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ABSTRACT

A model of educational policy development is reported that is democratic without being egalitarian. It provides a process for gathering information from all interested groups in a school district to construct a policy that is uniquely suited to that district. It was designed to help a small committee construct a teacher evaluation policy for a school district with 2,800 students. The steps of the model incorporate the beliefs of every sector of the school community without ignoring the experience and beliefs of others. The development process began with a committee of teachers and administrators who made plans for a committee of stakeholders that would include teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community representatives. This committee then asked questions of teachers, administrators, parents, and students about existing policies and, for groups other than teachers, their opinions of good teaching. Six areas of teacher competence were expanded to 14 standards. A scoring rubric incorporating the standards was developed and refined, and the final policy was presented to the school board for approval. In its second year, the policy appears to have met its goals for inclusion of the local vision of teaching and research on teacher development and evaluation. The development approach illustrated that not all groups have the same areas of knowledge, but all have a legitimate interest and some expertise to contribute to policy development. An appendix presents criteria for useful feedback developed through teacher response, the parent survey, and a questionnaire for students. (Contains 4 references.) (SLD)

Locally Constructed Teacher Evaluation Policy
A Model for Policy Development

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Presented at Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association
Chicago, Illinois March 26, 1997

Introduction

Daily, teachers and students stand to pledge allegiance to the flag. This creed is a statement of the principles of American democracy. After thousands of repetitions its meaning is still ambiguous. Perhaps that is why everyone can agree to it. The part that I refer to is "justice for all." What is justice? Too often "justice" in public school policy has been confused with equality where equal has been simplified to mean identical. As every child knows, a hot breakfast at school is a decidedly different entity to the child who has not eaten in the last twelve hours and to the child whose mother insisted on oatmeal, juice, and toast before leaving the house. A trivial example, perhaps, but illustrative of the difference between just and identical.

When policy development strives to be democratic, the distinction between just and identical is important. As unequal as "one breakfast fits all" is providing the same role to dissimilar groups. The policy development process often goes awry when the same questions are asked of everyone, those who have expert knowledge to offer and those whose opinions are uninformed. In a mistaken pursuit of equality, policy developers form committees of citizens, teachers, students, and experts to work in a democratic, *i.e.* one person, one vote, endeavor to create school policies. School leaders often undervalue their expert knowledge and assume that any well-intentioned person will come up with the same understanding that has developed through study, research, and experience. Frustration, ill-feelings, and flawed policy are too often the products of such well intentioned endeavors. The policies are not successfully implemented or they abound with unintended outcomes to the consternation of educator and citizen alike. Too often the enthusiasm and hard work result in a confirmation of the belief that "nothing works in schools."

The model of policy development explained in this paper is democratic without being egalitarian. It provides a process for gathering information from all of the interested groups in a school district to construct a policy that is uniquely suited to that district. It was designed to help a small committee construct an evaluation policy for a Maine school district of 2800 students. The steps of the model incorporate the beliefs of every sector of the school community in the policy without ignoring the experience and research of others. The policy honors both the need for consistent evaluation standards throughout the district and the variability of appropriate strategies at various grade levels and contexts and the skills and preferences of administrators. In its second

year of implementation, there is evidence that the policy is promoting the standards and the purposes for which it was developed. Data will be presented on its design validity, implementation progress, and effectiveness.

The model is straightforward, and adaptable to other types of policies and to other communities. Essential to its success is thoughtful leadership. The leadership strategies used and their impact on the policy and the committee members are the subject of another analysis (Estabrooke, 1995).

The Development Process

During the summer months, a group of fifteen teachers and administrators met several times to discuss changing the teacher evaluation policy. Many opinions were aired and issues were identified. In September a small committee was assembled from those in the summer group and was charged with the responsibility of designing a new teacher evaluation policy for the district. Building on the understandings developed over the summer, the committee refined its vision through reading research literature on evaluation policy, teacher development, and school change. From the research, it was clear that a policy constructed to suit the district's unique characteristics was most likely to effect change. The research on school change emphasized that those who would be effected by the new policy should be involved in its development. The committee realized that its role would be to engage the school and community in an exploration of teaching and evaluation and use the knowledge obtained to construct a policy for the district. With this vision for its work, the committee developed questions that needed to be answered to inform the policy. Each question became a mini-inquiry project conducted by the committee members, engaging the school community in research on itself. After choosing a three year cycle that provided clinical supervision for one year and teacher directed individual development for two years, the committee drafted a set of questions which became the foci for engaging every interest group in the district in discussion of teacher evaluation. When the questions were answered, the committee would use the data to construct the policy.

The committee defined as stakeholders the teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community representatives of the district. First, the committee wanted to know how teachers felt about evaluation. Second, they wanted to know what administrators expected from teachers.

They wanted to know what parents hoped teachers would do for their children's education. Finally they wanted to ask high school students what teachers did that led to learning for them. A plan was developed for each of these research areas. It was determined that each teacher would work with the group in which she was a natural member, i.e. each teacher with her own school's faculty and the principal with other administrators. My role would be to train them for the work and help as it was needed. The committee would meet monthly to review progress and design the policy as information was discovered.

Question 1. **What are the experiences of teachers and their resulting beliefs about provision of feedback on instruction that leads to meaningful change?** To answer this question, the committee asked teachers in school based meetings to reflect on times that they had received feedback on their teaching that led to improvements. They were provided with paper and pencils and encouraged to be as free with the interpretation of the prompt as they wished. The idea for this activity came from an article by Brookfield on critical incident writing (1986). The activity involves having participants respond with a short narrative to a prompt chosen to draw out the experiences of the participants in relation to some issue. When all of the narratives are completed, the participants share their narratives in a small group of their colleagues. As they share the stories, they identify common elements in their individual experiences until a list of critical features that seem to be important in the narratives is developed. Once these are recorded where everyone can see them, the leader provides opportunities for those present to make generalizations based on the information collected. Checks are made to be sure that everyone's experience is represented by the generalizations. When a number of critical elements are identified that seem to include the experiences of all of the participants, those are collected as understandings constructed from the individual experiences of the participants.

Usually, a few common elements will be found in all of the narratives. From the particulars of each person's unique story, common factors emerge. The activity provides useful information for policy development about the previous experiences and expectations of participants, allows individuals to make connections between their unique experiences and the common experience of the group, and permits participants to vent anger from previous experiences with the issue. Finding that what feels like a unique experience is familiar to others builds a sense

of community and teamwork that is essential for change initiatives.

After twenty minutes teachers were asked to join with three colleagues and in these small groups to share their narratives and look for themes that appeared in them. They were invited to share their discoveries by writing them on a chart at the front of the room. Finally, the leader reviewed the results that had been recorded and asked if everyone's experience was represented. Then the facilitator lead the group to construct some criteria for useful feedback on instruction.

After each school had completed this needs assessment, the committee assembled the charts and made generalizations about useful feedback (appendix 1). The results were reported to the teachers in a memorandum for verification that the generalizations reflected their beliefs and hopes for an evaluation program. The committee used this information and research on supervision to design procedures for the evaluation program. This initial meeting with teachers also served to permit questions about the committee's purposes and goals and for teachers to vent frustration over previous supervision and evaluation experiences. Finally, it made apparent to teachers that feedback could be useful in improving their teaching.

Question 2 **What do administrators believe are the essential areas of expertise for teachers?** To answer the second question,principals formed a focus group under the leadership of the principal on the committee to discuss their criteria for effective teaching. They developed a list of six headings for the standard evaluation tool: organization/classroom management, classroom atmosphere, instruction, physical setting, student/teacher relations, and student assessment. The administrators requested that there be two forms for data collection, one for classroom observation and one that is more comprehensive. For each heading, statements gleaned from other evaluation programs and the Support System used with beginning teachers were selected by the principal/committee member. These draft standards were revised by the administrative team in a second session. The six areas were the beginning of the standards that would eventually guide evaluation.

Question 3 **What standards do parents endorse for their children's teachers?** Parents in the district were invited to participate in a survey on teaching. Parent/ Teacher organizations at the elementary schools were informed that a committee was trying to describe good teaching as part of a teacher evaluation policy. They were asked to complete this statement as

part of a PTO meeting: "I hope my child's teacher will be or I appreciate that my child's teacher is...." Parents who attended parent conferences at the middle school and high school were given an opportunity to respond to the same prompt while they waited to talk with teachers or at the end of their conferences. Finally, each school included a short article about the committee and the survey question in its newsletter to parents. Once this data was returned to each school, the committee members engaged other teachers in analyzing the parent responses. Teachers were both surprised and happy to hear that what parents wanted was not in conflict with their own goals as teachers. The results of the analysis for each school were reported to the committee and to the parents in the schools' newsletters.

Question 4 **What do students believe is effective teaching?** In an extended homeroom period, the high school students were asked to list three or four of the most important characteristics of good teachers with these questions providing a focus: What makes a good teacher? What do teachers do to help you in the classroom? How do teachers help you learn? After all of the responses were collected, the committee member from the high school engaged her colleagues in analyzing the responses during a staff meeting. Teachers said that they enjoyed knowing what the kids thought and they appreciated the feedback. Several teachers made up a questionnaire based on the results of the analysis to use with their classes in assessing their teaching. The report of the high school teachers was forwarded to the committee and reported to students.

Question 5 **What do policy makers of the school district and activist citizens believe about good teaching?** The committee attended the school board meeting to gather data for this question. After an update on the work of the committee thus far, the school board members, administrators, and public audience were asked to reflect on their own experiences as students and to share their hopes for teachers in the district. First, they were asked to reflect on their own educational experiences and to recall a teacher who had been especially effective in helping them to learn or grow. After recalling in detail the teacher, the school setting, the subject, the grade level, anything that would refresh their memories about the learning experience, they were asked to answer this question, "What did the teacher do that was helpful for your learning?" All of the principals and three members of the public accepted the chance to respond as well. After

about five minutes, when all of the board members seemed to be finished, they were asked one more question: "What do you hope your best teachers do to promote student learning?" Not surprisingly, the hopes and visions expressed were consistent with the draft of standards that had been developed thus far.

The six areas identified by the administrative team were expanded to a set of fourteen standards including the views of parents, students, and public representatives. These standards were checked with the team once more, then with the teachers' association, and the superintendent. The committee planned to use a rubric for the evaluation of teachers to encourage self- evaluation and planning for improvement. The rubric would have four levels. The top would describe exemplary practice; the bottom would describe inadequate practice. The two middle levels would describe practice for the standard that was adequate and good. To define exemplary practice, the committee drew upon the expertise of teachers through a second set of meetings at each school.

Teachers had not been asked to define good teaching. This decision was both intentional and serendipitous. First, since teachers spend their lives considering what good teaching is, it seemed unlikely that they would be able to produce the type of precise statements that the other groups produced in a short meeting. Secondly, the opportunity to express their experiences and desires for feedback on instruction seemed more important. Finally, the evaluation of teaching is a function of those who are the recipients of teachers' services as well as those who administer the schools on their behalf, so it seemed appropriate that those groups establish the standards.

In the second set of teacher meetings, the committee members each engaged her colleagues in a discussion of exemplary practice to complete the rubric for evaluation. These meetings were the most ambitious for committee members to conduct. I helped them to prepare by providing detailed directions and by offering to attend those meetings if they felt that would be helpful. At the meetings, the committee member reviewed the progress since the previous report and stated that a draft was being prepared that the committee believed incorporated their suggestions for feedback that would improve teaching and the provisions for accountability required by the School Board. Then they reviewed the fourteen professional standards and responded to questions. Next, they explained the concept of a scoring rubric and told the teachers that we anticipated using a rubric rather than a checklist as the method of evaluation. A rubric would serve two purposes. It would

allow for self-assessment and specific guidance for improvement since the levels of performance were articulated explicitly in the document. It would provide some standardization among the evaluators as a check on subjectivity.

The teachers were asked to help define the levels of competence for each standard. Four levels would be required: exemplary practice, professionally well performed, professionally adequate, and inadequate for professional practice. We asked them to describe the top level -- exemplary practice -- by reflecting on their experience and knowledge about teaching. They were invited to think of an excellent teacher's performance of that standard and describe it. "Try to imagine that you have observed many teachers who perform very well on the standard. Now, describe for a new teacher how that task is performed in exemplary style." From their descriptions of exemplary practice, the committee would draft the other levels to complete the rubric.

The teachers were divided into small groups. Each group was given one or more of the standards and asked to return to the full group within an hour to share its results. The small groups dispersed, and the committee member and I circulated among them checking on clarity of directions. When the teachers reconvened, the standards were again displayed and teachers were invited to provide feedback to the committee on a sheet of paper. Groups were invited to share their description of exemplary practice with the group and a few did. Finally, they were reminded that the descriptions from the other school groups and theirs would be used by the committee to prepare the rest of the rubric and that they would have an opportunity to review it before it was incorporated into the policy.

At the next work session, the committee wrote the rubric using the exemplary descriptions from the four school faculties. Completion of the rubric completed the policy draft. The next step was to present it to teachers, administrators, teachers' association officials, and finally the school board for final review and (hopefully) adoption. At each meeting, the policy was presented and feedback was invited. The administrators were satisfied that the standards described their vision of good teaching. Teachers' association officials were concerned with the standard on punctuality and attendance at meetings because most meetings are held outside of the contracted day. Beyond that concern, all of the standards were acceptable to the association and the policy as a whole was acceptable. The meetings with teachers were again conducted at the building level by the

committee member from the school. Teachers were asked if the standards and the rubric reflected what they believed about teaching. With remarkably little discussion, the teachers agreed. Many expressed amazement that their idea was recognizable in the final version. They were happy with the policy's provision for flexibility and professional development. Some teachers expressed a concern that everyone would be expected to meet the exemplary level of the rubric to be considered "good." A few teachers were quite concerned about this possibility. As the teachers discussed the rubric, it was apparent that most underestimated their own performance as their colleagues said, "But, you do that so well," about the very standard they felt unlikely to meet. With a few exceptions, teachers expressed enthusiasm for the new policy and were willing to suspend unanswered concerns until they could see how it worked in practice. The committee was happy with that level of support. In all of the meetings, the areas of concern were about how the policy would work, not that the standards failed to reflect what they believed about good teaching.

Finally, on June 21, after a brief presentation, the school board adopted the policy and directed that it be implemented in the fall.

Data

The data were the various documents collected during the the process and the perspectives of the participants gathered through interviews, surveys and focused discussions. The resulting policy and its analysis by objective researchers are data for the study. Interviews of the implementation team before implementation, at the completion of the first year, and after its first year and a half provide an indicator of the policy's usefulness and adherence to the principles identified through the process. Anecdotal evidence of the implementation process were also data. A wider collection of data on teachers and parents reviews of the policy will be conducted when the first three year cycle is complete.

Results

Using the model, the committee developed a policy that appears to have met its goals for inclusion of local vision of teaching and the research on teacher development and evaluation. Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation suggests that policies be judged for design, implementation and effectiveness. Most of the data relate to the design validity of the policy, but limited data about implementation and effectiveness are available.

The policy met the criteria that the committee had developed for it. It incorporated the views of stakeholders to the schools, the beliefs about observational feedback of teachers, and the research on teacher development, reflective practice, and clinical supervision.

To have some objective appraisal of the policy, I sent it to Daniel Stufflebeam at the Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation at Western Michigan University. CREATE is a national center funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, directed by Dr. Stufflebeam. The appraisal commended several qualities of the policy: (a) the combination of a research-based system responsive to the specific needs of the system; (b) the inclusion of elementary, junior and senior high school teachers, administrators and superintendent in the committee; (c) taking into account the preferences of a wide group of stakeholders including parents, students, teachers, and policymakers; (d) through the consultations, the shared ownership of so many groups in the school community; (e) clear articulation of professional standards which reflect the duties of a teacher; and (f) clearly spelled out procedures and processes for evaluation. These qualities were cited as reflecting the Personnel Evaluations Standards of Service Orientation, Constructive Orientation, and Political Viability.

Three areas were recommended for further modification. First, the type of data that principals would use to assess whether a teacher met or did not meet a particular standard was not specified in the policy. Using additional data collection beyond the three observations was suggested, specifically teacher portfolios and interviews of randomly selected parents to provide for triangulation of data. Second, the use of style as an evaluative standard was discouraged since it is hard to define and no single style is recommended for every learner. Finally, the gradual implementation of the plan is suggested for two reasons: time is required for training both principals and teachers, and a pilot of the system in a few sites, using the Joint Committee's standards to conduct a meta evaluation to ensure that when the system is fully implemented, evaluations will be defensible and will help improve teaching and learning. The letter closed with an invitation to send later drafts for review and with this statement, "Once again, we think that the new plan is off to a good start and, subject to some modification, will serve the educational community of M.S.A.D. #35 well." The committee modified the data collection to include teacher

collected artifacts in a portfolio and other data beyond the observation notes. The standard on teaching style was retained as the intention of the rubric was to provide for reflection and a better word could not be found.

The policy includes a set of fourteen standards articulating the vision of good teaching held by parents, students, teachers, public representatives and administrators of the district. They were written directly from the information gathered from the interest groups, and they were checked again and again by the various groups throughout the nine months that the committee worked. After a year and a half of using the standards with teachers, the principals report no instances of a teacher not understanding what is meant by a standard. Their meaning is clear and concise. Although teachers are not as familiar with the standards as they ideally would be, principals believe that will happen with time. All the principals agreed that the standards reflect their understandings of parents' expectations . Two principals mentioned that two standards seemed somewhat redundant and could be revised, but agreed the standards provide a clear focus for the post-conference and general evaluation discussion.

The principals report that they have used the scoring rubric as a way to open discussion of teaching. Several principals reported that they ask their teachers to assess their own teaching with the rubric before seeing the principal's score. One reported that the rubric helps teachers open up and talk about practices and style. Often the teachers' appraisals of performance is more critical than the principal's and the discussion is an opportunity for the principal to help the teacher recognize strengths as well as target areas for improvement.

Principals reported that the impact of the policy has been to make their jobs more about teaching. It provides a structure that encourages effective use of principals' time in supervising instruction. One principal noted that he was spending much more of his time interacting with teachers about teaching. The amount of time the program would require from principals was a concern before implementation, but after a year and a half, all principals reported that the time demand was not too much. Principals had found various ways to organize their time for evaluation. Some principals said that they set up a schedule and inform teachers of their intended visits and meetings. Others are leaving the timing to teachers, encouraging them to invite the principal to class when it would be most useful for them to have feedback.

Principals were generous in praising the policy as meaningful and useful. One said, "This is the most useful and satisfactory tool I've used for teacher evaluation." Another said, "I love it. I get to spend much more time talking about teaching."

One benchmark of implementation is the institutionalization of change. Although it has been less than two years since the policy was adopted, evidence of its becoming integral to the district's work have begun to appear. In a recent meeting on a Goals 2000 grant, one committee member referred to the policy as a source of teacher self-evaluation and goal setting. She used the initials that refer to the Individual Development Plan, and everyone knew what she meant. The policy has replaced the old system throughout the district. Teachers' plans for development have begun to be presented to the certification committee and accepted there. It may be that the policy development model with its frequent teacher and administrator input fostered rapid institutionalization as the policy was well understood by the school personnel and designed to fit the structures of the district.

Another sign of success is that teachers are using the policy to serve their own purposes rather than simply to satisfy policy requirements. One teacher has used the IDP to get access to technology. He created a web page for the school and connected his social studies classroom to the world. He has become an enthusiastic supporter of other teachers' interest in computers and a resource for his colleagues. Another teacher has spent a year researching and learning about Attention Deficit Disorder. In the second year of her plan, she is designing a workshop to be used with parents of affected children to help them be more successful in school. Another teacher will assist her in making her presentation available on video for parents to borrow. In each case the teacher was supported to explore an area of interest and develop expertise that enriches the schools.

Principals were interviewed at the beginning of implementation, after a year, and after a year and a half. Their changing focus of concern seems to indicate progress in implementation of the policy. Before using the policy, principals major concerns were for the amount of time that the program required of them. They assumed report writing would take considerable time when it actually is a very minor part of the policy. It seemed that they were combining in their minds the old and the new policy. The policy had purposely shifted the active role to the teacher, but the principals initially found it difficult to let that role go. After the first year, principals had accepted

the active involvement of teachers and reapportioned their time toward face to face discussion and away from written documentation. By the year and a half mark, principals main concerns were how to help provide more effective feedback, and to encourage the teachers to take more active roles in providing data for evaluation. Their concerns now indicate an increased understanding of the policy and its purposes and procedures. Their questions center on how to refine their feedback and conferencing skills, how to use the policy effectively. Their focus is on using it to meet real goals not simply managing the forms and processes as directed. This progress in concerns seems to indicate progress in implementation.

Analysis

What can be learned from this case of policy development?

1. All of the groups who are stakeholders in education have legitimate interest and knowledge to contribute to policy development. The standards are truly a compilation of the knowledge about teaching and learning of informed educators, concerned parents, elected community representatives, and experienced students. Each groups' vision is included; eliminating any one would change the standards. Together they describe competent teaching. Together they produce a fullness and specificity that would not be achieved without any one group.

The areas of knowledge are not the same for each group. Designing inquiry approaches that accessed that information was the committee's responsibility. Everyone was not invited to answer every question. Parents were not asked how teachers should treat students, but they were able to say that their children should be treated with care and respect. Principals were not asked how teachers should present lessons, but that attention should be given to assessment, adapted to individual learning styles and appropriate to developmental stages. Pedagogical questions were left to the specialists, the teachers. Teachers, with their colleagues, wrote the descriptions of exemplary practice to guide both their own practice and the administrators' assessments of it.

2. The policy development process has a direct effect on the implementation of the policy. In this case, the cultural norms required for successful implementation were modeled in the development. For example, shared inquiry into teaching and learning between teachers and administrators was modeled in the composition of the committee. It is essential for the dialogue and study of teaching that the policy promotes. Looking for purposes as a way to find process

was the major focus of the committee, and it is reflected in both the standards and the procedures of the policy. No strategies are dictated to teachers, but questions are raised that promote pedagogical knowledge construction both for individual teachers and the administrators who work with them. Respect for the various interests and perspectives of the stakeholders was modeled through the inquiry approaches. Respect for each teacher's artistry in meeting the standards is essential to the effective use of the policy. The basic procedures follow the clinical supervision model in format, however the data collection is left open to the principal and teacher on a case by case basis. This provides appropriate flexibility for teachers at different career stages and respects the expertise as observers of classroom interactions that various principals bring with them. It is a parallel to the respect for teaching strategy selection that principals are permitted to use a variety of strategies for conducting observations. If change in teaching is to be promoted, the climate for change must be fostered at every opportunity. Developing a highly visible policy is such an opportunity.

3. The high level of participation of teachers and administrators in the policy construction facilitated implementation and rapid investment by both groups in the policy. Principals' requirements were met in the standards and the procedures for the policy. At first there was concern that the policy would require too much time from already busy principals, but by the year and a half mark, every principal said that the time demands were manageable and that the policy provided structure so that educational leadership was an expanding part of the job. .As teachers participated in the process, many started to envision projects they would like to undertake with the support of the district during the Individual Development Plan years of the evaluation cycle. By the time it was accepted, they were eager to use it to meet their goals. Some were intrigued by the standard evaluation after many years of not being observed. When teachers were offered a choice of beginning points on the three year cycle to start the implementation, they were well-informed of the options and active in deciding what to do.

4. Using research to define the purposes of evaluation and to draft questions rather than provide answers allowed the committee to construct a policy that suits the local context and is an extension of the educational philosophy of the community. Initially, the committee wanted to obtain policies used by other districts and see what could be used in the district. When policies

were collected, the old policy of the district was among those recommended by the Principal's Association. This convinced the committee members that they should invent a new wheel rather than retread an old one. The research that I chose for them to read raised more questions and clarified the purposes of evaluation instead of supplying ready made programs. As their confidence grew through taking leadership roles within their schools, they looked critically and with less awe at other people's work and came to respect their collective ability to solve problems.

Conclusion

The local construction of policy has many positive outcomes. It builds support for teaching and communication among consumers and providers of education. It provides opportunities for old prejudices and suspicions to be vented and released. The process stimulates discovery of the inarticulate, collective knowledge of the organization. Most people are unaware of the quality and depth of their knowledge until questions are asked that stimulate their concept formation and expression. This policy development process fosters knowledge construction on individual and organizational levels. The implementation of the policy is accelerated by the involvement of all members of the school community in the development process. Most importantly, the process promotes democratic participation in school governance without abandoning the knowledge base of professional education.

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Stufflebeam,D. (personal communication, May 17,1995)

Appendix 1

Criteria for useful feedback constructed by teachers' reflective responses.

Teachers in SAD #35 believe that specific, positive feedback provided immediately following a classroom observation by an administrator, peer, parent, or student who was viewed as supportive and knowledgeable was effective when it was given with a focus on future improvement in an atmosphere of trust and mutually shared goals of improving learning. Many teachers indicated a desire for such feedback stating that they had not been observed in many years and offering suggestions for ways the provision of support and feedback could be organized.

A program that responds to these findings would be characterized by flexibility, provision of timely and specific feedback, an improvement focus, adequate time for pre and post conferences, evaluation by knowledgeable and supportive evaluators drawn from a range of educational perspectives, shared ownership of improvement goals, improvement through a variety of means mutually developed by teacher and evaluator, and an atmosphere of trust and shared goals of increased student learning.

Parent Survey

What is a teacher?

A committee of teachers and administrators is reviewing the evaluation procedures of the District this year. As part of their study they are seeking the perspectives of the various members of the learning community. You are invited to help the Evaluation Study Committee collect information on what is important to parents by sharing your views. Take a few minutes to think about what you value in the teachers that your child or children have had and list three or four of the most important characteristics on the tear off section below. Please return your response to your child's school. Thank you for sharing your perspective with us.

I hope that my child's teacher will be or I appreciate that my child's teacher is...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

MARSHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
October 31, 1994

TO: All High School Students

FROM: Tracy Squires, Member of the Evaluation Committee TS

What is a teacher?

A committee of teachers and administrators is reviewing the evaluation procedures of the District this year. As part of their study they are seeking the perspectives of the various members of the learning community. You are invited to help the Evaluation Study Committee collect information on what is important to students by sharing your views. Take a few minutes to think about what you value in the teachers that you have had in high school. Please list three or four of the most important characteristics on the section provided below. I have provided some questions to help focus the subject. Thank you for sharing your perspective with us.

What makes a good teacher?/ What do teachers do to help you in the classroom?/ How do teachers help you learn?

PC 1. They should be able to level w/ the stude

CK 2. They should have knowledge and experi[illegible] of what they are teaching

PC 3. They [illegible] have self respect + respect for others

PC 4. They should be mature and yet still have the ability to act like a child

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