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Elementary Teachers' Use of Evaluation to Guide Their Instructional Practices

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Walden University

College of Education

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La Joi Gardner

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

Elementary Teachers' Use of Evaluation to Guide Their Instructional Practices

by

La Joi Gardner

MA, Indiana Wesleyan University, 2010

BS, Indiana University, 1998

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

April 2021

Abstract

Well-designed research-based evaluation instruments have been implemented in school districts in a southwest U.S. state; however, it was unclear how elementary teachers were using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to understand how elementary teachers' perceptions and experiences influenced their use of an evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices. Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model provided the conceptual framework for the study. The research questions focused on elementary teachers' perceptions and experiences with using an evaluation instrument as a guide for their instructional practices. A purposeful sample of elementary teachers employed with the study district for a minimum of seven years identified study participants. Data were collected from one-on-one semistructured phone interviews with 9 elementary teachers from a school district in a southwest U.S. state. Thematic analysis, including open and axial coding, revealed that elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a tool to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation and not as a formative tool for guiding the improvement of their instructional practices. Findings further indicated the need to align the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. The results were used to create a 3-day professional development plan that aligns the instrument's interpretation and practice for improving classroom instruction districtwide. Findings may promote improved understanding among educators, educational leaders, and education agencies regarding the use of a well-designed evaluation instrument to improve instructional practices in every classroom, leading to every student's improved academic performance.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my family, my husband, William, and three daughters, Jacquell, Kennedee, and Zoi, who have been supportive and encouraging while extremely patient during this journey. Their consistent patience and support have kept me motivated and focused on completing this journey to achieve my dreams. Also, last but not least I dedicate this to my mother, Celestine Williams, a fellow educator who developed my passion for education while reminding me continuously that there is nothing I can not accomplish as long as I have faith. I only hope that earning this degree makes her incredibly proud of me. Thank you all for your love, encouragement, and support to achieve this goal.

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Section 1: The Problem

Teacher evaluation has become the central focus of improving teachers' instructional effectiveness. Nearly every U.S. state has either adopted or overhauled its teacher evaluation instrument framework to meet federal requirements to receive grant funding (Childs & Russell, 2017; Hess, 2016; Pizmony-Levy & Woolsey, 2017). Driven by poor student performance on national and international assessment comparisons, the U.S. Department of Education has sought to increase student achievement by improving teaching and learning (Childs & Russell, 2017; Dragoset et al., 2016; Obama, 2009). Therefore, teacher evaluation instruments have become crucial tools for promoting a teacher's instructional effectiveness, leading to improved teaching and learning.

The U.S. Department of Education outlined several criteria schools need to meet to receive federal funding. One criterion is that schools use a teacher evaluation instrument that builds data systems to improve instruction (Obama, 2009). States and school districts applying for the federal grant began the crusade to either adopt or redesign their teacher evaluation instrument with multiple measures of teacher performance tied to feedback and professional development (Childs & Russell, 2017). This criterion for teacher evaluation was based on researchers' findings that teacher evaluation instruments must have the potential to transform teaching and ensure that every classroom has high-quality, effective instruction taking place that results in increased student achievement (Childs & Russell, 2017; Hess, 2016; Miller & Hanna, 2014).

Southwest State (pseudonym for the study state) was one of the many states that applied for the federal grant. Southwest State established a statute in 2009 that required the State Board of Education to adopt and maintain a model framework for teacher evaluation instruments by December 15, 2011. The state fulfilled this statute by developing and adopting a framework for measuring educator effectiveness. The framework outlined the state expectations for teacher evaluation with multiple measures that promote the best practices for professional learning and evaluator training that includes four teacher performance classification levels: highly effective, effective, developing, and ineffective. The state's framework details the three components school districts are to include in their teacher evaluation instrument along with the recommended percentages for rating teacher effectiveness: teaching performance (50%), academic progress (33%), and survey (17%). The teaching performance component identifies the Southwest State professional teaching standards' instructional practices that include four domains: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities (Lazarev et al., 2014; Makkonen et al., 2016). The state's framework also recommends that the data collected from teacher evaluations be used to inform the professional development needs for enhancing teaching and drive instructional decisions (Makkonen et al., 2016). The state's adopted teacher evaluation framework's overall goal is to improve classroom instruction and how schools evaluate their teachers by implementing a comprehensive teacher evaluation instrument with multiple measures of teacher performance that improve both teaching and learning.

School districts in Southwest State either adopted or redesigned their teacher evaluation instrument suitable for their schools' specific needs using the state's teacher evaluation framework as a guide. Meanwhile, instructional effectiveness continued to be a concern for Southwest State since implementing the current teacher evaluation instruments that were either adopted or redesigned by the school districts based on recent state reports. According to a report written by the National Council on Teacher Quality, Southwest State has many teachers rated as effective who barely made student academic growth. Furthermore, Southwest State's director of state policy stated before the council "unfortunately, the results have by and large remained the same as they were before the reform passed" (Pennington, 2017, para. 3). Although researchers suggested that teacher evaluation is an essential instrument for promoting teacher effectiveness, there is little understanding of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices for improving their instructional effectiveness (Hallinger et al., 2014; Harris et al., 2014; Hazi, 2014; Herlihy et al., 2014). The current study addressed how elementary teachers in Desert County (pseudonym for study county) perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The Local Problem

The problem investigated for this study was how elementary teachers in Desert County perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The gap in practice was that even with a minimum of 5 years of using either a redesigned or newly adopted teacher evaluation instrument, teachers in

Desert County had shown little to no improvement in their instructional effectiveness as measured by Southwest State Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness.

According to the state department of education, data collected from 162 of the 203 school districts in Southwest State revealed that 22% of the teachers employed in these districts are labeled as instructionally ineffective (Cano, 2018). Of the data, all 58 school districts residing in Desert County were included, which is approximately one third of the data collected.

How Desert County elementary teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices was the guiding question addressed in the current study. Desert County is centrally located in a Southwest State and consists of 58 school districts. Since 2012, the school districts within Desert County have implemented either a redesigned or adopted new teacher evaluation instrument based on the state guidelines. After implementing the current teacher evaluation instruments, not all teachers have demonstrated significant instructional effectiveness improvement. As affirmed by an executive director of curriculum and instruction in Desert County, “The current teacher evaluation instrument is designed to improve instructional effectiveness, but many teachers continue to struggle with improving their instructional practices” (personal communication, January 23, 2018). Although research indicated that teacher evaluation can inform practice and, with appropriate implementation, can improve a teacher’s instructional practices, there is still an urgent concern for improving teacher effectiveness (Donaldson, 2016; Donaldson & Papay, 2015; Steinberg & Donaldson, 2016). Investigating how elementary teachers

perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices can reveal how teachers make sense of and respond to the changes of the teacher evaluation instrument's intent to attain instructional effectiveness (Jiang et al., 2015). To understand how elementary teachers perceived using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, I interviewed teachers from two elementary school districts in Desert County. The study districts were Desert South District and Desert North District (pseudonyms used for the study).

During the 2012–2013 school year, Desert South District adopted a new teacher evaluation instrument developed by the Desert County Education Service Agency (pseudonym). This teacher evaluation instrument is used among several school districts throughout Desert County. In 2017, Desert South District categorized approximately 40% of its teachers as instructionally effective since implementing the currently adopted teacher evaluation instrument. This indicated a 25% decline in the number of teachers recognized as instructionally effective since the implementation of the teacher evaluation instrument in comparison to 65% of teachers identified as instructionally effective with the previous evaluation instrument used during the 2011–2012 school year. During a conversation with instructional coaches for Desert South District, they stated the following concern, “the current teacher evaluation instrument does provide teachers with feedback on specific areas of refinement and reinforcement of best instructional practices. However, many teachers don't act on the feedback provided through the evaluation instrument with consistency” (personal communication, May 9, 2017).

On the other hand, during the 2014–2015 school year, Desert North District collaboratively redesigned their teacher evaluation instrument with a committee of both district and site administrators along with teachers to begin its implementation during the 2015–2016 school year. Subsequently, approximately 94% of teachers have maintained a category label of instructionally effective in comparison to 99% identified as instructionally effective with the previously used evaluation instrument during the 2014–2015 school year, indicating a slight decrease in the number of teachers categorized as instructionally effective for Desert North District. Furthermore, the district’s instructional specialist stated “even though many teachers in the district are labeled as effective, the label does not align to daily observations of our teachers’ instructional practices” (personal communication, April 27, 2018). This statement suggested that teachers are not as effective as their evaluation results indicate.

These concerns and outcomes indicated a gap in both school districts’ practice with implementing the adopted or redesigned teacher evaluation instrument because the current practice was not yielding the expected results of increased instructional effectiveness within the school districts. There may have been a disparity between the intent of the teacher evaluation and how teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a means to improve their instructional effectiveness. Investigating both school districts was necessary to understand how elementary teachers make sense of an evaluation instrument so they can use it as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Studying both districts may broaden the understanding of how elementary

teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

These understandings may support the broader educational population of Southwest State, which continues to struggle with improving teacher effectiveness. Over the past decade, the state has ranked in the bottom 5% of student performance in the United States (United States Department of Education, 2017). Effective teaching is linked to improved learning outcomes for students, and most states are eager to see their school districts implement a teacher evaluation that provides every school with the tools and methods for improving teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Dee & Wyckoff, 2017; Donaldson, 2016; T. Ford et al., 2018; Goldhaber, 2015). Teacher evaluation is a research-based instrument that is identified by researchers as a means for improving teaching and learning (Childs & Russell, 2017; Pizmony-Levy & Woolsey, 2017). However, there is still a need throughout the United States to understand how teachers respond to evaluation and what supports can provide them with the next steps to take for improving their instructional practices, which can lead to improved teaching and learning (Makkonen et al., 2016). The current study may improve the understanding of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices for increasing their instructional effectiveness.

Rationale

The current demand for improved teacher effectiveness is a focal point of education reform in the United States (Croft et al., 2015; Donaldson & Papay, 2014b; Jiang et al., 2015). Researchers have identified teacher evaluation as a crucial component

for teacher growth and improvement of instructional effectiveness over the past several decades (Danielson, 2015a; Martinez et al., 2016; Marzano, 2012). According to the National Education Association (2015), “teacher evaluation has largely failed to identify teachers’ professional growth needs and failed to provide support for the professional learning opportunities required to meet those needs” (p. 2). It has become essential to transform teacher evaluation so that it guarantees all students have access to highly skilled instructionally effective teachers who can advance their learning (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Derrington & Kirk, 2017; Gitomer et al., 2014; McMillan, 2016; Ritter & Barnett, 2016). Even though teacher evaluation has repurposed itself to improve teacher effectiveness, teachers and school leaders often lack the skills and understanding of how to use the evaluation instrument to guide teachers toward professional growth (Bridich, 2016; Derrington, 2014; Gitomer et al., 2014). These skills and understandings require the evaluator to be able to collect evidence and provide feedback identifying the professional development needs of each teacher they lead. Research indicated that as school districts implement their current teacher evaluation instrument, collecting evidence to inform each teacher’s professional development needs is crucial for the instrument to improve their instructional practices (Cosner et al., 2015; Derrington & Campbell, 2015; Hasty, 2015).

In response to this demand, the local, state, and national level education agencies have transformed teacher evaluation over the past decade (Aguilar & Richerme, 2014; Childs & Russell, 2017; Martinez et al., 2016). Since the transformation of teacher evaluation, many teachers have not improved their instructional practices enough to

improve their instructional effectiveness (Hess, 2016). During a teacher evaluation review committee meeting, the Desert North District executive director of human resources stated “there is a concern with the high number of teachers being classified as instructionally effective because it is not corresponding to student academic achievement based on district and state testing” (personal communication, October 16, 2018). This concern aligns with the decades of research that suggested that teachers are the most important in-school factor related to student learning and achievement, and how many local, state, and federal policymakers continue to address the challenge of how to measure and develop effective teachers so that all students are ensured access to highly effective teachers (Moran, 2017; Sporte et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2016).

Most current teacher evaluation instruments are much stronger due to federal education reform requirements for the use of a comprehensive evaluation instrument with multiple measures of teacher performance that improve both teaching and learning in comparison to those used almost a decade ago before the federal education reform policy that used the job satisfaction checklist as the key indicator of teacher performance. Most current teacher evaluation instruments are used to collect data to inform teaching from detailed observation rubrics, frequent observations, and multiple measures of teaching intended to support teachers with improving their instructional practices (Aldeman, 2017). Despite teacher evaluation intent for accountability and supporting teachers with improving their instructional practices, schools tend to focus on the system and not the goals of improving teaching and learning in every classroom (Aldeman, 2017; Goldhaber et al., 2015; Sporte et al., 2016). Because research has identified teacher evaluation

system as the focus to improve teaching and learning, it is important to understand how teachers make sense of using an evaluation instrument to improve their instructional effectiveness. Understanding how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices may help to identify barriers that prevent teachers from becoming instructionally effective.

On October 7, 2015, Southwest State submitted a report to the United States Department of Education that reported the inequities of access to effective educators. The report recognized Desert South District as a district in high need of improving teacher effectiveness due to their substantial decline in teacher effectiveness since the implementation of their currently adopted teacher evaluation instrument. Desert North District has maintained approximately the same percentage of instructionally effective teachers of 94% since implementing their recently redesigned teacher evaluation instrument, with a 5% decrease in teacher effectiveness compared to the previously used evaluation instrument. Since implementing the teacher evaluation instrument over the past few years, Desert North District has had minimal impact on improving teacher effectiveness based on the Desert North District Continuous School Improvement Report released in the Spring of 2018. The decrease of effective teachers since the implementation of the current evaluation instrument, along with the number of effective teachers not corresponding with student achievement, suggests there is an unidentified problem with the teacher evaluation.

The district instructional specialist for Desert North District revealed that many teachers labeled effective are not demonstrating consistent instructionally effective

practices during daily walkthroughs and observations (personal communication, September 24, 2018). Several site instructional coaches for Desert South District expressed that many teachers have struggled to become instructionally effective under the current teacher evaluation instrument (personal communication, September 19, 2018). Therefore, there was a need to understand how elementary teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Seeking this understanding may help identify any disparities between the intent of teacher evaluation and how teachers make sense of an evaluation instrument as a means of improving their instructional effectiveness.

Despite the efforts to transform teacher evaluation, researchers have not examined how elementary teachers make sense of using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool for guiding their instructional practices, thereby improving their instructional effectiveness (Donaldson et al., 2016). By investigating how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, I hoped to identify factors that explain why many teachers continue to struggle with improving their instructional effectiveness. This study may inform both Desert South and Desert North Districts of how their teacher evaluation instrument guides their teachers' instructional practices toward instructional effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Definition of Terms

The following defined terms were significant to this study. They are explained to ensure understanding of their use in the study.

Association stage: An individual has learned a specific strategy and has begun experimenting with using it (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

Autonomous stage: An individual understands a specific strategy or skill fluently without little consciousness and is capable of using it with error (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

Classroom observation: A purposeful, collaborative process that examines teaching practices to provide the teacher with feedback that supports improving their instructional practices. During this process, an observer observes a classroom session while recording the teacher's instructional practices and student actions, then meets with the teacher to discuss the observation providing specific feedback on instructional practices (Reynolds et al., 2014).

Cognitive stage: An individual is aware and learning about a specific strategy but has not developed the ability to perform the strategy in a systematic way (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

Competency-based scoring: Use of research-based professional strategies and competencies to identify needed areas of improvement with instructional practices that are critical to the rigorous classroom that encourages the student to examine errors in reasoning, revise knowledge, and engage in cognitively complex tasks (Marzano et al., 2013).

Feedback: The information observed about a teacher's performance used to identify actionable areas of growth to improve the teacher's instruction (Tuytens & Devos, 2017).

Formative tool: An instrument serving to form something, especially having a profound and lasting influence on a person's development. Formative tools provide teachers with critical, real-time evidence to inform further actions (Ross et al., 2004),

Instructional practices: Teaching methods that guide interactions and promote learning for students in the classroom (Kumar et al., 2015).

Rubric scale: Scoring instruments of performance expectations for an instructional practice or teaching skill (Marshall et al., 2016).

Standards-based observation: An observer collaborates with the teacher to ensure the lesson implemented incorporates strategies and resources aligned to the academic standards (Marzano et al., 2013). This form of observation uses student data to inform and provide evidence of student learning to help decision-making in lesson planning.

Teacher effectiveness: A measure of a teacher's ability to effectively implement instructional practices that generate a positive impact on student academic achievement (Behrstock-Sherratt et al., 2014; Donaldson, 2016; Garrett & Steinberg, 2015).

Teacher evaluation: Teacher evaluation is a systematic approach for measuring a teacher's effectiveness in increasing student learning. Marzano (2012) stated that teacher evaluation as a system must measure a teacher's effectiveness and support improvement with instructional practices to develop highly effective teachers who increase student learning. In the past, administrators used teacher evaluation as a formal assessment of

teachers to formulate a conclusion about their instructional performance to decide ongoing employment (Kraft & Gilmour, 2017). The practice has evolved by focusing on using the conclusions drawn from an evaluation instrument to improve teachers' instructional quality. The current study focused on how elementary teachers use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices for improving their instructional effectiveness.

Significance of the Study

The findings from the study may support district leaders with making improvements to their teacher evaluation that can lead to improved teacher effectiveness in all classrooms. Over the past several years, teacher evaluation changed from the traditional checklist used to rate teachers as satisfactory or unsatisfactory for job continuance to measuring effective instructional practices for growing and developing teacher effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Donaldson & Papay, 2014a; Ford et al., 2018). The change signaled many education researchers to identify the best instructional practices that improve instructional effectiveness and promote increased student achievement. These research-based instructional practices became the focal point of teacher evaluation to promote effective instruction. Researchers noted that adding effective instructional practices to the teacher evaluation instrument allows teachers the opportunity to reflect on their instructional practices, have conversations about the feedback they receive, and make adjustments to their instruction that will improve their effectiveness (Danielson, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Donaldson et al., 2015). Since the implementation of a more comprehensive teacher evaluation instrument, there has

been little investigation of how an evaluation instrument is being used by teachers to improve their instructional practices (Hallinger et al., 2014; Harris et al., 2014; Hazi, 2014; Herlihy et al., 2014; Kraft & Gilmour, 2017).

There was a need to understand how elementary teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. This understanding may provide the study site districts with the information they need to support teachers using the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices to attain and maintain effectiveness. The findings may help the districts' instructional leaders meet their goal of increasing the number of effective teachers within their districts. The findings may inform educators and education agencies regarding how teachers make sense of using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices so they can use the information to make needed adjustments to teacher evaluation for increasing teacher effectiveness as defined and measured by state standards. It is advantageous for teachers to improve their instructional practices as it leads to teacher effectiveness. Recognized as one of the most powerful tools that can promote increased instructional effectiveness, teacher evaluation can promote increased instructional effectiveness for all teachers, thereby increasing student achievement. Therefore, it is beneficial for educators to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Research Questions

Qualitative research is conducted to uncover the participants' perceptions and experiences, the meaning they ascribe to their experiences, or a process (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). The research questions for the current study were intended to uncover how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices by understanding teachers' perceptions, sensemaking, and experiences with evaluation. The following research questions were used to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The first research question addressed how elementary teachers' perceptions of evaluation influence how they use an evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices. The second research question addressed elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument so they can improve their instructional practices. Understanding teachers' perception of their use of an evaluation instrument and their experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices may indicate what hinders teachers from becoming more instructionally effective. The following research questions (RQs) guided the investigation:

RQ1: What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?

RQ2: What are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?

Review of the Literature

One of the highest priorities for all schools in the 21st century is to provide students with the best educational opportunities and experiences that prepare them for college and career (Adams et al., 2015; Childs & Russell, 2017; Donaldson, 2016; Gilles, 2017; Hallinger et al., 2014; Martinez et al., 2016). Teachers are a significant factor for preparing students for college and career. Schools require high-quality instruction from their teachers (Danielson, 2015a). One powerful approach to engage in high-quality instruction is with a well-designed teacher evaluation instrument that supports teacher growth and instructional effectiveness (Danielson, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2015; Donaldson & Papay, 2015; Donaldson et al., 2016; Firestone, 2014; Hallinger et al., 2014). I sought to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. In this literature review I addressed the fundamental requirements of a well-designed teacher evaluation instrument that supports the growth and development of teachers' instructional practices that lead to their effectiveness. To provide a deeper understanding of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, I searched databases such as Education Source, ERIC, SAGE, and Taylor & Francis with the following terms: *teacher evaluation*, *teacher effectiveness*, *instructional practice*, and *teacher growth and development*. I used Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model as the conceptual framework to guide my research. The conceptual framework details effective instructional practices with the characteristics and recommendations for teacher evaluation to improve teachers' instructional effectiveness.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used to ground this study was the research-validated focused teacher evaluation model developed by Marzano (2017a) in partnership with Learning Science International. The focused teacher evaluation model was designed in response to national and state policies that called for school districts to implement standard-based observations and competency-based teacher evaluation that improves teacher effectiveness (Dragoset et al., 2016; Marzano, 2012, 2017b; Marzano et al., 2013; Marzano & Toth, 2013). The purpose of the current study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The focused teacher evaluation model addresses two significant conditions for a teacher evaluation instrument to support teacher effectiveness: (a) use of measures of student growth as indicators of teacher effectiveness, and (b) more rigorous measures of pedagogical skills of teachers that emphasize professional growth (Marzano & Toth, 2013). The second condition was the main focus of the current study because it addresses the use of rigorous instructional practices to generate instructionally effective teachers.

Researchers have found that teacher evaluation must establish a methodology that supports teacher growth toward instructional effectiveness while they make the necessary instructional shifts that sustain a rigorous standards-based classroom that supports teaching and learning (Danielson, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Derrington & Campbell, 2015; Donaldson, 2016; Harris et al., 2014; Marzano, 2017a). Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model details observable instructional practices with evidence

of instructional effectiveness for informing teachers as opposed to the constructivist models that generate scores based on lesson scripting and employing a sizeable checklist of elements (Marzano et al., 2013). Marzano designed the focused teacher evaluation model “to help teachers develop and improve while providing the most accurate measure of teacher competence currently available” (Marzano & Toth, 2013, p. vii). The model acknowledges effective instructional practices based on research while utilizing a common language of effective instruction for steering effective teaching dialogue (Marzano, 2012, 2017b).

The focused teacher evaluation model was developed based on the research of Marzano’s earlier work, along with Hattie’s discoveries on student achievement (Marzano, 2012). Eriksson’s research also influenced the focused teacher evaluation model design with the founding principle of how individuals improve performance with clear goals and expert feedback (Marzano, 2012). This extensive evidence-based research defined instructional practices and strategies that improve teaching and learning in schools (Marzano, 2017b; Marzano et al., 2013; Marzano & Toth, 2013, 2014). Researchers recognized that without a strong theoretical foundation to guide the development of a teacher evaluation tool, evaluation will not address research-based instructional practices proven to improve teacher effectiveness (Danielson, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Donaldson, 2016; Hallinger et al., 2014; Marzano & Toth, 2013).

Marzano’s focused teacher evaluation model recommends that data collected about teaching practices come from various sources during multiple times throughout the

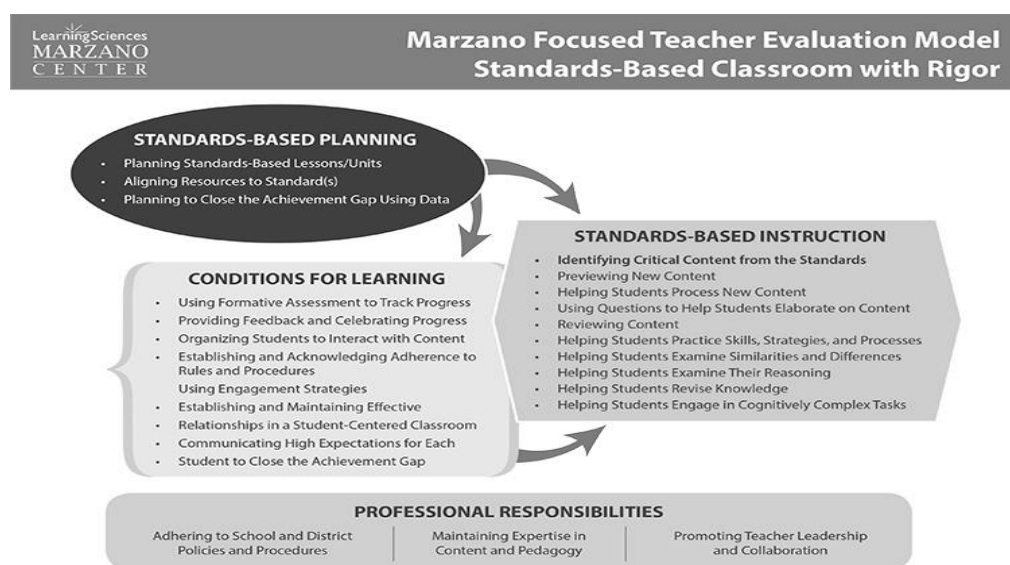
year (Marzano, 2012, 2017b). The data collected should measure teacher effectiveness with information gathered on how to improve their instructional practices. Researchers agreed that teacher evaluation should measure and develop teacher effectiveness, unlike traditional evaluation models that focus on measuring satisfaction (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Marzano, 2012; Marzano & Toth, 2013). For teacher evaluation to focus on teacher growth and development, the instrument needs to incorporate a comprehensive and specific model of effective instructional practices along with an observational scale designed to address teacher growth and development (Donaldson & Papay, 2014a; Goe et al., 2014; Marzano & Toth, 2013). Marzano & Toth, (2013) described three necessary characteristics of teacher evaluation needed to assess instructional practices that focus on the growth and development of a teacher's effectiveness when collecting data: a comprehensive and specific model, a developmental scale, and acknowledging and rewarding teacher growth.

The first characteristic, a comprehensive and specific model, supports teachers' understanding of effective teaching through a description of research-based instructional practices related to professional growth and teacher effectiveness. The characteristic includes four domains of expertise that emphasize 23 key elements of professional practices that measure teacher effectiveness, as shown in Figure 1. The four domains are Domain 1: standards-based planning (three elements), Domain 2: standards-based instruction (10 elements), Domain 3: conditions for learning (seven elements), and Domain 4: professional responsibilities (three elements) that detail observable professional teaching practices. For the current study, the focus was on Domain 1

(standards-based planning), Domain 2 (standards-based instruction), and Domain 3 (conditions for learning) because they describe instructional practices and classroom behaviors that increase teacher effectiveness.

Figure 1

Marzano's Focused Teacher Evaluation Model



Marzano and Toth, (2013) identified the second characteristic is a developmental scale that enhances instructional growth. The developmental scale requires using a rubric that measures the stage of skill development of a specific instructional practice. The rubric's scale measures whether a teacher is in the cognitive stage, associate stage, or autonomous stage of implementing an instructional practice. The cognitive stage refers to the teacher's awareness of a specific instructional practice they are learning but have not yet developed or implemented. The associate stage refers to the teacher having learned the specific instructional practice and experimenting with it. The autonomous stage refers to a teacher's ability to perform a specific instructional practice with no conscious effort

of using it without error. Skill development progression should identify whether a teacher is in the cognitive stage, associate stage, or autonomous stage of performing an instructional practice based on Anderson's research of skill development (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

The focused teacher evaluation model rubric uses the following scale to identify a teacher's skill level of competency with a specific instructional practice: 4 (innovating), 3 (applying), 2 (developing), 1 (beginning), and 0 (not using). Teachers at a skill level of 0 are in the cognitive stage in which they are aware of a specific instructional practice but are not using it. Teachers at skill levels of 1 and 2 are in the associate stage, meaning they have learned a specific instructional practice and have begun using it during their classroom instruction but have not yet mastered the instructional practice and are continuously working toward developing it. Teachers at skills levels of 3 and 4 are in the autonomous stage in that they are continually using the instructional practice while further enhancing the practice during their classroom instruction with accuracy, thereby demonstrating instructional effectiveness with using the instructional practice. Using a rubric scale informs teachers of the ability level at which they are implementing instructional practices in their classrooms (Marzano & Toth, 2013). Although the rubric scale informs teachers at which ability level they are performing a specific instructional practice, the scale also suggests the teacher's needed improvements to become more effective with implementing the instructional practice (DiPaola & Wagner, 2018; Gorozidis & Papiouannou, 2014). The rubric scale must provide a clear and precise explanation and description of the expected teaching behaviors at each skill level for a

teacher to improve their effectiveness with implementing each instructional practice (Danielson, 2016; Marshall et al., 2016; Marzano & Toth, 2013).

The third characteristic, acknowledging and rewarding teacher growth, requires teachers to identify instructional practices from the teacher evaluation instrument to improve on and monitor their progress throughout the school year. The teacher then shares the identified instructional practice with their evaluator. The teacher and the evaluator use the instructional practice as the basis of their evaluation throughout the school year for improving their instructional effectiveness. Teachers receive a score based on how well they met their growth targets during the school year. When teachers meet their growth targets, they receive intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Intrinsic rewards come from the teacher having a choice in their growth and development, and extrinsic rewards typically come from performance pay or other district policy means. This practice conveys to teachers that their continuous improvement is expected and rewarded. All three characteristics of teacher evaluation described by Marzano are necessary for supporting teachers' understanding of an evaluation instrument as a means for improving their instructional effectiveness.

Another recommendation of Marzano's (2012) focused teacher evaluation model is that the data collected on teacher instructional practices come from various sources and multiple points throughout the school year. When evaluators observe and collect evidence of teachers' instructional practices during multiple points throughout the school year, it prevents teacher observation error scores and produces a more reliable and valid measure of teacher effectiveness. When teacher observations are conducted only one to two times

a year, it results in incorrectly assessed teacher quality due to sampling and measurement errors (Marzano & Toth, 2013; van der Lans et al., 2015; Xu et al., 2016). Conducting more frequent observations allows the observer to collect more data to communicate the feedback needed for teachers to improve their instructional effectiveness. Researchers suggested that providing specific, rigorous, and comprehensive feedback to teachers is crucial in reforming teacher evaluation (Brookhart & Moss, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Tuytens & Devos, 2017). Traditional models have failed to provide the necessary feedback that differentiates effective and ineffective teachers. When teacher evaluation includes frequent observations, a comprehensive specific model and developmental scale, it can provide teachers with the needed information to identify their developmental needs and acknowledge their professional growth toward instructional effectiveness.

I used the focused teacher evaluation model to investigate how elementary teachers in both study site districts perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model characteristics and recommendations were used as a guide to understand how the study site districts' elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. By using the characteristics and recommendations of Marzano's model as a guide for understanding the teacher evaluation instrument of the study districts, I sought to gain an understanding of how the evaluation instruments are used to inform teaching and how

elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices to improve their effectiveness.

Review of the Broader Problem

Teacher Effectiveness

According to Charlotte Danielson (2016), “the concept of using teacher evaluation as to instrument to assess and improve teacher instructional effectiveness began with the best intentions due to the vital role teachers’ play in each student’s success” (p. 1). Concern for teacher effectiveness emerged when international examination results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Program for International Student Assessment revealed that the students in the United States were lagging academically in comparison to other countries (Croft et al., 2015; Dragoset et al., 2016; Gurl et al., 2016). In 1983 the report *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission revealed the need for education reform that implements rigorous education practices due to the low quality of education in the United States that could have a dire effect on the country’s economic competitiveness. Education reform began the examination of teaching practices and how they affect the learning outcomes of students. The findings initiated the standardization of education, focusing on the improvement of teaching and learning throughout the United States (Hallinger et al., 2014; Steinberg & Donaldson, 2016; Steinberg & Sartain, 2015). Over time the standardization of both student learning expectations and teacher instructional practices became the premise for education reform to improve the current education system.

During the first two decades of the twenty-first-century federal laws initiated guidelines for states to reform their education systems. These guidelines included the identification of high-quality, effective teachers. A high-quality teacher in 2006 was originally identified as a teacher having a bachelor's degree in education with a state teacher certification that demonstrates competency in the core academic subject taught (Aguilar & Richerme, 2014; Childs & Russell, 2017; Scannella & McCarthy, 2014). Many scholars and researchers asserted that teacher qualifications and knowledge positively correlate with effective instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Kini & Podolsky, 2016; Reynolds et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2016). Existing research has found that these qualifications do not always guarantee that every classroom with a highly qualified teacher would have high-quality teaching occurring in it (Balch & Springer, 2015; Davis et al., 2016; Firestone, 2014; Herlihy et al., 2014; Miller & Hanna, 2014). More recently, research has defined teacher effectiveness by a teacher's ability to teach the curriculum using high-quality teaching methodologies that are deliberate for optimizing student engagement and increasing learning for each student (DeNisco, 2014; Hess, 2016; Lavigne et al., 2014). As a result, states required school districts to reform their teacher evaluation to measures teacher effectiveness based on their instructional practices and evidence of student learning (Rosen & Parise, 2017; Weiss, 2014; Weiss & Hess, 2015).

Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Effectiveness

Understanding how to improve teacher effectiveness is crucial for informing accountability systems for individual teachers, schools, districts, and states (Childs & Russell, 2017). Consequently, being able to determine whether a teacher is low

performing or high performing is critical for improving teacher effectiveness (Abou-Assali & Kushkiev, 2016; Forman & Markson, 2015; Garrett & Steinberg, 2015; Katoch, 2016). Before the demand for teacher evaluation reform, most traditional teacher evaluations only rated teachers as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory, typically using one observation session per year or less. The New Teacher Project (Kraft & Gilmour, 2017) conducted an extensive study on teacher evaluation for this type of binary rating system. The study found the system unreliable, with over ninety percent of teachers labeled satisfactory in twelve diverse districts within four states, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, and Ohio (Donaldson & Papay, 2014b; Harris et al., 2014; Kraft & Gilmour, 2017). Approximately fifteen thousand teachers and thirteen hundred administrations were surveyed during the study that resulted in the 2009 report called *The Widget Effect*. The report brought attention to the fact that many teachers were identified as satisfactory when student data demonstrated otherwise. Key findings from the report suggest that; all teachers were rated as good or great regardless of student outcomes; professional development was inadequate or nonexistent for supporting teacher improvement; novice teachers were being neglected and prevented from growing professionally; and poor performers were going unaddressed with no consequences (Katoch, 2016; Kornell & Hausman, 2016; Steinberg & Kraft, 2017).

The New Teacher Project (Kraft & Gilmour, 2017) further revealed that administrators failed to document teachers who were performing poorly and refused to provide them with adequate professional support to improve their instructional effectiveness. This inadequacy was due to the claim that teacher tenure and due process

protected ineffective teachers and prevented these teachers' dismissal (Kraft & Gilmour, 2017; Lavigne, 2014; Rosen & Parise, 2017; Steinberg & Garrett, 2016). On the other hand, exceptional teachers were not recognized, compensated, or promoted for their instructional effectiveness due to a teacher evaluation rating that only identified teachers as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The report recommendations outlined how policy-makers and school leaders' attainment of detailed evidence of each teacher's instructional quality can identify the needed professional support or recognition they deserve. Such findings accelerated the demand to restructure teacher evaluation throughout the nation to focus on improving teacher instructional effectiveness.

Over the past few years, more than 43 states have made significant advances to redesign their teacher evaluation (Behrent, 2016; Fox, 2014; Holdheide, 2015; Ritter & Barnett, 2016). These advances sought to improve teacher evaluation as a system used to collect data that informs teaching and learning. Current teacher evaluations are developed using multiple levels of performance to categorize teacher effectiveness, require evaluation to occur more frequently for every teacher, and use multiple measures to determine teacher effectiveness. By reforming teacher evaluation to focus on improving instructional practices, it provides data that has an extreme impact on improving teacher effectiveness. Using a sound teacher evaluation instrument that distinguishes between the best, average, and worst-performing teachers based on their instructional practices identifies each teacher's professional development needs that leads to improved instructional effectiveness (Derrington, 2014; Donaldson, 2016; Donaldson & Papay, 2014b; Garrett & Steinberg, 2015; Ritter & Barnett, 2016; Rosen & Parise, 2017).

Teacher Evaluation for Improving Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher evaluation should be built upon what is known about effective teaching. It must be a means of accountability supporting teacher growth and development that produces highly effective teachers in every classroom for every student (Adams et al., 2015; Childress, 2014; Goldhaber, 2015; Gorozidis & Papioannou, 2014; Templeton et al., 2016). Therefore, the overall goal of teacher evaluation is to improve teacher effectiveness. A well-designed teacher evaluation instrument should be grounded on current research-based state-of-the-art teaching that incorporates self-assessment of instructional effectiveness along with evidence-based artifacts that demonstrate the ways their instructional practices contribute to student achievement (Kane et al., 2014; Martinez et al., 2016; Pizmony-Levy & Woolsey, 2017; Quinn, 2014). With this in mind, there a couple of ideologies of which a teacher evaluation must adhere to be a coherent, honest, and reliable system that supports a teacher's professional growth toward instructional effectiveness.

One ideology is that teacher evaluation needs to be grounded on professional teaching standards that assess teaching quality (Moskal et al., 2016; Schiefefe & Schaffner, 2015; Whitehurst et al., 2014). The assessment of teaching must be valuable and ongoing, focusing on standardized teaching practices that produce high-quality instruction that is deemed by research as contributing to teacher effectiveness. The assessment of a teacher's performance should continuously guide their professional learning throughout their career by identifying their strengths and needs for setting goals for improvement. For this to occur, evaluation needs to be frequently conducted by expert

evaluators that include both administrators and peers who have demonstrated proficiency in their instructional practices. Expert evaluators need to be highly trained in using the evaluation instrument and procedures. It will help them with recognizing and supporting the development of teacher effectiveness along with understanding how to teach the subject or content area evaluated (Cosner et al., 2015; Derrington & Kirk, 2017; Smagorinsky, 2014; Smylie, 2014; Tuytens & Devos, 2017; Young et al., 2015). To be an expert evaluator requires adequate training opportunities for evaluators to ensure they are skilled and knowledgeable at supporting teachers with improving their instructional practices.

Another ideology for a successful teacher evaluation instrument is that it is accompanied with useful feedback that is frequent and links teachers to professional development opportunities for them to collaborate with knowledgeable peers, such as instructional coaches or mentors that can help them reflect on their teaching practices and how they can improve their instructional effectiveness (Brookhart & Moss, 2015; Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2015; Quinn, 2014; Tefvik & Ozdem, 2017; Tuytens & Devos, 2017). As stated by Adams et al. (2015), “At the most fundamental level, what we want is an honest evaluation of our work by skilled and knowledgeable evaluators who can help us see the ways to improve practice at every stage of our professional lives and increase our contributions to the learning of our students” (p. 4). Unfortunately, research has found many teachers’ express concerns with how their evaluation connects to their professional development (Bagria & Arya, 2017; Gitomer et al., 2014; Kise, 2014; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). This concern indicated the need to understand the relationship

between teacher evaluation, feedback, and professional development as a system for improving teacher effectiveness.

Teacher Evaluation for Developmental Growth

Teacher evaluation has taken a direction in which it should not be used primarily as evaluative but as a tool to identify specific professional development needs for a teacher to increase their instructional effectiveness (Donaldson et al., 2016; Gilles, 2017; Smylie, 2014; van Soelen et al., 2016). Therefore, it is essential that teacher evaluation provides high-quality feedback that leads to the identification of needed professional development and the implementation of an action plan that begins professional growth toward a teacher's improved instructional effectiveness. High-quality feedback that recognizes required professional development is descriptive with informing the teacher of their instructional practices and areas that need improvement. Providing high-quality feedback can direct the teacher to be reflective in their instructional practices and take steps toward the necessary actions to improve their instructional effectiveness and continued support (Cosner et al., 2015; Hunt et al., 2016; Tuytens & Devos, 2017).

However, even though teacher evaluation has recently taken on a higher purpose for improving teacher effectiveness, many times, school leaders lack the skills and understanding of how to use the evaluation instrument as a tool to guide teachers toward professional growth (Bridich, 2016; Derrington, 2014; Gitomer et al., 2014). These skills include collecting evidence and providing specific feedback based on the evidence that identifies the professional development needs of both the individual teacher and the whole school. Research states that as school districts implement newer evaluation

systems, the system must include the use of collected evidence to inform the professional development needs of each teacher and the overall school (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Cosner et al., 2015; Derrington & Campbell, 2015; Hasty, 2015). The Measures of Effective Teaching Project found that teachers are concerned about teacher evaluation ability to provide the needed information supporting their instructional effectiveness (Bagria & Arya, 2017; Behrstock-Sherratt et al., 2014; Donaldson et al., 2015; Donaldson et al., 2016; Kane et al., 2014). Teachers' feedback should lead to better instructional practices with positive student outcomes that indicate increased teacher effectiveness. A comprehensive teacher evaluation instrument that offers specific feedback with ongoing professional growth and development support from all within the district, including school leaders, instructional coaches, mentor teachers, and central office administration, is essential to improve teacher effectiveness.

Implications

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate how elementary teachers use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The information collected from the study informed the study districts of how the teacher evaluation instrument is used by their teachers to improve their instructional effectiveness. By conducting semistructured interviews with teachers along with literature garnered from recent studies, it fostered a deeper understanding of how elementary teachers make sense of how to use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices and strengthen their instructional effectiveness. The study generated the needed information about the misalignment between the intent of

evaluation and elementary teachers' use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The findings were used to design professional development that supports elementary teachers' understanding of how to use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices for continuous growth and development that helps them develop and maintain instructional effectiveness. The study as well informed the study districts' leaders of evaluation practices that need strengthening or modification to achieve the desired results of increased teacher effectiveness that leads to improved teaching and learning in every classroom districtwide.

Summary

This study sought to understand how elementary teachers use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Section 1 detailed how recent federal laws have instructed states to implement teacher evaluations focused on improving teacher effectiveness. The majority of states have stepped in the direction of requiring school districts to either redesign their current teacher evaluation instrument or adopt a new teacher evaluation instrument that meets the requirement of focusing on increased teacher effectiveness. In the process of moving in the direction of refocusing teacher evaluation for improving teacher effectiveness, there are continuous concerns that teachers are still not improving their instructional practices. Essential terms were also identified that were used to understand the basis of this study and a literature review. The literature review identified the conceptual framework used to investigate the problem while exploring teacher evaluation relationship with teacher effectiveness and

developmental growth. Section 1 was concluded with a discussion of the implications that the study may have for our education systems, specifically the education systems of Southwest State.

In Section 2 the methodology used to conduct this study is detailed. I discuss the details for the decision to use a basic qualitative study, the data collection process, ethical research practices, and the data analysis process. I further discuss the understandings gained from the data analysis and the decision to create a 3-day professional development plan based on the findings of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

A qualitative research approach was used to investigate the problem of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. As stated by Patton (2002), “a qualitative research approach is inductive in that the researcher attempts to make sense of the situation without imposing pre-existing expectations on the research setting” (p. 8). The purpose of the current study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. A qualitative approach was the research method used for this project study. Qualitative studies allow researchers to study complex phenomena within their context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To gather data about how elementary teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, I conducted a basic qualitative study in the Desert North School District. Data were collected from only one of the proposed study districts due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing school closures throughout Southwest State. Therefore, the Desert South District was not able to participate in this study.

The purpose of a qualitative study is “to gain an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process of meaning-making (rather than the outcome or product), and describe how people interpret what they experience” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 13). Furthermore, qualitative researchers use an empirical approach to investigate the “how” or “why” concerning a phenomenon (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2017). I

investigated how elementary teachers perceived the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model characteristics and recommendations for developing teacher effectiveness were used to guide this study. Qualitative data were collected during semistructured interviews with teachers from the study site district to gain understanding, insight, and details of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The information gathered from these interviews was analyzed along with the focused teacher evaluation model characteristics and recommendations to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Qualitative researchers attempt to make sense of and interpret phenomena in their natural settings based on the meanings people bring to them (Merriam, 2009). Yin (2017) defined a qualitative study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident" (p. 13). Merriam (2009) described a qualitative study as an approach to seek an in-depth description and analysis of a phenomenon in a bounded system. I sought to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, which provided insight into how teachers interpret and make sense of teacher evaluation phenomena as a means to improve their instructional effectiveness. The insight gained from investigating how elementary teachers interpret and make sense of how to use an

evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices may increase awareness of the support and resources needed for elementary teachers to better utilize an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. This insight may also lead to improved teaching and learning.

Understanding how people interpret their experiences, construct their worlds, and attribute meaning to their experience with a phenomenon is the goal of a qualitative study (Merriam, 2009). Using a qualitative approach, I sought an understanding of the study phenomenon by investigating how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The understandings gained were used to inform the study site district and possibly shed light on teacher evaluation practices in other school districts and local education agencies. Even though qualitative studies' intentions are not used to generalize findings, these understandings can be used for further investigations and application in similar settings (Merriam, 2009).

A basic qualitative approach was the best design to conduct this investigation because I sought to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Although qualitative designs serve several purposes, a basic qualitative design was appropriate for this investigation. The other qualitative research designs include case studies, ethnographic research, grounded theory research, and narrative studies (Creswell, 2012). Yin (2017) classified case studies as descriptive, explanatory, or exploratory while further differentiating them as single, holistic, or multiple case studies. Stake (1995) classified case studies as collective, intrinsic, or instrumental. Collective case studies are used to

examine selected cases for comparison. Intrinsic case studies focus on a single case based on the merit of interest to the researcher. Instrumental case studies also focus on a single case but address an issue or phenomenon. Creswell (2012) described an instrumental case study as a qualitative design that allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth exploration that focuses on illuminating a specific issue. Even though a case study design could have worked for the current study, the purpose did not focus on a single case or illuminating specific phenomena. Ethnographic research addresses a group's culture, which was not the purpose of this study. Grounded theory research is used to produce or uncover a theory that explains a process of events, activities, actions, and interactions. I did not seek to develop or discover a theory; therefore, a grounded theory design was not appropriate for this study. Narrative researchers gather and tell stories about the lives of people studied while providing narratives of their experiences, which did not align with this study's purpose.

A basic qualitative design was the best fit for the study's purpose, which was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Using a basic qualitative design allowed me to obtain a deeper understanding of how teachers interpret and make sense of how to use an evaluation instrument to improve their instructional effectiveness. A basic qualitative study requires the collection of data that includes four elements: (a) the researcher gets close enough to the people and situation studied to understand in depth the details, (b) the researcher aims to capture what really takes place and what people really do, (c) the researcher collects plenty of descriptive activities and interactions of

people studied, and (4) the researcher obtains direct quotations of what is said and written by the people studied (Patton, 2002). The data collection requirements for this basic qualitative study enabled me to obtain a deeper understanding of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

This basic qualitative study focused on two study districts located in Southwest State in the Southwest region of the United States. The two study districts, Desert South District and Desert North District, are located in Desert County in Southwest State. The purpose of using two school districts was to gain a deeper understanding by seeking possible differences in how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices based on different teacher evaluation instruments. Gaining a deeper understanding and seeking possible differences may inform school leaders of how to support teachers in using the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional effectiveness. However, only one of the study districts was able to participate due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Desert South District a medium-size urban elementary school district located in the southern area of Desert County. Based on the Desert South District website, 19 schools operate in the Desert South District that serves approximately 9,500 students in prekindergarten through eighth grade. The district employs 422 certified teachers, 19 principals, nine assistant principals, and 29 instructional coaches. The 19 schools that operate in the Desert South District include one preschool, one school serving Grades kindergarten through 3, one school serving Grades 4 through 8; one alternative special

education school serving Grades prekindergarten through 8; five schools serving Grades preschool through 8, and 10 schools serving Grades kindergarten through 8. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Desert South District was unable to participate.

Desert North District is a small urban elementary school district located in the northern area of Desert County. The district serves approximately 5,666 students and employs 297 certified teachers, including eight principals and assistant principals and five district-level instructional coaches. Desert North District has eight schools serving Grades preschool through 8. Of the eight schools, four serve as Grades prekindergarten through 4, three serve Grades 5 through 8, and one traditional school serves Grades kindergarten through 8. Desert North District was able to participate in the study during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling of research participants to gain insight and an understanding of how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are knowledgeable about the study's phenomena (Merriam, 2009). Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to choose participants who meet the study's criteria so a deeper understanding of the phenomena can be achieved (Creswell, 2012).

Participant Eligibility Criteria

The study's participant selection criteria were teachers who had been employed by the study district for at least 7 years and had a minimum of 3 years of experience with

their school district's current teacher evaluation instrument. Merriam (2009) suggested selecting participants with at least 3 years of professional experience and knowledge. Therefore, selecting teachers with at least 7 years of employment in their current district and at least 3 years of experience with the current teacher evaluation instrument provided further insight into how they perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Number of Participant Justification

Invitations to participate in the study were emailed to a list of 136 eligible teachers provided by the Desert North study district to ensure enough participants volunteered during the pandemic. Of the 136 teachers, nine volunteered to participate in the study. This sample size of teachers, along with 7 years of employment with the study district and a minimum of 3 years of experience with the current teacher evaluation instrument, provided a good understanding of how their perceptions of evaluation had been influential in their instructional practices over time. Basic qualitative studies typically require a sample size of four to 12 participants, especially when the researcher is seeking in-depth insight into a phenomenon (Yin, 2017). It also is important when conducting a basic qualitative study that the researcher does not go over the recommended number of participants due to the massive amount of data collected and the need for the researcher to explore the data collected extensively to acquire a deep understanding of the phenomenon (Yin, 2017). Guidelines for selecting the participants were followed to ensure the probability of getting at least four to 12 participants who met the study criteria.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

When the study began, the process to gain access to participants involved district and site administrators being contacted by email to share the study's purpose and the problem investigated. Establishing the study's purpose, requesting consent, and building rapport with the study district led to the study's support from the study district by identifying possible participants and sites. Once approval was received from the study district, purposeful sampling methods were used to identify potential participants who met the selection criteria: teachers employed in the district for at least 7 years who had used the current evaluation instrument for a minimum of 3 years. The study district provided a list of 136 teachers who met these criteria. All teachers who met the criteria were sent an email invitation to participate in the study. The emailed invitation explained the study's purpose and procedures used to ensure their confidentiality and ethical protection. The findings were shared with the study district and participating teachers in anticipation of them being used to influence their use of the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide instructional practices.

Method of Establishing Researcher-Participant Relationship

A trusting relationship between the researcher and participants develops through open communication and full disclosure of the researcher's role and responsibility for conducting the study (Creswell, 2012). To establish a good researcher-participant relationship, I had initial communication by phone with each participant before their interview to discuss the study's details. Initial communication with participants was conducted by phone to comply with safety guidelines during mandated social distancing

due to COVID-19. The initial communication provided participants with the purpose of the study and their role as participants, as well as mine as the researcher. Participants were advised that their participation was voluntary, and all information they provided remains protected, kept confidential, and recorded with anonymity. Participants were informed that scheduled interviews took about an hour to an hour and a half to complete. Participants were allowed to decide on their interview date and time to ensure their convenience and comfortability during the interview.

Measures for Ethical Protection of Participants

Throughout the study, ethical protection was considered from the beginning until the completion of the study. Ethical practices must protect all participants' confidentiality and anonymity while obtaining informed consent. Creswell (2012) advises that qualitative research can anticipate ethical issues that will need managing. I used the ethical guidelines set forth by Walden University to address any ethical concerns during the study. To prepare for these ethical protection concerns, I reviewed the code of ethics while IRB approval was sought before conducting the study. Permission from the study district was sought and documented. The study district was informed of the study in writing to receive approval and consent to conduct the study. The approved documentation for permission to conduct research in the study district was submitted with the IRB application to Walden University (approval number 04-10-20-0463212).

Informed consent forms were provided to all participants using personal email accounts regarding the study's purpose, the researcher's role, their role as a participant in the study, preservation of their confidentiality, and the study's voluntary grounds. The

informed consent form notified all participants of their right to withdraw from the study at any time with no explanation. The informed consent forms provided all participants with contact information for both the researcher and Walden University. Participants signed and returned the forms using personal email accounts to ensure confidentiality.

To protect all participants from harm, I maintained all collected data, informed consent forms, interview notes, audio-recordings, journals, logs, and other documentation from interviews in a safe, locked location, in filing cabinets and password protected hard drives to prevent the collected data from compromising their confidentiality. Furthermore, all transcripts from interviews were coded to have no identifiable information and attain anonymity for all participants.

Data Collection

Qualitative researchers seek to understand problems or issues in which no clear solution exists. It requires collecting suitable information worthy of eliciting the qualitative data needed to answer the research question, capture the phenomenon of interest, and account for the human experience while challenging previous thinking and inviting further inquiry (Paradis et al., 2016). During qualitative research, data were collected to learn about the study participants' experiences and perceptions of a specific phenomenon. The data collected were used to gain an understanding of the specific phenomenon studied. To gain these understandings, qualitative researchers typically employ a data collection method that depends on open-ended questioning and unrestricted data inquiries (Creswell, 2012).

Type of Data Collected and Justification

For this basic qualitative study, one-on-one semistructured interviews were conducted to collect data on how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. All participants scheduled their interviews based on their availability. The interviews were conducted on the phone to address the COVID-19 social distancing mandate. Each interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder and transcribed immediately afterward. Audiotaping each interview permits the researcher to focus on each participant's response and reduce note-taking. Conducting one-on-one interviews with each participant allows the researcher to collect unrestricted information from participants that helped understand the research questions for this study (Creswell, 2012).

Data Collection Instrument and Source

Basic qualitative studies collect data that entail detailed descriptions of participants' experiences, feelings, and knowledge of the phenomenon studied (Patton, 2002). Semistructured interviews were conducted to collect data from each participant using a researcher-developed interview guide schedule (Appendix B). The interview guide schedule consists of specific open-ended questions that investigated the research questions by eliciting the participants' experience, behavior, opinion, values, feelings, and knowledge of using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices (Merriam, 2009).

The interview questions were formulated based on the recommendation of Marzano's focused teacher evaluation's conceptual framework. Specific questions were

designed to understand how the participants use an evaluation instrument to enhance their instructional practices, improve their instructional effectiveness, and acknowledge and reward their instructional successes. Using the interview questions, I sought to understand each participant's perception, experience, and how they make sense of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The interview guide schedule has various question types exploring the experience and behavior, opinion and value, feeling, and knowledge that generated participant perceptions of the evaluation instrument. The interview guide schedule includes interpretive, hypothetical situations, and ideal position questions to reveal the participants' perceptions of their positive and negative experiences using the evaluation instrument (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Each question prompted participant responses that gained a deep understanding of interpreting how elementary teachers in the study district perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Each question generated probing questions during the interviews that further sought clarification or more information as the interview was being conducted (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002).

I audiotaped each interview as a method to collect and record data as the study proceeded. The use of the data collection process and interview schedule guide as a protocol allowed me as the researcher to generate probing questions during each interview based on participants' responses to obtain more information. This method helped gain further clarity and understanding of each participant's perception of how they

perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002).

Establishing Sufficiency of Data

A researcher-designed interview protocol with open-ended questions aligned to the research questions was used to collect sufficient data. The open-ended interview questions allowed each participant to provide more information elaborating on their experiences, attitudes, feelings, and understanding of using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Merriam (2009) explains that using a semistructured interview format gives the researcher the flexibility to gain a deeper perspective of the participants' experiences while collecting specific data from all participants. To further expand each participant's elaboration of their experiences with the teacher evaluation instrument, I used probing questions throughout the interview that elicited more information or clarified the participant's response.

Process for Collecting and Recording Data

Data collection was generated, gathered, and recorded during audiotaped semistructured interviews with each participant. Each interview was completed by phone to address COVID-19 social distancing. Data collection occurred in the least disruptive manner, and consideration of time investment was applied by spending no more than 2 hours of participants' time during the interviews. During each interview, I used audiotaping and note-taking procedures to record the data collected. I used the audiotape recording and note-taking in a journal as a written account of what was heard, seen,

experienced, and thought during each interview to reflect on the participant's interview data.

System for Keeping Track of Data

While collecting data, I simultaneously organized and kept track of data using a research log, cataloging systems, and reflective journals. All data collected during the study, including journal notes and audiotape transcripts from interviews, was kept in a locked file box along with a research log to establish what data has been collected easily. I used file folders to catalog all collected data inside the file box by labeling folders to correspond with the research log. Participants' names were not identified on any data documents. Instead, all participants were assigned a number to ensure their confidentiality. The file box was kept locked in a secure location. I kept a journal to reflect on the data collected during the data analysis and coding process used for developing understandings.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

To gain access to participants, I provided the study district with the study's purpose and all documents to seek approval to proceed with the study based on Walden University guidelines. Once the district approved the study, teachers identified as possible participants were sent an email inviting them to participate in the study. When interested participants responded, I provided them with more specific details of the purpose, protocols, safeguards of confidentiality used during the study, and a request to schedule a date, time, and location for their interview. The study found multiple perspectives, including any conflicting findings or unfavorable perspectives; therefore, to

ensure participants' confidentiality, their names and profiles were changed on all collected data to prevent them from being easily identified. Once the study was completed, participants and other stakeholders were provided with the study's findings, based on Walden University's publication guidelines.

Researcher Role

I am currently the science coordinator for the Desert North District and previously worked in the Desert South District in a similar role. I have had no involvement in teacher evaluation with my current position in the study district and neither in the previous district. My relationship with the teacher participants is that of a coworker as the district science coordinator. Therefore, my relationship with the teacher participants caused no bias during this study as my role was never evaluative. My awareness of the problem resulted from Southwest State's ongoing focus on improving student academic achievement through teacher effectiveness. Southwest State ranks in the lower five percent of states in the U.S. for student academic achievement. The state accepted the opportunity to reform its education practices based on federal laws to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement in 2009. Since then, the state continues to rank in the lower five percent in the nation for student achievement.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process used was to make sense of the data collected. Qualitative studies involve extensive data analysis due to the various types and amounts of data collected. To make sense of the data collected, it encompasses "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people said and what the researcher has seen or read"

(Merriam, 2009, pp. 175-176). To analyze the data, I stored data into a record. I categorized the stored data by checking for themes or findings that answered the research purpose and questions. To categorize and organize the data, I identified segments as data-responsive units to the research questions. These units were then interpreted by searching for recurring regularities and patterns that were coded to form categories.

Coding Procedures

Data collection and data analysis were conducted simultaneously during the study. Data collection included audiotapes and handwritten notes I made during each interview. I organized and transcribed all data collected by audiotape and handwritten notes using Microsoft word program for each participant interview to prepare for the coding process. The transcription process involved reviewing audiotapes and comments of participant interviews while recording any understandings gained (Creswell, 2012). I initially read and explored each transcript to gain a general sense of the data collected. Memos, such as short phrases, ideas, concepts, and hunches generated from reading and exploring the transcripts, were written in the transcripts' margins to be prepared for the coding process. I used thematic analysis with open and axial coding that was completed manually using Microsoft Word without a computer software program. After reading the transcriptions from the data collected and gaining a general sense of the data, I coded the transcripts by hand for the studied phenomenon's descriptions and themes (Creswell, 2012). Once the data were coded, I divided it into text segments labeled with codes relevant to the study. I examined the codes for overlapping and redundancy and then collapsed the codes into broader themes. The coding process involved assigning a

shorthand designation to various aspects of the data, so pieces of data were easily retrieved (Merriam, 2009). I coded and organized the collected data based on schemes relevant to the study. I maintained a list of codes in a Word Document to monitor data analysis's consistency and accuracy. As suggested by Creswell (2012), codes were limited to 25 to 30 categories that I used to identify four overarching themes.

Evidence of Quality

As a strategy to ensure validity and accuracy of the study, I used triangulation of data. To triangulate the data, I used a member check, cross-check, peer review and examination, audit trail, and adequate data collection to ensure validity, accuracy, and credibility. As described in Merriam (2009), triangulation required collecting multiple data sources to compare and cross-check for accuracy, validity, and credibility. For this study, the first strategy I used to ensure quality was cross-checking the interviews' data against the study districts' evaluation instrument. By cross-checking the study findings with the study district's evaluation instrument, I gained a deeper understanding of elementary teachers' perceptions about using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The cross-check looked at how the findings aligned with the participants' perceptions of the evaluation instrument and supported identifying the practice gap.

The second strategy I used was a member check that required the solicitation of feedback on the emergent findings from the participants interviewed. Each participant received a copy of the preliminary analysis and initial theme identification for review (Merriam, 2009). Member checks addressed any possibility of misinterpreting what the

participant said or experienced. As described by Taylor et al., (2016), member checks prevent misinterpretation of findings and help the researcher identify their own possible biases and misunderstanding of what they heard or observed.

The third strategy I used to ensure evidence of quality was conducting a peer review and examination throughout the data collection and analysis process. The peer review and examination involved discussions of the data findings with colleagues while probing the data and results to evaluate whether its plausibility increased the study's credibility and validity (Merriam, 2009). Colleagues selected for the peer review and examination were colleagues who work in education but are not classroom teachers nor evaluators. Selecting people who work in education supported their ability to evaluate the findings efficiently based on their knowledge of teacher evaluation. A minimum of three colleagues were used for peer review and examination. The peer reviewers did not have to work for the study district and included; a college-level educator and two curriculum coordinators. Each peer review and examiner was required to sign a confidentially contract to ensure all discussions and findings are not shared outside of the peer review setting. To ensure the confidentiality of participants during peer review and examination, no personal identifiers of participants were shared on documents reviewed and examined.

I maintained an audit trail throughout the study detailing in a journal how I carried out the study. The journal described how data were collected and interpreted, how categories were identified, and decisions made throughout the study. The journal detailed my reflections and issues encountered as the researcher during the study, which included interactions during data collection, analysis and interpretation, questions, and decisions

made about the data collected. As a final strategy, I engaged in a peer debriefing with a colleague who earned their doctorate in education. The peer debriefing involved the colleague reviewing my audit trail and journal to ensure the validity, transferability, and credibility of the methods used throughout the study.

Conclusion

The problem investigated by this study was how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Literature suggests that teacher evaluation can increase teacher effectiveness by providing them with the necessary information and tools to support their instructional practices' ongoing improvement. This study investigated how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. By investigating how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices, I gained an understanding of how teachers make sense of the teacher evaluation instrument as a means for improving their instructional effectiveness and identified gaps in practices with using the teacher evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide instructional practices. The study may lead to further investigations on how to ensure that teacher evaluation is used to guide teachers to improve their instructional practices and achieve instructional effectiveness.

Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their

instructional practices. To gain insight into the study problem and research questions, I used a qualitative approach that generated, gathered, and recorded data from interviews that were transcribed, interpreted, and cross-checked against a document analysis to understand the study phenomena. Qualitative data analysis is a process of making sense of qualitative data that answers your study problem and research questions using inductive reasoning (Yin, 2017). Analyzing qualitative data involves “preparing and organizing data, exploring and coding the database, describing the findings and forming themes, representing and reporting the findings, interpreting the meaning of the findings and validating the accuracy of the findings” (Creswell, 2012. p. 236). The following details the qualitative data collection and analysis process I used to understand the study problem and research questions.

I collected data that were generated, gathered, and recorded during one-on-one semistructured interviews with participants to understand the study problem and research questions. I began this process by employing purposeful sampling to identify study participants. Purposeful sampling requires identifying specific criteria for participants to meet that directly reflect the study’s purpose (Merriam, 2009). The criteria used to select participants for this study was that they must be employed with the study district for a minimum of seven years with at least three years’ experience using the study district’s current teacher evaluation instrument. The criteria used supported the selection of participants who were able to provide an in-depth understanding of their perception and experience of using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. To gain access to participants, I sought approval from the study

districts to conduct the study. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing school districts' closure throughout the state, the Desert South District could not participate in this study. I gained access to teachers from Desert North District through a letter of cooperation and district site authorization form approved and signed by the district assistant superintendent of educational services. The study district approved documents were then submitted to Walden University's Institutional Review Board for approval to begin data collection (approval number 04-10-20-0463212). Once IRB approved me to start collecting data, I requested a list of teachers that were possible participants from the study district. The study district provided me with a list of 136 teachers' emails who met the study participant criteria.

I invited all 136 teachers by email to participate in the study to ensure that at least four to twelve participants volunteered during the pandemic, as Yin (2017) recommended. An invitation was emailed to potential participants briefly describing the study, their role as a participant, and the next steps for those interested in participating in the study to follow. Of the 136 teachers invited to participate in the study, nine teachers responded with interest by personal email. They were each emailed a consent form detailing the study to their personal email accounts to review before our initial communication by personal phone. I provided more details of the study's purpose, including the participants' and the researcher's role during the initial communication. Each participant scheduled an interview, signed their consent forms, and returned them using personal email accounts to ensure confidentiality. Each teacher that volunteered was assigned a participant number from 1 through 9 with no personal identifiers to

safeguard their confidentiality throughout the study. For example, the teachers who volunteered for the study were identified as Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and so forth to Participant 9. The data collected were from participants that have been employed with the study district ranging from seven to thirty-one years.

Table 1

Study Participants Number of Years Teaching in Study District

Study participant	Number of years employed with study district
1	27
2	16
3	7
4	31
5	11
6	19
7	9
8	27
9	13

I conducted one-on-one semistructured interviews that generated, gathered, and recorded data from each of the nine study participants using the researcher developed interview schedule guide (Appendix B). Merriam (2009) described semistructured interviews as a means for the researcher to collect, gather and generate the desired information to understand the study problem from the participants' viewpoint. Each interview was completed by personal phone to address statewide social distancing mandates during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The interviews were conducted over eight weeks and ranged from one to two hours in length. I chronicled every detail for data analysis by recording each interview using a Homder Digital Voice Recorder (Model TF-10). I recorded hand-written notes of my thoughts during each interview in a study

journal to reflect upon and ensure there was no personal bias during my analysis of the data collected.

I prepared and organized the data generated, gathered, and recorded for data analysis by transcribing each participant's interview. Transcribing the collected data involved listening to each participant's interview audio recording and typing their words verbatim into a Microsoft Word document. After transcribing each interview, I reviewed each transcript against the corresponding recording to ensure transcription accuracy. Once each transcript was validated, I immediately began the data analysis process by exploring the transcripts for each interview question's noticeable text segments. Data analysis involved sifting through interview transcripts to notice similar words and phrases or other indicators related to the research questions (Williams & Moser, 2019). While exploring each transcript, I highlighted the noticeable text segments that addressed the study problem and research questions to gain a good sense of the data collected.

Once all interviews and transcriptions were completed, I used thematic analysis with an open and axial coding process to generate emergent themes from the collected data. Open coding used an inductive approach to ensure the data determined the emergent themes (Saldaña, 2015). I began the open coding process by identifying data segments as phrases and words for each interview question that generated a list of open codes. Generating a list of open codes involved several reviews of each transcript to ensure I realized all-important concepts and patterns with the identified data segments. Once I identified the data segments, I typed them into a Microsoft word document, listing them each under the corresponding interview question (Appendix C). Next, I continued the

coding process by comparing the data segments for each interview question to create an initial open code list. I then compared the open code list for patterns to collapse and reduce them by color-coding them based on similarities and differences. The open codes went through several cycles of collapsing and reducing until I identified 26 open codes. I used the final list of open codes to review each transcript again to ensure they interpreted the data collected accurately. While reviewing transcripts against the open codes, I identified supporting participant quotes. Axial coding was then used to categorize the open codes based on the research questions and refined, integrated, and organized to determine the relationship between the codes and the research questions. The relationships and patterns were used to develop cohesive, meaningful emergent themes related to each research question for the study problem (Appendix D). The following research questions were used to guide the data analysis for the study problem:

1. What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?
2. What are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?

After analyzing the collected data, I identified four emergent themes related to the research questions investigating how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. For the first research question, I inquired about elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. I used this research question to guide my inquiry to understand how teachers' perceptions influence

how they use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. I identified two emergent themes for the first research question. The first emergent theme was that elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation. The first theme emerged from the repetitive pattern of all participants referring to the teacher evaluation instrument as a means for them to plan and prepare for their yearly observation to score effectively to receive the full amount of performance pay for their annual evaluation. The second emergent theme was elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction. The participants perceive the teacher evaluation instrument's instructional practices as performance-based expectations for evaluation purposes only instead of daily expectations for effective instructional classroom practices. The participants further implied that the misinterpretation of using the instructional practices daily prevents them from using them as regular classroom practices.

For the second research question, I inquired about elementary teachers' experience with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices. I used this research question to guide my inquiry to understand how teachers' experience with the evaluation instrument influences their use of the instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. There was a third and fourth theme that emerged from the data analysis for research question 2. The third emergent theme was that elementary teachers view the evaluation instrument's feedback as inadequate for improving their instructional practices. The participants similarly expressed that

administrators' feedback using the evaluation instrument was infrequent and insufficient even during their annual evaluation. Therefore, the lack of adequate, regular feedback deters them from actively performing each instructional practice daily to achieve optimal effectiveness. The lack of adequate feedback further caused them to view the instructional practices as insignificant for daily classroom instruction. The fourth emergent theme was elementary teachers express the need for professional development that aligns the evaluation instrument's interpretation districtwide. All participants suggested by aligning the teacher evaluation instrument's interpretation districtwide among teachers, instructional leaders, school and district administrators would improve the evaluation instrument's use as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Table 2

Summary of Study Problem, Research Questions, and Emergent Themes

PROBLEM: How do elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?		
Research Question 1: <i>What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?</i>	Theme 1	Elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation.
	Theme 2	Elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction.
Research Question 2: <i>What are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?</i>	Theme 3	Elementary teachers view the evaluation instrument's feedback as inadequate for improving their instructional practices
	Theme 4	Elementary teachers express the need for professional development that aligns the evaluation instrument interpretation districtwide.

I further analyzed the four emergent themes by cross-checking against a document analysis of the study district's teacher evaluation instrument. Documents are valuable data sources in qualitative research that help researchers understand the central phenomena (Creswell, 2012). The teacher evaluation instrument was retrieved from the study district's website. Document analysis combined with participant interviews were methods of triangulation to validate findings (Merriam, 2009). Crosschecking the emergent themes against the study district's teacher evaluation instrument lent a better understanding of the phenomena by substantiating the findings from data collected from interviews. The discussion of findings, emergent themes, and document analysis are discussed in the findings.

Findings

During this basic qualitative study, the problem I investigated was to understand how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Research has suggested that a well-designed evaluation instrument can cultivate genuine teaching and learning improvements by developing teachers' instructional practices and effectiveness (Ritter & Barnett, 2016). The Desert North School District implemented a more comprehensively designed teacher evaluation instrument to improve teacher effectiveness, but teachers still struggle to improve their daily instructional practices since its implementation. The purpose of this study is to investigate how elementary teachers' perceptions and experiences influence how they use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Two research questions investigated this study. Research question 1 "What are

elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. And research question 2 "What are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?". The following discusses the findings and emergent themes for both research questions based on the data analysis.

Research Question 1 Results

What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices? Two themes emerged from the data analysis I used to understand how teachers' perceptions influence how they use the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices.

Table 3

Themes Identified From Data Analysis for Research Question 1

Research Question 1	Data source	Themes
What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?	Interviews	Theme 1 Plan and prepare for annual evaluation
		Theme 2 Impractical instructional practices

Theme 1: Plan and Prepare for Annual Evaluation

The first emergent theme was elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide to prepare and plan for their annual evaluation. This theme emerged from participants explaining their understanding of the evaluation's purpose while discussing their perceptions of the evaluation instrument's intent and expectations. All participants explained that they understood the meaning of teacher evaluation is to support their professional growth and development. As demonstrated by participant 1

statement, “I think it’s meant to be used for your growth as a teacher professionally, to celebrate you’re doing well and give you things to work on professionally.” Even though participants explained the purpose of evaluation, their view of the intent and expectation of using the evaluation instrument was different from the purpose of evaluation. The participants view the evaluation instrument’s intent as a means for administrators to measure a teacher’s effectiveness to determine their performance pay or to place poor-performing teachers on improvement plans that can lead to their dismissal. They describe the evaluation instrument’s expectation as a means for them to use as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation performance.

All participants view the evaluation instrument as a tool used by administrators to measure their teaching effectiveness. They further described the instrument as a checklist of performance indicators used to score their effectiveness. As articulated by participant 3, “the evaluation instrument is a checklist of boxes that my principal uses to evaluate my overall knowledge of being an effective teacher.” Participants further shared that administrators use the evaluation instrument once a year during the classroom observation linked to the annual evaluation. As describe by participant 6, “We get one announced observation per year where our administrator schedules a time to come into our class and watch an entire lesson based on the evaluation instrument.” Participants 1, 2, 8, and 9 reflected on how they never receive suggestions for growing and developing their instructional effectiveness during their yearly evaluation. Participant 1 expressed as follows, “Evaluation looks at if you are doing everything right, by making sure you are doing all the expectations on the instrument through the eyes of the administrator in just

one observation, that occurs one time a year and with no plan for growth or development.”

Participants communicated that they view the instrument as a means to score well during their annual evaluation. Their incentive to score well is to receive the maximum amount of performance pay. Therefore, they use the instrument to prepare for their yearly classroom observation to receive the full performance pay amount. As explained by participant 4, “The instrument is used to rate your teaching performance during your announced observation. That score determines how much you will receive in performance pay; if it weren’t attached to performance pay, I would probably never look at it alone use it”. Seven of the nine participants explained that if a teacher does not score well during their annual evaluation, they would be placed on an improvement plan. Participant 3, “...the instrument is specifically used to make sure all of the expectations are present in my instruction during my announced observation. Otherwise, you get a low score and receive no performance pay and get on an improvement plan.” Participants mentioned that continuing teachers are evaluated once a year. A continuing teacher is identified as a teacher who has taught successfully for at least three years in the district. Participants explained that when a continuing teacher is evaluated more than once, they did not meet the instrument’s expectations and were placed on an improvement plan. As described by participant 5, “Observations using the instrument happens once a year for continuing teachers unless you get on an improvement plan, then you get observed again to get off the plan or dismissed.”

The data collected from participant responses based on the combination of the lack of regular classroom observations, incentives for performance pay, and avoidance of punitive actions diminish the instrument's value as professional growth and development tool. Therefore, elementary teachers view the evaluation instrument as a tool for planning and preparing for their yearly observation used for their annual evaluation.

As described by participant 6,

The evaluation instrument is a way to measure teacher performance. If you reach a range of 3 to 4, you get this amount of money; if not, you get less or no money. So there is a lot of pressure on having only one announced observation a year. That's why when it is time for my evaluation, I use the instrument to make sure I get the best score possible.

Participant 9 further elaborated that the evaluation instrument is pretty much seen as a measurement tool for your formal evaluation attached to performance pay. Many teachers only care about their scores and do not use them for their professional growth.

When discussing the change from the previous instrument used in the district to the current instrument, participants expressed concern that even though the instrument itself has improved compared to the previous one, it is still not being used for the intended purpose of evaluation, as explained by participant 7,

The evaluation instrument has changed for the better, with descriptors included for each expectation, but the instrument's use is not clearly defined. Many teachers only see it as useful for scoring effectively on their annual evaluation instead of growing and improving their daily instruction. I must admit that I view

it the same way and never think of using it beyond preparing for my evaluation because there is no expectation to use it for daily instruction in our school culture.

While participant 8 voiced,

Evaluation is meant to help you improve your instruction, but its purpose has become meaningless as it no longer focuses on teaching but the protocol that it must be done annually. So each year, teachers pull out their evaluation instrument and plan for their yearly observation to make sure they are labeled effective, especially since it is attached to performance pay; otherwise, I believe no one would ever look at it. It's just not a priority.

Theme 2: Impractical Instructional Practices

The second emergent theme for research question 1 was elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction. Participants view the instructional practices as not applicable to every content area, too teacher-centered, and time-consuming. Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 conveyed that the instructional practices are challenging to use in every content area because they do not meet the instructional approaches used to teach specific content such as science, social studies, specials, and Sped. As described by participant 6, "The instructional practices on the evaluation instrument are a one-size-fits-all for effective instruction, but it is not; they do not elaborate on how to use each practice beyond the traditional approach."

Participants then expressed that the instructional practices appear teacher-centered without regard for student learning as communicated by participant 2, "The instructional

practices on the evaluation instrument are very teacher-centered, making them not good for inquiry lessons but only direct instruction. This makes them very difficult to apply to every lesson.” Whereas participant 6 further explained, “I use some of the instrument’s practices, but it expects teachers to label everything first, and for my content area, I need to teach oppositely of this. It is just not the reality of my instructional needs.” Participant 8 stated, “The evaluation instrument focuses on teaching structures focused on teacher behaviors and less on student behaviors. It needs to be more blended or use a more detailed explanation of how to blend them into our instruction that demonstrates both teacher and student performance.”

Whereas participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 find the instructional practices are also unrealistic due to time constraints. Therefore, they typically do not use all instructional practices daily, but the ones that are best fit the learning for that day if time permits. Participant 7 explains, “Using all instructional practices is not realistic for teaching each subject within a specific timeframe; many times I have to throw some out mid-lesson due to time running out.” When asked to elaborate further, participant 7 stated, “For example, I may not use cooperative learning for student engagement daily because of time constraints and needing my students to focus on independent practice to mastery a concept.”

During interviews with participants 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9, they expressed the need for support in using the instructional practices more efficiently during their classroom instruction. Participant 6 stated, “there needs to be some clarity in using these practices with various instructional approaches used in different contents.” Whereas participant 8

exclaimed, “I’m more concerned with my students’ performance. There are no directions or suggestions on the evaluation instrument for improving or adjusting the practices to fit the instructional needs of every classroom.” Participant 9 described the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument as “...so general and nonspecific without guiding a teacher on how to use, how to improve or become more effective with each practice.” And participant 2 stated, “Maybe the instructional practices can be used for more than direct instruction, but it’s unknown in our district.”

Theme 1 and 2 demonstrate why researchers assert that an evaluation instrument primary use should not be evaluative but as a tool to identify specific professional development and growth needs for each teacher’s ongoing improvement of their instructional practices throughout the school year and their career (Donaldson et al., 2016; Gilles, 2017; Smylie, 2014; van Soelen et al., 2016). This entails teachers and administrators understanding how to use the evaluation instrument to grow poor-performing teachers and continuously develop the best-performing teachers’.

Research Question 2 Findings

What are elementary teachers’ experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices? Two themes emerged from the data analysis I used to understand how elementary teachers’ experience with interpreting the evaluation instrument influences their use of it as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Table 4*Themes Identified From Data Analysis for Research Question 2*

Research Question 2	Data source		Themes
What are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?	Interviews	Theme 3	Inadequate Feedback
		Theme 4	Professional Development

Theme 3: Inadequate Feedback

The third emergent theme was that elementary teachers view the feedback received as inadequate for improving their instructional practices. Elementary teachers experience the evaluation instrument's feedback as few, infrequent, and nonprescriptive of their professional growth and development. Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 expressed that the feedback they receive based on the evaluation instrument comes once a year during their announced observation. As described by participant 1, "Feedback comes once a year for me during my yearly observation, which is the only time an administrator visits my classroom." Participant 7 stated that "Feedback is basically only received during our yearly observation and rarely from walkthroughs. I assume you only receive feedback from walkthroughs if something is wrong with your instruction." Where participant 7 further stated that "...but walkthroughs are just as rare as feedback." And participant 3 expressed that "Sometimes we have pop-ins from our principals associated with our evaluation but never have I received any feedback from those pop-ins."

All participants described the feedback as nonprescriptive because it is typically given as a score for each performance expectation on the evaluation instrument. As

described by participant 1, "...feedback is given as a score identifying my effectiveness rating in each performance category with no plan or recommendation for my professional growth." In addition to the scores, the feedback received identifies an area of reinforcement, the highest score, and an area of refinement, the lowest score, as explained by participant 5, "Feedback only identifies your effectiveness score with one area of reinforcement and one area of refinement. It does not illustrate how you can improve in the areas of weakness."

Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 voiced concerns about whether their administrators' can effectively give feedback that would improve instructional practices. Participant 8 explained, "I find the feedback to be inorganic because it is given without true thought or evidence using the evaluation instrument, but to meet the protocol for evaluators to identify one area of reinforcement and one area of refinement...without any explanation of how to use the feedback to improve my instruction." Some participants experience blanket feedback, in which the principal focuses on one instructional practice during the entire school year. As explained by participant 2, "...many times principals get stuck on one area of instruction of the evaluation instrument and gives the same feedback to every teacher on campus." Participant 2 further elaborated, "It comes off as though the principals can't understand anything else to give feedback on and just gave it to satisfy the expectation that they provide feedback using the instrument during evaluation." This gives teachers the perception that principals are incapable of providing adequate, valuable feedback that is prescriptive for the individual teacher to improve their instruction.

Participants expanded on their concerns with their administrators' ability to give adequate feedback due to post-evaluation conferences not providing them with the needed dialogue to understand "why" or "why they are not" effectively implementing an instructional practice on the evaluation instrument. As described by participant 1 experience, "I will review the instrument and ask my administrator how do I improve from there but even then it is still unclear to me because they give me answers that do not clearly state how to improve." A similar experience was described by participant 3, "...during my post-conference, I have the opportunity to have a dialogue with my principal to ask questions and get the information needed to work on my professional growth, but still, I have no take-away on how to improve my instructional practices." Participant 5 expanded on this concern, stating, "I believe it is because the principals are not very well-versed with the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument preventing them from having the dialogue. They need to direct us on improving the areas identifies."

All participants implied the desire for constructive feedback to improve their classroom instruction but view the feedback as lacking details for their professional growth. They describe the feedback as limited to the language of the evaluation instrument and lacking support for improvement. Participant 7 stated, "Feedback is provided based on the rubric language, but it is limited to just that, the language on the rubric and not translated outside of the language on the rubric for a deeper understanding of how I can improve in a specific area." While participant 9 stated that "feedback does

not come with continued support for improving my instructional practices, so how do you know if you are improving.”

Theme 4: Professional Development

The fourth emergent theme for research question 2 was that elementary teachers express the need for professional development aligning the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. Seven out of nine participants expressed a concern that there is a misalignment of interpreting the district’s evaluation instrument. As stated by participant 1, “Everybody interprets the evaluation instrument differently; that is the problem.” Misinterpretation of the instrument causes varying understanding of how to implement the instructional practices. Participant 9 explains, “There is a need to understand how the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument looks, feels and sounds like in every classroom...this affects how and if they are used during instruction.”

The misaligned interpretation of the evaluation instrument’s instructional practices differs from one person to another, including the teacher to principal and schools to the district office. As mentioned by participant 3, “I find the evaluation instrument as unclear of what are the expectations for each instructional practice, especially since each evaluator I have worked with interprets them differently from teachers and other administrators in our district.” Some participants have experienced the misinterpretation of the evaluation instrument with the feedback received during their evaluation. As exclaimed by participant 5, “Principals misinterpret the instructional practices often with the feedback they provide using the evaluation instrument, causing a great gap in the understanding the instructional practices on the instrument.”

Based on participants 1, 3, 7, and 8 responses, not having an aligned understanding of the evaluation instrument's interpretation cause both teachers and administrators to misinterpret its instructional practices to improve instruction.

Participant 3 explains, "Misinterpretation of the instrument causes a lot of confusion on how to interpret the descriptors and use them to improve our effectiveness. Because they are not clear, nor specific for a linear understanding of what each practice looks like in each classroom." And participant 8 claimed, "Administrators do not communicate with teachers how to interpret the evaluation so they can use the instructional practices effectively to help them grow professionally." While participant 7 stated, "Administrators and teachers are incapable of breaking down how each instructional practice on the instrument looks in each classroom." Conversely, the misalignment of interpreting the evaluation instrument has prevented teachers from using the evaluation instrument successfully for guiding their instructional practices. Participant 1 described their experience, "This makes it difficult to use the evaluation instrument as a guide for my instructional practice because I think I may be doing a certain practice daily, but to them, I may not be doing it correctly or not at all."

All participants implied that if everyone has the same meaning and understanding of how to interpret and use the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices, it will help establish the real purpose of evaluation. Participants 1, 6, 7, and 9 directly stated a need for professional development aligning everyone's interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. The professional development needs to define how each instructional practice is used and improved upon in the classroom. Participant 7

stated, “There is a need to have some sort of training to address this misalignment of the interpretation of the evaluation instrument.” Whereas participant 6 said, “It would be better if the district provided regular training as they did a couple of years back before the new instrument was used.” When participant 6 was asked to elaborate further. Participant 6 explained, “It was the only training since we started the use of the instrument. With new administrators and teachers, the original interpretation of the evaluation instrument has been lost, causing each teacher to figure it out by a learn by failure process based on their evaluation results, which align with their administrators’ interpretation misinterpretation.”

By aligning the evaluation instrument’s interpretation districtwide, it can lead to improved feedback that is adequate for teachers to use the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices. Also, provide a districtwide understanding of how to use the instrument to guide their instructional practices. Marzano’s recommendation echoes that a comprehensive teacher evaluation instrument must offer teachers specific ongoing feedback that leads to personalized professional growth and development that supports their continued instructional improvement at all district levels. Including teachers, school leaders, instructional coaches, mentor teachers, and central office administrations for improving teacher effectiveness (Marzano, 2017a; Woulfin & Rigby, 2017).

Cross-Check of Findings to Teacher Evaluation Instrument

After analyzing the data, I completed a cross-check of the findings and emergent themes against the study district’s teacher evaluation instrument. Examining and cross-

checking the teacher evaluation instrument against the findings and emergent themes aided the understanding gained from the data analysis of elementary teachers' perceptions of the evaluation instrument. In examining the evaluation instrument, the first page appears as a checklist of five performance categories listing specific instructional practices for each category. The performance categories include; Category I: Planning and Preparation, Category II: Implementation of Instruction, Category III: Learning Environment, Category IV: Teacher Responsibility, and Category V: Student Growth, whereas student growth aligns to district and state testing. There are boxes beside each instructional practice for the observer to record a score ranging from one through four. Whereas a score of one is ineffective, two is developing, three is effective, and four is highly effective. The calculation of an average score is made to identify a final teaching effectiveness rating. At the bottom of the page, the evaluator has to identify a reinforcement objective and a refinement objective as feedback for teachers to use for their professional growth and development. As the evaluation instrument continues on pages 2-11, it outlines each performance category's instructional practices with observable teacher behaviors as a rubric. Each instructional practice has a box used by the evaluator to identify a score and take observation notes of each instructional practice's performance. The following pages 12-16 provide definitions and critical attributes that define each instructional practice.

Procedure details for an evaluation cycle are found on page 17. The procedures outline expectations for administrators to conduct a staff meeting at the beginning of the school year for reviewing the evaluation instrument and the evaluation cycle process for

evaluating both probationary teachers and continuing teachers. Probationary teachers have taught in the district for less than three years, while continuing teachers have taught a minimum of three successful years in the school district. The evaluation instrument requires a probationary-teacher to receive a summative evaluation score based on at least two unannounced and two announced classroom observations. In contrast, recommending continuing-teachers receive a summative score based on a minimum of two unannounced and one announced observations per year.

The instrument suggests coaching conferences are used to guide teachers to self-analyze the lesson observed. During the coaching conference, the administrator discusses the teacher's score, the reinforcement, and the refinement within five instructional days after the classroom observation. On page 18 of the evaluation instrument, there is a lesson plan analysis for principals to rate teachers' written lesson plans as either; well done (+), partially correct (+/-), or needs refinement (-). The final pages explain the procedures for placing poor-performing teachers on improvement plans and performance pay distribution for effective teachers.

The cross-check of the evaluation instrument with the emergent themes and findings supports the perceptions of elementary teachers' misinterpretation of how to use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Theme 1: teachers perceive the instrument as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation. The instrument describes the process for evaluators to conduct an evaluation. Still, it does not explain how the instrument is used for the continuous improvement of a teacher's instructional practices. The evaluation instrument is posed as a method for

evaluators to measure a teacher's effectiveness. Lending itself to the first emerged theme for this study, teachers perceive the instrument as a guide for them to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation. For an evaluation instrument to serve its intended purpose, there needs to be a clear direction for teachers to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices that lead to their professional growth and development. As recommended by Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model, "teacher evaluation must establish a methodology that supports teacher growth toward instructional effectiveness while they make the necessary instructional shifts that sustain rigorous standards-based classroom that supports teaching and learning" (Carbaugh, 2018, p.4). The study district's evaluation instrument details how administrators use the instrument to rate teacher effectiveness. Still, there is no guidance for how teachers should use it as a professional growth tool to reflect and continuously approve upon their instructional practices.

Emergent theme 2 was that elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction. Teachers need to view the instructional practices as valuable for effective teaching and learning to occur in their classroom, which entails teachers having a deep meaning and understanding of using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their daily instructional practices (Marzano & Toth, 2013). The evaluation instrument's performance categories align with Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model suggested performance domains but lacks details that support understanding of how to implement the instructional practices effectively during daily instruction. According to Marzano (2017b), evaluation

instruments must have a comprehensive and specific model using a development scale that supports teacher understanding of effective teaching related to professional growth and improves instructional effectiveness. While the instrument identifies best instructional practices, it does not define how each instructional practice is adaptable to all content areas.

The third emergent theme was elementary teachers view the evaluation instrument's feedback as inadequate for improving their instructional practices. Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model recommends that the founding principle for improving a teacher's performance is with clear goals and expert feedback that provides specific information on how to improve their instructional practices (Carbaugh, 2018; Marzano, 2017b). The findings reveal that this recommendation is not applied using the evaluation instrument. The evaluation instrument does require evaluators to provide feedback identifying an area of reinforcement and an area of refinement. Still, the expectations for applying this feedback are not explained with actionable goals for teachers to improve their instructional practices. Teachers view the feedback they receive from the evaluation instrument as few and infrequent due to being given only during their yearly classroom observation. The instrument does require the evaluator to perform a minimum of two unannounced observations and one announced observation per year for continuing teachers. Even though participants' experience accounts that feedback is only offered during the classroom observation linked to their annual evaluation. Evaluators' offer of feedback once a year does not align with the recommendation from the conceptual framework of Marzano. Marzano's framework recommends that data

collection of teaching practices are gathered from various sources at multiple points of time throughout the year to support each teacher's ongoing professional growth (Carbaugh, 2018; Marzano, 2017a; Marzano, 2017b).

The fourth emerged theme was that elementary teachers express the need for professional development aligning the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. The evaluation instrument directs administrators to review the evaluation process yearly with their staff. Still, it does not guide teachers or administrators to use the instrument for their professional growth and development throughout the year. The conceptual framework of Marzano suggests providing acknowledgments and rewards for a teacher's growth that includes both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for improving their instructional practices. Marzano recommends teachers identify instructional practices on the evaluation instrument to improve on and monitor their progress throughout the school year with their evaluator's support. When teachers identify an instructional practice to focus on yearly with their evaluator, it creates intrinsic rewards (Marzano, 2017a). The district does reward teachers monetarily for being effective as an extrinsic reward based on their annual evaluation. There is no provision for intrinsic rewards for teachers using the evaluation instrument to continuously work toward their growth and improvement of instructional practices throughout the school year.

As stated by participant 8,

We are never acknowledged for our growth. There is never any applause for improvement. Kind of like, if we don't applaud our student growth, they don't care; the same happens with teachers. That's why it is only viewed as a way to be

labeled effective to get your performance pay and not as a way to grow professionally.

Therefore, there is a need to interpret and understand the common language of effective instruction that steers the dialogue between the teacher and their evaluator for using the evaluation instrument to support their professional growth. For this to be achieved, both teachers and administrators need to be trained on how to use the evaluation instrument effectively as a guide to improve instructional practices continuously throughout the school year (Marzano, 2017a).

Discrepant Cases

Patton (2002) describes a case that does not suit the emergent patterns or themes as discrepant cases. It is essential to identify discrepant cases and salient data to understand the study phenomenon better. In my analysis of the collected data, I kept an open mind, not overlooking possible discrepant cases. The data collected were consistent with the emergent themes, and no discrepant cases or salient data were identified.

Evidence of Quality

During the generation, gathering, and recording of data, several steps were employed to guarantee the validity, accuracy, and credibility of the data collection process (Merriam, 2009). At the beginning of each interview to ensure validity, I reassured each participant's confidence that their responses are confidential and should reflect their perceptions and experiences rather than any possible bias from their peers or leaders. By audio recording each interview, I checked for the accuracy of my interpretation of participants' responses. Checking my interpretation accuracy involved

reviewing each audio recording and keeping a study journal with notes from each interview that would reflect my reactions that could bias my interpretation of any participants' responses. During each interview, I also paraphrased the participants' responses to ensure credibility. If a participant found that my paraphrasing did not interpret what they were expressing, I would ask for clarification of their response. I increased the validity, accuracy, and credibility of the data collected by employing these methods during each participant's interview.

I further safeguarded quality evidence using triangulation methods that confirmed findings by conducting member checks, a cross-check, peer review and examination, and peer debriefing. Member checks involved providing each participant with a summary of the data collected from their interview to ensure that the interpretation of their responses represented their perceptions and experiences. Once data was generated, gathered, and recorded from each interview, the participant received a copy of their interview transcripts, and interpretations as a preliminary data analysis member check via personal email. Participants were each given the opportunity to review and respond to their interview transcript and preliminary data analysis with any concerns. The member check confirmed that their responses accurately represented their perceptions, interpretations, and experiences for each question response preventing any possible misinterpretations of what a participant said or experienced while ensuring evidence of quality and credibility (Taylor et al., 2016).

A cross-check of documents is a triangulation method of data collection that improves quality evidence (Merriam, 2009). I conducted a cross-check that examined the

findings and emergent themes to the district's evaluation instrument document. As explained by Merriam (2009), "what someone tells you in an interview can be checked against what you observe on-site or what you read about in documents relevant to the phenomenon of interest" (p. 216). Cross-checking the district's teacher evaluation instrument to the findings and emergent themes supported identifying gaps in practice or misconceptions between the teacher evaluation instrument and how elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The peer review and examination was performed with three non-classroom educators who scanned the data to assess whether the findings were plausible to ensure evidence of quality and credibility. Each peer reviewer signed a confidentiality agreement to guarantee that all data discussions were not shared outside of the peer review setting. In addition to the peer review, a peer debriefing was completed. The peer debriefing involved a colleague that earned their doctorate in 2016. During the peer debriefing, we reviewed my audit trail detailing how I collected data, generated categories, and made decisions throughout my research.

Using member checks, cross-check, peer review and examination, and peer debriefing improved the plausibility and increased my study's credibility and validity (Merriam, 2009). I ensured the study's transferability and dependability by recording the study district's logistics and demographics with the study's methodology details. Using this process for collecting data supports my confidence in the evidence of quality for the data collection and study findings.

Summary

This basic qualitative study investigated how elementary teachers perceive an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. There were two research questions used to collect data that sought an understanding of this phenomena. The first research question sought to understand elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. For research question one, I collected and analyzed data that revealed that elementary teachers understand that the purpose of teacher evaluation is to support their professional growth and development. However, they perceive the evaluation instrument as a tool used during their annual evaluation by administrators to measure their teaching effectiveness and determine whether they will receive performance pay or be placed on an improvement plan for possible dismissal. Therefore, they perceive their use of an evaluation instrument is to "plan and prepare" for their scheduled classroom observation linked to annual evaluation.

Additionally, participants interpret the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument as impractical for daily instruction. Therefore, they only use the instructional practices during their yearly classroom observation to guarantee they receive the highest performance pay amount and avoid placement on an improvement plan that could result in their dismissal. Researchers recommend an evaluation instrument should not be used primarily as evaluative but as a valuable tool for guiding the professional growth and development of a teacher's instructional practices (Donaldson et al., 2016; Gilles, 2017; Pennington, 2017; van Soelen et al., 2016). When an evaluation instrument is perceived

as a valuable tool for improving a teacher's effectiveness, it will increase teachers' willingness to apply the instructional practices every day. For this to occur, it requires the teacher and evaluator to identify instructional practices from the evaluation instrument, based on evidence, to improve and monitor their progress for applying the instructional practices in their classrooms throughout the year (Marzano, 2017a). As described by Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model, this requires that an evaluation instrument details observable instructional practices with specific evidence of instructional effectiveness for informing teachers as opposed to the constructivist models that determine scores based on lesson scripting and employing sizeable checklist (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

Evaluation needs to be done collaboratively with evidence-based dialogue between the teacher and administrator, using the evaluation instrument as a guide for improving the teacher's instructional practice as ongoing throughout the year. Although there is an extrinsic monetary reward provided to teachers for being labeled as instructional effective, there is an absence of intrinsic reward that comes from acknowledging the teacher's professional growth for improving their instructional practices throughout the school year. When teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a valuable tool for their professional growth and development, it will cultivate their willingness to use it as a guide for their daily instructional practices resulting in improved teacher effectiveness (Marzano, 2017a).

For research question two, "what are elementary teachers' experiences with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?" data

analysis I found that teachers view the feedback received from the evaluation instrument as inadequate. Feedback is considered inadequate due to it being received infrequently and nonprescriptive for supporting their professional growth. The lack of adequate feedback causes teachers to recognize the need for professional development aligning the evaluation instrument interpretation districtwide. Teachers feel if everyone, including teachers, administrators, and the district office, has the same interpretation, it will help every teacher understand how to use the instrument to guide the continuous improvement of their instructional practices. Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model recommends that every teacher receive feedback from various data sources collected using the instrument about their teaching practices during multiple points of time throughout the school year (Marzano & Toth, 2013). Therefore, feedback needs to be specific, rigorous, and comprehensive information gathered from multiple observations using the evaluation instrument that informs teachers of how to improve their instructional practices by outlining action steps that support a teacher's growth and development. For a teacher evaluation instrument to be used intentionally, it must be accompanied by useful feedback. The feedback should be frequent and links teachers to professional development opportunities in which they can collaborate with knowledgeable peers, seek professional learning, and reflect on their teaching practices of how they can improve their instructional effectiveness (Brookhart & Moss, 2015; Lazarev et al., 2014; Tefvik & Ozdem, 2017; Tuytens & Devos, 2017).

Teachers expressed the need for professional development that aligns interpretation and understanding of the evaluation instrument districtwide. Many times

both school leaders and teachers lack the skills and knowledge of how to use the evaluation instrument as a tool to guide teachers toward professional growth (Bridich, 2016; Derrington, 2014; Gitomer et al., 2014). By aligning everyone's understanding and interpretation of the evaluation instrument, it creates meaning and common language detailing how to effectively implement the classroom's instructional practices and use the instrument to identify the actionable professional growth needs.

The cross-check of the instrument to the findings gained additional understandings of teachers' perceptions. Cross-checking the instrument against the findings reinforces the need for professional development districtwide. Professional development can expand the knowledge and skills of using the instrument to improve a teacher's instructional practices continuously. Researchers suggest that adequate training opportunities for both evaluators and teachers ensure evaluators are knowledgeable and skilled at supporting teachers with strengthening their instructional practices, and teachers are equipped with meaning and understanding for using the instrument to improve their instructional practices (Derrington & Kirk, 2017; Ford, 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Tuytens & Devos, 2017).

In conclusion, the purpose of the basic qualitative study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. I conducted one-on-one semistructured interviews with nine elementary teachers from the Desert North School District in Southwest State. In doing so, I gained an in-depth understanding of teachers' perceptions and experience with using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The

findings identified four themes as follows: elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation; elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction; elementary teachers view the feedback received from the evaluation instrument as inadequate for improving their instructional practices; elementary teachers express the need for professional development aligning the interpretation of evaluation instrument districtwide.

Therefore, a 3-day professional development was created as the project deliverable for this study. The 3-day professional development was designed based on the study's findings, the conceptual framework of Marazano's focused teacher evaluation model, and a literature review focused on cultivating teachers' capacity and competency using an evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool. The proposed project deliverable for a 3-day professional development will benefit both teachers' and administrators' by aligning their interpretation and understanding of how to use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. In section 3, I describe the project deliverable, including the purpose, goals, and benefits gained from the professional development found in Appendix A. In section 4, I describe my reflections and conclusions as the researcher and developer of the project.

Section 3: The Project

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The study was conducted in the Desert North School District in Southwest State. I collected and analyzed data from nine semistructured one-on-one interviews with teachers in the study district. The findings indicated the need for professional development. Specifically, the fourth emergent theme indicated the need for professional development that aligns with the evaluation instrument's interpretation districtwide.

In line with Haemer et al. (2017) professional development is valued for organizations to create change and develop human capital competencies in the workplace. This involves learning in the workplace that stimulates the development of a person's capacity and competency through formal and informal learning opportunities that promote the psychological and external interactional processes. Research indicated that collaborative peer learning promotes and sustains staff's continued professional growth and development within an education system (Pedersen, 2017). When professional development is designed using three learning strategies (intrinsic and extrinsic reflection, seeking help from others, and trial and error), it leads to positive change in teachers' capacity and competency to be more effectively skilled educators (Haemer et al., 2017; Kraft & Papay, 2014).

I designed a 3-day professional development plan that includes formal and informal learning opportunities with ongoing collaborative support that cultivates

elementary teachers' capacity and competency to use an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Section 3 provides the professional development plan's description, goals, rationale, literature review, project evaluation plan, and project implications.

Project Description and Goals

The deliverable project is a 3-day professional development plan (see Appendix A) based on the study findings and four emergent themes. Findings indicated a need to align the teacher evaluation instrument's interpretation districtwide to promote its purpose to develop effective teachers in every classroom. To achieve this requires generating meaning and understanding for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide teachers' daily instructional practices. The professional development plan is an initial 3-day formal learning event with continued support throughout the school year as ongoing informal collaborative support. The 3-day professional development plan's purpose is to provide elementary teachers with learning opportunities that cultivate their capacity and develop their competency for using the teacher evaluation instrument as a formative tool that guides their instructional practices. The professional development (PD) plan was created to meet the following goals:

1. Cultivate teacher capacity to interpret the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.
2. Develop teacher competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The PD plan begins with a 3-day formal professional learning period for teachers to intrinsically and extrinsically reflect on the teacher evaluation instrument and the instrument's instructional practices' expectations. The initial 3-day PD's objective is to produce a professional learning outcome that motivates participants to reflect on and monitor their instructional practices using the evaluation instrument. The PD plan also provides teachers with continuous support and ongoing learning opportunities throughout the school year. The ongoing learning opportunities occur as teachers seek help from their peers through collaboration that allows them to practice and receive feedback using the evaluation instrument through trial and error. The PD plan's use of collaborative learning opportunities within and outside of the formal PD setting will encourage the evaluation instrument's continued use as a professional growth tool and support PD goals.

The 3-day PD project is titled Reimagining Evaluation as a Professional Growth Tool. This title reflects the need for elementary teachers to perceive the teacher evaluation instrument as a formative tool used for their professional growth and development as opposed to a mechanism for their evaluator to measure their yearly effectiveness. Day 1 and Day 2 of the PD have the same learning objective: participants will engage in professional learning activities to reflect, redefine, and reinterpret the purpose, language, and use of the district evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices. During these 2 days, participants will collaboratively explore the domains and instructional practices found on the evaluation instrument to develop a deeper understanding of how to apply them within their daily classroom instruction. On

Day 3, participants will engage in activities that demonstrate strategies for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool. Participants will practice skills to monitor and support their professional growth by using the evaluation instrument to guide their daily instructional practices. The PowerPoint presentations are created to conduct each PD day's daily activities, supporting participants' professional learning experiences. The PD plan is designed to provide teachers with learning experiences that support their growth and development to become more instructionally effective by utilizing the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Rationale

This basic qualitative study addressed how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Current accountability policies in the United States require the implementation of multiple-measure evaluation systems designed to improve teaching practices and student learning (Grissom & Youngs, 2016; Huber & Skedsmo, 2016; Paufler & Sloat, 2020). The two primary evaluation goals are teacher accountability and development (Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Shah et al., 2018; Wieczorek et al., 2019). However, researchers found that pushback from evaluation by teachers is centered on their perception of its use as a measure to make personnel decisions for pay, promotion, and dismissal (Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Donahue & Vogel, 2018; Ford, 2018; Sartain & Steinberg, 2016). Teacher development appears to be missing from teachers' experience using a more comprehensive evaluation instrument for their professional growth. Therefore, there is a need for a different approach that motivates teachers' professional

growth and development beyond reward and sanctions to using evaluation to improve their instructional practices (Feedback, 2017; Garver, 2019; Kim et al., 2019).

Research has indicated three strategies that can demonstrate how evaluation improves teachers' growth and development of their instructional practices: (a) clear communication that evaluation is a tool for teacher development, (b) support that makes a connection between evaluation and development, and (c) implementation and monitoring informed and actionable feedback used to improve instructional practices (Connally & Tooley, 2016). The strategies require building teacher capacity and competency to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool that improves the teaching and learning in their classrooms (Karunanayaka & Naidu, 2018; Nolen, 2019; Shirrell et al., 2019).

Furthermore, research has indicated that PD that is done effectively as a coherent, rigorous, and ongoing learning experience will improve teaching practices (Abu-Tineh & Sadiq, 2018; Randel et al., 2016; Wood et al., 2016).

The data collected and analyzed for the current study yielded four emergent themes: (a) elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide used to plan and prepare for their announced observation, (b) elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction, (c) elementary teachers view the feedback from the evaluation instrument as inadequate, and (d) elementary teachers express the need for PD that aligns the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. These four emergent themes, the cross-check of the evaluation instrument, and the literature review indicated the need for a PD plan as my

project deliverable. The PD plan may build teacher capacity and competency for using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Review of the Literature

After completing my data collection and analysis for my study addressing how elementary teachers perceive using an evaluation instrument as a formative guide for their instructional practices, I determined that PD was beneficial for the study district. Using Google Scholar, Academic Complete, Sage Journals, Taylor and Francis, ERIC, and Education Source Complete as search engines, I searched for articles using the following terms to write a literature review related to my findings: *professional development, professional development that improve teaching practices, transformation of evaluation practices, teacher capacity, and teacher competency.*

Transforming Evaluation Practices

Transformational change has been described as “a new premise that guides new thoughts and actions in which underlying assumptions shift from an emphasis on external rewards and consequences to intrinsic meaning and transformation” (Frontier & Mielke, 2016, p. 26). Current study findings indicated a need to transform teachers’ perceptions and attitudes of the evaluation instrument from rating their performance to receive extrinsic rewards such as performance pay toward a formative tool to improve their instructional practices. Transforming teachers’ perceptions and attitudes about the purpose and use of the evaluation instrument may achieve its real purpose and goal as a professional growth tool. Achieving transformational change starts with adjusting the underlying perceptions and beliefs of those involved regarding the basis for a system so

they can develop the skills needed to act with expertise and productivity within that system (Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Holzberg et al., 2018; Lee & Lee, 2018).

Researchers have noted that many districts in the process of implementing a more comprehensive evaluation instrument failed to transform the perceptions and behaviors of how the instrument is used (Neumerski et al., 2018; Nolen, 2019; Paufler & Sloat, 2020; Skedsmo & Huber, 2018). Before implementing more comprehensive evaluation instruments as the framework for evaluation, both school leaders and teachers viewed evaluation instruments as tools used solely by evaluators to measure teacher satisfaction for making organizational decisions such as teacher retention. To transform these perceptions and beliefs, instructional leaders and teachers need to make shifts from the underlying strategy and process of previous evaluation instruments toward the required beliefs and attitudes that will transform behaviors of using an instrument for its intended purpose (Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Lenhoff et al., 2018; Mette et al., 2017; Trehan & Paul, 2014). Offering coherent, rigorous, and ongoing PD results in a new process that empowers teachers to be encouraged and self-motivated to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide and improve their instructional practices. Providing PD that is coherent, rigorous, and ongoing will provide teachers with the opportunities needed to build their capacity and competency of using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices (Cheon et al., 2018; Guskey, 2017; Shirrell et al., 2019).

Building Teacher Capacity and Competency

Although teacher evaluation instruments have evolved to provide teachers with the needed information to guide and improve their instructional practices, researchers have found that teachers need to build their capacity and competency of how to use the instrument as a professional growth tool (Connally & Tooley, 2016; Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Karunanayaka & Naidu, 2018; Skedsmo & Huber, 2018). To build both teachers' capacity and competency, the evaluation instrument begins by transforming their perceptions and understandings of the evaluation instrument's purpose and premise and then developing their capacity and competency with using it.

The purpose and premise for using a more comprehensive evaluation instrument are to measure and inform teachers' professional growth and development. Although districts are implementing more comprehensive evaluation instruments, teachers still maintain the same beliefs from the previous less informative evaluation instruments used by evaluators to rate their instructional performance (Connally & Tooley, 2016; Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Jones & Bergin, 2019). Transforming this belief may lend itself to developing teacher capacity and competency to use the evaluation instruments as a powerful tool to make instructional decisions about their teaching practices that improve their instructional effectiveness. To build teachers' capacity means cultivating their beliefs to influence their power to learn or regain knowledge that gives them the potential for development, growth, or accomplishment (Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Kim et al., 2019; Wayne et al., 2018). Building teacher capacity requires them to gain new beliefs that empower them to act on these beliefs. Building teacher capacity involves rigorous

training opportunities that articulate the evaluation instrument's intent and purpose while removing previous beliefs that act as a barrier for developing the competence to use the instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Once teacher capacity has been cultivated, they need to develop their competency, which are the skills and behaviors required to be experts that are self-motivated to use the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices (Connally & Tooley, 2016; Ford et al., 2018; Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Smith et al., 2020). Research has identified five standard components for any discipline system to support expertise and competence; 1) shared language of practice, 2) opportunities for feedback and deliberate practice, 3) opportunities to observe and discuss expertise, 4) clear criteria and plan for success and 5) recognition of status as one makes incremental progress toward expert performance (Frontier & Mielke, 2016, p. 17). When these components are present, teachers will have the capacity and competency to engage in meaningful reflection to act on their practices. To cultivate teacher capacity and competency using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices involves rigorous ongoing teacher professional development and support systems.

Evaluation Instrument as a Professional Growth Tool

Modern-day evaluation instruments are designed to drive instructional improvement by informing teachers of their practices that link them to professional development (Archer et al., 2017; Danielson, 2015b; Steinberg & Garrett, 2016; van der Lans et al., 2016). Unfortunately, even the best-planned and most promising policy initiative can become unsuccessful due to how those involved interpret it (Holloway et

al., 2017; Lee & Lee, 2018; Von der Embse et al., 2017). To engage teachers with using the evaluation instrument to lead to positive changes in their instructional practices, they must perceive the instrument's full value and purpose as a tool that supports their ongoing professional growth and development. Building teacher capacity and competency with using an evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool begin with the communication between school leaders and teachers that encourage teachers' attitude and view of the legitimacy of the evaluation instrument as a useful tool for instructional improvement (Connally & Tooley, 2016; Donahue & Vogel, 2018; Kim et al., 2019). Communicating the evaluation instrument's value and purpose can change teachers' perception of the evaluation instrument as merely a rating mechanism used by evaluators. Furthermore, teachers will view an evaluation instrument as a tool for professional growth and development while adjusting their behavior to use it as an ongoing means to improve their instructional practices. Establishing the legitimacy of the evaluation instrument will likely motivate teachers to change their behaviors voluntarily. That will result in them using the instrument to reflect and improve their instructional practices instead of viewing it as a tool used to receive an extrinsic reward or avoid punitive actions (Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Garver, 2019; Kim et al., 2019; Seymour & Garrison, 2016).

Unfortunately, even the best-designed evaluation instruments created in the world may produce accurate ratings based on teaching performance but is not likely to develop expert teachers (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016; Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Grissom et al., 2017; Grissom & Youngs, 2016; Koedel et al., 2017). Developing expert teachers

involves removing all fallacies of the evaluation instrument and developing teacher capacity and competency. Research has identified five fallacies that need to be addressed for teachers to build their capacity and competency with using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool; 1) evaluation elicits expert teaching, 2) comprehensive teaching frameworks are used exclusively by administrators for purposes of evaluation, 3) teachers fail to improve because they lack the incentive or consequence to do so, 4) evaluators are the only source of meaningful feedback and can provide enough to help teachers improve, and 5) systems of evaluation are a catalyst for teachers to establish meaningful improvement goals (Frontier & Mielke, 2016, p 18.). Whereas, Marzano has identified five strategies that develop teacher expertise and address the fallacy of using the evaluation instrument for instructional growth and improvement; 1) a well-articulated knowledge-based and shared language for teaching, 2) opportunities for focused feedback and deliberate practice, 3) opportunities to observe and discuss expertise, 4) clear criteria and plan for success and 5) recognition of status on the pathway toward expertise (Frontier & Mielke, 2016). Addressing the teacher evaluation instrument's fallacies and using Marzano's strategies leads to developing expert teachers with the capacity and competence to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Developing teachers' capacity and competency requires them to acquire structured methods they can practice in isolation and with colleagues that support their professional growth and development (Özdemir, 2020; Ratminingsih et al., 2017; Scavette & Johnson, 2016; Smith et al., 2020). These methods must address the fallacies

of the evaluation system's use of the instrument and develop teachers' behavior to become actively engaged in their ongoing professional growth. The following are understandings and methods that are necessities for teachers to build their capacity and become competent with using the evaluation instrument for their professional growth and development; a) develop a common interpretation of the rubric language and practices, b) using the evaluation instrument to observe and learn from each other's practices while engaging in dialogue using the evaluation instrument c) using the instrument daily as a minimum to guide their instruction d) how to elicit and use feedback from the evaluation instrument to improve their instruction e) how to self-reflect and analyze their instruction and 6) establish improvement goals and create action plans for improving their instruction (Connally & Tooley, 2016; Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Marzano, 2012; Shirrell et al., 2019). These methods and behaviors can be learned and developed through ongoing coherent, rigorous professional development that supports teachers' continuous development of their capacity and competency by using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Effective Professional Development for Teachers

The implementation of any education policy begins with communication. Communication through professional learning opportunities clearly defines and supports teachers understanding of the value and validity of the new system in regards to their future outcomes as relevant to their instructional improvement and student achievement (Cheon et al., 2018; Guskey, 2017; O'Hara et al., 2019; Skedsmo & Huber, 2018; Smith & Kubacka, 2017). Providing teachers with professional learning opportunities that

clearly define and support their understanding and development of using an evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool will influence their perceptions and change their behaviors. Therefore, to change teacher behaviors requires creating professional development that develops teachers' understanding and skills for engaging in the practice of using the instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The professional development should address all fallacies with the evaluation instrument while giving teachers the opportunities to deconstruct the evaluation rubric to reconstruct a deeper understanding of the instructional practices while providing them with the needed methods and behavior to act on improving their instructional practices (Frontier & Mielke, 2016; Huber & Skedsmo, 2016; Özdemir, 2020).

Effective teacher professional development is defined as “structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practice and improvements in student learning outcomes” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 7). Providing effective, high-quality professional development that is coherent, rigorous, and ongoing in which teachers are actively engaged and collaborative gives them the additional knowledge and skills for using research-based practices (Choy & Chua, 2019; O’Hara et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2016). High-quality professional development that improves teacher knowledge and the use of evidence-based instructional methods encompassing demonstration, practice, and continuous coaching will increase teachers’ knowledge, skills, and application of their professional learning. Both externally and job-embedded professional development activities are needed to increase teacher knowledge and change their behaviors for

improving their instructional practices. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) have identified seven key principles for effective professional development as follows;

1. Is content focused
2. Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory.
3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts
4. Uses models and modeling of effective practice
5. Provides coaching and expert support
6. Offers opportunities for feedback and reflection
7. Is sustained for a duration

The following will detail each of the seven principles and how they apply to the professional development plan designed to meet the goal of cultivating capacity and building competency for teachers using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Seven Key Principles of Effective Professional Development

Well-designed professional development positively influences the participants' knowledge and practice (Abu-Tineh & Sadiq, 2018; Bates & Morgan, 2018; Guskey, 2017). To warrant the influence of participants' knowledge and practice using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool, the seven key principles of effective professional development were applied as follows.

The first key principle of effective professional development is it should be content-focused, meaning it needs to allow teachers to connect “theory to practice” by aligning the strategies or practices learned to the content that is taught by teachers

(Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Özdemir, 2020). The content-focused principle requires teachers to have the opportunity to apply their learning to content-specific teaching to analyze using a structured protocol. The professional development is designed for teachers to gain the knowledge and practice of using the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices in the subjects they teach. The professional development includes the support of curriculum-specialist that collaborate with teachers on how to interpret the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument based on the subjects they teach. Involving curriculum-specialist enhances the meaning of the instructional practices and the value they contribute to all subject areas.

The second key principle of effective professional development is active learning. Active learning encompasses “how teachers will learn as well as what they learn” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 7). The principle of active learning for teachers is aligned with the adult learning theory. Adults learn best using their own experiences, interest, and needs with inquiry and reflection to engage them in the learning experience. Engagement strategies used for the study’s professional development include collaboration, coaching, peer observation and feedback, recording, analysis, and reflection of instructional practices, and modeling the learned practices. Allowing participants to try out what they learn helps them process the new learning by analyzing and making sense of how the practice supports their instructional effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Shah et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2016). Throughout the professional development, engaging activities linked to practice are used to develop elementary

teachers' capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative guide for their instructional practices.

The third key principle of effective professional development is collaboration. Collaboration builds trusting relationships that teachers can use to support each other's deepening of their knowledge and strengthening their skills with their instructional practices (Özdemir, 2020; Sinclair et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2016). Professional development is designed for participants to collaborate in various ways, including one-on-one, small groups, and whole groups. Teachers will work with other teachers and curriculum specialists to develop their understanding and skills for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The fourth key principle for effective professional development is the use of models and modeling effective practice. Using models and modeling effective practices helps teachers grasp their learning by allowing them to visualize the practice as it applies to their professional growth (Akiba & Liang, 2016; Bates & Morgan, 2018; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Models during professional development are done using videos and demonstration of practices. Using these modeling types will help teachers visualize the newly learned techniques and make sense of how it applies to their teaching and using the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices.

The fifth key principle of effective professional development is using coaching with expert support. Coaching with expert support scaffolds the participants' efficiency and effectiveness with implementing new curricula, tools, and approaches (Akpınar, 2019; Brickman et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Ratminingsih et al., 2017).

The professional development plan includes coaching involving teachers, peers, instructional leaders, and curriculum specialists. They work together to identify instructional practice improvement goals and create an action plan to support the goal. Coaching is provided using the evaluation instrument as a guide for their instructional practices. It will entail using observations, feedback, and reflection, which refers to the next key principle of effective professional development.

The sixth key principle of effective professional development is the use of feedback and reflection. Feedback and reflection provide teachers with the input, time to think, and modify their learned practice (Brickman et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2020). Providing teachers with the opportunity to receive constructive feedback using the evaluation instrument allows them to utilize the feedback to reflect on how to improve their instructional practices while modeling best practices for using the instrument as a formative tool. Feedback and reflection are used during professional development through ongoing collaboration and peer observations to build their capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The seventh key principle of effective professional development is sustained duration. Professional development to have the most significant transformation of practices and meaningful to the participants depends on its time and quality. Professional development must be supported over time, giving teachers numerous opportunities to engage in and practice their learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2017; Randel et al., 2016). Professional development should not be a “one-and-done, sit-and-

get” approach. This approach always results in ineffective, no matter how dynamic and vigorous professional development is due to not sustaining ongoing support. The professional development will be three days with ongoing job-embedded support and check-ins. Providing ongoing support beyond the 3-day professional development will ensure that teachers continue to practice and grow by using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Ultimately, well-designed professional development is a crucial element for the system of teaching and learning. Therefore, effective professional development leads to improved teaching and learning. The seven key principles of effective professional development warrant the desired outcome of teachers’ understanding and applying new skills. In addition to the seven key principles of professional development, using Marzano’s five strategies for developing teacher expertise and the essentials for developing teachers’ capacity and competency can yield teachers proficient with using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Project Description

The project is designed based on the study findings and literature review used to inform the needed understandings and skills for elementary teachers to cultivate their capacity and competency using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The professional development is designed to achieve two identified goals;

1. Cultivate teacher capacity to interpret the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.

2. Develop teacher competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The 3-day professional development plan occurs during the district professional development kick-off implemented yearly at the beginning of the school year. The professional development plan includes daily activities that actively engage participating teachers with new learning that incorporates the adult learning theory. The literature review suggests seven key principles for effective professional development. The activities are aligned to the themes found from the data collection and literature review to help teachers develop their capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative guide for their instructional practices. The activities are content-focused and include collaboration, models and modeling, expert support, opportunities for feedback, and reflection and are designed for a sustainable duration to increase its effectiveness based on the seven principles of effective professional development. The following outlines the resources, supports, potential barriers, potential solutions, evaluation plan, and project implementation used for the professional development plan.

Resources, Supports, Barriers, and Solutions

The resources for professional development include the use of a room in the district professional development building. Each room can hold from 60 to 120 participants using expandable walls. The rooms are set up for cooperative learning, with tables seating four participants. The facility has readily available resources for professional development, including collaboration tool kits containing erasable markers, pens, pencils, sticky notes, talking chips, and whiteboards. Each table will have paper and

poster board paper to use during the professional development activities. There are projectors, screens, and computers to use during professional development sessions. Participants will receive an agenda with professional development materials they will use and maintain throughout the school year that are facilitator created. Each day, the teachers receive breakfast, lunch, snacks, and water provided by the district's yearly professional development kick-off days funding.

The professional development implementation is facilitated by myself and the district content curriculum specialists, including Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education. Including the district curriculum specialist as support will allow teachers to collaborate with their district content specialists to enhance their understanding of how the evaluation instrument aligns with each content area to improve their instructional practices.

The most significant barrier is that professional development will not reach all teachers districtwide due to time and room capacity. The best time to implement professional development is during the district-wide professional development kick-off. Unfortunately, this time only affords so many participants to attend, approximately a third of the district teaching staff.

A solution to address this barrier is to request instructional leaders from each campus select at least one teacher who can use their learning to support the remainder of the staff at their school campus as train trainers. I will work with those select teachers from each campus to provide professional development for those unable to attend due to

either space or the need to participate in other professional development sessions. I will support the selected teachers as they work with the teachers at their school.

PD Implementation Timetable

The timetable for professional development will last approximately one school year. There will be a 3-day initial professional development session at the beginning of the school year during the week of return from summer break. A districtwide professional development kick-off is held for teachers at this time. During the professional development kick-off, teachers can choose from various sessions that support their professional needs for the school year. The proposed professional development will be one of the district's professional development opportunities that any teacher employed by the school district can attend.

There will be follow-up with teachers who attend the 3-day professional development throughout the school year once a month during TCT days and ongoing support from teachers, instructional leaders, and curriculum specialists. TCT days are early release days that reoccur every Wednesday for teachers to meet as professional learning communities with their school colleagues. Additional support is provided through peer-evaluation and self-reflection practices with district curriculum specialists, site colleagues, or instructional leaders from their campus. During the TCT sessions participating teachers will use this time to collaborate and reflect on their practices of using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. Providing teachers follow-up and support makes the professional development duration

sustainable, as suggested by the seven key principles of effective professional development.

Roles and Responsibilities

My role during professional development is as a presenter and facilitator. My responsibilities include training the participants, guiding the professional development activities, preparing all materials, and ensuring the room is set up for the professional development to occur smoothly with no glitches. The district has six curriculum specialists that support ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Sped, and Specials. Their roles will be as support systems for teachers by working with specific groups of teachers throughout the professional development sessions to align the newly learned understanding and skills to the content areas they teach. They will also help with distributing materials and managing the room during the professional development sessions.

Project Evaluation Plan

An evaluation plan involves the appraisal of the professional development activities' important aspects and attributes. Professional development's aspects and attributes include professional development goals, plan design to achieve the goals, and the concepts used to develop the plan (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Guskey, 2017). Professional development evaluation plans can be formative or summative. Formative evaluation plans are performed during the implementation of professional development. It is a systematic process that reoccurs throughout the professional development progression. The information gained from a formative evaluation plan provides

immediate evidence of the success or need to improve the professional development plan. It allows for reflection based on evidence that can help identify needed adjustments, modifications, or revisions that will enhance professional learning while in the process. A summative evaluation plan occurs after professional development has occurred. Its purpose is to judge the program's overall value and significance for achieving professional development goals. Unlike formative evaluation, it does not provide the evidence needed to monitor and make adjustments as the professional development proceeds.

The best evaluation plan for this professional development project is a formative evaluation plan. Using a formative evaluation plan will allow me to acquire the needed information from participant feedback to make adjustments while implementing the professional development. The formative evaluation plan includes participants' daily assessment of each 3-day session and monthly evaluation during TCT meetings. The information will help me reflect on each day of the initial professional development to monitor and adjust any critical areas of need. The formative evaluation plan will continue during the ongoing professional development throughout the school year.

Project Implications

Social Change Implications

The project gears to improve elementary teachers' instructional practices by building their capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool. The most significant social change from this project is the transformation of elementary teachers' perception of the evaluation instrument and using it as a formative

tool to improve their instructional practices, leading to improved student achievement. Equipping teachers with the needed capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool will redirect their focus from pursuing performance pay or fear of consequences for being ineffective to their continuous ongoing growth and development of their instructional practices.

In conclusion, when teachers have the capacity and competence to work toward their professional growth and development, it will create a change in every classroom that will generate positive student outcomes. A student's academic success is entirely dependent on the effectiveness of the instruction they receive. This requires teachers who are reflective with their instructional practices and always seek to improve them daily. Providing professional development that ensures teachers are capable and competent in monitoring their professional growth and development using an evaluation instrument can ultimately enhance their teaching effectiveness and increase student achievement.

Project Importance

This project was developed in response to the study problem, how do elementary teachers perceive an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. The study found that teachers need to develop their capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a guide to improve their instructional practices. School districts immediately obliged when state policy mandated them to adopt a comprehensive evaluation instrument to improve teaching and learning. During the adoption process, the failure of school districts to develop teachers' capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument to monitor and improve on their

instructional practices resulted in the continued behavior of viewing the evaluation instrument as a rating mechanism used by evaluators to make organization decisions instead of its intended purpose as a tool to advance teaching and learning. This project can remedy teachers' misconceptions and adjust their behavior by providing them with the knowledge and skills to use the evaluation instrument to continuously reflect on and improve their instructional practices throughout the school year and the years ahead.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

I created this study project based on my study findings and literature review of PD. I created a PD plan to address the need for elementary teachers to develop the capacity and competency to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. This project's strength is that it allows teachers to understand evaluation and develop skills to use the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

I found that teachers need opportunities to understand evaluation as a means for their professional growth and development while developing the evaluation instrument's skills as a professional growth tool. A PD plan was designed to achieve two specific goals. The first was to cultivate teacher capacity to interpret the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool. The second was to develop teacher competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool that guides the continuous improvement of their instructional practices. The PD project included the seven key principles for effective PD and five systems for developing teacher expertise. Applying Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) and Marzano's (2017b) recommendations were intended to enhance the PD's potential to build both the capacity and competency of teachers' use of the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

The PD 3-day plan offers teachers the opportunity to interpret and redefine their understanding of the evaluation instrument while developing the skills to use it as a

professional growth tool. Throughout the PD, participants collaboratively work toward interpreting the evaluation instrument to create a well-articulated language and knowledge that supports their communication with colleagues. The PD further provides teachers with the methods needed to develop their teaching expertise for self-directed growth and develop the evaluation instrument. Participants apply their gained understandings and skills from the PD to create actionable plans to identify yearly goals they can self-monitor to improve their instructional practices using the evaluation instrument as a guide. The PD plan may increase teacher effectiveness beyond that obtained from an annual evaluation.

Limitations

The most well-designed PD plan will have limitations (Wood et al., 2016). The possible limitations for the current PD plan are time and commitment. District initiatives and other learning challenges may prevent teachers from having the available time and dedication to practice using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool daily. Although the district supports the PD plan, the results may depend on teacher commitment and self-motivation of their continuous practice using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool that guides their instructional practices.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The problem initiating this study was that teacher effectiveness was still a concern after schools implemented comprehensive evaluation instruments to grow and develop effective teaching practices. I sought to understand how elementary teachers perceive using an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. I

interviewed nine teachers from the study district, which led to four themes that elementary teachers (a) perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide used to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation, (b) perceive the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument as impractical for daily instruction, (c) believe that feedback received from the evaluation instrument is inadequate for improving their instructional practices, and (d) express the need for PD aligning the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide. The findings were used to create a PD plan to develop the capacity and competency for elementary teachers to use the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool. Even though the PD plan addresses the teachers' needs, there are two alternative solutions.

The first alternative solution involves administration. During the interviews with teachers, I found that teachers perceive using the evaluation instrument as a guide used to plan and prepare for their annual announced observation. Feedback is viewed as inadequate, nonspecific, and infrequently received from their evaluators. The cause could be an absence of time due to managing other aspects of the school's daily operations and a lack of understanding of how to use the evaluation instrument to guide their teaching staff toward professional growth and development. The solution would be for administrators to implement better systems to improve teaching practices. Better systems require administrators to have extensive training for improving their time management and ability to use the evaluation instrument for providing better feedback and guidance throughout the school year that supports teachers with their professional growth and

development (Archer et al., 2017; Brickman et al., 2016; Nazareno, 2015; Neumerski et al., 2018).

The second alternative solution involves the district's policy for teacher evaluation. During the instrument's cross-check with Marzano's focused teacher evaluation model, I noticed that the instrument does not clearly guide teachers and administrators on using the instrument for teacher professional growth and development. The instrument details performance categories identifying specific teaching practices expectations to receive a score of 4 (highly effective), 3 (effective), 2 (developing), and 1 (ineffective), along with the consequences of placement on an improvement plan for being labeled ineffective and compensation of performance pay for being labeled effective or higher. The instrument does not prescribe its use as a professional growth tool. The instrument also recommends that administrators review the formal evaluation process at the beginning of each school year. Therefore, the instrument substantiates its perception as a measurement mechanism used by administrators to evaluate teachers annually. The solution would be to create a policy addendum for the teacher evaluation instrument that advises teachers and administrators of the expectations for their use of the instrument as an ongoing systematic process that improves each teacher's effectiveness with using the instructional practices continuously throughout the school year.

Both alternative solutions may address the needs found in the study but were not deemed the best solution to develop teachers' use of the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool. The 3-day PD plan was considered the best solution. The

alternative solutions are options that may support teachers' building their capacity and competency of using the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change Scholarship

Developing this research project enhanced my skills as an education practitioner by improving my problem-solving skills for formulating practical solutions that can be acted on to transform teaching and learning. The skills I developed will be applicable throughout my career as an education leader. For every problem, there is a need to seek a concrete solution that results in positive change. Education is a continuously evolving profession that requires skills to act quickly but sensibly and responsibly when seeking a solution. The current project study developed my skills to approach a problem using qualitative methods when seeking solutions. The skills I have gained and enhanced will be used throughout my career as an education leader.

Project Development and Evaluation

The development of this project and its evaluation plan have improved my skills with PD and evaluation design. I have the responsibility to design PD supporting science instruction in my current position. Over the years, I have focused on science concepts and materials needed to implement science activities in the classroom. This project helped me look beyond my subject area expertise to integrate the best practices for improving the subject by using the best practices necessary for effective instruction. In designing the project, I was able to look at the point of view of both teachers and evaluators to understand how the evaluation instrument can produce more effective instructional

practices in every subject. These insights were used to develop the project to meet every teacher's needs for using the evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices daily. The evaluation plan ensures PD success through continuous monitoring of its implementation to identify possible revisions. The project development and evaluation may ensure PD continues to evolve to produce successful outcomes by supporting and creating highly effective teachers capable of using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Leadership and Change

This experience added to my development as an instructional leader and will guide me as a change agent in the education system. This is very important for my career as an education leader. As an education leader, I have worked toward improving learning in every classroom. This research experience enhanced my ability as a change agent by improving my skill sets to assess instructional needs and develop a conducive solution for positive change for all.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

As I reflect on my work throughout this study, I realize how important it is to gain an in-depth understanding that generates solutions to problems that will transform people's skills and perceptions over time. I learned that many perceptions are created from a lack of communication and awareness to generate new understandings. As districts implement new changes and policies, there must be a consideration of how the new changes or policy will affect those involved. These considerations must lead to actions that will support stakeholders in adjusting to the changes and monitoring them as

they adjust. Leaders must take the time and effort to support stakeholders with any changes of policy and expectations. Supporting stakeholders with organizational change may reduce resistance and increase acceptance while removing previous perceptions that do not align with the new policy or changes.

The purpose of this project was to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices. This project's findings indicated the need for PD to build teacher capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool, and indicated the importance of promoting acceptance of change with the continuous support for implementing the change. Instructional leaders must not assume that all stakeholders have the capacity and competency to implement an organizational change without the necessary guidance to adjust and adhere to the changes (Lee & Lee, 2018). This understanding will follow me throughout my career. As an agent of change in an evolving world of education, I now have the skill set that makes me capable of finding feasible solutions that will support stakeholders responsible for implementing the change. These skills will be used to work toward improving the inequity and inequality that persist in many education systems. One day, I hope that the skills I have learned will be applied to create social changes in the education system that will make my mentors and Walden proud of my achievements as a scholar nurtured by the university.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

My project was intended to develop elementary teachers' capacity and competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their

instructional practices. I aimed to redefine teachers' perceptions of the evaluation instrument as a tool used to improve their instructional practices. Social change is possible through the PD as teachers learn to embrace the evaluation instrument as a tool used daily to reflect on their instructional practices and make the needed adjustment to improve their instructional effectiveness. By continuously improving their instructional effectiveness daily, the PD could lead to increased student achievement. Increased student achievement due to improved instructional effectiveness will have a lasting effect on students in the study site district by preparing them for higher education and careers.

My decision to use a basic qualitative approach was the best method for my research problem. My research problem sought an understanding that no quantitative approach can measure. Specifically, using a basic qualitative approach allowed me as the researcher to have one-on-one interviews that gained in-depth knowledge that I could not have gained using surveys or questionnaires. I was able to probe and expand on the questions as needed during each interview to clarify and accumulate more intensified thoughts and perceptions of each participant. This method was extremely appropriate for my study. On the other hand, if I were looking to understand this problem in a broader context, it would have used an approach that could reach as many participants as possible such as surveys and questionnaires. Even though it would not generate the profound understandings gained from individual participant interviews, it would gather the needed information applicable to the general population.

As for future research, there is a need to investigate further how teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a formative tool in other districts or possibly statewide. To

reach a vast number of participants, surveys or questionnaires can gather the needed data to understand how implementing more comprehensive evaluation instruments is used to improve teaching and learning. The participants should include teachers and administrators, as they are essential components of the teacher evaluation system, and their perspectives can enhance the understanding gained.

Conclusion

Researchers have determined teacher evaluation as the best means for creating highly-effective teachers. Even though education systems have accepted the research, they have neglected researchers' recommendations about using a more comprehensive evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool for improving teachers' instructional practices. Neglecting the recommendations has prevented the success of implementing more comprehensive evaluation instruments for improving teacher effectiveness. Ultimately, to achieve the purpose and intent of an evaluation instrument to improve instructional practices requires developing teachers' capacity and competency to use it efficiently as an ongoing systematic method to monitor and improve their instructional practices.

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Appendix A: The Project

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

Purpose: The purpose of this professional development is to foster teacher understanding and skills for using the teacher evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool that guides their instructional practices.

Goal 1: Cultivate teacher capacity to interpret the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.

Goal 2: Develop teacher competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

Learning Outcome: By the end of professional development, participants should have enhanced their understanding of the purpose of evaluation, as well as gained a deeper awareness of the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool and developed strategies to use it to guide their instructional practices.

DAY ONE: Reimaging Evaluation as a Professional Growth Tool		
Daily Objective: <i>Participants will engage in professional development activities to reflect, redefine, and reinterpret the purpose, language, and use of an evaluation instrument to guide instructional practices.</i>		
TIME	SLIDE/ACTIVITY	NOTES
8:00-8:30	Sign-In	➤ Participants sign-in and enjoy breakfast
8:30-9:00	SLIDES 1-2 <i>Welcome Introductions</i> <i>Getting to Know You</i> <i>Team Mix-Up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome participants and introduce myself as the facilitator along with supporting PD members (content specialist and instructional leaders) <input type="checkbox"/> Getting to Know You -Take Off/Touch Down: have participants stand up when a statement applies to them and sit down when it does not <input type="checkbox"/> Have participants count to 15 and that number will be their new table to work at the next 3 days. Once participants join their new group at their assigned table have them to create a name tent using the materials (name tent, markers) found at their table.
9:00-9:20	SLIDES 3-8 <i>PD Overview</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> facilitator reviews norms of professional development and collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> facilitator discusses the research study, purpose of professional development, PD goals, learning outcomes, and daily objective with participants
9:20-10:00	SLIDES 9-12 <i>Penny for a Thought</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants use “A penny for your thoughts” to guide a discussion about teacher evaluation using a quote provided to each team. Each participant is given 5 pennies to share for each thought about the quote and guiding questions about evaluation. Guiding questions will be used for their thinking. This activity helps them reflect on their current practices and beliefs with evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Each group will share a summary of the final group

	<p><i>Purpose of Evaluation</i></p> <p><i>Silent Reflection</i></p>	<p>thoughts they have about the quote and teacher evaluation with the whole group within less than a 2-minute timeframe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The facilitator reviews the purpose of evaluation slide-The Best of Both Worlds statements and watches 5-minute video of Marazano interview on the purpose of evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants read, reflect and process the Marazano quote in silence and then release them for a 15-minute morning break.
10:00-10:15	BREAK	Participants take a 15 minute break
10:15-11:30	<p>SLIDES 13-15</p> <p><i>Group Quote Reflection & Discussion</i></p> <p><i>Team Problem Solving: A Hypothetical Situation</i></p> <p><i>Examining the Evaluation Instrument</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants resume discussing with team the quote by Marazano they reflected on prior to going on their break. Guiding question for discussion “How does the quote apply to your current instructional effectiveness practices?” <input type="checkbox"/> Team Problem Solving: Participants are given hypothetical situation that they have to plan how they will prepare and support students for a year-long performance based project. Each team will share their plans with the whole group. Whole group will further discuss the purpose of this activity that will lead to the analogy that just as we have expectation of our students to use a rubric to meet performance expectations so should we expect the same of ourselves as teachers by using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool to improve our performance. <input type="checkbox"/> Each group examines the evaluation instrument to notice specific details and possibly things they have never noticed. The discuss how the instrument is used currently to support their instructional practices. <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group discussion about the examination of the evaluation instrument.
11:30-12:15	LUNCH	Participants go to lunch provided by District Office
12:15-12:30	<p>SLIDE 16</p> <p><i>TEAMBUILDER-Blind Drawing Activity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blind Spot team builder has participants to complete a drawing based off the directions of a teammate without giving away what the object is. Encouraging communication through listening.
12:30-2:00	<p>SLIDES 17-20</p> <p><i>Class Portrait</i></p> <p><i>Interpreting the Rubric: Overview & Discussion of Performance Category III</i></p> <p><i>Evaluating Your Class Portrait</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants draw a picture of their classroom learning environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Groups discuss the rubrics for each performance expectation for The Learning Environment (classroom culture, physical environment, student management), while highlighting key terms used describe each performance expectation. <input type="checkbox"/> Then as a whole group discussion about the expectations of the learning environment rubric. <input type="checkbox"/> Each person evaluates their class environment drawing using the evaluation instrument category III the learning environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Group discussion about how their drawing meet the rubric expectations.

	<i>Discussion & Reflection</i>	
2:00-2:10	BREAK	Participants take a 10 minute break
2:10-3:50	<p>SLIDES 21-23</p> <p><i>Interpreting the Rubric Category, I: Planning & Preparation</i></p> <p><i>Overview & Discussion: Performance Category I</i></p> <p><i>Analyzing Objectives, Sub-objectives and Aligned Activities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants as a team review the evaluation instrument rubric for performance category I; planning and preparation: objectives, sub-objectives, and aligned activities. Using highlighters to identify specific language describing the expectations that identifies each level of performance from ineffective to highly effective. Teams discuss the language used and how their practices meet the language. <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group discussion interpreting the language and expectations for category I: planning and preparation. Provide participants examples of well written objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants as teams will analyze two lesson plans for meeting the expectations of the rubric language for category I. The group will discuss how the objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities meet the expectations of the evaluation instrument and share with whole group their analysis and alignment with a justification using the evaluation instrument.
3:50-4:00	<p>SLIDE 24</p> <p><i>DAY 1 SESSION CLOSING</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revisit today's objective with participants and have them reflect and discuss their learning today. Participants complete an evaluation form and exit ticket for Day One Session.

DAY ONE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



WELCOME

- Introductions
- Getting to Know You
- Team Mix Up



REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NORMS

NORMS OF Professional Development

- *Be present and actively engaged*
- *Encourage each other to take active part in discussion*
- *Listen to each other in effort to examine our own teaching beliefs*
- *Avoid sidebar conversation or actions that detract from our professional growth*
- *Keep the boundaries regarding beginning, ending and breaks*
- *Turn off cell phones, email and only use computers for note-taking*
- *Presume positive intent*

NORMS OF COLLABORATION

- *Pausing*
- *Paraphrasing*
- *Posing Questions*
- *Putting Ideas on the Table*
- *Providing Data*
- *Paying Attention to Self and Others*
- *Presuming Positive Intent*

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

3

RESEARCH STUDY

• PURPOSE OF STUDY:

- *To understand how teachers perceive use the evaluation instrument is used as a formative tool to guide instructional practices.*

• DATA COLLECTION

- *One-on-One Interviews with teachers*
- *Cross-back Evaluation Instrument*

• FINDINGS

- Teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide used to plan and prepare for their announced observation,
- Teachers perceive the instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction,
- Teachers believe the feedback from the evaluation instrument as inadequate, and
- Teachers express the need for professional development that aligns the interpretation of the evaluation instrument districtwide.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PURPOSE

- *The purpose of this professional development is to foster teacher understanding and skills with using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool that guides their instructional practices.*

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GOAL 1:

Cultivate teacher capacity to view the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.

GOAL 2:

Develop teacher competency for using the evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

- By the end of this professional development, participants should have enhanced their understanding of the purpose of evaluation, as well as gained a deeper awareness of the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool and developed strategies to use it to guide their instructional practices.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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DAILY OBJECTIVE:

Participants will engage in professional learning activities to reflect, redefine and reinterpret the use of an evaluation instrument as a means for guiding their professional growth and improving their instructional practices.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

8

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

- Each Table has a “Quote” about teacher evaluation.
- As a team use a “Penny for Your Thoughts” to guide the discussion.
 - Each person is given 5 pennies
 - Each team member spends one penny for each thought shared with team
 - Everyone must use all 5 of their pennies
 - Once everyone has used all their pennies place them in the red cup sitting up.
 - Choose a representative to summarize your thoughts to share with the whole group.



REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

9

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

Think about the following questions as you use each penny for a thought

- How does this quote resonate with your current thoughts about teacher evaluation?
- How do you think evaluation applies to your daily instruction?
- What is the purpose of evaluation?
- How can evaluation be used differently?
- How can evaluation generate change?
- How can feedback support your instructional practices?
- What supports are needed to support instructional practices?
- How well articulate are you with the language of the evaluation instrument?
- What opportunities are available that focus on feedback, deliberate practice, observing and collaboration using evaluation?
- What do you do to monitor and adjust your instructional practices based on evaluation?



REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

The Best of Both Worlds

- Both measurement and development are important aspects of teacher evaluation. When measurement is the primary purpose, a small set of elements is sufficient to determine a teacher's skill in the classroom.
- However, if the emphasis is on teacher development, the model needs to be both comprehensive and specific and focus on the teacher's growth in various instructional strategies. These distinctions are crucial to the effective design and implementation of current and future teacher evaluation systems.

[Robert J. Marzano Interview on Purpose of Evaluation](#)

REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

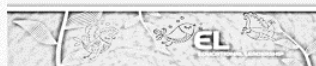
11

How does the quote apply to your current instructional effectiveness practices?

Please take a 15 minute Break

“Measuring teachers and developing teachers are different purposes with different implications.”

—Robert J. Marzano, “The Two Purposes of Teacher Evaluation,” *Educational Leadership*, November 2012



REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

12

HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION

As a Team Come Up with a Plan

- You give your students a performance-based project that will take them the entire year to complete independently but with your guidance.
- It is approximately 50% of their grade for the school year.
- How will you prepare them to understand what the expectations are for the project?
- The project has specific expectations, how will you grade them?
- What will you use to grade them?
- How will you support them?
- How will they focus and be motivated to complete the project?



REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

13

Examining The Evaluation Instrument

As a team examine the evaluation instrument and discuss important details and how they align to your current instructional practices.



THE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

- What did you notice you have not noticed before?
- What are the categories?
- What instructional practices are found in each category?
- How is the rubric designed?
- How does the language translate for interpretation on the instrument?

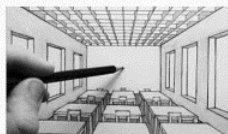
LUNCH @ 11:30

TEAMBUILDER – BLIND SPOT

- The game requires 2 players to sit back to back, where one team member is given a picture of an object or word. Without specifying directly what the thing is, the person must describe the image without using words that clearly give away the image.
- These should be non-related words for instance – if it is a “flower” then the person can describe it as hearts put together (to form flower petals), a string/rope holding the hearts (Stem), rain/water drops (leaves) and so on. The person with pen and paper draws the object based on the verbal description and their own interpretation.
- The final outcome is fun to see and depict whether 2 members can effectively communicate, imagine, and innovate in each other’s company.

MY CLASSROOM PORTRAIT

- Each participant has 10 minutes to draw a picture representing their classroom environment.
- Once you are finished turn picture upside down.



REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PERFORMANCE CATEGORY III: Teacher Skills and Knowledge ~ The Learning Environment

INTERPRETING THE RUBRICS

CLASSROOM CULTURE
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
STUDENT MANAGEMENT

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

18

EVALUATE YOUR CLASS PORTRAIT

- Use the evaluation instrument's **The Learning Environment Rubrics: *Classroom Culture, Physical Environment, Student Management*** to evaluate and reflect on your class portrait
 - What are the things you do that make your classroom learning environment effective?
 - What are somethings you can do to enhance your classroom learning environment?
 - What are something you can change to improve your classroom learning environment?

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

What language is used in instrument?

How does the language support your classroom learning environment?

How will you use these new understandings in your classroom learning environment?

- What are the things you do that make your classroom learning environment effective?
- What are some things you can do to enhance your classroom learning environment?
- What are some things you can change to improve your classroom learning environment?

Let's Take a 10 minute Break

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY I:

Teacher Skills & Knowledge ~ Planning & Preparation

INTERPRETING THE RUBRICS

LESSON OBJECTIVES

SUB-OBJECTIVES

ALIGNED ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES, SUB-OBJECTIVES & ALIGNED ACTIVITIES

AS A TEAM,

- Review the effective and highly effective criteria for objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities
- Discuss/highlight what are the key language of expectations is described by each.
- Reflect on how you apply this when planning your lessons
- Think about what makes a good objective? Good sub-objectives? Good aligned activities?

ANALYZING CATEGORY I

- Each team has been given 2 lesson plans to evaluate using the evaluation instrument rubric for category I: planning and preparation.
- Determine if each objective, sub-objective, and aligned activity meet the expectations of the language of the evaluation rubric.
- Provide the reason and suggestion for improving each are not meeting expectations using the rubric language.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
 REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL
 DAY ONE SESSION CLOSE

Please complete you exit ticket an evaluation before learning

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: <i>Reimaging Evaluation as a Professional Growth Tool</i> EXIT TICKET Please indicate which PD DAY by circling 1...2...3	
Participant Name: _____	Date: _____
School: _____	Grade Level/Content Area: _____
<i>I learned ...</i>	
<i>I plan to use what I learned today ...</i>	
<i>I would like to know more about ...</i>	

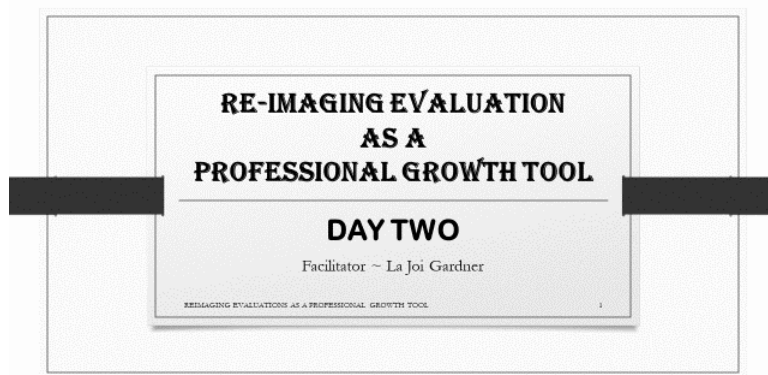
REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL					
Professional Development Evaluation DAY 1 & 2					
<i>We would appreciate knowing how you rate this professional development session. For each statement below, please check the box that applies.</i>					
STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The objective of today's session was clearly stated.					
2. Today's activities were aligned to its stated objective.					
3. Today's session was valuable and useful.					
4. Today's session enhanced my understanding of evaluation.					
5. Today's session helped me gain a deeper awareness of the evaluation instrument.					
6. Today's session provided strategies to use the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.					
7. The facilitator incorporated our experiences in today's activities					
8. The facilitator effectively presented materials that increased my understanding and skills for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.					
9. There were opportunities to collaborate during today's activities.					
10. Today's activities were relevant to my job needs.					
11. The learning environment for today's session met my learning needs.					
12. Today's session overall effectiveness					
COMMENTS					

DAY TWO: Reimagining Evaluation as a Professional Growth Tool		
Daily Objective: <i>Participants will engage in professional development activities to reflect, redefine, and reinterpret the purpose, language, and use of an evaluation instrument to guide their instructional practices.</i>		
TIME	SLIDE/ACTIVITY	NOTES
8:30-8:30	SIGN-IN	Participants sign-in and join their teammates
8:30-8:45	SLIDES 1-2 <i>TEAMBUILDER Dog, Chicken & Rice</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> In their groups, participants will use their creative thinking to problem solve how a farmer can get his dog, chicken and rice across water. Each group will create a poster with a diagram of their answer to share with whole group as a gallery walk.
8:45-10:00	SLIDES 3-5 <i>Review & Present: Performance Category II: Implementation of Instruction</i> <i>Interpreting Learning Focus, Logical Sequence, Teacher Content Knowledge Rubrics</i> <i>Overview & Discussion: Learning Focus, Logical Sequence, Teacher Content Knowledge</i> <i>USING THE INSTRUMENT: Sorting & Sequencing ~ Objectives, Sub-Objectives & Aligned Activities</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole group discussion reviewing day 1 learning and presenting the learning focus for category II: Implementation of Instruction its 10 instructional practices for day 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants review and highlight key language that demonstrate the expectations of the evaluation instruments rubrics for Learning Focus, Logical Sequence, and Teacher Content Knowledge and discuss with their groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants have a whole group discussion about the language of expectations for performance expectations for learning focus, logical sequence and teacher content knowledge. <input type="checkbox"/> As a team, participants will sort and logically sequence the learning objectives, sub-objectives, and aligned activities to create 2 lesson plans. Once they complete it they will evaluate the lesson plans against the evaluation instrument rubric for learning focus, logical sequence and teacher content knowledge. Then share with whole group how and why they sorted and sequence it the way they did using the evaluation rubric language to justify their decision.
10:00-10:15	BREAK	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants take a 15 minute break
10:15-11:30	SLIDES 6-9 <i>Interpreting Modeling & Meaning and Understanding Rubric</i> <i>Overview & Discussion: Modeling ~ Meaning and Understanding Rubric</i> <i>MEGTACONTIVE MODELING & VIDEO</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants review and highlight key language used to describe effective use of the instructional practice Modeling & Meaning and Understanding. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants discuss as a whole group the rubric expectations and language for modeling and meaning and understanding. Further discussing the purpose for modeling and why it is needed and a necessary practice for students. Each team shares with whole group. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants watch video on metacognition and modeling then have a group discussion on their take-away from the video <input type="checkbox"/> Participants watch video to observe a teacher

	<p><i>USING THE INSTRUMENT: Observing and Feedback for Modeling</i></p> <p><i>VIDEO DISCUSSION & REFLECTION</i></p>	<p>modeling for their students and use the evaluation rubric to write feedback for the teacher based on the evaluation instrument language for modeling and meaning and understanding. Then discuss as a group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> As a whole group, participants will discuss their observations and feedback based on the evaluation instrument.
11:30-12:15	LUNCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants have lunch provided by the district
12:15-12:30	<p>SLIDE 10</p> <p>TEAMBUILDER ~ SNEAK PEEK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants take turns to view a picture and guide their team on what to put in their picture. The game teaches participants how to problem solve and communicate effectively.
12:30-2:00	<p>SLIDES 11-13</p> <p><i>Interpreting Engagement & Student Accountability Rubric</i></p> <p><i>Overview & Discussion: Engagement ~ Student Accountability</i></p> <p><i>A PICTURE VIEW</i></p> <p><i>UNSTRUCTURED ACTIVITY</i></p> <p><i>STRUCTURED ACTIVITY</i></p> <p><i>GROUP DISCUSSION OF ENGAGEMENT ~ STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants review and highlight key language used to describe effective use of the instructional practice Engagement & Student Accountability. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants discuss as a whole group the rubric expectations and language for engagement and student accountability. <input type="checkbox"/> In teams, participants discuss the picture of students in the classroom using the instrument language for engagement and student accountability and then share with whole group what they discussed. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants read article 5 levels of engagement and discuss as whole group. The facilitator will randomly call on people with no structure to ensure equal participation. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants individually and silently read 5 tips for engagement strategies. Then each person in the team has 1 minute to share what they learned from their reading. Then each team has a representative to discuss what they learned as a team. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants in their teams discuss the difference in each of the activities, unstructured and structure, how each meets the expectations of the evaluation instrument rubric and how each can be used during their daily instructional practices.
2:00-2:10	BREAK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants take a 10 minute break.
2:10-3:30	<p>SLIDES 14-17</p> <p><i>Interpreting Practice, Feedback & Assessing Student Learning Rubric</i></p> <p><i>Overview & Discussion: Practice, Feedback & Assessing Student Learning</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants review and highlight key language used to describe effective use of the instructional practices: Practice, Feedback and Assessing Student Learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants discuss as a whole group the rubric expectations and language for practice, feedback and assessing student learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants in their groups brainstorm the types of practice they use to assess student learning.

	<p><i>Practice & Assessing Student Learning</i></p> <p><i>Feedback & Assessing Student Learning</i></p> <p>PERFORMANCE <i>CATEGORY II: Reflection on Daily Use</i></p>	<p>Create a diagram demonstrating how the different types of practice assess student learning and how they align to the evaluation instrument rubric expectations. Share with whole group their diagram.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants view and discuss videos about the importance of feedback and effectively providing student's feedback as a group. Then discuss and give examples of the kind of feedback that they provide students throughout their daily practices. Then share with whole group. <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group discussion of Category II: Implementing Instruction and how all the puzzle pieces from Categories I, II, and III is used in our daily instruction. Participants reflect on how they use each daily and how they can work toward using all performance expectations daily.
3:30-4:00	<p style="text-align: center;">SLIDE 18</p> <p>DAY 2 SESSION CLOSE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants complete evaluation and exit ticket. <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator closes our day with participants

DAY TWO POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



TEAMBUILDER

Dog, Chicken, Rice



- One of the group members is allotted the role of a farmer and the rest team acts as villagers. The farmer has to return home along with its 3 purchases (Dog, Rice and Chicken) by crossing a river in a boat. He can carry only one item with him on the boat.
- He cannot leave the dog alone with the chicken because the dog will eat the chicken, and he cannot leave the chicken alone with the bag of grain because the chicken will eat the bag of grain. How does he get all three of his purchases back home safely?
- The villagers can help him in arriving at the solution, which is really simple if the group thinks creatively and together.
- Your group will draw a diagram of their answer.

Mind Puzzle

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PERFORMANCE CATEGORY II: Implementation of Instruction

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Learning Focus | • Engagement |
| • Logical Sequence | • Student Accountability |
| • Teacher Content Knowledge | • Practice |
| • Modeling | • Feedback |
| • Meaning and Understanding | • Assessing Student Learning |

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

3

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY II: IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

INTERPRETING THE RUBRICS

Learning Focus

Logical Sequence

Teacher Content Knowledge

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

4

LOGICALLY SEQUENCING

- The pieces of paper on your tables are the objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities for 2 lesson plans
- As a team, sort the pieces into the 2 lesson plans and sequence the learning objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities with your team.
- There maybe or not be some objectives, sub-objectives and aligned activities that do not belong.
- Once each lesson is sorted and sequence, evaluate each lesson using the evaluation instruments Category I: Planning and Preparation along with Category II: Learning Focus & Logical Sequence giving a score to all five element criteria; objectives, sub-objectives, aligned activities, learning focus, logical sequence and teacher content knowledge.
- Be prepared to justify your decisions using the evaluation instrument language.

Let's take a 15 minute break

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

5

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY II: IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

INTERPRETING THE INSTRUMENT

Modeling

Meaning and Understanding

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

6

MODELING

PURPOSE

Provide students a clear understanding of the expectation of the learning

What needs to be modeled:

- PROCEDURE - How to do something
- PRODUCT/PERFORMANCE- An exemplar that shows the end result of the completed task

EFFECTIVE MODELING

- Is explicitly constructed-it uses very intentional concrete examples and/or visual images
- Is free of distractions-there isn't any extraneous information or verbiage
- Has labeled steps or parts with precise academic vocabulary

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

7

MODELING METACOGNITION

METACOGNITION

1. Providing an explicit, concrete visual example
2. Explaining the steps or parts with clear academic vocabulary labels
3. Keeping the model free from distractors
4. Articulating the internal critical thinking as a task or performance completed

GOOD THINKING-That's so
Meta(Cognitive)

TEACHER EVALUATION
MODEL TRAINING VIDEO

VIDEO DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

- What did you notice done well in the video?
- What could have been done better?
- How can the modeling technique be improved in both the areas of weakness and strengths?

TEAMBUILDER SNEAK A PEEK

- Each team will have to replicate a picture located at the front of the room.
- To replicate only one team member at a time will come to the front of the room and look at the picture to memorize what's in it within 30 seconds.
- Once their time is up they return to their team and have 1 minute to describe to them what to draw in your team picture.
- This will repeat until the last team member has viewed the picture.
- We will check our pictures as a group against the original picture to see how we did.

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY II:
IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

INTERPRETING THE INSTRUMENT

Engagement

Student Accountability

REIMAGINING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

11

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY



REIMAGINING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

12

DISCUSSION

- What was the difference between the two engagement activities?
- Which had the most student involvement?
- Which can produce the best student outcomes?
- What could be done differently for the engagement activity that held student lesson accountable?

REIMAGINING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

13

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY II:
IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

Interpreting the instrument

Practice

Feedback

Assessing Student Learning

REDESIGNING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

14

PRACTICE &
ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

- As a group brainstorm different independent practices used to assess student learning.
- How do you provide student feedback during this type of practice.
- Give examples

GROUP PRACTICE

- As a group brainstorm different group practice used to assess student learning.
- How do you provide student feedback during this type of practice.
- Give examples

Create a group Venn Diagram for the different types of Practice to Assess Student Learning

REDESIGNING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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FEEDBACK &
ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

- Importance of Feedback
- Effective Feedback Practices

- In your group, discuss the video and why it is important to provide students with feedback.
- In your group, discuss the video and how effective feedback practices align to the evaluation instrument language for feedback.

REDESIGNING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

- As a team, create a poster demonstrating how all practices for Performance Category I, II, and III is done effectively in the classroom.
 - Looks Like
 - Sounds Like
 - Feels Like
- Place poster on the wall closest to your table

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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DAY 2: REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

Thank You

Please complete your exit ticket and evaluation before leaving.

REIMAGING EVALUATIONS AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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DAY THREE ~ Reimaging Evaluation as a Professional Growth Tool		
Daily Objective: <i>Participants will participate in activities that demonstrate their strategies for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.</i>		
TIME	SLIDE/ACTIVITY	NOTES
8:00-8:30	Sign-In/Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants sign-in
8:30-8:45	SLIDE 1 <i>WELCOME & TEAMBUILDER</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Teams will create a team logo using personal items they have with them. The teams will do a gallery walk to view each team's logo.
8:45-10:00	SLIDES 2-5 <i>LOOKING BACK AT OUR THOUGHTS</i> <i>Evaluation as Professional Growth Tool</i> <i>Developing Teacher Expertise</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Each team looks back at the quotes from day 1 and discuss how each quote resonates with them now and answer the guiding questions <input type="checkbox"/> Participants watch the video "Every Teacher Can Improve" then self-reflect on how this applies to the evaluation instrument and use the quote to discuss with their team how this applies to them. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants then view a video of R. Marzano "Developing Expert Teacher Video". Then participants will discuss in groups each of the 5 conditions to support

	<i>Reflection on Practices</i>	<p>teacher expertise and how they can apply these conditions to their daily practices using the evaluation instrument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will use their reflection on their current instructional practices using the evaluation instrument and identify ways they can improve their practices by using sticky notes in their evaluation instrument.
10:00- 10:15	BREAK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants take 15 minute break
10:15- 11:30	<p>SLIDES 6-8</p> <p><i>TEACHER EXPERTISE CONDITION ONE</i></p> <p><i>TEACHER EXPERTISE CONDITION TWO ~ Peer Observation and Feedback/Self-Analysis</i></p> <p>TEACHER EXPERTISE CONDITION THREE ~ Collaborative Planning Instructional Rounds Team Observations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Each group discusses how they can work toward expertise by using a shared language of practice and share out with whole group. <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group watches videos and discussion on how to increase focused feedback and deliberate practice for developing expertise using the evaluation instrument with peer observation and feedback and self-video-analysis using the evaluation instrument will be explained as 2 effective strategies to meet this condition <input type="checkbox"/> Watch video on collaborative planning and discuss in teams then as whole group how it creates opportunities to observe and discuss expertise. 3 strategies explained; Collaborative Planning, Instructional Rounds and Peer/Team Observations
11:30-12:15	LUNCH	Participants have lunch
12:15- 1:30	<p>SLIDES 9-10</p> <p><i>TEACHER EXPERTISE CONDITION FOUR Identifying Goals & Creating a Plan for Success</i></p> <p><i>TEACHER EXPERTISE CONDITION FIVE ~ Monitoring & Adjusting</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group discussion about how what we have learned so far can help us meet condition four. <input type="checkbox"/> Using their evaluation instrument and the sticky notes of their current practices each participant will identify at least 3 practices they would like to improve on this school year. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will work in groups to determine what are the important components to create a success plan to achieve their goals. The components should identify each of the conditions for teacher expertise. Groups will share. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will discuss how they can meet condition five by using their plan to monitor and adjust their instructional practice throughout the school year based on conditions 1-4)
1:30-3:30	SLIDES 11-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will use this time to create a plan on an electronic document to use the

	<i>INDEPENDENT & COLLABORATIVE PLANNING</i> <i>REFLECTION OF PROCESS</i>	evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool throughout the coming school year. <input type="checkbox"/> Participants will work both independently and collaborative <input type="checkbox"/> Whole group reflection and discussion of planning process and strategies for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool
3:30- 4:00	SLIDE 15-16 <i>DAY 3 CLOSURE</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants complete exit ticket and evaluation for PD <input type="checkbox"/> PD References & Resources

DAY 3 POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

**RE-IMAGING EVALUATION
AS A
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL**

DAY THREE

Facilitator ~ La Joi Gardner

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL 1

LOOKING BACK ON OUR THOUGHTS

- As a team look back at your team quote activity from day one.
- Is there anything the team would change?
- Is there anything the team would like to add?
- Are there any quotes that resonate with you more after the last 2 days?

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL 2

EVALUATION AS PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

[Every Teacher Can Improve Video](#)

[Marazano Developing Expert Teachers Video](#)

"Don't struggle to be a better teacher than everybody else. Simply be a better teacher than you ever thought you could be."

--Robert John Meehan

REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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BECOMING AN EXPERT TEACHER

[Marazano Developing Expert Teachers Video](#)

Five Conditions to Support Teacher Expertise

Marzano
2007a



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www.MarzanoCenter.com

REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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DEVELOPING TEACHER EXPERTISE

1. A well-articulated knowledge based and share language for teaching
2. Opportunities for feedback and deliberate practice
3. Opportunities to observe and discuss expertise
4. Clear criteria and plan for success
5. Recognition of status as one makes incremental progress toward expert performance.

~ Marazano, 2012

REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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Reflection of Practices

- Use the evaluation instrument to reflect on your instructional practices
- Honestly, address how you meet or do not meet an effective for each practice.
- Use sticky notes to make comments about your current practices in comparison to the evaluation instrument

Let's take a 15 minute break.

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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EXPERTISE STEP ONE

A Well-Articulated Knowledge Based and Share Language for Teaching

To meet step one,

How can we work toward to improving how we articulate the knowledge and language for teaching on the district evaluation instrument?

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EXPERTISE STEP TWO

Opportunities for Focused Feedback and Deliberate Practice

To meet step two,

How can we increase the focused feedback we receive and deliberate practices for developing our teaching expertise using the evaluation instrument?

- *Peer-observation and Peer-feedback*
- *Self-reflection Practices*

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EXPERTISE STEP THREE

Opportunities to Observe and Discuss Expertise

To meet step three,

What opportunities can we do to observe and discuss our teaching expertise using the evaluation instrument?

- *Collaborative Planning Video*
- *Instructional rounds*
- *Peer/Team Observations*

Time for Lunch

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EXPERTISE STEP FOUR

Clear Criteria and Plan for Success

To meet step 4,

How can you develop a clear criteria and plan to be successful with your teaching expertise using the evaluation instrument?

- **Goal Setting** by identifying at least one yearly goal as instructional practices you want to focus on improving
- **Action Plan**, develop a plan to reach your yearly goal

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EXPERTISE STEP FIVE

Recognition of Status on Pathway to Success

To meet step 5,

How can you recognize your status on your pathway to success for expert teaching using the evaluation instrument?

- *Measuring your progress using the evaluation instrument*
- *Monitoring and Adjusting your practices*

REIMAGINING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL STRATEGIES

INDEPENDENT PLANNING

- Using your self-assessment of your practices using the evaluation instrument identify at least 3 practices you would like to focus on this school year.
- Develop an action plan you can use to improve on these practices.

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

- Work with preferably at teacher at your school campus
- Create a plan to support each other using the steps for expert teaching.

REFLECTION & DISCUSS

- Reflection on the process and strategies learn throughout the professional development to develop your understanding and skills to use the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool.
- Share at least one thing with whole group based on your reflection

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

- PD EVALUATION
- EXIT TICKET ~
 - What support will you need to implement your plan for this school year?
 - Use sticky note to place on EXIT BOARD

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

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Marzano Interview: Purpose of Teacher Evaluation
http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/vol12/iss03/wm03/The_Two_Purposes_of_Teacher_Evaluation.aspx

Center for Adaptive Schools: Norms of Collaboration: https://ed.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/3_norms_associated.pdf

Effective Feedback Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4C8SLy6J>

Evaluation Quotes <https://www.ascpotes.com/quotes/topics/evaluation.html>

Every Teacher Can Improve Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wll6wA5TTE>

Good Thinking-That's so Meta(Cognitive) video by Smithsonian Science Education Center retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4N00dM6>

Minds in Bloom Ideas for Educators Read 5 Tips for Engagement Strategies
<https://minds-in-bloom.com/5-tips-to-increase-student-engagement/>

Norms of Collaboration: Annotated https://ed.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/3_norms_associated.pdf

Norms of Professional Development <https://www.sldeserve.com/series/2006-norms-for-professional-development>

Quotes about teacher evaluation <https://www.quotesmaster.org/teacher-evaluation>

Solution Tree: Robert J. Marzano on Developing Teacher Expertise Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wll6wA5TTE>

Teacher Evaluation Model Training Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1aOZ1W4dI>

Teacher Thought-We grow teachers July 3, 2020, 5 Levels of Student Engagement @ <https://www.teachthought.com/teachthought/levels-of-student-engagement-continuum/>

The Education Hub April 1, 2018 The importance of feedback <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad1a1pWw>

REIMAGING EVALUATION AS A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH TOOL

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY 3 FINAL EVALUATION

Facilitator: La Joi Gardner

Please complete this evaluation rating the overall professional development. For each statement, provide a rating by checking the box that applies

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The professional development was of high quality.					
2. The professional development content will be useful to me.					
3. I can use the knowledge and skills I gained to improve my instructional practices.					
4. I can use the knowledge and skills I gained to use the evaluation instrument to guide my instructional practices.					
5. I would like additional opportunities to increase my					

knowledge and skills with the evaluation instrument.					
6. There was a supportive professional learning community during professional development.					
7. The professional development provided opportunities to collaborate and learn from colleagues.					
8. The professional development had opportunities to seek meaning and construct new understandings of the evaluation instrument.					
9. Professional development had an appropriate balance of presentation and participant interactions.					
10. The overall presenter's effectiveness.					
11. The materials used for professional development were appropriate.					
12. The presentation overall effectiveness					
13. The professional development achieved its purpose, goals, and outcome					
14. I will use my new learning to guide my instructional practices throughout this school year.					
15. I feel confident about the strategies and knowledge I gained to support my instructional practices using the evaluation instrument.					

FEEDBACK QUESTIONS

What did you value the most from this professional development?
As a result of the professional development, what will you do differently in the future? Why?
What other supports do you need for using the evaluation instrument as a professional growth tool to guide your instructional practices?

Appendix B: Interview Schedule Guide

(The following interview questions have no specific order and can be adjusted based on data collection needs. Probing questions will be generated by the researcher as needed per interview to provide more clarity and understanding based on participants' responses)

1. Explain what you think the purpose or intent of evaluation?
2. Describe the evaluation instrument used in your district?
3. What are the expectations of the evaluation in your district?
4. Tell me about your experience with using the evaluation instrument in your district?
5. How do you interpret the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument?
6. How do you apply the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument in your classroom?
7. How do you interpret the feedback you receive from the evaluation instrument?
8. Let's say you receive an evaluation result that is not what you expected; how would you respond to this?
9. Describe the acknowledgments and rewards gained from the evaluation?
10. Do you have any challenges with the evaluation instrument?
11. Describe the supports given for evaluation?
12. How does the current evaluation instrument compare to the one used previously in your district?
13. What do you see as an ideal evaluation?
14. What else would you like to share about evaluation?

Appendix C: Data Segments From Participant Interviews

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Q1: Explain what you thing the purpose or intent of evaluation?									
Growth Measure teaching ability Expectations One-time No growth plan Used punitive Get rid of teachers Need professional development to meet purpose	Improve instruction Improve instruction Score instruction Identification strengths/weakness Performance pay	Moment time Observe effectiveness Improve instruction Same page instruction expectations Performance pay	Snapshot of teaching Determine effectiveness Feedback help Evaluate teaching Score for performance pay	Determine teacher doing Yearly observation Get performance pay Provide feedback Grow and develop Guide and support	Identify strengths and weaknesses Give feedback Announced evaluation 301 money	Make aware of strength and weaknesses Get label and score Feedback Yearly evaluation	Improve instruction Label your teaching Done annually Extra money	Evaluate effectiveness Score to determine effectiveness Instruction expectations Score Improve instruction	
Q2: Describe the evaluation instrument used in your district?									
Mixture different components Teaching practices Not clear, broad descriptor language	Used to evaluate our effectiveness Scoring one whole lesson Teacher centric Measuring teacher behavior Plan and deliver lesson To score teaching Measure of expectation Rubric of indicators	Checklist of boxes Principal used to evaluate Teacher overall knowledge Descriptors with look for to observe Create lesson plan	Checklist performance Admin use to evaluate Scores for performance pay	Prepare our formal evaluation Rubric of different performances Scores for teaching methods	Rubric w/domains Descriptors of things teachers do Scores teaching for money	Performance categories Evaluate how well we teach Part of evaluation cycle	Business driven model Rubric component No gray areas Focuses on structures do not fit with all lessons Instructional practices scripted rubric Not used daily	Instructional practices Components of effective lesson Difficult to use with every lesson	
Q3: What are the expectations of the evaluation instrument in your district?									
Meet certain level Teach lesson components Score high One-time observation	At least effective Focus on lesson components Score effectively for performance pay	Formally evaluated once a year	At least score effective Receive performance pay Help write lesson plan for evaluation	Be effective Improve areas of weakness Professional growth	Meet expectations of rubric Get effectiveness label Money 1-2 observations	Different expectations New teachers 2 observations w/some training Continui	Need to score effective for performance pay	Proving effectiveness Become continuing teacher	

P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Q4: Tell me about your experience with using the evaluation instrument in your district?								
Better prepare yearly observation Plan and prepare evaluation Admin use to score teaching No support for my growth	Use to know what to do Show indicators during evaluation Admin not visiting barely doing walkthrough for support Not following daily	Use for formal evaluation Make sure lesson plan checks all boxes for observation Difficult to use for special education Designed for traditional classroom	Get ready for formal observation To understand my score Plan my lesson for evaluation	Meet expectations using evaluation rubric Try to use daily but challenging at times	Instrument one-size fits all Doesn't fit all subjects and contents	Use some instructional practices Never use beyond evaluation	Do not use evaluation instrument Does not meet instructional needs Use as scoring mechanism by admin Determine effectiveness	Help with planning lesson to meet district expectations Use to reflect on lesson No support with improving just work on refinement
Q5: How do you interpret the feedback you receive from the evaluation instrument?								
Use experience to interpret Experience does not match evaluator Everybody interprets differently Need to understand how to interpret instrument Same page, different meanings	Instructional practices teacher driven Only for traditional lesson Prevent outside box instruction Need to understand how they apply to both students and teachers	Unclear, never had real clarity through conversation or professional development Interpretation changes between administrators Need understanding how to apply to various classrooms	Instructional practices very general without demonstration looks like More learning opportunities	Understand what looks like Planning lessons for evaluation	General practices More development with specials and small groups Needs opportunities for training Understand them clearly to be on same page	Focus on what is expected Use to be successful for evaluation Incapable of breaking down how each IP looks in classroom Training could address this	Using my experience Difficult to use without clarity of what admin wants Structures are forced teacher behavior How to blend them into our instruction Suggestions for improving or adjusting practices	Practices general nonspecific No guidance on how to improve Practices not possible everyday use Content and time restraints
P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Q6: How do you apply the instructional practices on the evaluation instrument in your classroom?								
Use lesson plan template Use most daily, not	Don't use to plan daily Think about some practices	Try to apply IP works best using lesson plan	Use during formal evaluation	Try to understand IP's look like in my	Do not address method of inquiry	Use the components guide my	IP's not applicable for daily use More for	I use components daily but can't say how

very practical for every content subject area	when planning Not necessary practical everyday	daily Implement ation find myself adjusting during my lesson because they not working	Use language on rubric so evaluator knows I'm using it Does not meet instructional needs or goals always	classroom when planning my lesson Use most daily based on what standard I'm teaching but never works out	Evaluating administrator not able to breakdown From traditional method following rubric	lessons but more specifically my evaluation Daily you would not observe all components in my class	creating cookie-cut teaching to keep uniformity Evaluated based on a formal commercial product	well I am using them
Q7: How do you interpret the feedback you receive from the evaluation instrument?								
Feedback comes once a year during yearly observation No plan or recommendation for growth Given score with area of refinement and area of reinforcement	Good feedback I apply, Feedback is not useful when principals can't interpret IP's Given to satisfy evaluation Incapable giving adequate feedback to support growth	Opportunity for dialogue as long as meaningful Need specific feedback regularly to interpret and apply But given as score and one word reinforcement and refinement	Want feedback Help me grow Received once a year Very general numerical score without details for improving instruction No rich clear feedback to improve instruction	Always gotten positive feedback but could be better Use to reflect on instruction Think of ways to improve More often than my yearly evaluation	Problem after getting feedback from annual evaluation no support to know how you are improving	Feedback needs to be clear what they want for me to improve based on rubric language requires more feedback Not translated outside rubric language Deeper understand to improve	Find dragonish and not organic Find one thing wrong Feedback is limited No discussion or value behind it. Administration not very fluent with the evaluation instrument	I accept it to make goals Of how to improve area of refinement Don't get often but when I do I take it to heart
Q8: Let's say you receive an evaluation result that is not what you expected; how would you respond to this?								
If provided in way to cognitively coach and process, I accept it to get better Needs explanation why I need to get better	Best if given 2-way but these conversations do not happen Focus test scores Lot of feedback based on student test scores not instruction	Evaluators need to be content specific to better give feedback	Have proof or evidence to talk about how to get better score	Principals misinterpret IP's on the feedback they give Great gap in alignment everyone's understanding IP's	Feedback is important, positive or negative, with caution to make better and grow from	Just accept it, have discussion to work on improving	Challenge it Self-advocate Admin do not understand how to interpret the tool itself Prepare evidence	Meet with evaluator to understand how I can improve
P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P8
Q9: Describe the acknowledgments and rewards gained from evaluation?								

Only Pay for performance	Performance Pay	Pay for performance, 301 money	Pay for performance	Pay for performance	Pay for performance	Pay for performance	Pay for performance	Pay for performance
Q10: Do you have any challenges with the evaluation instrument?								
Everyone has different definition of indicator Does not fit all subjects' areas One-size fits all Not on same page Do not communicate with teachers how to interpret	Lesson plan template and instructional practices difficult to adjust to all subjects Need deeper understanding how this looks using our instrument	Not clear understanding of expectations How to apply to different classroom needs Understood descriptors to improve effectiveness Need linear understanding	Does not match needs Explained to administrators how it looks IP's one-size fits all based on descriptors	Better if provided training Training needs to help teacher understand how to interpret instrument for daily use We figure out on own and learn by failure	Fit everything checked off every category during evaluation Content taught does not match rubric	Has glitches All content does not fit instrument Must follow to score and get 301 money Prevents teachers from using best practices	Does not agree with instrument Process my classroom doesn't trust Value null and void	Components easily missed when not understood by administrator.
Q11: Describe the supports given for evaluation?								
Optional coaching conference Instructional specialist	Optional pre-conference Peer support	Instructional coach Special education coordinator	Instructional specialist but they service all schools	Sometime TCT but not really good only 10-15 minutes	District coaches and specialist Pre-conference	District coaches and specialist Optional pre-conference	District coaches and specialist Optional pre-conference	District coaches and specialist Optional pre-conference
Q12: How does the current evaluation instrument compare to the one used previously in your district?								
Not specific for growth No adequate feedback Seek own PD to grow	Takes deeper look at lesson Needs give more specific feedback to improve instruction	Could be more valuable One and done evaluations Need deeper look understand each component and expectation	List of look for-s Broken down in categories Expectations with descriptors	Checklist but with more detail Not clear or specific but better	Descriptors each component Help you improve with best practices	Similar just more detail Help you focus on each area at a time	Old evaluation more valuable w/portfolio and instruction Principals need to visit at least once a month with feedback	More detailed to instruction Lacks information for strong process to improve
P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Q13: what do you see as an ideal evaluation?								
Applicable to every subject need	More student centered Adaptable to inquiry and	Consideration of demographic or	Descriptive, clearly defining	Designed to reflect on everything	Includes student growth Use of	Evaluation portfolios	Evaluators drop by regularly give	Need more fidelity with

Better trained administrators More feedback for continuous growth and development	specials Evaluated on student learning	inherent challenges different classrooms Needs provisions of know how Have truly deep understand expectations look like on instrument	expectations and descriptors IP applies to each subject	g that you want individual to do Language descriptors more specific and clear understanding of expectations	artifacts to demonstrate learning	Take our instrument look at more focused language and performance	continuous feedback Not a one and done Weekly observations and once a month evaluations Support growth and development Good understanding of practices	observing and providing feedback More than one to 2 evaluations per year
Q14: What else would you like to share about evaluation?								
More specific detailed professional growth More feedback	Improve how we evaluate our instruction	Use improve our instruction Leaders & administrators not using adequately More than one	To be used with real purpose not a got you	Better if everyone on same page T, A & DO. Too many gray areas on instrument	Qualitative and quantitative data to support effectiveness	Look through w/fine tooth comb to make language clearer of expectations support growth	Getting off focus of teacher more students Bad teacher show through student performance	Admin need to be in classrooms more One or 2 a year does not work

Appendix D: Codes, Patterns, and Emergent Themes From Segmented Interview Data

Finalized Open Codes	Patterns/Relationship	Research Questions, Findings & Emergent Themes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instrument measure teaching • used to score instruction • used to receive performance pay • yearly evaluation • one-time observation • Admin use instrument to score lesson • plan and prepare for formal evaluation • IP's difficult to use every lesson • IP's impractical all subjects • Instrument focus traditional instruction • IP's look like in every classroom • Clear expectations how to use daily • Inadequate feedback • Infrequent feedback • No support for improvement • Interpret based on experience • Feedback no plan or support for growth • Gap in understanding of IP's • More observations to improve • More feedback to improve • Need to be on same page • Administrator misinterpretation of IP's • Discrepancy in how everyone interprets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers understand the purpose of evaluation but feel it's not the focus • Teachers only use to prepare and plan for their yearly observation/annual evaluation to get high score to receive highest amount of performance pay. • Performance pay only reward or incentive to use evaluation instrument • Teacher feel the instrument is for administrator to score their observed lesson to give label and amount of performance pay • Teachers find the instrument as a list of rubrics for performance expectations • Teachers feel the instrument practices do not fit or are impractical to use daily or in every classroom or for every subject • Only use the IP's that fit lesson • Find instrument to not give guidance of how to improve • Instrument only support direct instruction • Need explanation and understanding on how to apply to every classroom/lesson/subject • ET's find feedback to be infrequent, nonprescriptive and support of their growth and development • Feedback only one-time a year during evaluation is typical • Feedback given as scores with 1 refinement and 1 	RESEARCH QUESTION 1: What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the use of an evaluation instrument as a formative tool to guide their instructional practices?	
		Theme 1: Plan & Prepare for Evaluation	Elementary teachers perceive the evaluation instrument as a guide to plan and prepare for their annual evaluation
		Theme 2: Impractical Instructional Practices	Elementary teachers interpret the evaluation instrument's instructional practices as impractical for daily instruction.
		Research Question 2: What are elementary teachers' experience with interpreting the evaluation instrument to improve their instructional practices?	
		Theme 3: Inadequate Feedback	Elementary teachers view the evaluation instrument's feedback as inadequate for improving their instructional practices.
		Theme 4: Professional Development	Elementary Teachers express the need for professional development that aligns the evaluation instrument interpretation districtwide.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not specific for growth • No acknowledgements • No training available 	<p>reinforcement no suggestion or follow-up for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional walkthroughs come with no feedback • ET's desire same meaning and understanding of how to use the evaluation instrument IP's daily • Need for aligning everyone's interpretation of IP's on instrument • Need to understand how to use instrument to improve instruction • IP need better defining with deeper understanding of what they look like in the class daily 		
---	---	--	--