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A Case Study of the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

Joanmarie Baggs Penney

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A CASE STUDY OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF TEACHER EFFICACY

BY

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ABSTRACT

A Case Study of the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

The characteristics of teaching associated with high student achievement are identified in research on self-efficacy. Teachers with high self-efficacy believe they can ensure that their students learn and to master effective strategies for attaining positive results. This qualitative study provides guidelines for influencing and sustaining efficacy in teachers and their students. Within the framework of this study, teacher efficacy is defined as the most effective proposal for professional development because it relates to instructional choices and actions that affect improved student learning. Despite the emergence of empowerment strategies, wide variances in student achievement endure. In response to persistent challenges to learn how teachers foster high academic achievement, this study examined the implementation of an innovative evaluation program designed to stimulate teacher efficacy and increase student performance. Links between the attributes of high expectations, confidence and persistence support the study contention that teachers who activate their efficacious expertise accomplish their learning goals and expand student skills. Study findings demonstrate that the efficacy beliefs of teachers are reflected in their instructional methods and student outcomes. Three research questions guided the researcher to investigate teacher efficacy factors of high expectations, confidence and persistence. Question 1 investigated subject perceptions of what they chose to teach, how they planned instruction, created learning environments, delivered content and motivated collaboration to advance student achievement. Results aligned with the literature review and identified teacher efficacy as a primary factor affecting student achievement.
The second question led to analysis of participants' experiences in the self-directed model of evaluation. Findings captured pertinent results about the interrelationship of teacher efficacy and evaluation to raise student performance. Case study records revealed that teacher efficacy significantly influenced student achievement. Study subjects articulated ways in which their pedagogical practices improved through participation in the innovative evaluation paradigm. New strategies enhanced instruction, increased teacher efficacy and thereby influenced their students' ability to self-monitor and self-assess. The third question investigated how the implementation of the self-directed evaluation option impacted the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes. Results revealed that consistently setting goals and reflection spiraled teachers and learners to higher levels of achievement. In summary, the self-directed model stimulated teacher efficacy by mobilizing the positive impacts of perceived capacities, choice, and perseverance to raise student achievement.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The lessons learned in writing this dissertation were inspired by my experiences with teachers who took time to encourage me throughout my life.

I would like to thank Dr. David Abbott for his inspirational belief in the power of self-efficacy to empower educators to devote their passion and unconditional love to the academic advancement of all students. His high expectations, confidence and perseverance motivated hundreds of teachers to dedicate themselves to high quality teaching and to an intrinsic belief that became the focus of this dissertation.

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Special thanks are given to Dr. James Caulfield, my Cohort IX colleagues and to Dr. Tami Crader, Cohort VIII graduate and friend, who inspired me to accomplish my goal by seeking new ideas and working with my cohort colleagues toward our collective vision of efficacy and excellence. Their combined goodness and support reinforced my own sense of self-efficacy.

Finally, words alone cannot express the appreciation I hold for my friends and colleagues at Marlboro Memorial Middle School and the thousands of educators and students throughout my career who encouraged me to learn, laugh and leave a legacy of love.
DEDICATION

This dissertation was written in honor of my father, Dr. Bernard J.T. Baggs, who inspired me to understand that education was created to serve mankind in one’s continual pursuit of knowledge and learning for eternal redemption.

As written in Viktor Frankl’s book, Man’s Search for Meaning, "Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual." Writing this study revealed the countless ways in which my life companions, my husband, Ted Penney, my brother, Bernard Baggs, and my best friend and mentor, Jeff Rutzky, shared their time, intellect and compassion to teach me how to become a better person and educator.

Throughout the journey of my graduate studies, I have enjoyed the spiritual company of my children, Laureen, Michelle, Nicole and Brettlyn Penney: four extraordinary women who teach and learn everyday by honoring the academic and sacred gifts that have blessed their lives.
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CHAPTER I

Background and Problem

Introduction

Learning how teachers foster high academic achievement has been a persistent challenge over the course of extensive literature published on the state of American schools over the past twenty years. Multiple studies investigated the implementation of model evaluation programs highlighting collaboration, differentiation, and precise evaluation criteria as significant to raising student performance (Glatthorn & Holler, 1987; Manatt, 1987; Tesch, Nyland, & Kernutt, 1987). McGeal’s (1983) goal-focused teacher appraisal system promoted organized assessment around the core issues of professional standards.

The characteristics of teaching associated with academic success are identified in research on teacher efficacy. Educators with high self-efficacy believe they are capable of motivating students and working with them to achieve designated learning goals (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Bandura’s study (1997, p. 3) on the varied ways teachers apply these beliefs reveal “one’s capabilities to organize and execute a course of action”.

Teachers, who are able to attain challenging goals, are valuable resources for learning about teacher efficacy. Student achievement advances by continually
transforming the ways teachers teach in response to the ever changing ways learners learn.

Administrators use evaluation tools to improve student achievement by assessing teacher performance. Educational leaders who are committed to high quality student achievement are acutely aware of consumer demands for improved teaching skills. The publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983 and federal legislation of No Child Left Behind in 2002 increased attention to academic accountability and highlighted the need for reform. Despite the emergence of popular empowerment strategies, wide variances in student achievement and teacher skills persist as public perception of school success continues to erode. School leaders are continually looking for improved performance by assessing the skills of teachers who are committed to accomplishing their students’ academic success despite challenging obstacles. By focusing on teacher efficacy and accountability, educators encourage reflection on the valuable attributes of high expectations, confidence and persistence to improve student achievement.

Teacher evaluation processes are designed to foster student achievement. Woolfolk Hoy states succinctly that, “there is no one best way to teach” (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 164). By getting to know students, discovering and building on their unique strengths, engaging them through a wide array of strategies, and being “persistent and inventive,” teachers simultaneously enhance their students’ sense of efficacy and their own (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 164). The evaluation system proposed by Danielson and McGreal (2000) enables teachers to design instructionally pertinent decisions. Knowing which attributes of teaching are critical for learning is essential to continually improving student performance.
This study examined the traits of teachers who have been identified as having a high sense of efficacy to better understand instructional practices that are vital to sustained high quality student progress. An interview guide was designed by the researcher to study the perceptions of teachers who participated in a self-directed model of evaluation.

*Problem Statement:*

What attributes of teacher efficacy are essential to influence student achievement? This study examined an innovative teacher performance appraisal system to identify pedagogical attributes that explain the actions of educators who have been recognized for setting high standards for student performance and successfully overcoming barriers to academic achievement. The teachers participating in this evaluation format were selected because they were identified by their principals as high in self-efficacy. Each subject was evaluated through the self-directed model of evaluation in the 2005-2006 school year.

*Relevance and Purpose of the Study*

School leaders require evaluative tools to effectively diagnose the reasons for excellent or poor performance (Connor & Lake, 1994). This study utilized an interview protocol to investigate teacher efficacy, which has been theorized as an important characteristic of effective instructional performance. Findings demonstrate that the efficacy beliefs of teachers are reflected in their instructional methods as well as in student outcomes (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Meehr & Pintrich; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teachers with a high sense of efficacy feel more confident in adopting innovative teaching strategies (Allinder, 1995; Ross, 1992) and are more likely to believe that altering classroom practices will help students
who are difficult to teach (Soodak & Podell, 1994). As a result, more efficacious teachers are less prone to endorse special education referral for problem students, believing instead they can learn in the regular classroom (Soodak & Podell, 1995). Developing means to improve efficacy and thereby improve performance has been the focus of efficacy studies (Bandura, 1997, p. 440).

"Most modern theorists believe that in order to understand organizational health we must study the basic principles governing human motivation as well as the factors that contribute to the individual's feeling of satisfaction at work" (Howell & Dipboy, 1982, p. 41). Shamir's (1990) analysis of employee motivation provided the following statement:

"In the case of collective tasks whose accomplishment depends on collective efforts, it is not rational to make an effort if collective efficacy is perceived to be low, because no matter how strong the perceived relationship between rewards and collective accomplishments, the chances of such accomplishment and therefore of obtaining rewards, are perceived to be low. Hence, a cognitive calculative formulation of collectivistic motivation must include the individual's subjective probability that the collective efforts will result in collective (organizational, departmental, or team) accomplishment" (p. 316).

Individual perceptions of the school's capabilities are crucial to the overall success of the organization.

On July 28, 2002, the U.S. Secretary of Education announced that schools singled out for national honors would reflect the goals of new education reforms for high standards and accountability. The No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private K-12 schools that are either academically superior in their states or demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement. Blue Ribbon award panels describe some schools as having a certain "feel" about them that exudes efficacy; where a
“can do” attitude pervades the halls of the organization. Other groups have less of the attitude, where people have less "fight" in them (Ryan & Oestrich, 1998).

Highly effective organizations employ people who believe they can accomplish anything set before them (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). They persist in achieving meaningful goals and are proud of their work. Research shows that self-efficacy supports effective behavior (Reeve, 1996) when strong beliefs sustain individual persistence (Sadri & Robertson, 1993). This study looks at how teachers who were selected for the self-directed evaluation option for demonstrating these characteristics accomplished their learning goals and increased student performance.

The intricate nature of teaching requires a commitment to ongoing growth if professionals are to continually engage and challenge increasingly diverse students in a complex world. As professional learners, teachers must continually assess their expertise, capabilities and accomplishments to hone their skills as reflective practitioners who actively seek to strengthen their professional skills, knowledge, and perspectives. A review of current literature illustrates the need for ongoing improvement in teaching and learning. Debates about merit pay for teachers and abolishing tenure intensified the call for reform in teacher evaluation systems.

No Child Left Behind legislation increased demands for linking teacher observation to student performance. Heightened attention on accountability created significant change in many educational processes. Efforts to improve student performance and respond to the requirement for scientific, research-based programs refocused leader responsibilities in the area of evaluation. New emphasis on student performance led educators to review observation and evaluation procedures to show how
instructional experiences fostered specific improvements in student performance. Effective evaluation systems provide information that is appropriate, sound, and sufficiently reliable to use in making thoughtful and responsible decisions about teaching and learning.

Albert Bandura (1997) theorized about the nature of social development to explain rationales in educational research. His study looks at beliefs that self-efficacy "promotes persistence and perseverance in the face of significant demands" (Zaccaro, et al, 1995, p. 323). Bandura maintained that "among the different aspects of self-knowledge, perhaps none is more influential in people's lives than conceptions of their personal efficacy" (1986, p.390). He asserts that the core of teaching success is the teacher's self-efficacy, a motivational force of human action. In social cognitive theory, self-efficacy underlies virtually all human endeavors (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Woolfolk Hoy concurs with the importance of self-efficacy, stating that, "self-efficacy is the most useful self-schema for education because it relates to choices and actions that affect learning such as goal-setting, persistence, resilience, effort, and strategy" (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 172).

Understanding self-efficacy theory enables educators to identify practices that increase efficacy and thereby increase achievement. In order to comprehend systemic improvement, this study includes "the fundamental principles that contribute to an individual's feeling of satisfaction at work" (Howell & Dipboye, 1982, p. 41). Teacher efficacy is an important indicator because individual perceptions of the school's vision and mission are essential to the success of school goals; a significant factor when looking at ways to raise student achievement.
Teaching requires content knowledge, skills in conveying knowledge and a continual pursuit of new knowledge. Guiding student achievement through differentiated instruction and innovative practice are essential tools for teaching in our interactive, fast-paced society. Educational researchers recognized that teachers have strong convictions and established routines that may be difficult to change. They challenged teachers who continued to use conventional teacher-centered strategies. Clearly, the efficacy of the teacher is one of the most significant factors in student achievement. The challenge is how to influence efficacy in teachers and students.

The purpose of this study is to observe self-efficacy as an important characteristic of teacher success (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Wood & Bandura, 1989). Differences in teachers' ability to perform at the highest levels of achievement show wide variances in self-efficacy. Understanding the dynamics of self-efficacy in a selected group of high performing teachers illustrates the skills of educators who persistently set high expectations for student performance. The perceptions these specific teachers hold about their role in promoting student learning provides better insights into the association of teacher efficacy and student performance than a random sampling of educators.

Evaluation reform gained national attention when the Nation At Risk publication (1983) identified critical needs for improved student performance and effective instruction. Education reforms have advanced considerably in the past decade; however, teacher evaluation procedures have been less conducive to change than other elements of the learning environment (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). The initiative investigated in this study requires standards-based goals for highly trained teachers and skilled leaders.
Teachers with high self-efficacy design lessons for students of all abilities that provide opportunities to raise their self-efficacy and achieve personal learning goals (Allinder, 1995; Pajares, 2001, as cited in Maehr & Pintrich). An underlying principle of this study is that teacher efficacy and evaluation are interrelated in the quest to raise student performance. Examining ways to promote teacher efficacy is critical to improved student achievement. Sweetland and Hoy (2000) proposed a theoretical model to study connections between school characteristics and student performance. Bandura's work (1993) on efficacy relates to the critical decisions teachers make about teaching and learning in their classrooms. These perspectives depict teacher's lives at work, classroom instruction, management and student learning experiences. A primary focus of this study is to understand what teachers believe about their capacity to teach. How these beliefs explain variances in student achievement will be demonstrated by examining teacher efficacy through the implementation of an innovative evaluation system. Teachers vary in how they utilize personal motivation, self confidence and self assurance to make essential decisions about learning. While there are many factors that affect student performance, this study focuses on the attributes of teacher efficacy.

Investigating teacher efficacy emphasizes how individual teachers perceive the capabilities of their school organization. As members of a collective organization, teachers interact and have an awareness of the capabilities of their colleagues to teach (Zaccaro, et al, 1995, p. 305). School faculties share common understandings and integrated cohesiveness based on the similarities of their tasks and goals. The teaching community knows they are a part of the larger district accomplishments. Lindsley, Brass & Thomas (1995) wrote,
“We argue that there are certain cognitions that group and organizational members have which are quite different and distinguishable from the beliefs they experience as individuals in isolation, or in contexts outside the group or organization. These cognitions are collective, group-based beliefs, arising from the individual’s ability to cognitively consider social entities larger than himself or herself.”

The Differentiated System of Evaluation

Representatives of the district professional community, known as Teacher Evaluation Research Committee (TERC), volunteered to become technical experts to study and guide the district through the initiative, investigation and implementation stages of an innovative change in the evaluation process. In 2003, a partnership between Teachers Evaluation Research Committee (TERC) and the board of education was established by the superintendent to create a differentiated evaluation process across all phases of a teacher’s career. The committee, made up of the teachers, subject area supervisors, district administrators, principals and representatives from the teacher union set forth to describe a shared vision of exemplary teaching to support the ongoing professional development of veteran and novice teachers.

Shared vision was aligned with the model standards developed by the committee using the framework for good teaching described in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, by Charlotte Danielson (1996). The Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment evolved as a way to support teacher efficacy and implement the new process throughout the school district. The district satisfied the State of New Jersey’s code for teacher evaluation which requires that all non-tenured and tenured teachers receive formal observations and an end-of-year summary evaluation. Non-tenured teachers receive three formal observations and tenured teachers receive one observation. In assessing the value of instructional performance, the Differentiated System of Evaluation describes and rates specific learning elements. The committee chose to broaden the evaluation objective by expanding the approach
to improve practice while enhancing student performance. An effective formative evaluation
would not only support learning, but provide a built in way to assess outcome results.
Encouraging self-efficacy for teachers simultaneously motivates organizational efficacy. By
executing a process that evaluates the individual and the district, the effect of schooling on
student achievement is prioritized.

The committee found that ongoing improvement was affected by the teacher’s level of
expertise and efficacy, collaborative leadership, and opportunities for teachers to excel. They
also determined that at none of the seven schools was every teacher effectively implementing
standards-based education. Furthermore, the traditional process in place did not provide a
multidimensional approach to teacher supervision. The new initiative offered instruction on
ways to help teachers and students improve learning. The 35 teachers selected for the
self-directed model of evaluation were identified as tenured staff members with a high sense of
teacher efficacy. The Teacher Evaluation Research Committee viewed the new evaluation
process as a vital way for supervisors to encourage excellence by unifying educational
understandings and practices.
Research Questions

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?
   a. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?
   b. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school’s vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?

2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

3. How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

Limitations/Delimitations of the Study

1. Not every school that has implemented a differentiated system of evaluation will be included in this study due to the delimitations of the selection process. Due to time constraints, it would be impossible to review all existing research in the areas of teacher efficacy and school leadership.

2. Criteria for waivers for the observation and evaluation practices required by the New Jersey Department of Education Teaching Standards are not included in this study.
3. The qualitative data collected in this research represent self-reported information, limiting the objectivity of this study.

4. The researcher’s inexperience with designing questionnaires and interview procedures may limit this study. A skilled interviewer is sensitive to nonverbal messages, effects of the setting on the interview, and nuances of the relationship. These subjective factors are sometimes considered threats to validity.

5. The study is de-limited by examining two constructs: self-efficacy and evaluation. Despite the narrow focus of these factors, the researcher will restrict the study to teacher efficacy and teacher performance evaluation processes.

6. This study is de-limited by selecting one district for analysis.

7. This study is de-limited by selecting participant’s who were recognized as distinguished teachers prior to their participation in the self-directed model of evaluation.

8. The researcher’s bias toward the political frame of leadership is a limitation.

9. This study will be limited to the Differentiated System of Evaluation and Assessment Self-Directed Option and its influence on professional efficacy and student achievement.

10. This study will be de-limited by the researcher’s beliefs on teacher efficacy.

11. The study will be de-limited by including the interviewer as part of the study is the instrument (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, as cited in Patton, 1988). The interviewer therefore can be susceptible to factors like fatigue, personality, and knowledge, as well as levels of skill, training, and experience.
Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the definitions of terms are as follows:

*Action Research* – the identification and analysis of specific classroom concerns experienced by a teacher or group of teachers. The teacher researches alternative ways to resolve issues and concerns. Action research follows a systematic approach to solving classroom problems.

*Collegial Partnerships* – two or more educators select a project that is related to a specific aspect of teaching, the curriculum, support services, or supervision. Partners should have specific goals with plans to reach those goals prior to requesting approval of this option. The Collegial Partnership option may evolve from a curriculum project or an action research project. Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged. The partnership participants must agree on project components, the necessary materials and assistance, the review process and the criteria to determine a successful outcome.

*Curriculum Research* – a curriculum-related model that allows teachers to increase scholarly backgrounds by examining and analyzing pertinent curriculum documents and/or programs. Following the research, teachers might include these materials within the curriculum as a pilot project for review and subsequent rejection or recommendation. This model offers an opportunity for curriculum integration through the development of thematic units, as well as affording teachers the opportunity to pilot curriculum materials.

*Differentiated Supervision* – a multidimensional approach to teacher evaluation and supervision.
Domains – four broad categories that describe Teaching Standards of Professionalism

Four Domains adapted from Danielson’s book, Enhancing Professional Practice.

Interactive Journals – an on-going conversation and written dialogue between the teacher and the administrator. The teacher engages in authentic professional development through analysis, reflection and discussion of his/her own work with an administrator. Interactive journal writing promotes collaboration and collegiality. Journals are highly interactive and serve as both a communication tool and a data source that promotes reflection, growth and the linkage of experiences on which to build teaching practice.

Levels of Performance – Unacceptable, Minimal, Proficient, and Distinguished.

Each level clearly defines expectation for teachers in the four domains.

Observation – a formal classroom visitation that an administrator documents as part of a teacher’s permanent record.

Peer Coaching – a relationship between two professionals with each participant offering insights that result in the improvement of teaching and learning. In peer coaching, teachers work in pairs or groups. As a team, or as individuals, they observe each other’s classes to provide critical feedback and offer ongoing support.

Portfolios – evidence of teaching and learning that reflect the thinking process of the teacher. Portfolios offer an opportunity to self-assess, reflect and improve instruction. A portfolio is a concrete product with information collected over a period of time that illustrates the work of a teacher and his/her students and documents self-reflection. The impact of self-reflection on student learning is explored through teachers’ selection of
included materials. The portfolio is an opportunity for teachers to showcase their professional and personal growth and must contain reflections on its contents.

*Professional Improvement Plan* – (PIP) a specific plan for professional development that may focus on a teacher's interest or a district initiative.

*Reflective Teaching* – an educational process that helps teachers to become introspective by identifying what they believe and examining what they are doing so that they may grow professionally.

*Self-Efficacy* – belief in one's ability to perform tasks or activities.

*Specialized Growth Plan* – a PIP that has been developed for a teacher by an administrator.


**Chapter Summary**

Chapter I presents the background of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose and relevance of the study, the research questions, the limitations/delimitations and definitions of terms.

This study asserts no direct connections between teacher efficacy and issues related to student achievement. The primary focus of the self-directed option is to build teacher efficacy to deliver effective instruction to all students. Educators are expected to ensure persistent implementation of quality instruction and to provide ongoing support
for teachers and administrators as they deepen their knowledge of content, efficacy, pedagogy and classroom management for standards-based instruction. Researchers have written multiple findings on achieving content knowledge through the exploration of complex problems and examination of learners' capacities to think, reflect, and apply knowledge. These skills are enhanced by self-efficacy factors of high expectations, confidence and persistence. Despite these studies, wide variances in student achievement and teacher skills persist.

Professional evaluation and reflections occur every day in the classrooms of teachers with high self-efficacy as they continually assess what students know and need to know. Negative influences on self-efficacy occur when interventions are overwhelming and imposing top down supervision inhibits collaborative support. Specific goal setting behaviors have been shown to improve self-efficacy and improved performance when leaders include direct feedback in the evaluation process. The motivational impact of feedback needs additional study to better understand the relationship of different types of feedback and goal setting strategies.

As no direct links can be made between teacher efficacy and student achievement, this study is an in-depth analysis of how teacher efficacy thrives in an organization that advances student achievement through curriculum development, inquiry-based instructional practices, collaborative leadership and organizational success. For the purpose of this study, teachers who have been designated as highly skilled teachers will be interviewed to examine the personal attributes that promote teacher efficacy to improve and advance student achievement.
CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

In a 2004 interview, Anita Woolfolk Hoy described the evolution of the concept of teacher efficacy from its roots in Rotter’s (1966) locus of control theory to the current direction in research derived from Bandura’s (1986, 1997) social cognitive model of self-efficacy (Shaughnessy, 2004). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) refer to teacher efficacy as a “simple idea with significant implications” (p. 783).

Bandura (1986) defines perceived self-efficacy as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated levels of performance” (p. 391). In the context of education, teachers with high self-efficacy believe they are capable of motivating students and working with them to achieve designated learning goals (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Their firm belief in their teaching ability extends to students considered “difficult” or “hard to reach” as well as students who learn with ease. In an environment marked by a strong emphasis on accountability, it is almost understated to say that, “This judgment has powerful effects” (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p. 783).

The publication of A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983) was a driving force in unprecedented waves of education reforms. In their highly charged critique of the
educational system, the National Committee on Excellence in Education (NCEE) declared that, "our society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of their basic purpose of schooling and of the high expectations and disciplined efforts needed to attain them" (NCEE, 1983, pp. 5-6). Shortly thereafter, Gibson and Dembo (1984) introduced an instrument for the assessment of teacher efficacy. Gibson and Dembo (1984) predicted that teachers with higher scores on the dimensions of teacher efficacy would convey high expectations for student achievement, take actions to promote student achievement, and apply extra effort to reach struggling or disengaged students.

According to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), "The development of the Gibson and Dembo instrument was a boon to the study of teacher efficacy" (p. 213).

A substantial body of research supports the validity of Gibson and Dembo's (1984) initial predictions. Studies demonstrate that the efficacy beliefs of teachers are reflected in their instructional methods as well as in student outcomes (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Maehr & Pintrich; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teachers with a high sense of efficacy feel more confident in adopting innovative teaching strategies (Allinder, 1995; Ross, 1992) and are more likely to believe that altering classroom practices will help students who are difficult to teach (Soodak & Podell, 1994). As a result, more efficacious teachers are less prone to endorse special education referral for problem students, believing instead they can learn in the regular classroom (Soodak & Podell, 1993). Gibson and Dembo (1984) observed that teachers with higher perceived self-efficacy divided the class to provide small group instruction, a practice that was not commonplace at the time.
The 1980s also saw the emergence of McGreal’s (1983) goal-focused system of teacher appraisal. Several case studies appeared in the literature chronicling the implementation of model evaluation programs hallmarked by collaboration, differentiation, and precise evaluation criteria relevant to raising student performance (Glatthorn & Holler, 1987; Manatt, 1987; Tesch, Nyland, & Kernutt, 1987). These exemplary models were rare. Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984/1985) decried the traditional evaluation methods for alienating teachers and administrators alike. They described the evaluation process in many school districts as a “perfunctory, routine, bureaucratic requirement that yields no help to teachers and no decision-oriented information to the school district” (p. 29).

In an extensive research project, Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984/1985) found that school districts where evaluation data was used to improve teacher quality and personnel practices had adopted a professionally driven approach to evaluation. They allocated adequate time and resources to the procedure, and above all, they emphasized expertise. The school districts with the most effective evaluation programs achieved success “by resisting the bureaucratic impulse to treat all teachers alike and by involving expert teachers in the evaluation process” (p. 32). Of particular note, “it is the more professional role of teachers in instructional design and delivery that distinguishes the districts’ approaches to the organization as well as to teacher evaluation” (p. 32).

Recognition that evaluation systems should be designed to promote teaching excellence and professionalism is central to the philosophies of Danielson and McGreal (Danielson, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; McGreal, 1983). The outranked
practices observed by Wise and Darling-Hammond, 1984/1985) have not entirely disappeared.

A review of the literature suggests that teacher evaluation is one of the most recalcitrant aspects of education reform. In fact, Danielson and McGreal (2000) note that many evaluation systems currently employed data from the 1970s and thus contain checklists of “observable behaviors” such as “writing the learning objectives on the board” (p. 3) rather than ensuring that students are clear on the learning objectives and are taught to master effective strategies for attaining them. Enabling students to achieve challenging learning goals demands evaluation programs that build on and promote teachers’ professional expertise (Danielson, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1984/1985).

Teachers typically have adverse attitudes toward evaluation when they perceive it as something that is imposed on them by an external authority (Down, Chadbourne, & Hogan, 2000; Fitzgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003; McConney, Ayres, Hansen, & Cuthbertson, 2003). Conversely, involving teachers in developing performance appraisal procedures fosters a sense of ownership and appreciation for how the data can be used to enhance their practice (Manatt, 1987; Sawyer, 2001; Tesch et al., 1987). Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984/1985) expounded on the detrimental impact of bureaucratic lines of authority that exclude teachers and principals from the decision process and preclude multidirectional communication. Senge (1990) observed that organizations grounded in an emphasis on performing for the approval of others paradoxically perpetuate mediocre performance. According to Senge (1990), superior performance demands superior learning. In a learning organization, leaders can come from all levels
and are recognized for expertise rather than rank. The top executive is an empowering leader who is dedicated to cultivating excellence in all organization members.

Fullan (1993, 1995) envisions transforming schools into learning organizations with teachers as agents of positive change. A central tenet of the change agent role is mastery. According to Fullan (1993), expertise is not only requisite for effectiveness but is also crucial to successful change. The term self-mastery is often used synonymously with self-efficacy. Weasmer and Woods (1998) call on school principals to seek out teachers and teacher candidates who have shown evidence of positive personal teaching efficacy. Through professional development and collegial activities these teachers have the capacity to enlist their colleagues in introducing innovations and ideas. Ironically, Senge (1990) has said very much the same thing. In Senge’s perspective the most effective principals are leaders committed to “creating an environment where teachers can continually learn” (O’Neil, 1995, p. 21). Senge (1990) acknowledges that the principal cannot “establish an environment” in isolation, but accomplishes change by seeking out teachers with new ideas and supporting them in working toward a collective vision of innovation and excellence. Fullan (1995) also shares this perspective of principal leadership.

Conger (1989) drew on Bandura (1986) for his portrayal of empowering leadership behaviors. Research on empowering leaders demonstrates that they share one key characteristic: “a strong underlying belief in their subordinates’ abilities” (Conger, 1989, p. 18). Consistent with this belief, they engage in behaviors that support and reinforce their subordinates’ sense of self-efficacy. At the organizational level, the combined efforts of efficacious personnel translate into a strong sense of collective
efficacy (Bandura, 2000). The effect is especially powerful when organization members are driven by shared vision (Senge, 1990). Research has documented a significant positive association between the efficacy of individual teachers and the collective efficacy of schools (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). By extension, collective efficacy is linked with high student levels of student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

To Goddard et al. (2004), the significance of collective efficacy to educational outcomes lies in organizing schools to foster collective efficacy beliefs. In particular, “When teachers have the opportunity to influence instructionally relevant decisions, collective conditions encourage teachers to exercise organizational agency. The more teachers have the opportunity to influence instructionally relevant school decisions, the more likely a school is to be characterized by a robust sense of collective efficacy.”

Goddard et al. (2004) conceive of collective efficacy as a promising framework for structuring schools with the capacity to fulfill the mandates of No Child Left Behind.

A keynote of the model of teacher evaluation proposed by Danielson and McGreal (2000) is enabling teachers to “influence instructionally relevant decisions.” Senge (1990) observed that given the complexity of the traditional school system bureaucracy, schools have lagged behind corporations in transforming organizational culture (O’Neil, 1995). Education reforms have advanced considerably in the past decade; however, teacher evaluation procedures have been less conducive to change than other elements of the learning environment (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). An underlying principle of this study is that teacher efficacy and evaluation are interrelated in the quest to raise student performance. Furthermore, the organization and leadership
structures that promote teachers' sense of self-efficacy are associated with implementation of innovative evaluation strategies.

*Self-Efficacy in Theory and Practice*

Self-efficacy beliefs play a critical role in people's thoughts, motivations, and actions (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Individuals who are confident in their ability to reach their intended goals set high goals and apply effort and determination to achieve them. To these efficacious individuals, difficulties are perceived as challenges to overcome. When faced with obstacles, they are more likely to intensify their efforts than abandon or lower their goals. In contrast, people with a low sense of self-efficacy tend to avoid difficult endeavors. They are less committed to attaining their goals and tend to interpret setbacks as signs of personal weakness.

There are four major sources of self-efficacy perceptions (Bandura, 1986). The dominant influence on self-efficacy is mastery experience. The term "mastery" implies that success comes from working through challenges rather than relying on easy goals. In fact, Bandura (1986) notes that individuals who derive their success from easy goals can easily be discouraged when faced with failure. Persisting in the face of obstacles builds a resilient sense of self-efficacy. A second source of self-efficacy is vicarious learning or modeling. Bandura (1986) emphasizes that the effectiveness of modeling is enhanced by perceived similarities to the model. The third influence on self-efficacy is social persuasion, which refers to positive feedback, encouragement, and support for effort. To be fully effective, the encouragement must be realistic and take place within the context of an experience that is likely to offer success. Verbal encouragement can be especially effective when success is defined in terms of personal self-improvement.
The fourth source of self-efficacy is the person’s semantic and emotional states (Bandura, 1986). Stress, tension, anxiety, and low mood undermine self-efficacy while positive mood, energy, and enthusiasm intensify it. The relationship operates in both directions. Confident in their abilities to succeed, individuals with high self-efficacy take on tasks positively and energetically while the same activities may be perceived as stressful or intimidating to those with low self-efficacy.

Experiences that have an enduring impact on self-efficacy entail focusing efforts toward achieving challenging but realistic goals. As conceived by Bandura (1986), self-efficacy is mainly domain specific. Once embedded in experience, high self-efficacy perceptions can extend to other situations, as long as they have attributes similar to the experiences from which the efficacy beliefs are derived. The focus in self-efficacy is on the future: the four sources of self-efficacy impact the establishment and attainment of future goals. The domain specific character of self-efficacy distinguishes it from self-esteem and self-concept. The broadest of the three concepts, “Self-concept is a more global construct that contains many perceptions about the self, including self-efficacy. Self-concept is developed in part from comparisons of the self to other people, using other people’s abilities or accomplishment as frames of reference” (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004, p. 3). Conversely, self-efficacy is derived from self-reflection and self-appraisals of one’s ability to accomplish a given task (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy differs from self-esteem in that, “Compared to self-esteem, self-efficacy is concerned with judgments of personal capabilities; self-esteem is concerned with judgments of self-worth” (Woolfolk Hoy (2004, p. 3). Whether self-efficacy in a given context affects self-esteem usually depends upon how important the task is to the individual.
In the educational environment, the three major types of efficacy judgments are student, teacher, and collective (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). Students’ self-efficacy perceptions influence their motivation to learn, ability to use self-regulatory strategies, and persistence and determination in achieving performance goals (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Maehr & Pintrich). In turn, teachers boost students’ self-efficacy through a repertoire of innovative teaching strategies and assessments, as well as through modeling, feedback, and setting goals that are both challenging and attainable. Bandura (1986) cautions strongly against exposing individuals to experiences that are likely to produce failure, especially when they are at a vulnerable point in the development of self-efficacy beliefs. Notably, Danielson and McGreal (2000) state that, “Teaching, alone among the professions makes the same demands on novices as on experienced practitioners” (p. 5). Their recommendation that all teachers be held to high standards yet evaluation procedures for novices should not be identical to those for experienced teachers is highly congruent with Bandura’s (1986, 1997) depictions of how self-efficacy beliefs are supported and reinforced.

Although the literature is replete with the term “teacher efficacy,” Woolfolk Hoy is not satisfied with the term, arguing that Bandura might prefer terms such as “teachers’ sense of efficacy, self-efficacy of teachers, instructional efficacy, teachers’ efficacy beliefs, or teachers’ perceived efficacy” (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 154). Woolfolk Hoy’s rationale is that “teacher efficacy” is often confused with teacher “effectiveness.” As Fullan (1993) observed, applying mastery goes beyond being merely effective. Drawing on Bandura (1986, 1997), it is more appropriate to say that teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy believe they can be effective.
Woolfolk Hoy divides effective teaching into three key categories (Shaughnessy, 2004). Of foremost importance, teachers must "understand how students think about an idea or subject" (p. 164). This critical understanding entails continually devising high-quality ways to observe and assess students. Second, Woolfolk Hoy stresses that students, like adults, prefer work that is important, authentic, and meaningful, and endows them with a sense of competence and respect. Third, Woolfolk Hoy states succinctly that, "there is no one best way to teach" (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 164). By getting to know students, discovering and building on their unique strengths, engaging them through a range of strategies, and being "persistent and inventive," teachers simultaneously enhance their students' sense of efficacy and their own (p. 164).

In social cognitive theory, self-efficacy underlies virtually all human endeavors (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Woolfolk Hoy concurs with the importance of self-efficacy, stating that, "self-efficacy is the most useful self-schema for education because it relates to choices and actions that affect learning such as goal-setting, persistence, resilience, effort, and strategy" (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 172). In addition, Woolfolk Hoy (2004) believes that "self-efficacy provides a connecting thread through the work on attributions, self-regulation, and goal theory," which are "all important tools for understanding motivation and learning" (p. 175). Woolfolk Hoy views self-efficacy, ability, and opportunities as three key factors underlying achievement.

Woolfolk Hoy (2004) calls on teachers to learn to regulate their own sense of self-efficacy by developing self-awareness of the sources of the three relevant types of self-efficacy: teaching, student, and collective. Students' self-efficacy is strongly linked with motivation and self-regulation, which influence learning (Pajares, 2001 as cited in
Maehr & Pintrich). Teachers' motivation and learning are dually influenced by their personal sense of efficacy and by the collective efficacy of the school staff (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

Collective Efficacy

Collective efficacy operates in a parallel manner to self-efficacy. Bandura (2000) states that collective efficacy goes beyond the sum of the efficacy perceptions of individual group members. He notes that many objectives people aspire to can only be attained via interdependent efforts. The shared beliefs of group members in their collective power to achieve mutual goals are a major element of collective agency. The outcomes result from a dynamic coordination and synergy of the knowledge and skills of individual group members. Collective efficacy can be operationalized in two ways. In one approach, collective efficacy is an aggregate of individual members’ appraisals of their personal abilities to carry out the tasks they perform in the group. The second conception of self-efficacy is of group members’ appraisals of the group’s capacity to perform as a whole. As with personal self-efficacy, the higher the group members’ expectations for group success, the more determined they are to persist through obstacles to achieve their shared goals.

In the educational setting, “perceived collective efficacy refers to the judgment of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students” (Goddard et al., 2004, p. 4).
The constructs of school climate and culture are useful for examining how collective efficacy interacts with teaching practices and educational outcomes. Broadly, school climate encompasses "teachers' perceptions of their general work environment," and is "influenced by the formal organization, informal organization, personalities of participants, and the leadership of the school" (Hoy, 1990, p. 151). Culture "refers to belief systems, values, and cognitive structures" (p. 151). Hoy (1990) acknowledges that the difference between organizational climate and organizational culture is subtle. School climate is based on behavior, while school culture is based on beliefs. Beliefs and behaviors are intrinsically linked in self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Teachers' collective efficacy is reinforced by a school climate dedicated to the belief that teachers have the power to make a positive difference in students' lives (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

A supportive, positive school climate can be especially important for novice teachers (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Having had limited opportunities for mastery experiences, beginning teachers can be particularly susceptible to the detrimental impact of negative social persuasion. Conversely, positive encouragement in the context of a support environment is a major source of high self-efficacy perceptions (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Elaborating on this idea, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) state that: Schools where teachers' conversations dwell on the insurmountable difficulties of educating their students are likely to undermine teachers' sense of efficacy. Schools where teachers work together to find ways to address the learning, motivation, and behavior problems of their students are likely to enhance teachers' feelings of efficacy. (p. 221).
Woolfolk Hoy (2004) cautions teachers to avoid settings where teachers dwell on student failure and instead seek out collegial environments that enhance their beliefs in their capabilities. Although novice teachers are more vulnerable to being demoralized by a school climate low in collective efficacy, they are also receptive to strategies that enhance efficacy perceptions (Henson, 2001).

According to Goddard et al. (2004), the proposed relationship between perceived collective efficacy and the realization of group goals forms a persuasive argument for the rise in interest in collective efficacy. Perceptions of collective efficacy impact organizational culture through the diffusion of group expectations for actions. In schools, cultural norms that promote a strong academic push encourage faculty members to persevere toward achieving designated learning goals. Even in individual classrooms, teachers are not immune to the social influence of collective efficacy. Senge argues that for schools to become genuine learning organizations, teachers have to depart from the traditional classroom isolation and engage in collegial activities, ideally led by teachers who embrace innovation and change (O’Neil, 1995). Fullan (1993) stated that, “Personal and group mastery thrive on each other in learning organizations” (p. 14).

Weasmer and Woods (1998) claim that when highly efficacious teachers are encouraged to share their positive perspectives with colleagues, the advantages can extend beyond the classroom to the school and school system. Similar to the negative attitudes of teachers who resent externally mandated evaluations (Dow et al., 2000; Fitzgerald et al., 2003; McConney et al., 2003), teachers often feel burdened by top-down reform measures and new instructional methods (Weasmer & Woods, 1998). On the
other hand, Weasmer and Woods (1998) argue that when teachers are provided with valuable learning experiences and engaged in meaningful work in a climate of shared authority, any negative attitude usually turns to eagerness to demonstrate expertise. In their perspective, teachers with high personal efficacy can take a leading role in encouraging professional development. Professional development activities such as attending conferences enables the change agent teachers to network and share ideas with other innovators, which in turn, reinforces commitment to positive change.

A school environment that promotes teacher leadership and professional development enhances the personal efficacy beliefs of all teachers. A major factor in self-efficacy judgments in organizations is perceived control over the work environment. According to Wood and Bandura (1989), two elements of self-efficacy are particularly pertinent to organizational performance. The first aspect concerns the level of personal efficacy needed to effect changes through enlistment of effort and creative use of capabilities and resources. This constitutes the personal side of the transactional control process. The second aspect concerns how changeable or how controllable is the environment. This facet represents the level of system restraints and opportunities that are available for one to exercise personal efficacy.

Of special relevance to teachers in the midst of sweeping education reforms, Wood and Bandura (1989) note that, “Neither self-efficacy or social environments are fixed entities” (p. 374). There is an ongoing, dynamic interaction between the two. In fact, the authors state that, “For the most part, the social environment constitutes a potentiality that is actualized by appropriate action” (Wood & Bandura, 1989, p. 374). This “potentiality” is emphasized by those who see confident teachers as agents of
positive change (Fullan, 1993, 1995; O’Neil, 1995; (Weasmer & Woods, 1998). Goddard et al. (2004) suggest that allowing faculty members to exert control over decisions that affect their professional practice may be a viable way to increase collective efficacy in schools. Providing teachers with a sense of control over evaluation procedures has proven advantageous to school systems departing from conventional practices (Manatt, 1987; Tesch et al., 1987; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1984,1985).

**Teachers’ Efficacy Perceptions**

The theoretical framework for teacher efficacy surfaced in the 1970s in a research project conducted by the RAND organization. The RAND researchers conceptualized teacher efficacy as “the extent to which teachers believed that they could control the reinforcement of their actions, that is, whether control of reinforcement lay within themselves or the environment” (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 202). Student performance and motivation were presumed to provide the main reinforcements for teachers’ actions. Specifically, “teachers with a high level of efficacy believed that they could control, or at least strongly influence, student achievement and motivation” (p. 202).

The RAND research coincided with Bandura’s introduction of self-efficacy theory in Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). However, the RAND researchers based their model of teacher efficacy on Rotter’s (1966) locus of control theory (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). This theoretical underpinning is apparent from the RAND researchers’ focus on whether teachers believed that the ability to reach difficult students lay within them or was under control of an external force. Nevertheless, as Bandura’s self-efficacy theory gained
prominence in educational psychology, it was Bandura’s construction that became uppermost in the conception of teacher efficacy. The social cognitive concept of self-efficacy posed an excellent mechanism for explaining the actions of teachers who set high standards for student performance and successfully strive to overcome barriers to academic achievement. Woolfolk Hoy regards self-efficacy as the most useful concept in educational psychology (Shaughnessy, 2004).

Bandura (1997) has elaborated upon the theoretical distinctions between locus of control and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to the belief that one can carry out certain behaviors whereas locus of control focuses on the causal relationship between actions and outcomes. Internal locus of control is the belief that outcomes are under one’s personal control rather than governed by an external, controllable force. The basic difference lies in whether the focus is on actions or outcomes. According to social cognitive theory, outcome expectations are mediated by self-efficacy beliefs. One can have an internal locus of control orientation but still lack confidence in the ability to execute actions required to control the outcome of a specific situation.

As interpreted by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), “The existence of these two separate but intertwined conceptual strands has contributed to a lack of clarity about the nature of teacher efficacy” (p. 203). To the authors, the ideal model of teacher efficacy synthesizes the RAND conception of teacher efficacy with Bandura’s task specific conception of efficacy. The controversy of teaching outside one’s certification area highlights the need to recognize that efficacy beliefs are influenced by the context in which teaching takes place. Although knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy are essential components of good teaching, the conditions of the school environment
influence teachers’ motivation to teach, positively or negatively (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

The RAND researchers identified and labeled two types of teaching efficacy: general teaching efficacy (GTE) and personal teaching efficacy (PTE). Subsequent studies substantiate the existence of these two types of teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). GTE refers to the relative importance that teachers attribute to factors outside the control of the school in influencing student outcomes as opposed to practices and conditions within the school. For example, an overwhelming majority of teachers attribute the problems of difficult students to problems arising within the family such as family turmoil, divorce, or relocation (Soodak & Podell, 1994). Notably, teachers with the highest sense of efficacy are most likely to feel that that the school was responsible for the students’ difficulties.

GTE reflects the constructs of locus of control and outcome expectations. Research conducted with an assessment tool developed to measure teacher locus of control (TLC) found that teachers with higher efficacy beliefs made more internal attributions for student success or failure (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). However, this channel of research was short-lived. GTE lacks the clarity of PTE, which corresponds to Bandura’s theory of teacher efficacy.

Measuring Teacher Efficacy

Since the introduction of teacher efficacy into educational psychology, various instruments have been devised for evaluation purposes. A perennial problem confronting researchers is that proper assessment tools must strive for a balance between being too expansive to have practical significance or conversely, overly specific (Tschannen-Moran
et al., 1998). Pajares (2001), as cited in Maehr & Pintrich, warns against using instruments that do not adequately match the assessment criteria with the target tasks. This type of disparity weakens the predictive power of self-efficacy beliefs. Pajares (2001), as cited in Maehr & Pintrich, maintains that the explanatory and predictive power of self-efficacy measures is contingent on targeting them to the appropriate domain of activity being analyzed and the full range of tasks demands within that domain. Accomplishing this objective involves having coherent understanding of the domain and its particular attributes, the types of abilities required by the domain, and the range of situations in which these abilities might be deployed.

Tschanen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) maintain that, “a valid measure of teacher efficacy must assess both personal competence and an analysis of the task in terms of the resources and constraints in particular teaching contexts” (p. 795). The most popular instrument is Gibson and Dembo’s (1984) teacher efficacy scale (TES), which combines conceptual elements of the RAND model and Bandura’s self-efficacy theory. The TES keeps the construct of PTE and operationalizes GTE (labeled teaching efficacy) in terms of outcome expectancy. The dual factor structure means that the instrument has the capacity to assess teachers’ perceptions of their own behavioral competence as well as gauge their attitudes toward the relative power to external factors such as students’ family backgrounds and sociodemographic characteristics.

Despite the extensive use of the TES, the instrument has been faulted on ground of clarity regarding the meaning and stability of the dual factor structure (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschanen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Striving to compensate for flaws in the existing instruments, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001)
created the *Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale* (OSTES). To test and refine the OSTES, the researchers conducted three independent studies involving preservice and inservice teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

An important distinction between the OSTES and its predecessors is that the earlier instruments focused on teachers’ beliefs in their ability to overcome students’ learning difficulties and environmental constraints (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Although surmounting obstacles is intrinsic to self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1986, 1997), a narrow focus on problems ignores the positive aspects of efficacy. That is, “Lacking were assessments of teaching in support of student thinking, effectiveness with capable students, creativity in teaching, and the flexible application of alternative assessment and teaching strategies” (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p. 801). The OSTES encompasses a wider range of teaching tasks than the previous models and assesses efficacy related to teaching strategies, student engagement, and classroom management in order to “represent the richness of teachers’ work and the requirements of good teaching” (p. 801). The OSTES reflects Pajares’ (2001), as cited in Maehr & Pintrich, conception of a well-designed assessment instrument.

The rationale for Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy’s (2001) on-going investigation into teacher efficacy is the development of strategies designed to build and reinforce specific sources of efficacy for teachers at the individual and collective level. Goddard et al. (2004) stress the importance of delving deeper into understanding the dynamic interplay of individual and collective efficacy in student outcomes, particularly in response to the demands of No Child Left Behind.
While recognizing that the contributions of Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) and Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) to the exploration of teacher efficacy, Henson (2001) argues that there are issues still left unresolved. In particular, there is a dearth of research on the relationship between the sources of efficacy appraisals and teacher efficacy. For example, vicarious experience and social persuasion appear to have a pronounced impact on GTE, while mastery experiences are the primary source of PTE. However, Henson maintains that these conceptions of teacher efficacy are not completely consistent with the proposed model. According to Henson (2001), understanding of teacher efficacy will be advanced through empirical investigation of the sources of efficacy building information, collective teacher efficacy, and strategies for promoting change in teachers.

Henson (2001) did not critique only the OSTES, but rather contended that understanding teacher efficacy is impeded by weaknesses in the existing instruments. Henson, Kogan, and Vacha-Haase (2001) investigated the reliability of four instruments used to evaluate teacher efficacy and teacher locus of control. The four assessment tools were the TES of Gibson and Dembo (1984), and the Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (STEBI) for assessing self-efficacy beliefs, and the Teacher Locus of Control and Responsibility for Student Achievement for assessing locus of control. The detailed analysis was derived from a research review of 52 studies published from 1981 through 1999 (Henson et al., 2001).

The study revealed considerable variability in the reliability of the four instruments. Henson et al. (2001) found the mean reliability coefficients to be acceptable, although they conceded that the notion of what represents acceptability is
“a somewhat arbitrary decision and ultimately determined by the context of the study” (p. 415).

With regard to the TES, the researchers observed that the PTE subscale tended to have more robust integrity than the GTE subscale, suggesting that the GTE subscale is more vulnerable to measurement error. This finding reflects the observation of Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) that there is some confusion over the meaning of GTE while there is general consensus over the interpretation of PTE. Woolfolk Hoy (2000) suggests that the GTE might actually reflect teachers’ conservative or liberal attitudes toward the power of schools to reach “difficult” students rather than being a genuine measure of teaching efficacy.

The STEBI produced comparable results to the TES, from which it was derived (Henson et al., 2001). Henson et al. (2001) reported that despite the lower susceptibility of the PTE subscale to measurement error, the PTE still yielded variations in reliability estimates. Henson (2001) considers the OSTES a promising tool for advancing exploration of teacher efficacy.

Henson (2001) views self-efficacy theory as a valuable framework for structuring professional development activities so they have maximal impact. According to Bandura’s (1997) research, the efficacy beliefs of novices in a given field are most conducive to intervention while the efficacy beliefs of veterans are more resistant to change. Woolfolk Hoy (2004) extends this principle to the efficacy beliefs of novice and veteran teachers. Henson (2001) contends that favorably changing PTE in experienced teachers is unlikely to occur unless it is situated within the context of long-term professional development activities designed to promote critical reflection on classroom
practices and active involvement teachers in instructional improvement. Weasmer and Woods (1998) are more optimistic that change can take place informally through exposure to colleagues with high self-efficacy beliefs who embrace innovations. Senge shares a similar perspective on the power of enthusiastic, committed teachers to filter a message of change throughout the school (O’Neil, 1995). However, Senge is realistic about the constraints imposed by the traditional school organization and entrenched beliefs about teaching and learning. Professional development is one domain in which knowledge of teachers’ personal and collective efficacy can be applied to altering school conditions and learning outcomes (Goddard et al., 2004).

Woolfolk Hoy believes that the concept of teacher efficacy would be advantaged by research employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Shaughnessy, 2004). Quantitative research produces documented evidence of what occurs; however, it does not explain why. Henson (2001) calls for research on examining how the four sources of self-efficacy influences teachers’ efficacy perceptions. In Woolfolk Hoy’s perspective, “qualitative methods are appropriate for an exploration of factors that mediate efficacy development and cultural influences on the construction of efficacy beliefs” (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 155). Woolfolk Hoy related that in her experience, she worked with one student who applied qualitative methods to the study of five prospective teachers participating in a cross-cultural immersion teaching internship. Woolfolk Hoy and her protégé used qualitative case study methodology to explore the interns’ beliefs and perceptions of their teaching efficacy.

The importance of combining qualitative and quantitative research strategies is highlighted by a study of novice teachers involved in Learning Through Teaching in an
After-School Pedagogical Laboratory (L-TAPL), an innovative professional development program (Onafowora, 2004). L-TAPL participants have opportunities to observe a master teacher teaching predominately African American students in different grade levels. The backgrounds of many of the new teachers were similar to those of their students, which was a driving force in their choice of the program. The results of the quantitative analysis showed that the teachers were confident in their abilities to work with the students. However, their oral and written narratives revealed discrepancies between their perception perceptions and the numerical data. The novice teachers clearly wanted to work with the students to overcome barriers to academic success. However, the qualitative reports showed that many were overwhelmed by issues of discipline and classroom management and despite their intentions, they were not confident in their ability to deal with the classroom issues they faced.

Bandura (1997) recognized that inaccurate self-appraisals usually reflect a tendency to overestimate one’s capabilities. People generally select careers in which they feel they will perform well. In particular, novices embark on their professional careers with a strong sense of commitment not always accompanied by realistic expectations of what to expect. As a result, their self-efficacy perceptions may be inflated. This explains the decline observed in the efficacy beliefs of beginning teachers (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). However, as Woolfolk Hoy noted, while the data documents that efficacy perceptions decline, they do not provide insights on how the sources of self-efficacy affect them (Shaughnessy, 2004). The qualitative expressions of the L-TAPL teachers provided insight into what areas the teachers lacked confidence and consequently, how the problems might be addressed (Onafowora, 2004).
Onafowora (2004) provided a detailed analysis of the inconsistencies in the novice teachers' responses. Onafowora interprets the results as evidence that new teachers require ongoing involvement with professional development activities based on the notion of "teaching by learning." The author views teacher efficacy as a valuable framework for exploring their progress. In fact, the study exemplifies Henson's (2001) recommendation that self-efficacy research should be used to inform professional development practices. In addition, Onafowora (2004) noted that the study was part of a larger project "designed to more fully investigate the learning patterns of novice teachers over time and capture their evolving self-confidence and capabilities at being efficacious teachers" (p. 42). Woolfolk Hoy observed that despite the assumption that teacher efficacy may be most amenable to change during internship and induction, there are few longitudinal studies that monitor efficacy during the "malleable period of student teaching" (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 155). The L-TAPL project employs quantitative and qualitative methods to assess this effect (Onafowora, 2004).

Woolfolk Hoy also noted that qualitative research is frequently used to help researchers discover topics for quantitative studies and phrase items appropriately (Shaughnessy, 2004). This was the case with an exploration of how resources and social supports impact teachers' efficacy beliefs, which led to a quantitative report (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002).

*Empirical Research*

A healthy school climate is characterized by institutional integrity, principal influence, consideration, research support, morale, and academic focus (Hoy, 1990). Using the TES, Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) investigated the interrelationship between
teachers' efficacy beliefs and organizational health in a sample of New Jersey elementary schools. The two dimensions of organizational climate that predicted teachers' personal teaching efficacy were the principal's influence and emphasis on academic achievement. Personal efficacy beliefs were higher in schools where teachers perceived that their colleagues set high but attainable goals, create an orderly and serious learning environment, and demonstrate respect for academic excellence. Principals who were viewed as having influence with their superiors were typically at the helm of schools where teachers had higher perceived efficacy, possibly because more influential principals were better able to secure teaching resources, or because of their professional leadership.

Taylor and Tashakkori (1995) examined the impact of school climate and participatory decision-making on the job satisfaction and sense of efficacy of 10th grade teachers. The strongest relationship was between school climate and job satisfaction, which in turn, seemed to operate through its influence on perceived efficacy. Teachers felt confident to the extent they believed they were capable of influencing student achievement. Teachers who perceived their students as academically capable and disciplined and felt that principals supported their professional expertise and autonomy were most satisfied with their work. Involvement in school decisions had no significant impact on either job satisfaction or perceived efficacy. The important factor for increasing efficacy in schools may be in enlisting teachers in decisions that affect their professional practice (Goddard et al., 2004). Teachers may prefer to be respected for their professional expertise rather than involved in making broad governance decisions.
Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk Hoy (2000) consider gaining clear understanding of how school attributes contribute to student performance as "one of the great challenges" for educational researchers (p. 2). Goddard et al. (2000) explored the connection between school conditions and academic outcomes by drawing on both teacher efficacy and collective efficacy. After field-testing and pilot testing a measure of collective efficacy that conceptualizes collective efficacy in terms of group competence and task analysis, the investigators surveyed 452 teachers from 47 elementary schools.

The results confirmed a strong relationship between group competence and task analysis, thus supporting the model of collective efficacy devised by Goddard et al. (2000). Higher collective efficacy was linked with higher student performance in reading and mathematics. While recognizing that collective efficacy cannot solve all the problems faced by urban schools, Goddard et al. (2000) call on principals to adopt strategies for raising the collective efficacy of the school, preferably through carefully designed professional development programs and action research projects. Henson (2001) also targets professional development programs and action research as strategies for raising school effectiveness.

Goddard and Goddard (2001) conducted additional analysis of the data derived from the urban elementary schools (Goddard et al., 2000). They reported that collective efficacy had a more pronounced impact on school culture, and by extension, on student achievement, than socioeconomic status (SES). Teachers in schools with higher collective efficacy displayed higher perceptions of personal efficacy, which was reflected in their classroom methods. The results of this study build on the findings of Hoy and Woolfolk's (1993) earlier study. The same factors promoted personal teaching efficacy
in both studies. That is, being surrounded by teachers who set high but attainable goals, create a cohesive, serious learning environment, and respect academic excellence, as well as having a principal who had influence with district superiors, manifests in higher perceived efficacy (Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Goddard and Goddard (2001) view the results of their research as demonstrating unerring support for the implementation of strategies designed to promote collective efficacy, with principals leading initiatives for change. The success of a learning organization is contingent on strong support from the top executive (Senge, 1990). In an environment that fosters collective efficacy, school leaders seek out confident teachers to drive the change process at the faculty level (Wcasmer & Woods, 1998).

Woolfolk Hoy (2000) charted the trajectory of efficacy beliefs over the first years of teaching by surveying the participants as prospective teachers entering teacher education, then at the completion of student teaching, and finally, after their first year as classroom professionals. All the teachers were part of the same program, based on a professional development school (PDS) model. The comprehensive program included a variety of methods courses and preparation for teaching diverse urban learners. As part of a larger project on teacher efficacy, the study employed multiple assessment tools including the TES, Bandura's Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale, and a specific measure of efficacy created to capture the elements of the teacher preparation program.

The study found that efficacy increased during teacher preparation but declined with actual teaching experience (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000), a finding consistent with Bandura's research (1997). A study a decade earlier conducted by Hoy and Woolfolk found increases in personal teaching efficacy during student teaching (Woolfolk Hoy,
2000). At the same time, Woolfolk Hoy noted that the teachers in the prior study did not have the intensive internship of the teachers in the latter study, "Thus the current sample probably had more support and buffering during their student teaching experience" (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000, p. 17).

Woolfolk Hoy (2000) observed that declines in support produced declines in personal efficacy whereas higher support resulted in heightened personal efficacy. Based on this finding, which is not uncommon, Woolfolk Hoy (2000) suggests that providing novices with adequate support "may be important in protecting efficacy during early teaching" (p. 17). Onafowora (2004) expresses a similar perspective.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) examined the impact of resources and supports on the efficacy perceptions of teachers with varying degrees of experience, ranging from one to 29 years. Of the 255 participants, 34% taught elementary school, 29% taught middle school, 31% taught high school, and 6% taught preschool. The types of support assessed by the study included teaching materials, interpersonal support offered by colleagues and school administrations, and support offered by parents and community members.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) concluded that the study provided "limited support" for the model of teacher efficacy proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998). Findings suggested that task analysis was most appropriate for assessing efficacy among novices and teachers embarking upon a new assignment whereas veteran teachers give more weight to their memories and interpretations of previous similar teaching experiences. Perceived support was only important for novice teachers, a finding that
strengthens the argument in favor of structuring schools to bolster the efficacy levels of new teachers (Henson, 2001; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000, 2004).

Adequate access to teaching resources and support from parents emerged as the major sources of teachers’ sense of efficacy. Tschanen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) attribute this to the conventional school organization, commenting that, “Because of the traditional isolation of the teaching profession, and the dearth of meaningful feedback from administrators in traditional supervisory practice, perhaps it is not surprising that teachers do not look to these as primary sources to inform their efficacy judgments” (p. 6). They also note that teachers have historically lacked community support. This recognition is an ironic argument in favor of a comprehensive model of professional development that departs radically from past practices and emphasizes collegiality among teachers and stakeholder and community support (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2003).

A positive and intriguing finding is that even in the absence of support from colleagues or administrators “teachers have cultivated a robust sense of their efficacy” (Tschanen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002, p. 6). Pajares (2001), as cited in Maehr & Pintrich, noted that lack of adequate teaching resources can tax the coping ability of even confident teachers. This was confirmed by the significant impact of teaching resources reported by Tschanen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002). It stands to reason that the professional efficacy of teachers would be challenged when they lack access to resources needed to effectively carry out their work.
Task challenges appear to increase for teachers in higher grades. Middle and high school teachers were less confident in their capacity to provide their students with appropriate instructional strategies, manage classroom behavior, and actively engage students with varied ability levels in genuine learning (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002). Much of the professional development literature focuses on elementary school teachers. Carefully designed, comprehensive professional development activities have successfully transformed the cultures of schools serving children of all ages and grades as well as all social classes (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) propose that educators give more attention to “structural changes and professional development opportunities that would help boost the efficacy of teachers of older children” (p. 7). Their study of teachers in grades three and six surmised that teachers’ confidence in their ability to influence declines as the student’s progress through the grades.

Oh, Kim, and Leyva (2004) explored efficacy perceptions among 87 PreK-12 teachers employed by three inner city schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). All the schools were located in low-income communities with predominately Mexican American student enrollments. The schools ranked below the national average on the Stanford Nine achievement tests, although all three schools had enjoyed gains from the previous year.

In all three schools, the teachers displayed low levels of efficacy, low expectations for their students, and limited confidence in their teaching (Oh et al. 2004). Latino teachers, who accounted for 52.9% of the sample, expressed higher expectations for their students than their white colleagues. A study of special educators for English
language learners with disabilities disclosed that proficiency in the students’ native language was a key factor in teachers’ perceptions of efficacy (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). A similar mechanism may underlie the disparities between the Latino and white teachers in the LAUSD schools (Oh et al., 2004). The LAUSD teachers believed that other teachers held lower expectations for student success than they did, a sign of low collective efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Oh et al. (2004) attributed the discrepancies in the teachers’ appraisals of their personal efficacy and that of their colleagues as a sign of low collegiality and collaboration.

Research consistently documents that students in low-income schools are more likely than affluent peers to be taught by inexperienced or under-qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2004). The inequity is even more pronounced in California than in other areas of the country. The teachers surveyed by Oh et al. (2004) were all properly trained and credentialed, although the researchers noted that teachers with master’s degrees had higher efficacy beliefs than those with bachelor’s degrees. The major issue appears to be the lack of cohesiveness and collegiality in the low-performing schools.

In their study of special education teachers of English language learners, Paneque and Barbetta (2006) concluded that “special education teachers would benefit from an infrastructure that promotes support from others and collaboration with other professionals” (p. 188). Collaboration is essential if special and regular educators are to work together to ensure that students receive appropriate placements and services. In addition, Paneque and Barbetta (2006) recommend that school districts contemplate offering teachers professional development activities in the areas of cultural diversity,
testing and evaluation, language development and second language acquisition, and family participation.

Ross (1992) investigated the interactions between teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs, student achievement, and the impact of peer coaching on 18 seventh and eighth grade history teachers in the process of adopting a new curriculum. While noting that no prior study had connected teacher efficacy with coaching, Ross (1992) maintains that teachers who believe they have the capacity to make a difference in the way children learn will look favorably on opportunities to coach others, and as protégés, more willing to experiment and risk being criticized by a coach. Additionally, more confident teachers are more motivating coaches, which intensifies the effect (Ross, 1992).

The results supported the assumption that academic performance would be higher in the classrooms of teachers who engaged in more intensive interactions with coaches (Ross, 1992). Academic achievement was also superior in classes with teachers who scored high on personal teaching efficacy. This finding is ubiquitous in the literature (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Maehr & Pintrich; Tschanne-Moran et al., 1998; Tschanne-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Similarly, research consistently documents that teachers who are more efficacious are more willing to experiment with new teaching strategies.

The relationship between high personal efficacy perceptions and openness to new teaching methods holds true for special educators as well as regular educators (Allinder, 1995). Allinder examined the impact of self-efficacy on the classroom practices of 19 special educators who had recently adopted curriculum-based measurement (CBM). The teachers, in grades three through six, had ample experience in special education and
all were given specific training in implementing CBM. Each teacher chose two students with mild disabilities whose mathematics performance they charted with CBM.

Not unexpectedly, teachers who scored high on personal and teaching efficacy set more ambitious goals for their students and increased them more often over the course of the school year (Allinder, 1995). Allinder (1995) proposed their goal setting strategies “may be a concrete reflection of a belief in their ability to teach students and a belief that the students whom they teach can benefit from the education offered them” (p. 251). Additionally, in view of the link between higher goal setting and higher student progress, the students’ gains may act as reinforcement for the teachers’ efficacy perceptions. Allinder projected that certain behaviors associated with higher personal efficacy contributed to the students’ superior achievement. These include persevering with students who have problems grasping material, maintaining high academic standards, conveying high expectations for performance, and sustaining on-task behavior.

Derived from the TES, the STEBI was created specifically for assessing efficacy beliefs about teaching science (Henson et al., 2001). Morrell (2003) employed the STEBI-B, designed for use with preservice teachers, in a study of prospective elementary school teachers. Participation in methods courses had a significant impact on personal science teaching efficacy. Of particular significance, Morrell noted that the courses were structured to include the four sources of self-efficacy. The teacher candidates gained mastery experiences through assignments in K-12 classrooms, vicarious learning by watching teachers model science lessons in virtual lessons, and sources of verbal persuasion that included the expert instructor, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. Furthermore, the environment in which the course took place and the overall
design of the educational program provided the teaching students with a positive physiological and emotional state.

Morrell (2003) states that the design of preparatory courses and programs is particularly important for raising the efficacy perceptions of teaching candidates who have low self-efficacy in a particular discipline. The synthesis of qualitative and quantitative research methods employed by Onafowora (2004) allows for greater understanding of prospective teachers’ weaknesses and hence for developing strategies to overcome them.

Teacher Evaluation

Fullan (1995) observed that in the midst of pressures for accountability, initiatives to make schools more accountable have often proved to be counterproductive. Theoretically, performance evaluation should be a measure of accountability; however, traditional evaluation procedures fail to capture relevant aspects of teachers’ classroom performance (Danielson, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1984, 1985).

Danielson and McGreal (2000) chronicled the evolution of teacher evaluation from the 1970s. The 1980s were dominated by a focus on teacher effectiveness; recognition of the importance of critical thinking skills emerged in the in the 1990s; the current trend is the adoption of authentic pedagogy. The paradigm shift from a mechanistic model of teaching and learning to a constructivist approach requires evaluation protocols that address the components of teaching within constructivist pedagogy and their impact on student learning. An additional concern is that current evaluation protocols should reflect the principles of teacher leadership and
professionalism. Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984/1985) recognized an emphasis on professionalism as an important element of evaluation systems two decades ago.

An additional issue involves differentiated evaluation for teachers at different points in their teaching careers (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Novice teachers benefit from procedures that employ formative evaluation to support and enhance their professional practice (Danielson & Dwyer, 1995). Differentiated evaluation accomplishes this aim. In a case study of the introduction of differentiated evaluation in the Calvert County School System, Maryland, Glatthorn and Holler (1987) noted that the process involved meetings among the district superintendent’s staff, school principals, and supervisors. The three stakeholder groups reached consensus on the idea that evaluation procedures should distinguish between three interrelated activities:

*Rating:* the process of appraising teachers’ performances.

*Giving feedback:* offering ongoing information about performance.

*Facilitating professional development:* helping teachers grow professionally.

These three interrelated components and a clear understanding of what constitutes each one is essential to an effective evaluation program (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

The Calvert County study (Glatthorn & Holler, 1987) was among several case studies that appeared in the 1980s. The School Improvement Project (SIP) in the Northwest (Manatt, 1987) and the evaluation project implemented by the Pasco, Washington, School District (Tesch et al., 1987) provide excellent examples of innovations that emerged in the wake of A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983). The Northwest and Pasco projects both emphasized participation and collaboration by teachers, which engendered a sense of ownership for the evaluation procedures (Manatt, 1987; Tesch et al., 1987).
The Pasco School District utilized McGreal’s (1983) goal-oriented framework for teacher evaluation. Tesch et al. (1987) cited McGreal’s model as a vehicle for facilitating discussion and collaboration between teachers and principals, as well as guiding collective efforts to improve the effectiveness of the schools. According to Tesch et al. (1987), the introduction of the appraisal system yielded numerous benefits since the structured feedback sessions led to the development of new ideas, including a plan for assisting novice teachers with goal-setting. The district abandoned the conventional appraisal system in favor of a program aligned with the district mission for school improvement. Ironically, many school districts are still reluctant to replace their existing systems with new evaluation models in spite of increasing pressures for accountability and radical shifts in teaching and learning goals (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

In the context of the SIM project, Manatt (1987) reported that, “Teachers were the dominant group on each stakeholder committee, and in general, their standards were higher than those of other stakeholders” (p. 9). In a conjoint effort with university consultants, the stakeholder groups sought out “valid, reliable, and discriminating performance criteria” (p. 11). This is the type of assessment that Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984,1985) found to be linked with superior academic outcomes.

The adoption of developmental and participatory supervision for teachers was a central component within SIM project’s strategic plan (Manatt, 1987). They acknowledged that this was a difficult step for principals and consequently, recommended that principal performance evaluation should include the ability to motivate and promote change. The participants identified several attributes of effective performance evaluation. First, performance criteria must make sense to teachers and
principals. Second, effective evaluation entails cooperation between the evaluator and the person being evaluated. Third, there must be honest and direct communication between the evaluator and the person being evaluated. Fourth, the participants must be sensitive to one another’s concerns and responsibility. Finally, successful evaluation demands objectivity and clearly defined expectations.

McConney et al. (2003) reported on the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) reform initiative, which includes a Performance-Based Evaluation System (PBES). A striking finding was that whereas 81% of principals considered the PBES guidelines to be clear and understandable, only 45% of teachers agreed. Furthermore, only 30% to 40% of teachers deemed the PBES policies fair and ethical, evenly applied, oriented toward teacher improvement, and consistent with due process. Twice as many principals viewed the policies favorably.

The Baltimore teachers were asked to appraise the utility of different elements of their evaluations (McConney, 2003). Two-thirds of the teachers viewed classroom observations as a useful tool for evaluation and slightly more than half the teachers rated performance reviews and self-assessments as equally useful (McConney et al., 2003). However, only 20% of the teachers had positive views of portfolios, which several teachers described as “useless” and “worthless.”

Danielson (2001) maintains that portfolios stimulate reflection on teaching practice. In sharp contrast to the comments of the Baltimore teachers (McConney et al., 2003), Danielson (2001) claims that many teachers engage in self-reflection and professional discourse as they prepare their portfolio. Relevant and effective evaluation

Australian researchers reported that teachers' original apprehension over mandated performance management dissolved over time as the teachers found they could take control of the process (Down et al., 2000). The teachers resourcefully found ways to maintain professional autonomy and despite the externally imposed appraisal system. However, the impact of the evaluation system on teaching performance was negligible. Improvements in classroom teaching were attributed to engaging in professional conversations with colleagues and to informal, spontaneous learning experiences. Down et al. noted that the teachers desired "feedback and support to be based on a professional, rather than managerial, model of teacher review and development" (p. 221). The teachers' attitudes are consistent with proponents of professionalism in performance evaluation in the U.S. (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1984, 1985).

Fitzgerald et al. (2003) found that the attitudes of New Zealand teachers toward state mandated performance management depended upon their position within the school organization. Teachers who lacked managerial authority were less likely to view the appraisal process as fair and transparent and more likely to perceive it as a mechanism for controlling teachers' actions. Based on the teachers' responses, Fitzgerald et al. (2003) concluded that empowering teachers by involving them in the evaluation system is essential to its success. The case studies reported by Manatt (1987) and Tesch et al. (1987) support that assumption.
Educators in the Washoe County School District (WCSD) serving Reno and Sparks, Nevada, chose to use Danielson's (1996) Framework for Teaching for performance appraisal (Borman & Kimball, 2005; Kimball, White, Milanowski, & Borman, 2004; Sawyer, 2001). Teachers in the WCSD (which has a compelling need to recruit and retain teachers) consistently complained that evaluation was a procedure imposed on them as opposed to a process that engaged them as active participants (Sawyer, 2001). The conventional evaluation procedures focused on novices or poorly performing teachers while neglecting veteran teachers who desired to refine their expertise. In addition, the evaluation criteria were vaguely defined so teachers remained unclear about what was expected of them. A task force gathered samples of various teacher evaluation models and synthesized the basic ideas into a framework aligned with standards for teacher performance.

The new appraisal system adopted the four domains of teaching outlined by Danielson (1996): planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities (Sawyer, 2001). Each domain has specific components and detailed elements of teacher behavior. Under each element, a rubric describes the teaching behavior as unsatisfactory, target for growth, proficient, or area of strength. The WCSD educators field-tested the model and revised it to be better aligned with district goals.

The most striking finding was that the majority of experienced educators teachers reported being "revitalized by the reflection the new system encouraged and by the confirmation that their expertise could be stated in descriptive terms rather than in glowing, but vague, generalities" (Sawyer, 2001, p. 46). The teachers responded
favorably to their perceived control over the outcome of their performance appraisal and expressed renewed commitment to their professional teaching practice. Sawyer (2001) presented a case study of the WCSD initiative from the teachers’ perspectives. Kimball et al. (2004) investigated the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and student learning outcomes. The analyses were based on third, fourth, and fifth grade students’ performance in mathematics in mathematics and reading. The researchers described the results as “mixed.” The teachers’ evaluation scores were linked with student achievement outcomes across grade levels and subjects; however, the associations did not always reach significance. In fact, the results were only significant for fourth grade reading achievement and mathematics and reading achievement in fifth grade. While conceding that the results were not as impressive as anticipated, Kimball et al. acknowledged that, “compared to education and experience as reflected in the district salary schedule, the teacher evaluation scores do help explain more variations in teacher effects” (p. 70). Kimball et al. (2004) suggested that the district examination might have reflected the knowledge taught in the classroom, which would attenuate the effects. Alternately, there was a limited range of student performance scores, with an unusually high average, which could result in a ceiling effect.

Other potential explanations proposed by Kimball et al. (2004) are more critical of the evaluation protocols. The stakes were not high for the WCSD, which might have led evaluations to inflate their assessments to boost teachers’ morale. Kimball et al. (2004) also speculate that the standards might not be specific enough to allow for comprehensive assessment of teachers’ performance on key elements of instruction. Thus it is possible that the “results would have been different if the evaluation system
focused more on instructional content and content-specific pedagogy and emphasized uniform sources of teaching evidence” (p. 71). Kimball et al. (2004) describe Danielson’s (1996) framework as “generic.” However, the types of evaluation programs recommended by Danielson and McGreal (2000) encompass the specific elements described by Kimball et al. (2004).

Borman and Kimball (2005) explored the issue of whether teachers with higher evaluation scores narrow gaps in student achievement. Using standards-based evaluation as a proxy for teacher quality, they discovered that “teacher quality is not distributed equitably among classrooms with varying baseline achievement and poverty and minority concentrations” (p. 17). This is a perennial finding in educational research (Darling-Hammond, 2004). As in other studies, Borman and Kimball (2005) observed that poor, minority, and lower-performing students had limited access to high quality teachers, which serves to perpetuate disadvantage.

Alternately, Borman and Kimball (2005) suggest that teachers in low-performing, economically disadvantaged schools might be perceived by evaluators as less effective as a result of the characteristics of the students, whereas the ratings of teachers in affluent, higher-performing schools might be inflated. At the same time, researchers using teacher credentials and other measures of quality consistently find that poor and minority students have less access to quality teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

Indirectly, Borman and Kimball (2005) invoked the concepts of teacher efficacy and collective efficacy by stating that, “Attributes of the school context, such as limited school organizational capacity or lack of a strong professional culture, also can constrain the performance of good teachers in high-poverty, high-minority, and low-achieving
schools. Alternatively, a strong sense of collective efficacy has the power to positively transform the performance of low-income urban schools (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), although it is a challenging process without clear understanding of how collective efficacy operates (Goddard et al., 2004).

Borman and Kimball (2005) agree with Darling-Hammond (2005) that better teaching is correlated with better learning outcomes. At the same time, Borman and Kimball (2005) express uncertainty over whether teacher evaluation is a reliable measure of the teacher quality within a given school system.

Howard and McColsky (2001) focused on the Professional Review Process (PRR) used to assess the performance of experienced teacher in North Carolina. The PRR is based on formative teacher evaluation, "which provides a structure for individualized professional growth through a process of self-assessment, goal setting, and feedback from such sources as peer review, peer coaching, and portfolio development" (p. 48). The system developed from recognition that the conventional summative evaluation protocols had no provision for promoting teachers' professional growth. Consequently, formative evaluation was added as a "growth component" during the years that experienced teachers did not undergo the state-mandated summative evaluation process. A field test of the formative evaluation instrument drew suggestions for improvement from teachers and principals, which were integrated into the model (Howard & McColsky, 2001). Howard and McColsky conceive of teacher appraisal as a "link between teacher and school performance," provided it is aligned with educational goals (p. 51). According to the authors: Involving teachers in their own assessments, helping them develop goals that are aligned with those of the school and district, and providing clear expectations and
feedback encourage the type of professionalism and growth essential to high quality teaching (Howard & McColsky, 2001, p. 51).

In the WCSD, novice teachers expressed the highest endorsement for the innovative appraisal system (Sawyer, 2001). Praxis III was devised as a nationwide system for licensing new teachers (Danielson & Dwyer, 1995). Praxis III integrates evaluation with coaching and mentoring. Danielson and Dwyer (1995) found Praxis III to be beneficial to all constituent groups. Novice teachers and evaluators both have a specific framework to guide them. Mentors engage in self-reflection and learning from their interactions with protégés, while staff developers have a systematic assessment tool that provides them with information they can use to advance professional development.

Gallagher (2004) investigated the validity of a performance-based, teacher evaluation system, in addition, drawing on teacher efficacy as a factor in student achievement. The study took place at Vaughn Elementary, a charter school in the LAUSD with an enrollment of 1,290 students. The entire student body is eligible for free or reduced price meals and 85% of the students are English language learners. Before becoming a charter school, Vaughn ranked in the lowest 10th percentile on norm-referenced tests, and the charter designates improving student performance as a "critical goal and measure of student success" (pp. 83-84).

In the differentiated approach to performance evaluation, the teachers were classified into three salary categories (Gallagher, 2004). In Category 1 were teachers working toward full California teaching credentials (these teachers were appraised on fewer dimensions). Category 2 consisted of fully licensed teachers who attained an
average rating of 3.0 (proficient) on all basic domains, while Category 3 was composed of teachers whose average score across domains was 3.5.

There were marked disparities in the teaching of literacy and mathematics, which to an extent, reflected differences in the focus of professional development (Gallagher, 2004). The rubric for literacy learning emphasizes teaching decoding, comprehension, and more complex analysis and literacy learning is a prominent feature of professional development. As a result, the teachers endorsed a vision of effective literacy learning that was aligned with state standards. In contrast, although mathematics teaching was a focus of professional development at Vaughn, not all teachers had equivalent exposure to the activities. A particularly striking finding was that the emphasis on literacy in professional development produced a generally high sense of efficacy for literacy instruction. Only one teacher did not have high self-efficacy perceptions for literacy instruction, and Gallagher noted that, “her classroom effects were lower than would have been predicted from her evaluation scores” (p. 102).

The rubric for mathematics teaching at Vaughn lacked the sophistication of the rubric for literacy learning. Additionally, Gallagher (2004) observed that the teachers’ sense of efficacy for mathematics instruction was below that for literacy instruction. Ironically, the teachers systematically reported that the students’ limited English vocabulary impeded their mathematics performance while no comparable statements emerged for literacy learning, where English fluency could have more of an impact on learning. According to Gallagher (2004), qualitative analysis implied that the more limited relationship between teachers’ sense of efficacy and classroom effects in
mathematics was due to poor alignment between the state mathematics standards and Vaughn's mathematics teaching and teacher evaluation.

Chapter Summary

A substantial body of research documents that there is a marked association between teachers' sense of efficacy and student performance. To an extent, this is attributable to the connection between teachers' personal sense of efficacy and the degree of collective efficacy within the school. Schools led by a supportive principal and comprised of faculty who engage in collaboration to achieve high academic aims are characterized by a powerful sense of collective efficacy. At the same time, there is an evident need for more research into the influences on collective efficacy.

Compared to the impressive body of literature on collective research, there has been far less examination of the relationship between teacher evaluation and student performance. The redesign of evaluation procedures lags behind other elements of education reform and even innovative new instruments may not adequately capture the components of effective teaching. The consistently positive effects for personal teaching efficacy on learning outcomes suggest that an evaluation instrument that includes teacher efficacy as an attribute of good teaching has the potential to provide information to guide professional development and enhance professional practice for teachers at various levels of expertise.
CHAPTER III
Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how individual teacher efficacy attributes foster student achievement. A case study design was used with eleven highly performing elementary teachers randomly selected from a population of 23 purposely selected participants in a K-8 public school district in central New Jersey.

Purposeful sampling provided information-rich interview opportunities. Thirty-five tenured teachers in the study district who were selected for the self-direction assessment option were evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year. From this sample of potential participants, twelve teachers were assigned to middle school or early childhood classes. Twenty-three teachers were assigned to four K-5 elementary schools and were invited to participate in the study. Eighteen teachers volunteered and 11 teachers were randomly selected for interviews.

Data were collected through focus groups, observations, interviews, and analysis of artifacts. Results indicated that learning artifacts reflected individual teacher efficacy traits. Interactions within the self-directed evaluation model environment encouraged participants to reflect on their decisions about lesson planning and preparations, establishing a culture for learning, instruction and professional responsibilities.
Proponents of self-efficacy research acknowledge the traits of high expectations, confidence and persistence skills that are inherent in teachers with high efficacy. The complex nature of effective teaching is reflected in self motivation, and designing instruction that is effective for the learner. Amidst the current national attention on educational accountability in our schools through No Child Left Behind legislation, effective teaching capitalizes on skills for analyzing, presenting, and communicating results.

The setting for this study was a K-8 public school district in central New Jersey. The district recently implemented a differentiated system of professional evaluation initiative. Each teacher was observed and evaluated using a standards-based assessment system. The evaluation initiative was designed to use standards based domain rubrics to assess and change teachers' practices. In the past, observers relied on clinical method of evaluation. The invitation to apply for the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation offered tenured teachers an opportunity to use the most current standards based content available, while studying the means by which students learn best. The teachers selected for the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation were identified by their principals as distinguished educators who demonstrated a strong sense of self-efficacy.

Participants

Thirty five teachers initially participated in the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation. From this sample of potential participants, 23 elementary school teachers from four district schools were invited to take part in this study. The 11 teachers who
were randomly selected for interviews are described in detail in the characteristics of the participants table.

*Qualitative Research*

A key task of the evaluation process is to assess and document professional progress. Qualitative interviews with self-directed model participants provided valuable information on how teachers perceive self-efficacy and what they regard as important elements in an evaluation program designed to encourage collaboration and differentiation. A semi-structured interview guide was constructed to advance understanding of teacher perceptions about efficacy and the differentiated performance appraisal format. Open-ended responses provided statements for further analysis. Patton (1989) notes that quotations "reveal the respondents' levels of emotion, the way in which they have organized the world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions" (p. 289). This study was designed to provide a framework within which teachers participating in the self-directed model of evaluation respond in ways that represent their perspectives on the experience. Actual quotations from teachers about student achievement and self-efficacy provided ways to understand the complex nature of their effective teaching. Goals of the interview process included documenting individualized outcomes, describing the self-directed program processes, investigating differences between participants' experiences, noting dynamic change, and recording teacher beliefs about the appraisal program.
Interview Guide

Patton (1990) identified the interview guide approach as a useful tool as the participant's responses are open-ended and not restricted to choices provided by the interviewer. The data collection is systematic and comprehensive while the style of the interview is conversational and informal. The interviewer is able to probe for in-depth responses and guide the discussion to cover relevant topics. Although additional important issues may be raised by the participant, the interviewer is able to compare or analyze data.

The study design, interview protocol, and data analysis were planned during the proposal process. Patton (1989) also identifies the interview as an observation. The interviews and their transcripts were categorized, analyzed and interpreted.

The research questions listed in Chapter I are the focus of this study.

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?

   a. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?

   b. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school's vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?
2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

3. How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

*Interview Guide on the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy*

Sixteen open-ended interview questions regarding teacher efficacy and the self-directed model of evaluation will be preceded by three questions intended to elicit background information.

*Background Information Questions*

- How many years have you been teaching?
- How long have you been teaching your current grade level?
- What grade levels did you teach prior to your current assignment?

*Perceptions as they pertain to teacher efficacy*

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?
   
   1.1 What teaching practices do you believe are critical for setting high standards for student learning?
   
   1.2 What efficacy strategies do you utilize in designing and delivering instruction that support student learning?
   
   1.3 How do you implement and evaluate new content knowledge?
   
   1.4 What relevant strategies have you developed for instructional improvement?
1.5 To what extent does your planning and preparation strategies demonstrate your content knowledge, teaching skills, lesson designs and assessing student learning?

1.6 What does good teaching look like in the classrooms of teachers with a strong sense of teacher efficacy?

_Perceptions as they pertain to the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation_

2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

2.1 In your opinion or perception, how important is the freedom you have in directing your own evaluation processes?

2.2 In your opinion or perception, what aspects of the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation were most satisfying?

2.3 In your opinion or perception, what aspects of the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation were least satisfying?

2.4 How have you applied the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation practices to enhance teaching and learning?

2.5 To what extent did the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation impact your decisions about creating a respectful culture for learning, managing procedures, supervising student behavior and organizing the physical space?

2.6 What common instructional practices do teachers share that contribute to the school’s vision and mission for achievement?
Perceptions regarding the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation to impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes

3. How does the implementation of the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

3.1 How did the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation impact your choices about professional responsibilities in the ways you reflected on your teaching, student assessment and professional activities at school?

3.2 How would you describe the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation as a way to provide teachers with opportunities for self-assessment and self-directed growth?

3.3 What opportunities are in place for you to share feedback on relevant and meaningful instruction with your colleagues?

3.4 How did the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation encourage you to expand your own learning?

Design and Data Sources

Chapter II provided an overview of the theories and studies associated with diffusion and adoption of teacher efficacy research. The case study method (Patton, 2002) was selected to study both the process and products of learning over the course of a one year evaluation timeline. This format allowed for the study of each participant as an individual case and to group patterns across all cases. Varied data collection methods were used to inform the results of this study. Using multiple methods enabled the observer to collect the study documents and triangulate the data in order to confirm the findings and interpretations.
The data is presented according to the sequence of the research questions. Items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 were designed to gather subject perceptions regarding the impact of teacher efficacy on student learning. The next set of questions, focused on the interviewee's responses to the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation; 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6. Questions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 asked participants for perceptions regarding the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation's impact on the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes.

Focus groups, observations, interviews and artifacts were resources that contributed to this study.

The Teacher Evaluation Research Committee convened to serve as a panel of experts. They contributed feedback and guidance on the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation study. According to Patton (2002), focus group discussions can offer assistance in determining needs and questions for further study. The purpose of the observations is to provide descriptive information to supplement and complement the interview data. In addition, observational data will be used as probes and referents to corroborate interview data.

Interviews lasting no less than 45 minutes and no more than one hour were conducted with each of the 11 participants who were selected at random. The semi-structured interview protocol was designed to provide order and phrasing of the questions, as well to probes to specific information (Patton, 1990). Teachers were asked to describe how their efficacy affected their learning, as well as their choice and use of instructional tools. For example, the participants discussed which methods were most
helpful in the construction of their learning artifacts. They were encouraged to articulate what they learned and how the self-directed model of evaluation met or changed their thinking about teaching and learning. Participants reflected on their completed project, how it represented their abilities, what they learned, and what decision-making processes were used in selecting specific instructional practices. At the conclusion of the study, participant-generated artifacts and documents will be collected and used as reflection aids in the study findings.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data followed the qualitative analysis process (Creswell, 1998), and comparative methods for coding directly from the interview and from observational and factual data. Coding categories were reviewed multiple times to detect patterns and document statements that represented broader themes. In addition to themes and patterns, descriptive accounts of the participants were developed to profile the participants. Results indicated a high level of researcher-participant agreement. Recommendations from each participant were noted and revisions or additions made as necessary.
Chapter Summary

This study was conducted to identify the attributes of teachers with high self-efficacy as perceived by educators participating in a self-directed model of evaluation. The data was gathered to determine if these beliefs were compatible with the literature review referenced in this research. The district superintendent granted permission to study elementary school teachers engaged in the self-directed model of evaluation during the 2005-2006 school year. Interviews were conducted with the identified case study sample population of teachers who participated in the Differentiated System of Evaluation Self Direction Option of Charlotte Danielson research (1996). Twenty three elementary school teachers from four schools were invited to participate in this study. (see Appendix B). The sample size of 11 was 47% of the population of 23. Confronted with increasing demands for teacher accountability, educators are eager to promote teacher efficacy and identify effective standards-based strategies for comprehensive improvement. This study analyzed the implementation of a differentiated system of evaluation process to determine if the opportunity to participate in a self-directed option demonstrated teacher efficacy. Investigating the influence of what teachers choose to teach, how much effort they put into the instruction and their perseverance when students fail to learn is valuable. Reviewing literature studies for developing an instrument to measure self-efficacy helped formulate interview items. Preliminary discussions explained the purpose of this study and the organization of the research. After receiving the superintendent’s permission to participate, the teachers were invited to participate in the study.
The interview inquiry is consistent with Maddox’ analysis of self-efficacy theory (1995) in looking at how teachers: see their mission, seek to achieve, enact resilience in the face of obstacles, use resources, apply diligence in designing lessons, persevere when student efforts fail to produce achievements and deflect vulnerability to discouragement that affects teaching dealing with challenging social issues. Kotter & Heskett, (1992) studied 207 organizations. Their efficacy report concluded that effective cultures have a “feeling of confidence: the members believe, without a doubt, that they can effectively manage whatever new problems and opportunities come their way” (p. 44-45). Shamir (1990) advocated measuring perceptions of organizational efficacy by combining individual perceptions of their organization’s capabilities. The amount of variation in a faculty with a high sense of efficacy would be very low.

Analysis of the study data was conducted through a grounded theory approach to generate an appropriate data investigation and offer relevant explanation of the findings. Grounded theory practices provided a basis for collecting information and coding each subject’s responses to maintain anonymity. All interview subjects are knowledgeable experts in their field.

After interviewing each participant, the researcher transcribed the data to seek patterns and exceptions for each question. Conclusions that materialized from the analysis of the qualitative interview data were derived from a systematic process of restructurin the questions. Each prompt was reorganized and designated a specific color to align the responses for coded and grouped category listings. By seeking response commonalities, the researcher was able to detect patterns in the participant answers.
The interview transcripts were examined multiple times to comply with the open coding and combing techniques cited by Strauss & Corbin (1998). These applications explored the transcriptions to identify substantive topics to be included in this study and considered for future research. The exploratory nature of the interview protocol investigated self-directed evaluation practitioners to learn about their performance appraisal experiences.

In addition to the interviews, documents were collected as suggested by Patton (1989). Records of the original Teacher Evaluation Resource Committee were reviewed to further understand the district professional standards and implementation of the domain rubrics. Discussions with principals, focus groups and formal observations offered practical information to strengthen this study.

In summary, the value of promoting teacher self-efficacy to advance student achievement is that it brings together multiple informational sources of data, and individual teacher perceptions of the school concerning the organizations’ capabilities and abilities, under one construct.

The Teacher Evaluation Research Committee initiative encouraged all district educators to become a community of teachers and learners. The new self-directed model required a paradigm shift towards self-efficacy. Greater emphasis on choice in their professional development, to participate as active change agents where the goals builds on what they already know and encourages everyone to increase efficacy in their own professional lives in a community of educators where autonomy, and the uniqueness of each teacher-learner results in effective instruction.
The differentiated system of evaluation recognizes the multiple stages and needs of teachers. "One-size fits all" staff assessment is no longer appropriate for teachers who possess personal autonomy and exercise discretion in deciding the direction of their own professional development. It is assumed in teacher development theory that growth toward a developed professional state can take place through reflection on the ordinary day-to-day experience of instructing students in classrooms" (p. 210). Opportunities to reflect on the "dailiness" of life of the actual students in the classroom are key to effective change.

Engaging students in constructing their own knowledge requires teacher models. Students who think critically need efficacious teachers.
CHAPTER IV
Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine teacher attributes that contribute to successful implementation of sustained, exemplary instructional practices. Perceptions teachers hold about their role in promoting student learning provide insights on the association of teacher efficacy and student performance that encourage educators to replicate conditions conducive to high quality student achievement. An interview protocol was developed to elicit teacher perceptions on efficacy and the ways in which their experiences with the self-directed model evaluation expanded self-efficacy. Background information and open ended questions explored teacher beliefs regarding planning and preparation, establishing a culture for learning, instruction and professional responsibilities. The study was designed to expand understandings of the proficiencies, skills and characteristics of teachers with high efficacy.

Bandura's work (1993) on efficacy relates to the critical decisions teachers make about teaching and learning in their classrooms. These perspectives depict what teachers think about student learning experiences. A primary focus of this investigation is to understand what teachers believe about their capacity to teach. How these beliefs impact student achievement will be demonstrated by examining teacher efficacy through the implementation of an innovative evaluation system. Educators vary in how they utilize personal motivation and self-confidence to make essential decisions about learning.
While there are many factors that affect student performance, this study focuses on the attributes of teacher efficacy.

Qualitative research methodology was selected to gain understandings of teacher efficacy. Chapter IV presents data obtained from semi structured interviews and transcription analysis. The researcher developed interview guide provided a flexible conversational protocol without compromising consistent inquiry. According to Patton (2002), qualitative data from interviews provides direct quotations from subjects about their knowledge and experiences. This qualitative study documents interviewee experiences and analyzes their perceptions for common themes, patterns, concepts, insights, and understandings regarding teacher efficacy. Qualitative inquiry is especially powerful as a source of grounded theory that emerges from findings generated by asking questions, exploring professional experiences, and listening to participant stories. These methods facilitated the study of teacher efficacy through the self-directed evaluation protocol in depth and detail. By gathering responses to open-ended questions, the researcher captured the perspectives of study participants on teacher efficacy.

*Nature of the Study*

The research population for this case study included tenured elementary teachers who were selected for the study district’s self-directed model of evaluation. The district is a K-8 public school system that has been identified as a District Factor Group 1 in Monmouth County, New Jersey.

Research shows that teachers with high efficacy are persistent in their efforts, have the confidence and determination needed to help students improve and are self motivated learners (Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Woolfolk
Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). In May 2005, all tenured teachers in the study district were invited to volunteer for the self-directed model of evaluation. Principals reviewed the dimensions of high expectations, confidence and persistence and selected 5 staff members who demonstrated these high efficacies in each school. The option to participate in a self-directed appraisal system stimulated reflection on the teacher’s sense of personal accomplishment, student achievement goals, and professional responsibilities.

To emphasize the importance of continually developing teacher expertise the study district supported a choice of self-directed projects. Options included developing portfolios, peer coaching, interactive journals, collegial partnerships, curriculum research projects and action research. The self-directed models were approved by the principals and the teachers integrated new findings into their content repertoires throughout the 2005-2006 school year.

The interview protocol included nineteen questions that were specifically related to the research questions stated in Chapter I.

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?

1a. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?

1b. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school’s vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?
2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

3. How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

*Identification of Teachers Demonstrating High Efficacy*

Principals have diverse opportunities to observe teacher planning, instruction, professional interactions and student achievement outcomes. The teachers who were approved to participate in the self-directed model in the 2005-2006 school year developed a mutually agreed upon Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) with their principal to identify a specific professional growth activity. The appraisal focused on the teachers’ experiences and accomplishments with portfolios, peer coaching, interactive journals, collegial partnerships, action research or curriculum research projects. The self-directed model replaced the traditional process of one observation and one annual summative evaluation by an administrator. All self-directed participants received an annual summative evaluation written by their principal.

The district superintendent granted permission for conducting this study. Letters of solicitation were sent to four elementary school principals to identify the tenured teachers in their schools who were selected to participate in the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option. The subjects in this study were identified from the listing of Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5 elementary school teachers who participated in the self-directed model of evaluation during the 2005-2006
school year by the principals who were responsible for their supervision, observations, and annual evaluations.

 Twenty three teachers were identified as having high efficacy by the principals who supervised and evaluated them in the 2005-2006 school year. They were sent letters of solicitation inviting them to participate in this study. Nineteen teachers replied, eighteen agreed to participate and one declined to participate. The Teacher Response Data is represented in Table 1.
Table 1

*Teacher Response Data*

---

**A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invited to Participate</th>
<th>Responded</th>
<th>Agreed to Participate</th>
<th>Declined to Participate</th>
<th>Selected for Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of the Study Participants

Eleven teachers from four district schools were randomly selected for interviews. They met individually with the researcher in their schools and were asked three background questions to learn about the number of years the subject has been teaching, current grade level and prior subject or grade level assignments. The participant characteristics are shown in Table 2.
Table 2

Participant Characteristics

A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Years in Education</th>
<th>Current Grade Level</th>
<th>Prior Grade Levels</th>
<th>Selected Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>Kdg.-5</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kdg.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Kdg.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interactive Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>G &amp; T</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Pre-Kdg.</td>
<td>Kdg.</td>
<td>Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Collegial Partner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: SE = Special Education, Kdg. = Kindergarten, G & T = Gifted and Talented, School = One of 4 Schools
Presentation and Data Analysis

Study findings are organized to present the data in a structured format to answer three research questions:

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?
   1a: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?
   1b: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school's vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?

2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

3. How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

   The interview guide included three introductory questions intended to elicit background information and sixteen open-ended questions regarding teacher efficacy and the self-directed model of evaluation. The open-ended questions were designed to collect data on the self-directed evaluation experience as demonstrated through teacher commentaries on the implementation of their chosen project and interview guide responses.
**Background Information**

In the initial set of questions, teachers were asked about the number of years they have been teaching, how long they have been working in their current position, and previous teaching roles. The data provided information for analysis of the subject responses to determine if any patterns emerge.

**Years in Education**

The responses to this question ranged from 5 years to 34 years. The average number of years teaching experience of the study participants was 19.5 years. Two study participants mentioned careers they held in business prior to attaining certification as teachers (see Table 2).

**Current Assignment**

All study subjects teach at the elementary school level. The respondents reported current teaching assignments from all elementary school grade levels ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 5. Four participants serve as teachers of students in Grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 through assignments in Special Education, Gifted and Talented and Speech. Five regular education teachers are assigned to elementary levels in kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 5 (see Table 2).

**Prior Teaching Assignments**

Ten of the 11 teachers responded to this questions by describing teaching positions which differed from their current assignment. Only one teacher remained in the same grade throughout her teaching career. Two teachers stated that they had worked at the middle school level prior to being transferred to elementary school classes. The answers to this question indicated that the participants represent teaching experience in
all elementary grade levels, pre-kindergarten through grade 5. Both regular and special education programs are represented in this study (see Table 2).

Principals in each of the four schools worked with the self-directed teachers to link their project to student outcomes and district goals. Measures of student learning were emphasized throughout the year as a way to enhance their project without basing formal evaluation judgments on student achievement data. All options required specific goals and on-going discussions with principals regarding progress and outcomes.

An analysis of teacher efficacy attributes is provided in the following summaries. A thorough content analysis of the interview responses and self-directed evaluation documents reveal recurring themes. There was a pattern of participants describing their pedagogical practice using each of the four domains as illustrated in Table 3: Planning and Preparation, Table 4: Establishing a Culture for Learning, Table 5: Instruction and Table 6: Professional Responsibilities.
### Domain I Planning and Preparation

#### A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Efficacy Attributes</th>
<th>High Expectations</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Instructional Goals which include Standards and Mandated Programs.</td>
<td>Teacher can clearly articulate how goals establish high expectations and relate to curriculum frameworks and standards.</td>
<td>All goals permit viable methods of assessment, are clear and written in the form of student learning.</td>
<td>Goals reflect different types of learning and integration of the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers display thorough knowledge of typical and atypical developmental characteristics of age group.</td>
<td>Teacher effectively applies knowledge of students' varied approaches to learning.</td>
<td>Goals consistently take into account the varying learning needs of individual students or groups.</td>
<td>Teacher displays extensive content knowledge, with evidence of continued pursuit of such knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher recognizes these characteristics within each</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designing Coherent Instruction</th>
<th>The lesson/unit's structure is clear and allows for differentiation of instruction.</th>
<th>All materials and resources including technology support the instructional goals, and engage students in meaningful learning.</th>
<th>Instructional groups are differentiated to support the instructional goals. Students are able to assess group progress.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students consistently demonstrate caring for one and other as individuals.</td>
<td>There is evidence of student participation in selecting or adapting materials.</td>
<td>Students progress coherently, producing a unified whole and reflecting recent professional research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Domain II Establishing a Culture for Learning

### A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Efficacy Attributes</th>
<th>High Expectations</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing a culture for learning</td>
<td>Students take pride in their work and initiate improvements ensuring that high quality work is displayed.</td>
<td>Both students and teachers establish and maintain through planning of learning activities, interactions, and the classroom environment high expectations for the learning of all students.</td>
<td>Teacher-directed volunteers and paraprofessionals make a substantive contribution to the classroom environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Classroom Procedures</td>
<td>Teacher transitions are seamless, with no loss of instructional time.</td>
<td>Teachers set seamless routines for handling materials and supplies.</td>
<td>Teacher organizes independent tasks so that students are productively engaged and able to complete the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Student Behavior</td>
<td>Teacher standards of conduct are clear to all students and appear to have been developed with student participation. Students demonstrate through their active participation, curiosity, and attention to detail, that they value the content's importance.</td>
<td>Teacher response to misbehavior is highly effective and sensitive to students' individual needs. Student behavior is entirely appropriate.</td>
<td>Monitoring by teacher is subtle and preventative. Students monitor their own and their peers' behavior, correcting one another respectfully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5

**Domain III Instruction**

**A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Efficacy Attributes</th>
<th>High Expectations</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating Clearly and Accurately</td>
<td>Teacher directions and procedures are clear to students and anticipate possible student misunderstanding. Teacher's spoken and written language is correct and expressive, with well-chosen vocabulary that enriches the lesson.</td>
<td>Teacher's questions are of uniformly high quality, with adequate time for students to respond. Students formulate many questions.</td>
<td>Students assume considerable responsibility for the success of the discussion, initiating topics. Teachers ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Students in Learning</td>
<td>All students are engaged in the activities and assignments. Students initiate or adapt activities, goals, and projects to enhance understanding. Presentation of content links well with students' knowledge and experience.</td>
<td>Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to instructional Student take the initiative to influence learning.</td>
<td>Students contribute to presentation of content. Instructional materials are well suited to the instructional goals and engage students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Feedback to Students</td>
<td>Teachers use effective communication skills which students emulate to resolve classroom conflicts.</td>
<td>Feedback is consistently high quality and timely. Provision is made for students to use feedback in their learning.</td>
<td>Teacher actively seeks additional materials to enhance instruction, for example, from professional organizations or through the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities

#### A Case Study of The Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Efficacy Attributes</th>
<th>High Expectations</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting on Teaching</td>
<td>Teacher initiates choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance learning.</td>
<td>Teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness.</td>
<td>Drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, the teacher offers specific alternative actions, complete with probable successes of different approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Teacher uses technology to effectively maintain information on non-instructional activities.</td>
<td>Teacher uses and interprets multiple assessment strategies to evaluate program effectiveness.</td>
<td>Students utilize assessment data to monitor their progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with Families</td>
<td>Teacher provides information to parents frequently on both positive and negative aspects of student progress. Response to parents concerns is handled with great sensitivity.</td>
<td>Teacher provides frequent information to parents, as appropriate, about the instructional program. Students participate in preparing materials for their families.</td>
<td>Teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful. Students contribute ideas for projects that will be enhanced by family participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the School and District</td>
<td>Teacher takes initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty and makes a systematic attempt to conduct action research in her/his classroom.</td>
<td>Teacher volunteers to participate in school and district projects and makes a substantial leadership contribution.</td>
<td>Support and cooperation characterize relationships with colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing and Developing Professionally and Showing Professionalism</td>
<td>Teacher makes a particular effort to challenge negative attitudes and helps ensure that all students are honored in the school.</td>
<td>Teacher takes a leadership role in the grade, team or departmental decision making</td>
<td>Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development. Teacher is highly proactive in serving students, seeking out resources when necessary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 1

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?

1a: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?

1b: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school’s vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?

Research Question 1, and subsidiary questions 1a and 1b are related to Domain I: Planning and Preparation and Domain II: Establishing a Culture for Learning.

To identify efficacy factors in Planning and Preparation participants examined their practice in terms of content, pedagogy, knowledge of students, selecting instructional objectives, designing coherent instruction and assessing student learning. All respondents spoke of high expectations and differentiated planning as critical to the ways they think about designing lessons. Study subjects were confident that they accomplished learning objectives and created meaningful lessons despite multiple challenges. According to Woolfolk Hoy (2004), teachers with high efficacy apply effort and are determined to achieve their intended goals. Learning difficulties are perceived as challenges to overcome by intensifying efforts. Four interviewees mentioned that rather than avoiding complex needs, they interpret setbacks as challenges and respond by designing lessons that incorporate dynamic teaching skills and differentiated activities.
Extensive knowledge of content and pedagogy were found to be essential elements in this study. Six of the research subjects spoke about the importance of knowing their subject and students well when designing differentiated instruction. One teacher addressed the need to continually assess student readiness in order to know when to "ignite a spark" or "rekindle an emerging discovery". Several interviewees spoke of anticipating student misconceptions and designing lessons based on successful prior experiences. One special education teacher believes her knowledge of content and specific student needs enables her to accomplish high expectations in spite of severe learning disabilities. Whether assigned to regular education classes or working with students who are classified, the study subjects were well acquainted with typical and atypical developmental characteristics. Recognizing these needs led participants to prepare lessons that were directly related to their students' varied approaches to learning.

Four respondents talked about setting instructional outcomes specifically intended to motivate engagement and understanding. Examples included hands-activities, stories, dramatization, and multiple observations to assess learning. Five interviewees spoke about the extensive amounts of time they devote to preparing lessons with clear content details and attention to the multiple learning styles. They assure that plans are developmentally appropriate and challenging by creating meaningful experiences. This intent is shown the way one participant described her process, "What I found to be successful is to first pry and then probe for what they already know. My lessons focus on multiple modalities and multiple intelligences when adapting lessons through these elements."
Several teachers implemented reflective processes when designing lessons. Teacher and student generated rubrics were noted as ways to document initial understanding before delivering new content. One study subject considered follow up assessments as essential to her reflection on how to design a unit study requiring multiple lessons.

A primary level teacher enthusiastically described her students' success despite a wide span of special needs. These insights led her to review IEP objectives weekly in order to plan instruction based on what she wants her students to learn. Detailed planning revealed how she motivated interest and engaged students. Knowing each child well enabled her to anticipate difficulties and provide individualized resources. Another participant stressed preparing age appropriate materials to enhance understanding. She is confident that understanding how her students learn facilitates differentiated activities and reflection on results.

Respondents provided 19 comments on how they transformed their extensive experiences into planning for increasingly diverse needs. They addressed the study district's interjection of new technology expectations for all staff members. Teacher pages on the study district's website were identified as a new way to communicate lesson plans with colleagues and parents. Three interviewees referred to pedagogical skills that evolved during the year as they increased their technology skills and developed better methods for communicating authentic lessons.

All study participants referred to their experiences prior to 2005-2006 self-directed evaluation year. Six teachers mentioned evidence of continually increasing student achievement over the years. One interviewee expressed how she maximized
academic success by consolidating what she knows about teaching and what she knows about learning. Her regard for the social and emotional characteristics of the children in her class led to decisions about their varied developmental stages of understanding. Lessons were intentionally designed to build upon individual strengths and class growth.

Eight interview statements referred to knowledge of prerequisite content relationships in order to link sequential lesson segments. An early learning specialist described how the self-directed evaluation model encouraged her to take risks in lessons designs. Another participant noted feeling confident that if a lesson fails she would be able to evaluate and talk with colleagues to discover alternative ways to succeed. Several interviewees persistently model editing and revision strategies to enable pupils to replicate risk taking in their own writing.

Planning demonstrates the teacher’s knowledge of materials and resources to enhance instruction. Two study participants referred to detailed preparation strategies as clear evidence of their diverse teaching skills. In designing lessons that utilize multiple methods of assessment, one participant described how “an experienced teacher can watch and look at the facial expressions of the students and know whether or not they’ve got it”. She described multiple ways to observe student responsiveness to determine if content has been mastered or needed to be re-taught. A special education teacher described how she “analyzes the learning styles of the class to reach out to each child’s learning style”.

All study participants clearly articulated their high expectations for learning and set objectives that accommodate the varying learning needs of individuals or groups of students. By structuring lessons that progress coherently, teachers plan instruction to engage students in meaningful learning. Specific activities are selected to prompt active
participation and assure differentiated instruction. This approach is congruent with effective instructional goals and reflects what the teacher knows about the students’ readiness for learning.

To identify efficacy factors in Domain II: Establishing a Culture for Learning, the participants shared ways in which they nurture respect and rapport in the classroom, establish a positive environment, manage procedures, model behavior and organize their classrooms. Establishing a culture for learning descriptors were identified in interview guide questions regarding teaching in the classrooms of teachers with a strong sense of teacher efficacy and the impact of the self-directed model on creating a respectful environment culture for students.

Teachers with high efficacy convey high expectations for student achievement. They understand how their students think and continually devise effective ways to assess student learning. Meaningful lessons are designed to advance learning and endow their students with a sense of competence and respect. A primary school teacher reported her thoughts about the environment by saying, “I really feel that the teacher needs to establish rapport before teaching lessons”. She was confident in her belief that a sense of humor makes children feel more comfortable when setting high goals to be achieved.

Getting to know students well enables teachers to discover and build on unique strengths. They nurture environments where children continually examine, investigate and learn. A study subject shared how she reacted on seeing that one of her students was continuously unorganized. She decided the problem was interfering in his academic progress and confidently re-taught routines successfully practiced by classmates. Rather than criticizing the child, she employed her efficacy skills to effectively persuade
by modeling simple tactics and thereby promoted the child’s engagement. The teacher believes that students who do not effectively organize their lives at school have difficulties self-regulating their studies in class and at home. Her well structured class procedures were intentionally designed to decrease frustration levels for her students.

In responding to questions about creating environments of respect, seven teachers spoke of compassion and respect for their students. Two study participants who shared a collegial partnership provided multiple examples of how their children show caring for one another as individuals and take pride in their independent tasks and group work. Developing a classroom culture where students provide information about how they are progressing benefits collective and individual learning gains.

A first grade teacher expressed her belief on assuring a productive environment: “I think it is very important to design whole class, partnered or small group experiences to create an environment where students feel very comfortable”. She believes that learning to work cooperatively in small groups and as members of a team is valuable.

Confident teachers encourage students to use the room in ways that make learning accessible to multiple learning styles. One interviewee described her class culture by saying, “I set an enthusiastic and carefree atmosphere knowing that both the teacher and student can exchange knowledge and opinion without any repercussions”. Class conduct is well managed when effective teaching practices create a motivational environment.

An experienced primary grade teacher expressed her ideas about establishing a productive climate for learning by saying, “I make every small space in the classroom a little work of art to help them connect to big learning. I’ll ask them about something I’ve changed in the room. I want them to notice little things.” Five other study participants
referred to the benefits of an empowering class settings and specific ways in which they enhance a sense of community. Seventeen comments described productive class environments and ways in which sharing resources and classroom settings provide support for cooperative learning.

Teachers who achieve order and harmony in their classrooms gain student cooperation in class. A participant who deals with gifted and talented students talked about her respect for colleagues who cannot be intimidated and sets high expectations for their students to learn. She believes that educators who are perceived by their students to be both caring and demanding often gain their collaboration. In spite of the fact that advanced ability students can be challenging, the respondent described ways in which teachers with high efficacy are intentionally imaginative, flexible, and unthreatened by the capabilities of these students.

All eleven teachers referenced positive support from their principals as integral to environmental decisions about creating a respectful culture for learning, effectively managing student behavior and reorganizing the classroom according to their students’ needs. These beliefs were stated in response to interview question 1.6 regarding what good teaching looks like in the classrooms of teachers with a strong sense of teacher efficacy.
Research Question 2

How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools? Research Question 2 is related to Domain III: Instruction.

To identify efficacy factors in Instruction, participants addressed communication, questioning and discussion techniques, student engagement, feedback and demonstrating responsiveness. Instructional strategies were solicited in the interview guide questions regarding teaching new content, instructional improvement, and application of the self-directed model practices to enhance teaching and learning.

Three participants revealed assessment strategies which they implemented to determine if the children learned what they intended to teach. Multiple reflections enabled teachers to decide what alterations were needed for students who did not appear to understand the initial instruction. Two of the three teachers described how their instruction would change if they had an opportunity to present the lesson again.

Efficacious teachers further their students' self-efficacy by persistently expanding their repertoire of creative strategies and innovative assessments. Eight participants described how they model, offer frequent feedback, guide change and set goals that are challenging and rewarding. High self-efficacy teachers know they can successfully motivate students. Their confidence is shown in lessons that encompass high expectations for students who are challenging and for those students who easily master content.

Several study participants shared samples of student work and spoke about knowing they enhanced achievement when students responded to specific feedback and
individualized support. Instructional practices depicted by the interviewees in each of the four schools noted how their self-directed project promoted student success. Subjects described how they praised and encouraged their children to self-regulate and set personal goals. One respondent expressed her confidence in using modeling as a strategy to get students interested and involved by stating, "I want them to want to learn."

In answering a question about instructional practices that contribute to the school’s vision and student achievement goals, one informant commented on good teaching that goes far beyond solid content knowledge. Being involved in the life of the school, serving as an active participant in school celebrations and being an understanding and compassionate person were cited as valuable traits in teachers who have the power to influence learning.

By creating instructional environments where students continually learn, teachers advanced student efficacy as well as academic success. Two study subjects described themselves as well organized and goal oriented with specific attention to managing procedures, and focusing on productive behavior. Responses detailed how they organize notes, give directions, and are readily available for assistance.

The interview prompt on teaching new content knowledge led study subjects to talk about their students’ prior knowledge and using multiple assessments to verify accurate understandings. Relevant strategies encouraged students to ask questions and demonstrated the participant’s pedagogical skills in monitoring and investigating academic accomplishments. Descriptions of the ways teachers assess learning exhibited a wide repertoire of examining and verifying skills.
Teachers with high efficacy believe in themselves and their professional abilities. A primary grade participant illustrated her determination to achieve mastery by saying, “I would stand on my head if I needed to and then introduce the lesson in another way if they did not understand what I taught in the first session”. A colleague expanded on differentiated strategies by describing how she applied multiple intelligence research and sensory approaches to her instructional practice. Participant statements reinforced beliefs regarding collegial efficacy. Writings by Seage (1990) cite that the effect of combined efforts is especially powerful when class learning is driven by shared vision. The combined efforts of skilled teachers culminate into a strong sense of collective efficacy.

Shared efficacy strengths were illustrated in the way one of the participants described her collegial partnership, “The two of us found that we were teaching in the same room. We began by teaching simultaneously, but working on two different subjects. We started to hear each other and making suggestions on how to teach. Then we put some of our shared ideas into action. We taught each other and taught our students to help themselves learn.” Respondents also described pedagogical practices that contribute to their school’s achievement goals. Three subjects stressed the importance of presenting content that links well with prior knowledge and experiences with previous teachers.

All study participants believe that instructional groupings are productive when various objectives are established. One study subject linked lesson structure to her instructional methods, “I think that peer work is a very important opportunity. I like small group learning because it provides me with quite a bit of information about how they are progressing and what needs must be met.”
Efficacious teachers anticipate possible misunderstandings. They respond by offering instruction that is tailored to student needs. Carefully designed discussion techniques encouraged students to answer and formulate relevant follow up questions. On being asked about presenting a complex concept, one primary teacher described her detailed process by saying, “I want to make sure when I introduce the lesson that I bring up something that they can relate to. I seek any prior knowledge that they might have. That gives me a feel for how to gear my lesson, and then I direct my lesson accordingly.”

One participant has been a teacher for more than 20 years. She volunteered for the self-directed option because she saw possibilities for utilizing reflection to improve student learning. In describing differentiated instructional strategies for presenting complex concepts, the interviewee reflected on ways she determines what students need to know. Awareness that not all students come to school with similar background knowledge led the teacher to identify the needs of struggling students and persistently provide direct guidance. Four of the eleven participants viewed helping students to develop action plans as vital to improved achievement. Setting goals and assessing progress were noted as powerful ways to change unproductive habits and persistently improve learning.

Efficacious teachers structure coherent lessons that support reflection through vigilant focus on specific objectives. Self-directed participants believe that high quality and timely feedback is important. One study subject provided opportunities for students to respond to her guidance and was determined to model effective communication skills. Students emulated her conflict resolution strategies when they mediated misunderstandings in class and outside the classroom.
An upper grade level interviewee designed an authentic literature study by directing her students' research of Michelangelo and the Metropolitan Museum. They recreated a mini Metropolitan Museum of Art in their classroom and invited friends and parents to tour the display. The class later expanded their "tour guide" skills by learning to read maps of subways and New York City as they prepared to visit the museum.

The dynamic relationships between the teacher and her students in the museum classroom were indicative of high professional standards and teacher efficacy.

Research Question 3

How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

To identify efficacy factors in Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities, participants reflected on communicating with families, contributing to the school and district, developing professionally and showing professionalism.

Professional Responsibilities were characterized by responses to interview guide questions regarding the freedom teachers experienced in directing their own evaluation processes, most and least satisfying aspects of the process, and impacts on choices about professional responsibilities at school. Respondents described opportunities for self-directed growth, feedback from colleagues, and perspectives on how the self-directed model of evaluation encouraged them to expand their own learning. The demands
teachers placed on themselves illuminated persistence and determination as vital attributes for student growth.

Interview responses to research question 3 provided participant perceptions of ways to sustain exemplary teacher efficacy attributes. Twelve comments provided recommendations to engage all staff members in on-going intellectual opportunities to expand their skills in teaching for deep understanding. They emphasized the positive benefits of the self-directed evaluation experience. The differentiated formats were viewed as appropriately recognizing the wide range of skills that characterize school faculties while also stressing the need for accountability and continuous growth. Eight respondents believe that professional development should distinguish between the expertises of veteran teachers and provide support for novice educators. Others stressed the importance of the professional responsibilities domain as endorsement of valued professional learning and appreciation for their growth as a community of learners.

Self-directed study subjects volunteered for the differentiated appraisal system because they believe performance evaluations should promote excellence and professionalism. Prior experiences with one observation per year were described as limited checklists of observed activities rather than noting how teachers made sure that their students were taught to master knowledge. They clearly understood how the framework domains reflect exemplary pedagogical practice and link professionalism to student achievement.

One teacher viewed the self-directed option as a way to seize opportunities to enhance learning. Her 2005-2006 option based instruction on her students' interests and sought effective approaches to accomplish IEP goals. Three participants spoke of using
research based assessment techniques to evaluate their instructional effectiveness and advance student learning. They shared student generated rubrics with colleagues to utilize assessment data and monitor their own progress.

Early childhood participants described expanded communications with families to provide updated information about the instructional program and convey aspects of their child’s progress. Seven comments mentioned that responsiveness to parent concerns is taken very seriously. Efforts to engage families in the instructional program were noted often throughout the interviews. One primary teacher emphasized her belief that when students contribute ideas for projects; their family interactions are enhanced.

Eight study subjects spoke about contributing to their school by creating new relationships with colleagues. They referenced new leadership roles by volunteering to design curriculum projects or organize professional development workshops. Fourteen comments referred to beliefs that teachers grow professionally by seeking out opportunities for self development and conducting action research.

Study participants view themselves as peer leaders. When asked about professional responsibilities, two collegial partnership teachers described how they work together. "We never stop. We always share ideas and what we are doing with the other teachers in our school". Throughout the interview process study subjects talked about specific opportunities, such as becoming facilitators or mentors to support novice educators in their pursuit of teacher efficacy. They valued their roles as change agents who became eager to share expertise and implemented reflective learning approaches.

Professionalism was emphasized when the teachers spoke about their appreciation for new initiatives to direct their own evaluation and partake in peer coaching processes.
Professional responsibilities were identified as reflecting on teaching and participating in professional activities that enhanced continuous progress. Several study subjects referenced the benefits of collegial partnerships and the new appraisal system to improve their instruction and student learning. Eight of the 11 teachers stressed collegiality as valuable to designing meaningful co-teaching experiences. They talked about lessons that they intentionally created to be content specific and differentiated according to student needs.

Study subjects perceive the self-directed model of evaluation as a positive way to encourage on-going professional growth, consistent discovery of student learning styles and persistently centered on doing whatever is needed to improve student achievement. They believe reflection fosters scholarly development in teachers who are highly proficient educators and in novice teachers who are struggling to improve their practice.

Interviewees affirmed that the self-directed evaluation process had a positive influence on their teaching practices. They clearly articulated pedagogical practices that changed as a direct result of their participation in the differentiated paradigm. Improving teaching in the classroom and developing specific evaluation criteria increased their efficacy attributes and thereby increased student achievement.

The importance of freedom in choosing the self-directed option was noted by 10 of the 11 teachers interviewed for this study. Having the option to adjust plans or reorganize strategies as needed without having to conform to the district timelines for observations was considered a positive change.

Respondents answered the question about the most satisfying aspect of participating in the self-directed model by citing practical applications of their
Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) such as devising innovative strategies to conduct meaningful curriculum research in class. A special education teacher shared her thoughts by saying, “I think it is validating in that what you are doing is being validated”.

The question about the least satisfying aspect of partaking in the self-directed option frequently noted the excessive amount of work needed to accomplish the individualized project objectives. Three comments lamented the lack of time to gather with other district self-directed teachers. Multiple demands on teachers appeared to inhibit meetings after school. They noted concerns about time constraints such as not being able to have a common planning period with a collegial partner or difficulties aligning personal demands outside of school.

Two participants stated they were very satisfied with their own evaluation experience, but objected to being assigned to a partner without having any input into the decision. Several of the self-directed projects took more time than the interviewee expected. Time issues occurred when the teacher attempted to align project objectives within marking period needs for documentation on student achievements. On-going reflection on how lessons could be designed differently resulted in time consuming changes for subsequent classes.

Study participants frequently referred to their chosen project and the resultant ways in which they concentrated their efforts rather than being overly concerned with traditional pace and sequence components of the curriculum. One upper elementary grade level teacher stated, “The Self-Directed Model of Evaluation impacted my choices about professional responsibilities in the way that they reflect on instruction, student assessment and professional activities at our school.” Another participant added that the
self direction option was “empowering” and provided assistance in developing new strategies. She renewed her interest in reading research on what other teachers do and how they do it. Her partner addressed the ways they worked with teachers, students, and parents to advance student learning. She believes that the same careful attention they devoted to students who are classified should be devoted to sustaining good teaching.

Several participants believe that their self-directed colleagues are committed to student success. This high efficacy orientation sustains their openness to collectively developing a wide range of strategies to respond to their students’ wide range of needs. To the extent that teachers persistently try to find new ways to teach and observe the effects, students will achieve success.

When asked how the self-directed option impacts the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes, nine study participants responded by mentioning newfound roles they play in team meetings, department meetings, faculty meetings and pro days. They believe that new opportunities have been put in place for them to share feedback on relevant and meaningful instruction with colleagues. One teacher added that directing her own evaluation process gave her the flexibility of joining mentoring meetings that were not previously available, “The common instructional practice that self-directed teachers share in the school’s vision is to apply what we have learned in all facets of teaching.”

Seven participants noted that support increased when they volunteered to be part of the self-directed model and began to examine their use of high expectations, confidence and persistence to improve student achievement throughout the first year of implementation.
Study subjects provided detailed descriptions of exemplary practice through interview responses. They emphasized the importance of devising opportunities for all teachers to skillfully demonstrate the four domains of lesson planning, class climate, instruction and professionalism.

Preliminary findings from the interview analysis indicated that thirteen comments referred to support available to them from their principals or collegial partnerships. Statements mentioned high levels of support that was available regarding the quality of their teaching skills, available resources, and encouragement from colleagues and administrators.

The teachers in this study exhibit the attributes of self-efficacy we seek to have in all classrooms. They teach and learn by implementing their beliefs in setting high expectations for themselves and their students. Confidently planning and persistently delivering instruction until all students have mastered skills was key in these interviews.

All eleven participants viewed the four domains of planning and preparation, establishing a culture for learning, instruction and professional responsibilities as essential to advance student achievement. Several interview questions elicited responses that referenced all four stages by citing specific objectives, creating a motivational environment, being well organized and providing differentiated instruction. The attributes of teacher efficacy that were universal to every study participant were determination to achieve student goals and dedication to attaining high quality achievements.
Conclusions

The interview guide was designed to gather data to respond to the three research questions posed in Chapter I. Analyses of findings were based on Shamir's (1990) premise regarding aggregating perceptions of efficacy through individual responses. This approach guided the construction of the interview scale and procedures for analysis of the findings.

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?
   
   1a. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?

   1b. What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school’s vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?

   The study participants’ responses to research question 1, 1a and 1b focused on Domain I: Planning and Preparation and Domain II: Establishing a Culture for Learning. Interviewee answers described critical teaching practices for setting high standards for student learning, efficacy strategies utilized in designing and delivering instruction and the extent to which their planning and preparation strategies demonstrated content knowledge, lesson designs and assessments skills.

   In an analysis of the responses regarding planning and preparation, all respondents indicated that they believe this aspect of teaching is critical to academic
achievement. This finding was consistent across all participant characteristics. As was expected, the study subjects’ answers were congruent with the literature. Focusing on the need to know students well and offering unconditional support for all learners were recurring themes noted by the interviewees. They consider the benefits of understanding the unique needs of each student as fundamental to setting high expectations and persistently advancing achievement. Frequent references were made to the social and emotional needs of students and parental impacts on lesson planning and delivery. This fact is one of the underpinnings of lesson planning and preparation. Tasks described by respondents included prioritizing student needs. These responses indicated consistency across all factors of the participant characteristics. Although the researcher expected to find participant objections to emphasizing planning strategies, all participants offered considerable support to thorough lesson designs based on the needs of the learners rather than completing curriculum objectives. Their emphasis on skilled content knowledge and pedagogical expertise far exceeded their focus on the traditional format of anticipatory set, instruction and closure. Comprehensive planning was viewed by all 11 interviewees as fundamental to the success of their instruction. Domain II responses provided participants’ perspectives about the ways in which their children interact in the classroom. As these decisions are influenced by self-efficacy beliefs, study subject responses provided practical ways to learn about the teacher’s pedagogical practice. In describing how students learn, participants explored beliefs that the learning culture and environment are integral to their supportive, disciplined and carefully designed instruction.
In an analysis of responses regarding establishing a culture for learning, the researcher noted that teachers consistently identified their classroom design as having a strong impact on student interactions. Interview answers were congruent with the literature review on adapting the environment to the needs of the students. The tone and culture of the classroom was part of the decision making participants viewed as essential to making children feel comfortable when asking questions or identifying needs. Classroom design was seen as a salient way for teachers to advocate for their students’ enjoyment in learning as a group. Nine of the interviewees talked about being aware of friendships and tensions within the class that interrupted student progress. The teacher’s ability to set high expectations is affected by the standards for interaction that are in place. One subject expressed her belief that ensuring a supportive environment led to high standards of social responsibility and respectful interactions. She views the effectiveness of her teaching skills as dependent on making her classroom setting a high priority. Although the researcher expected to find participant objections to over emphasis on the environment, subjects talked about managing the class setting as an indicator of their dedication to being knowledgeable about pedagogy and instructional trends. Fostering a productive learning culture reveals insights into their abilities to provide a safe and secure class climate. Study subjects believe it is their responsibility to manage the classroom setting and continually evaluate its effect on learning. While participants frequently referred to establishing a structured class culture, two teachers stressed the importance of giving students freedom to design parts of the room to encourage creativity and individualism. They considered risk taking an important reflection mechanism and a unique way to convey their belief that the room belongs to the children as well as their
teacher. Prior to analysis of interview answers, it was expected that teachers of upper
elementary grades would assume stricter behavioral rules. However, the results of
management comments suggest that teacher decisions on class rules and regulations were
made independent of grade level, years of experience or current assignment.

Research question 2 investigated how participation in the self-directed model of
evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices. By examining Domain
II: Instruction study subjects affirmed that the self-directed evaluation process had a
positive influence on their teaching strategies. Interviewees articulated specific ways in
which new pedagogical practices were implemented as a direct result of their
participation in the new paradigm. They believe that working with colleagues on new
approaches improved their teaching skills, increased awareness of their teacher efficacy
and thereby increased student achievement. In an analysis of the responses regarding
instruction, it was noted that all participants emphasized the importance of this domain.
Three respondents mentioned the need to monitor academic progress continually in light
of social and emotional developments. None of the study subjects emphasized guidance
services when discussing ways to strengthen student resilience as they relied on
homeroom teachers to respond to these needs.

Although the researcher expected to find participant concerns with high stakes
testing and personal accountability, the respondents strongly supported the fundamental
importance of persistently monitoring student improvement. Providing clear assessments
and emphasizing continual progress were viewed as ways to ensure scrutiny on outcome
goals. Teachers talked about balancing sequential lesson designs in order to recognize
growth or the need to re-teach for mastery and vigilantly analyzing assessment results to identify trends. Five respondents spoke about assuring that no student was left behind and devising differentiated ways to deal with limited progress. Four participants addressed high expectations and the need to establish clear standards for noteworthy performance. All respondents referenced district expectations when they spoke about delivering instruction to accomplish curriculum implementation to document student mastery. Several teachers talked about monitoring student progress in relation to test results to improve their skills but only one respondent spoke about her impatience of using tests to determine placement in gifted and talented services. She viewed her skills as a teacher and monitor of student progress to be superior to using test results as the primary source of recommendations.

To summarize this domain, study findings identified the same components recognized in the district’s instructional domain for student achievement. Study responses were congruent with the literature review.

Research question 3 asked study subjects to talk about how the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impacts the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes. Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities discussions included beliefs that the teaching profession continually needs to change and improve as our students continually change and improve. The new appraisal system allowed study teachers to examine what other teachers do while reflecting on what they themselves do and why. They confirmed that hearing what teachers think and what they believe feel is a rich source of valuable information.
In an analysis of the responses regarding professional responsibilities, all respondents indicated that they believe that continual pursuit of expertise in teaching is crucial to student achievement. Participants also identified the importance of being validated by administrators and colleagues for the daily work they devote to student learning. In describing the impact of the self-directed model of evaluation on the sustainability of exemplary efficacy attributes, interviewees consider communicating their project results with district educators as an important factor in this study.

Three study subjects addressed the value of on-going reinforcement in the advancement of both teachers and students. All participants expressed beliefs that they needed to construct innovative assessment strategies to promote mastery for their students. They emphasized the positive effect of recent district goals on assessment. Analyzing test scores prior to instruction provided essential feedback on past performance. Several of the self-directed projects incorporated data driven decision making as an outcome goal during the 2005-2006 school year. It was noted that respondents spoke about the principal’s role in supporting their self-directed project. These statements included opportunities to speak at faculty meetings and working with collegial partners to analyze project results.

Mutual commitment by administrators and study subjects maintained focus on the selected projects throughout the implementation of the new system. Teachers confirmed that it was important to them to be in the first cohort participating in the new paradigm. Seven respondents expressed their excitement about continuing the project after the
initial year was completed. They viewed themselves as teacher leaders determined to accomplish the mission of the evaluation change.

Several teachers relayed their feelings about the significance of their role as autonomous self evaluators. They talked about adapting their faculty presentations according to the experience of their audience and engaging all members of the staff in the goals of their projects. Contributing to the annual summary provided the advantage of viewing progress throughout the year rather than relying on the interpretation of the principal alone. Providing participants with resources for their selected projects enabled teachers to implement creative ideas and new options. Responses regarding how to sustain the benefits of the self-directed model cast teachers in leadership roles and identified colleagues as primary sources of excellence. Although the researcher expected to find participant objections to ranking and rating teacher competency, one participant expressed her intolerance of teachers who refused to engage in new research. She believed teachers should promote high quality professional expertise or seek employment outside education.

Several respondents expressed the value of peer leadership. All participants provided comments about professionalism such as serving as coaches, mentors, facilitators and guides in the ways they shared the progress of their self-directed projects or described improved professional practice. Spending time in the classroom of collegial partners was for some, a novel experience. Listening to others teach was viewed as a special opportunity to advance personal skills. Respondents spoke about conferencing in new ways with their grade level colleagues. The importance of this aspect of the
self-directed model was confirmed by the six participants who selected collegial partnership projects.

Teacher leaders displayed high expectations for colleagues as coaches for new educators. Four of the subjects in this study expressed the importance of encouraging colleagues to become creative risk takers as a way to improve novice skills. They found that the self-directed option provided new opportunities to make decisions on their own. They also talked about the freedom to schedule time within the school day and work with partners to create social interactions for the students they share. They viewed these incentives as an important way to empower long term professionalism. Valuing teachers as decision-makers was a recurring theme throughout the interviews.

Another aspect of professionalism highlighted was the freedom to engage in examining data related to their experiences with the study district’s emphasis on reading and writing. Nine respondents talked about the ways they keep current with research on teaching and staff development opportunities.

Early learning specialists referred to parent involvement when they talked about the development of expanded communications. One primary teacher mentioned high expectations of district parents and the ways in her self-directed project increased reviews about individual student progress. She viewed herself as taking a more active role in working with parents in 2005-2006.

To summarize professional responsibilities, literature reviews cited the importance of in-service opportunities. As expected, study participants responses aligned
with these findings. Additionally, interviewees noted the significance of collegial leadership as a strong influence on their skills. They referenced partnerships that encouraged exploratory learning, cooperative groupings, and responding to the social and emotional needs of students. Serving as instructional resources and spending time listening to colleagues expanded their skills as risk takers and reflective practitioners.

The literature describes teacher efficacy attributes as demonstrating strengths in high expectations, confidence and persistence to accomplish student achievement goals. This research study confirmed the importance of these characteristics. All respondents were experienced teachers who participated in the self direction evaluation option. They valued the four professional practice domains as essential to their own success as an effective teacher. The respondents throughout the interviews acknowledged the four domains identified by the study district as valuable. Participants stated that their roles as educators require solid content knowledge skills, high quality pedagogical practices and ongoing pursuit of excellence as a teacher and learner.

Although the researcher expected to find participant objections to the amount teacher of work involved in the self-directed option, only two teachers described this concern when asked about the least satisfying element of the new appraisal system. The continual engagement of observation and evaluation was presumed to offer a reason for the subjects to abandon this method after the first year. This pattern did not appear and all eleven study subjects expressed interest in continuing the self-directed process in the 2006-2007 school year. The successful implementation of the self direction option of
evaluation resulted in a district decision to expand the selection of applicants from 5 teachers to 10 teachers in each school during the 2006-2007 school year.

The teachers in this study shared cherished ideas about their commitments to students, teaching and learning. They are master educators who were eager to discuss their proficient teaching methods and valued goals. Stories of actual classroom and professional experiences symbolize the benefits of qualitative research in education. Listening to a wide array of first-person narratives recounts the exhaustive work of successfully advancing every student. Their contributions to this study enabled the researcher to observe the demands of daily instruction, reflection and the intricate ways teachers enhance understanding.

Chapter V assesses these findings and seeks to relay congruency with the literature. Conclusions, implications and recommendations for further research are provided in this review.
Chapter Summary

Chapter IV restates the rationale for this case study and the basis of methods employed. The selection of study participants and their descriptors were presented to describe subject characteristics. A semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researcher to gain insights into the research and subsidiary study questions. Open ended interviews were conducted to record the subjects' unique knowledge and perspectives on teacher efficacy and student performance. Individual interviews provided detailed statements from a sample of 11 teachers who were selected for the self-directed model of evaluation. Mason (2002) views case study interviews as a valuable way to collect rich and significant subjective information. This phenomenological approach enabled participants to contribute personalized accounts of their experiences. The interview protocol followed the guidelines of Pattoo (1989) by developing a process that elicited background information, primary questions, secondary questions and probes to draw out detailed and specific informant responses. Three background questions and 16 open ended questions were asked to collect data for this study and record teacher perceptions on efficacy and the self-directed model of evaluation.

The interview transcripts were categorized, coded, analyzed and interpreted. Response commentary corresponds to the three research questions cited in Chapter I. These statements offer essential evidence of the subjects' perspectives regarding efficacy and the self assessment appraisal system.

Comprehensive study of the transcriptions yielded four groupings of text for
analysis as related to the research questions. All study participants viewed the four stages of planning and preparation, establishing a culture for learning, instruction and professional responsibilities as essential to advancing student achievement. Several interview questions elicited responses that referenced the four domains citing the importance of setting specific objectives, creating a motivational environment, being well organized and providing differentiated instruction critical to improve student accomplishments.

This study focused on teacher efficacy traits to better understand how teachers utilize motivation, confidence and persistence to make essential decisions about learning. These professional traits relate to Bandura’s work (1993) as noted in Chapter I. Participant statements illustrated the critical decisions made when designing lessons and delivering instruction. Descriptions of their daily lives at school depicted how teachers integrate high expectations, confidence and persistence to enhance learning. Comprehending what study informants believe about their abilities to engage students is essential when examining teacher efficacy in this study.
CHAPTER V
Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

As written in Chapter I, highly effective organizations employ people who believe they can accomplish anything set before them (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). They persist in achieving meaningful goals and are proud of their work. Research shows that self-efficacy supports these effective behaviors (Reeve, 1996) when strong beliefs sustain individual persistence (Sadri & Robertson, 1993).

The complexity of teaching requires educators to plan and execute intricate instructional tasks. Learning how to assure that all district teachers are proficient practitioners motivated the study district to align expectations of exemplary teaching with supervisory and appraisal practices. In response to this target, an innovative self-directed model of evaluation was offered to highly skilled tenured teachers to convey the district’s high expectations for distinguished teaching and learning. This case study examined the attributes of self-efficacy to investigate how teachers, who were already recognized for exemplary skills, employ their high expectations, confidence and persistence traits to accomplish professional learning goals and advance student performance. Participants were interviewed to better understand how the dynamics of self-efficacy in a selected group of teachers promotes instructional excellence.

The researcher studied the attributes of highly efficacious teaching through the following research questions:
Research Questions

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?
   1a: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high standards for student learning?
   1b: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school's vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?

2. How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

3. How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes.

The literature review presented in chapter II provides a synopsis of research findings on self-efficacy. The diffusion of theories to promote learning was described to demonstrate how the efficacy beliefs of teachers are reflected in their instructional methods and student outcomes (Pajares, 2001 as cited in Maehr b& Pintrich; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Chapter III explains the qualitative study design used to determine how individual teacher efficacy traits foster student achievement. The interview protocol was composed to enable the researcher to gain a better understanding of how teachers selected for the self-directed model of evaluation think about the ways they plan, establish a learning environment, instruct and reflect on their professional responsibilities.
Chapter IV presents the findings obtained from the interview protocol and the analysis of the study participants' responses. The answers were classified and described through the four domains of professional practice: planning and preparation, establishing a culture for learning, instruction, and professional responsibilities.

Chapter V provides the collected data based on a qualitative analysis of the subjects' perceptions of teacher efficacy and their self-directed evaluation experiences. It was anticipated that the research findings would be congruent with the literature on self-efficacy. The researcher expected the study subjects to describe teaching strategies that reflected applications of high expectations, confidence and persistence to advance student learning goals. Interview commentary confirmed these expectations. Participants provided relevant feedback and also made unexpected requests for extended collective efficacy opportunities.

A summary of the findings, data analysis and conclusions for the three research questions is presented in this final chapter. Examination of the self-directed evaluation process contributed vital feedback on how study participants applied their self-efficacy traits. In this analysis, high expectations, confidence and persistence attributes were studied by separating the teaching domains of planning, environment, instruction and professionalism. Recommendations for further study and final remarks are included.

Self-Efficacy

Study participants were educators possessing traits of high self-efficacy who demonstrated proficient skills in advancing student achievement. Interview responses aligned with Woolfolk-Hoy's (1990) beliefs that self-efficacy, ability, and opportunities are key factors underlying achievement. Study subjects succeeded at optimal capacity
levels when they activated self-efficacy beliefs. All respondents perceived difficulties as challenges to overcome and viewed impediments as reasons to intensify their efforts.

Allinder (1995) observed that teachers with a high sense of efficacy confidently apply innovative teaching strategies and believe that differentiated classroom practices will help students succeed. It was clear from the analyzed interview data that teacher efficacy offered essential support and is not separate from student achievement. High expectations, confidence and persistence traits are influenced by the teacher’s beliefs about learning. In turn, student achievement has a direct influence on the ways study subjects applied their self-efficacy beliefs.

The highly efficacious teachers who participated in this study are dedicated to their students’ achievements and expressed great joy in their chosen profession. Their perceptions demonstrated strongly held beliefs regarding their ability to teach all students, confidence in their instructional methods and pride in student outcomes. These results are congruent with the research of Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; and Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001.

More than having an overall “feel” that exudes efficacy; where a “can do” attitude pervades the halls of the school (Ryan & Oestrich, 1998), the attributes of high expectations, confidence and persistence promoted the participants’ ability to execute high quality skills. This pattern of self driven incentives is aligned with Wood and Bandura’s (1986) studies on self-efficacy, “Perceived self-efficacy concerns people’s beliefs in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over events in their lives.” Interview comments
included specific references to the ways in which they organized these strengths to accomplish learning.

Study records revealed that efficacy attributes are exhibited in the ways teachers promote student learning. Interviewees described high efficacy colleagues as instructors who can effectively advance students of diverse abilities. Numerous comments referenced teachers who are noted for offering innovative opportunities and differentiated learning objectives. Multiple strategies are enacted because they believe no one model is best for all learners. This conviction motivated a wide repertoire of activities as teachers persisted until mastery was achieved. All interviewees expressed appreciation for the positive impact of the self-directed evaluation system on improving the quality of their own self-efficacy, teaching practice and student performance.

*High Expectations*

Gibson and Dembo (1984) predicted that teachers with high efficacy ratings would convey high expectations for student achievement, promote sustained learning skills, and persistently reach struggling students through rigorous effort and support. Case records on the participants' capacity to accomplish these goals revealed beliefs regarding high expectations sustained durable efforts to increase student performance. Instructional practices were intentionally designed to set high expectations and promote high student achievement. Interview notes recorded a culture of self-directed teachers who set high expectations for their students and themselves.
**Confidence**

Bandura’s research (1986) on the theory of self-efficacy reveals the value of self-confidence as an achievable goal. Confidence in one's ability helped participants determine the risks they were willing to take to reach challenging goals. Bolstered by this belief, teachers employed self-assurance skills to influence how hard and how long they worked to achieve goals. They expected to do well and utilized their underlying beliefs when faced with performance tasks that challenged their abilities. Study subjects reported confidence in their ability to devote considerable effort to accomplishments they believe will be successful.

**Persistence**

The research data collected in this study revealed that the attribute of persistence was demonstrated in the ways teachers described instructional practices to promote and sustain student learning. Study subjects commented on their persistent need to better understand the ways their students think and learn. This commitment led teachers to continually revise methods of observation and assessment. Guided by this conviction, participants devised lessons that they considered to be fun, important, and meaningful. Knowing their students well and persistently planning for their unique strengths engaged teachers in on-going pursuits for effective strategies until accomplishments were achieved.
Summary of Self-Efficacy

Links between high expectations, confidence and persistence support the study contention that teachers who allocate significant time and resources to instruction activate their efficacious expertise. Self-efficacy attributes are marshaled to ensure that students know the learning objectives and are taught to master effective strategies for attaining positive results. This professional profile is central to Allinder's (1995) examination of the impact of self-efficacy on the classroom practices. As expected, efficacious teachers set more ambitious goals for their students and increased expectations over the school year.

Participant goal setting strategies appeared to reflect belief in their ability to teach and belief that their students benefited from their skills. Additionally, connections between higher goal setting and higher student progress may reinforce the teachers' efficacy perceptions. Allinder (1995) proposed that certain behaviors associated with higher personal efficacy contributed to the students' superior achievement. These include persevering with students who have problems grasping material, maintaining high academic standards, conveying high expectations for performance, and sustaining on-task behavior.

The Self-Directed Model of Evaluation

In looking at how traditional evaluation systems compromised student achievement, the study district identified prior appraisal procedures that were inadequate for assuring continuous progress. New No Child Left Behind mandates led many schools to review evaluation practices and hold educators accountable for student achievement. In response to these findings, the self-directed model of evaluation was approved to
operationalize teacher leadership and learn about the characteristics of effective teachers. Understanding what constitutes quality teaching and learning was essential to sustain long term and continually improving student achievement. Once the new appraisal system was authorized by the Board of Education, all certified staff members received several in-service training sessions. As the range of experience spanned from one to forty-five years, professional development sessions were designed to address the specific needs of novice and veteran learners.

The three tier evaluation system was an added advantage in that it assured customized mentoring and supervision. Tier 1 evaluated non-tenured teachers in the traditional model of supervision. Proficiency in the four domains of planning, environment, instruction and professionalism was the primary basis for tenure decisions. Tier 2 evaluated tenured teachers in the traditional model of supervision with an annual summative evaluation based on proficiency in the four domains of planning, environment, instruction and professionalism. Tier 3 evaluated tenured teachers in the self-directed model. A plan was developed with the administrator to select a professional growth project. The voluntary self-directed appraisal replaced the traditional model and included an annual summative evaluation based on the four domains of professional standards.

All research participants believe that the existence of a multi-tier appraisal system fostered exemplary instructional practice and provided motivation for district-wide change. Multiple evaluation processes were informative in the ways they offered baseline and subgroup comparisons. Additionally, teacher directed and administrator directed variables offered critical findings that became the basis of disaggregating data
during the first year implementation analysis. The positive energy produced at the kick-off celebration increased staff awareness and commitment to the innovative process. Comments from participants in all four study schools referred to pride in being selected as an efficacious teacher and membership in the first self-directed cohort.

According to Bandura (2000), the mutual effort of efficacious personnel converts into a strong sense of collective efficacy. The effect is especially powerful when driven by shared vision (Senge, 1990). Research has documented a significant positive association between the efficacy of individual teachers and the collective efficacy of schools (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). By extension, collective efficacy is linked with high student levels of student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004).

Promoting teacher efficacy through implementation of the self-directed evaluation option offered advantages not readily identified when the Differentiated System of Evaluation was first approved. One unanticipated, yet noteworthy, benefit of the self-directed model was the collective emphasis on quality teaching and learning. The collegial partnership advantage aligned with studies by Goddard et al. (2004) as cited in their research on the significance of collective efficacy. Educational outcomes are advanced when schools foster collective efficacy beliefs. In particular, “When teachers have the opportunity to influence instructionally relevant decisions, collective conditions encourage teachers to exercise organizational agency. The more opportunities teachers have to influence instructionally relevant school decisions, the more likely a school is to be characterized by a robust sense of collective efficacy” (Goddard et al., 2004, p. 10).
Another advantage is shared confidence in the expertise of colleagues. Consistent with these gains, interview respondents noted ways in which they supported and reinforced their partners' sense of self-efficacy.

Limited teaching skills and low teacher efficacy hinder student achievement of the core curriculum standard and the New Jersey legislative mandate. Case study records indicate that school leaders should identify the impact of existing evaluation practices on student and staff achievement and expand self-directed opportunities. The findings of this study are illustrative for principals seeking to determine if current performance appraisal processes are of high quality or warrant change. Teachers commented that one positive aspect of the self-directed model is that the framework provides for differentiated needs of novice teachers and veteran experts.

Promoting teaching efficacy through the self-directed model has several advantages in light of district demands for high quality teaching. Oversight and control of professional progress has been divested from a supervisory responsibility to a collaborative process of self-evaluation. An added gain occurred when self-directed teachers assumed leadership roles and mobilized new partnerships. Participants referenced new conversations on how they helped each other think outside traditional practices and devised creative ways to motivate common interests.

Implementing the innovative evaluation system required change, risk taking and a redistribution of power. Study subjects evidenced this shift by citing their work with new partners. Detailed descriptions of collaborative lessons illustrated full engagement and shared accountability. Confident in their pedagogical skills, no participant expressed any concern for diminished reputation or uncertainly about their ability to accomplish
curriculum goals. The only factor identified as stressful was uncertainty about the impact of change at the beginning of the process.

As noted by Rogers (1962) in his study on the diffusion of innovative ideas, workers participate enthusiastically if they believe a concept is valuable and directly enhances their skills. This theory was noted throughout interviewee reflections. Preparations for the multiple logistics of the new system required a willingness to engage in unfamiliar procedures. Study subjects volunteered to join the new initiative based on their personal goals, confidence and interest in partaking in an innovative experience. Interviewees expressed the notion that teachers were more likely to try the new process because it appealed to their interests and self-reliant method of learning.

Findings suggest that the selected teachers linked the self-directed learning opportunity to their own sense of risk taking and experimentation. The teachers who were chosen for the self-directed model were identified by their principals as prolific instructors who typically demonstrated high expectations of themselves and their students, confidence in their skills and persistence to stay the course through mastery. They contribute school wide lesson designs, instill productive learning environments, design creative instruction and continually motivate professionalism. While the collective process was positively affected by the adoption of the differentiated system of evaluation, several factors may have inhibited other tenured teachers from volunteering for the self-directed option. Uncertainty, increased workload and disinterest may have influenced their decision to choose the traditional performance appraisal.

The dynamic support of colleagues created a school culture that engaged widespread interest and resulted in more volunteers than needed in the second year of
implementation. Based on these findings, the self-directed evaluation process encouraged and supported the attributes of teacher efficacy. Additionally, participants exhibited distinguished practice across all four domains of the professional standards.

As the system evolved over the first four months, study subjects made a paradigm shift from tentative participation to enjoying the various stages of implementation. They began to share program understandings and sought opportunities to convey ideas with colleagues outside the self-directed group. Frequent communication with self-directed partners and supervisors noted this change. Collegial support was referenced in interviews as essential to continuous progress. Staff development sessions were scheduled throughout the year to provide participants encouragement, feedback and guidance across the district.

Six months into the first year of implementation, the self-directed process appeared to be fully operationalized by all participating teachers. While the four elementary schools differ in culture, reflection and customized instruction was a daily norm as documented in participant lesson plans, weekly meetings with principals, appraisal reports and professional interactions. Sustained interest and commitment for the full year was achieved at all schools.

When asked to address the sustainability of the self-directed model, teachers referred to the option as a positive move toward formative appraisals rather than random observations. These responses were congruent with the studies of Shaughnessy (2004) stating that, “self-efficacy is the most useful self-schema for education because it relates to choices and actions that affect learning.”
Case study commentary established the participants' view of performance appraisal as a positive interpersonal communication. New procedures and cooperative experiences contributed a substantial degree of coherence to the self-directed model. As the self-directed teachers worked with partners and supervisors in schools throughout the district, they influenced other faculty members and shared their perspectives on the self-directed evaluation process.

Clearly, study participants felt they had a key role expanding a sense of cohesion and contributing to the academic productivity of their community of expert scholars, especially when facing the uncertainty of the new evaluation paradigm. First cohort members viewed themselves as educators who made important pedagogical contributions to the new program. All participants volunteered to continue into the second year of implementation. The results of their insights and reports set the agenda at each school for continued success of the self-directed option.

Teachers noted the tendency for district supervisors to underestimate the powerful influence of experience. Self evaluation encouraged participants to value prior experience as a conduit for progress. Rather than remaining isolated behind the doors of individual classrooms, collegial partnerships engendered greater understandings of internal goals while mindful of the external emphasis on academic improvement. They articulated concerns regarding student placement decisions based on standardized test results and the effects of high-stakes testing in regard to the mandates of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.
Conclusions

Research Question 1: What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?

Interviewer comments reflected the highly selective nature of the participants and indicated that teachers with a high sense of efficacy hold strong beliefs about their ability to make a difference in the lives of their students. While reflective practice engages people in thinking about past results, self-efficacy propels profound thinking about specific tasks through future efforts. Self-assessment without comparison to others becomes the basis of deciding whether an assignment can be accomplished and focuses on one's capabilities to perform a specific task.

The experienced teachers involved in this study were well versed in this powerful belief. Knowing that all learners experience challenges in some areas while being proficient in others is a liberating concept. Understanding the sources of self-efficacy and seeking ways to build access to this attribute is a valuable component of professional knowledge.

Efficacious teachers model their expectations in order to reinforce their own skills and expand their students' self-efficacy. Study subjects acknowledged their students' reliance on the teacher's skills and factored this component into lesson activities. Positive feedback and guidance were essential to helping students increase their efforts, generate new ideas or persist through completion of an assignment. Effective persuasion is useful when helping students recover from the negative affects of self-doubt. Successfully attempting new strategies and learning how to persist despite setbacks is
valued when students are being taught by a teacher who knows how to raise efficacy by
design exciting and non-threatening instruction.

References to the efficacy traits of high expectations, confidence and persistence
were found within interview statements as teachers described how they utilized the
domains of planning, environment, instruction and professionalism. Research Question 1
investigated subject perceptions of what they chose to teach, how they planned
instruction, created learning environments, delivered content and sustained their
perseverance when students failed to improve. Listening to how participants viewed their
role as both teacher and learner provided feedback on their beliefs and actions. Factors
noted throughout the interviews included commitment to accomplish academic goals and
capacity to adapt to difficult challenges.

Subsidiary Question 1a: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist
among teachers that are critical for sustained exemplary practices in setting high
standards for student learning?

Teachers with strong self-efficacy know that students who lack confidence in
their ability to interact with complex material will act in accordance with their belief even
if their skills are equal to the task. Being aware of this problem enables instructors to
design motivational lessons to counter the student’s low expectations. Learning how to
develop confidence and persist when challenged by problems helps students understand
the need for self-empowering strategies. Study participants stressed the importance of
learned optimism to conquer the negative affects of learned helplessness in students who
have lost faith in their ability to succeed.
Study practitioners included self-reflection in their lesson designs as a way to help their children become more reliant on their mastered skills. They frequently cited intentional efforts to teach their students to self-regulate their own attributes of high expectations, confidence and persistence. Lesson designs incorporated challenge, collaboration and support to develop self-efficacy. References often noted teacher commitment to positive feedback and specific ways to improve rather than general praise or comparisons to classmates.

Domain I Planning and Preparation was a focus of research question 1a responses. Study participants believe that planning and preparation skills have a direct impact on the final outcome of instructional activities, classroom management and assessment practices. Responses revealed extensive understandings of teaching and learning processes. Lesson planning provided vital options for complex content to students. Having an abundant array of lesson plans made it possible for teachers to choose alternative methods from their wide repertoire of experiences. Many viewed goal setting as an ambitious opportunity to target student aspirations. Detailed preparations were clearly seen as a source of diligent and compassionate planning for student learning. These strengths played a critical role in planning, preparation and reflection prior to instruction.

Teachers with high efficacy regard lesson preparations as critical to effective instruction. They were determined to create lessons that are firmly fixed on curriculum outcomes while remaining flexible to address student needs and interests. As educators who set high expectations, participants revealed an underlying belief that the outcome of a cognitive task depends on whether students expect to succeed and the degree to which
they value the outcome. If a task has no value and there is little likelihood of success, students may not perform well. However, if expectancy and value are high, the combination will provide positive results. Participants understand these behaviors and are determined to stimulate optimism and resilience for themselves and their students. While addressing how they set expectations for academic achievement, respondents spoke about professional values and the expectancy of success as essential to achievement.

Teachers with high self-efficacy believe that they can achieve goals. Because of this conviction, they are diligent and determined to succeed. In describing classrooms of colleagues perceived as having low self-efficacy, several participants were concerned that novice teachers may not believe that they can achieve. Low confidence causes some first year colleagues to expend insufficient efforts achieving goals and thereby, have a low probability of success. High confidence mentors are needed to model success in this area.

_Subsidiary Question 1b: What commonalities in pedagogical practices exist among teachers that contribute to the school’s vision and mission related to the success of school achievement goals?_

Case study documents reveal that respondents clearly understood the power of teacher efficacy to mobilize the study district’s vision and motivate student accomplishments. Emphasis on the positive results of a supportive culture created a district wide “can do” climate intentionally countered the typical faculty room complaints about student failure. Exciting kick off sessions and fun competitions between the
schools focused all educators on implementing the domains of professional practice. These motivating incentives nourished all educators' efficacy awareness and set high expectations for self-regulated improvement. Every member of the staff knew well the superintendent's dedication to high efficacy by nurturing advanced competencies, providing mentors and models, seeking support and continuous reflection.

Common practices engaged teachers in identifying their own and their students' strengths. The proactive questions, assignments, and assessments that grew out of the new emphasis on teacher efficacy developed a strong commitment to the district mission for improved student achievement.

Domain II Establishing a Culture for Learning was a focus of research question 1b. In describing how students learn, participants explored their perceptions of the learning environment in relation to instruction. They frequently referred to positive feedback and offering consistent encouragement to achieve challenging learning goals. The study subjects stressed the importance of providing a stimulating environment that is specifically designed to motivate positive energy and enthusiasm. Participants clearly believe that altering classroom practices helps students learn.

Understanding how students deal with complex content generated multiple ways to observe and assess student growth. Positive impacts on school climate were highlighted by describing how the self-directed evaluation process supported their efforts to assure nurturing environments. They were proud of their classrooms and believe they designed interactive and interesting learning centers to motivate their students. Respondents viewed the instructional climates as an important facet of teaching. They talked about student centered environments and learner-oriented interactions when
addressing the importance of being accessible and a visible presence for their students. They believe assuring a safe classroom atmosphere is essential to student trust and their ability to share with classmates. Communicating successful progress and maintaining high standards for productive behavior were mentioned as essential for a nurturing and supportive setting. These beliefs were noted as common themes in interview responses.

Several teachers spoke about the positive tone of their school and efforts made by colleagues to provide social and fun experiences. Several respondents participated in their school’s weight loss programs and saw walking together daily as opportunities to talk about their self-directed projects. They described their schools as caring and conducive to learning. Promoting teamwork and empowerment were viewed as important skills. These findings were confirmed by eight of the eleven participants. Additionally, respondents frequently referred to working with colleagues as essential to their own professional progress. They viewed effective teachers as being student centered, accessible and having a leadership presence in the school. One interviewee stated that promoting a climate of on-going change was critical to collective progress. Others stated it was important for them to act as mentors for novice teachers as a way to set high expectations for new colleagues, students and parents. In promoting a culture for learning, effective teachers nurture progress despite all impediments. This finding was supported by all participants.

Research Question 2: How has participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?
Study subjects reported a positive change in their professional relationships with supervisors and colleagues as a direct result of their participation in a Self-Directed Model of Evaluation. Frequent interactions with faculty members, ongoing discussions with principals and recognition of sustained learning provided confidence and thereby, made the selected projects easier to accomplish.

Written reflections were authorized as part of the annual summative reports to encourage teachers to develop, regulate and increase self-efficacy attributes. Continuous progress in self-awareness made faculty members more cognizant of individual and collective resources. Most interesting was the participants’ growing commitment to customized instruction and assessment as a way to best improve student achievement. This growth made several members uncomfortable with tests that treat all students as if they possessed the same skills and abilities. Disappointments about generic prescriptions of content standards and loss of autonomy over decisions about curriculum were more difficult to accept as teachers increased their beliefs about their accountability and responsibility for each child’s success.

Domain III Instruction was a focus of research question 2. Study participants exhibited their efficacy beliefs by describing instructional methods and student results during their participation in the self-directed evaluation in the 2005-2006 school year. Research shows that efficacious teachers confidently develop innovative teaching strategies (Allinder, 1995; Ross, 1992) and believe that altering classroom practices will help students succeed (Soodak & Podell, 1994).

Case study records reveal that teacher efficacy significantly influenced student achievement. Study subjects affirmed that the differentiated process positively impacted
their teaching practices. They articulated various ways pedagogical practices have been changed by the innovative evaluation paradigm. They believe new strategies improved instruction, developed means to increase efficacy and thereby influenced achievement.

Several subjects claimed that working with colleagues in the self-directed option expanded their repertoire of inventive lesson plans and developed innovative ways to enhance their students' sense of efficacy. No participant discussed any reluctance to working with struggling or disengaged students. They were confident in their skills to accomplish learning outcomes in spite of dealing with students who had severe disabilities and offered positive reflections on prior success when faced with obstacles.

Helping a student understand one's abilities empowers the child to develop an internal locus of control. Being able to articulate thinking processes helps strengthen critical elements and reduces trial-and-error approaches to problem solving. Efficacious teachers influence their students' ability to self-monitor and self-assess. These skills are as important as knowledge acquisition.

Research Question 3: How does the implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

Sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes is accomplished through commitment to on-going self-assessment and self-regulation. Consistently setting goals and becoming more reflective of these accomplishments spirals teachers and learners to higher levels of achievement. The negative consequences of oppositional behavior lead to a descending spiral of hopelessness and helplessness.
Changing life long habits is difficult. Lessons learned from participants in this study indicate that they sustain efficacy traits by customizing instruction to the skills of their students, monitor progress and increase rigor as mastery and confidence increases. They assure that students are able to evaluate their own work and expect continuous improvements to instill an awareness of the power to consistently change and advance skills over time. The implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision and Assessment Self-Directed Option validated the participants’ constructivist approaches and meaningful pedagogy. The formative evaluation process enhanced the professional practice of veteran teachers and supported growth and development in their colleagues.

When interviewees considered how to help novice teachers establish resilience and optimism for life-long teaching and learning, they identified confidence, persistence and prior accomplishments. They expressed a strong desire to identify strategies that would build collegial efficacy and promote change in their schools. Many references to past skills included evidence of distinguished teaching practice and student mastery. The tasks they described were typically difficult and not easily achieved without significant effort, struggle, revision and final success. These findings aligned with research studies on the positive relationship between high group expectations and persistence to accomplish valuable goals. Increased cohesiveness and collaboration were benefits of self-directed opportunities.

Implementation of the Differentiated System of Supervision reconnected participants with the professional notions they held during their college teacher education ideals and aspirations. Opportunities to dialogue with other professionals provided time to articulate belief about metacognitive theories, pedagogical technologies, and
contemporary research. Finding time to think and talk about frames for reflection allowed study subjects to apply their formal training through informal settings. The invitation to integrate their vast experiences enriched their understandings of teaching and learning across their classrooms, their schools, and their district. References to the collegial partnerships provided support for the cohesiveness gained through shared projects and improved student achievement. Interviewee comments showed a strong relationship between project goals and project accomplishments. Study partners expressed newfound confidence in the ways in which their personal efficacy skills contributed to decision making. This belief is congruent with Schwarzer et al. (1999) statement: “Collective self-efficacy deals with a group’s beliefs in its competence for successful action”.

Comments regarding the self-directed model of evaluation demonstrated significant satisfaction with being involved in an appraisal system that encouraged reflective practices and working with others to improve student achievement. Study subjects increased their capacity to work with colleagues in developing innovative lesson concepts. They established shared learning environments where colleagues sought out skilled teachers and worked toward a shared mission of continual improvement. Participants also referenced how their ideas enhanced school wide practices. New partners fostered a sense of collective ownership and led colleagues to develop shared roles to advance student accomplishments.

Domain IV Professional Responsibilities was a focus of research question 3. As members of an affinity driven organization, teachers respond to social persuasion such as realistic encouragement, positive feedback, and support for experiences that are likely
to offer success. Confident in their abilities to advance student achievement, educators with high self-efficacy assume challenging tasks that others may consider intimidating. Study participants saw themselves as capable of mobilizing student interest and enabling pupils to achieve designated goals. Skilled pedagogical practice included success with students who are challenging as well as with those who are successful learners.

**Key Findings**

Teacher efficacy thrived when study subjects applied their skills to promote student achievement through solid knowledge of the curriculum, inquiry-based instructional practices, and collaboration with colleagues. As revealed in case study findings, it was clear that among the participants in this study, the attributes of teacher efficacy were essential to improved student achievement. Records demonstrate that teachers employed high expectations, confidence, and persistence to engage learners from the early stages of instruction through mastery. These elements were noted as critical characteristics of effective instructional performance. Study documents show evidence of ways in which respondents applied self-efficacy skills to plan, teach and assess student progress. Reflection on their daily teaching experiences provided focused opportunities to advance academic development. These perspectives were key to academic growth and development. Clearly, the effectiveness of the teacher is one of the most significant factors in student achievement. Variations in teachers' ability to perform at the highest levels of achievement indicated wide variances in their applications of high expectations, persistence and confidence traits. The challenge therefore became developing means to effectively advance teacher efficacy and thereby advance student achievement.
Key Findings on Self-Efficacy

Focusing on self-efficacy afforded new understandings of how individual teachers perceive high standards of teaching and learning. As members of four collective faculties, each study participant was interviewed individually to collect data on the respondent’s views on high quality teaching. Case study documents reveal beliefs that reflection fosters scholarly development for veteran teachers who are already proficient practitioners, as well as for novice educators struggling to improve their methodology. Interview responses confirm that high quality educational outcomes for all students should be modeled in every classroom by efficacious teachers.

Confidence and persistence traits are well matched to creative modes used by teachers to plan instruction and assess of their professional practice. Stimulating conversation and interactive planning between colleagues resulted in productive preparations and inspired instructional delivery. Thinking about the experience of teaching and thinking about how others think about the experience of teaching benefited dynamic learning. Encouraging self-assessment as a valuable tool for improved instruction emphasized the advantages of high expectations, confidence and persistence.

According to Pajares as cited in Maehr & Pintrich (2001) students’ self-efficacy perceptions influence their motivation to learn, ability to use self-regulatory strategies and determination in achieving performance goals. In turn, teachers advance their students’ self-efficacy through a repertoire of innovative teaching strategies and assessments, as well as through modeling, feedback, and setting goals that are challenging and attainable.
Key Findings of the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation

The Self-Directed Model of Evaluation was established as a framework for distinguished teachers to advance educator efficacy traits and expand professional expertise. The innovative paradigm proved to be well suited for encouraging high quality teaching. In contrast with prior traditional methods of observation and evaluation, the new appraisal process provided exemplary examples of teacher efficacy already in action.

Study subjects considered their participation in the self-directed option a positive way to erase the bureaucratic lines of authority that previously limited staff and administrative interactions. This principle is in accord with a study by O'Neil (1995) on the importance of “creating an environment where teachers can continually learn”. When asked to describe themselves as instructional planners, respondents emphasized the benefits of the self-directed format as an important method to sustain on-going professional growth and to encourage persistent discovery. Study participants described their self-directed experience as validating and a profound change in how they feel about evaluation procedures. They emphasized influential impacts by specifying how the process enabled teachers to achieve district improvement goals and personal growth plans. Empowering students to achieve challenging learning goals demands evaluation programs that build on and promote teachers’ professional expertise (Danielson, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1984 1985). Wise and Darling-Hammond (1984/1985) cautioned against the “the detrimental impact of bureaucratic lines of authority that exclude teachers and principals from the decision process and preclude multidirectional communication.” While the researcher did not
predict that study subjects would regard evaluation procedures as beneficial tools, the participants' endorsement of the self-directed model as a way to strengthen teacher efficacy was a positive change from traditional notions of authoritarian management. Although preliminary expectations estimated two years to establish the new evaluation process, implementation time was significantly abbreviated due to the constructive reviews of self-directed volunteers throughout the 2005-2006 school year.

Study participants believe that evaluations should promote excellence. This conviction is essential to the philosophies of Danielson and McGreal (Danielson, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; McGreal, 1983). Case studies published by Glaithorn & Holler (1987); Manatt (1987); and Tesch, Nyland, & Kernutt (1987) cited effective implementation of model evaluation programs hallmarked by collaboration, differentiation, and precise evaluation criteria relevant to raising student performance. Interview commentary described the new initiative as reflective of these studies when compared to subjects' prior experiences with evaluations that they considered a waste of time and not helpful in improving their skills. Respondents viewed the new system as a powerful way to emphasize accountability and respect. A key finding of this study confirmed that the self-directed model of evaluation aligned with theories associated with innovation and adoption concepts.

In summary, the self-directed model encourages teacher efficacy by bringing together multiple informational sources of data under one theoretical construct and aggregates these resources into a useful appraisal instrument. Teacher efficacy takes into account the impact of perceived capacities, choice, freedom, perseverance and a myriad of other variables that provide an awareness of accomplishments and needs.
Study conclusions are tempered by the highly selective nature of the participants. Given this limitation, positive results were documented for implementing the self-directed model of evaluation. By applying the four domains of planning and preparation, establishing a culture for learning, instruction and professional responsibilities to daily lesson designs, participants stimulated highly efficacious aspects of teaching and learning. Teacher efficacy prospered among study subjects as they enacted effective instructional performance and completed their selected projects. By asking questions, exploring collective deliberations, and listening to participant stories, the researcher captured respondent perspectives on teacher efficacy and gained insights on instructional practices vital to sustained high quality student progress.

Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the attributes of teacher efficacy that explain the actions of highly skilled educators who set high standards for student performance and successfully strive to overcome barriers to academic achievement. Studying a selected group of distinguished teachers provided better understandings of the dynamics of self-efficacy. The positive effects of personal efficacy on learning outcomes suggest that an evaluation instrument that includes teacher efficacy as an attribute of good teaching has the potential to provide information to guide professional development and enhance professional practice for educators at various levels of expertise.

Highly effective school districts utilize the talents of efficacious teachers who believe they can accomplish quality achievement goals and are determined to design meaningful learning experiences to improve student achievement. Based on the context of this study, school leaders who value efficacious practice and want to institutionalize
these benefits should consider the following recommendations to increase teachers’
ability to perform at the highest levels of achievement:

1. School leaders should foster an organizational culture of teachers with high self-
   efficacy to collaborate with struggling colleagues in order to achieve high quality
   teaching skills.

2. Educators need to convey high expectations for student achievement, take actions to
   promote student efficacy, and apply extra effort to reach struggling or disengaged
   students.

3. Teacher performance appraisals should establish benchmarks for collaboration,
   differentiation, and evaluation criteria relevant to raising student performance.

4. Evaluation systems should be designed to promote teaching excellence and
   professional expertise.

5. School leaders should involve teachers in developing performance appraisal
   procedures to foster a sense of ownership and to enhance their practice as educators
   who have shown evidence of positive teaching efficacy.

6. School leaders should facilitate the combined efforts of efficacious teachers to foster
   collective efficacy beliefs.

7. School leaders should support and reinforce efficacious teachers who intensify their
   efforts when faced with challenges rather than abandon or lower their goals.

8. School leaders should challenge teachers to boost their students’ self-efficacy through
   innovative teaching strategies and setting goals that are both challenging and
   attainable.
9. School leaders should mentor teachers dealing with challenging experiences especially when they are at a vulnerable point in the development of self-efficacy beliefs.

Implications for Future Research

Organizational leadership and innovative evaluation processes are needed to advance teacher training and ongoing professional development. Future researchers might wish to expand on studies that indicate a connection between teachers' personal sense of efficacy and the degree of collective efficacy within the school. There is also an evident need for more research into the influences on collective efficacy. Compared to the impressive body of literature on collective research, there has been far less examination of the relationship between teacher evaluation and student performance. The redesign of evaluation procedures lags behind other elements of education reform and innovative new instruments may not adequately capture the components of effective teaching. Collective efficacy inquiry is needed to survey studies on assessing both individual efficacy decisions and the faculty as a group. Research studies by Goddard et al., (2000); and Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001), provide valuable information on this topic.

Self-efficacy is a dynamic force in academic success. Efficacy attributes are significantly influenced by experiencing mastery throughout student teaching and during the first years in the classroom. Well designed professional training provides critical learning in the pre-tenure years for sustained efficacy development. Although there are variances in teacher expertise, professional in-service is essential throughout one's career to expand self-efficacy. Knowing how and when to best provide professional
development offerings would be an important result of future research studies. Schools led by a supportive principal and comprised of faculty who engage in collaboration to achieve high academic aims are characterized by a powerful sense of collective efficacy. Several research studies look at the importance of the cultural context of efficacy. Research is needed to show evidence that the school principal has a direct impact on teachers’ sense of efficacy.

**Concluding Remarks**

A primary goal of the study district’s vision was identifying, sustaining and expanding teacher efficacy. The self-directed initiative encouraged all district educators to join together as a community of learners. Although not all volunteers were able to participate in the 2005-2006 school year, first cohort participants played a key role in providing dynamic energy and were instrumental in causing the size of the second cohort to double in size. The study district’s Professional Development Institute served as an effective recruiting conduit for the second year implementation.

A fundamental outcome of this case study is that teacher efficacy and evaluation are interconnected in the mission to improve student performance. Examining ways to promote teacher efficacy is critical to advancing student achievement. Study subjects guided student learning by applying their professional efficacy skills and innovative practices to achieve positive results. Furthermore, the district organization and administrative tools that promote teacher efficacy are interrelated with implementation of innovative evaluation strategies.

The self-directed initiative encouraged all district educators to join together as a community of learners with authentic relationships. Greater emphasis on choice in their
professional development increased efficacy in their professional lives and highlighted in the benefits of autonomy in teacher-learner interactions.

Self-efficacy attributes exhibit one’s ability to select practices that benefit achievement. On-going learning about learning and leading change is vital to continuous academic improvement and sustained intellectual growth. Self-directed teachers have valuable perceptions to share with the study district concerning the capabilities and abilities of its staff and students. The teachers in this study shared cherished stories about teaching and learning. They are master educators who were eager to discuss their hopes and efforts through stories of actual experiences that symbolize the benefits of qualitative research in education. Listening to a wide array of first-person narratives recounts the triumphs and trials of successfully advancing every student. Their contributions to this study enabled the researcher to observe the demands of daily instruction and the intricate ways teachers enhance understanding. Sharing their time, experiences and commitment to support colleagues is a special offering in a profession that continually needs to change and improve as our students continually change and improve. The wisdom of their practice allows teachers to examine what other teachers do while continuously reflecting on what they themselves do and why. Learning what teachers think and what they believe is a rich source of valid information.
References


APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

Letter of Solicitation/Superintendent
Joanmarie Penney  
Principal of Marlboro Memorial Middle School  
Marlboro Township Public Schools  
71 Nolan Road  
Morganville, NJ 07751  
jpenny@marlboro.k12.nj.us

November 1, 2006

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student in the College of Education and Human Services at Seton Hall University in the Executive Ed.D. Program. My doctoral dissertation research seeks to examine the impact of New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standard 3.2 (Writing) on writing instruction in third and fourth grade classrooms in Morris County.

I am requesting your permission to give a survey on this topic to third and fourth grade teachers in your district if my dissertation proposal is approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Seton Hall University. After receiving your permission, I will contact elementary principals in your district and ask for the names of their third and fourth grade teachers. Upon receipt of these names, I will send the survey directly to the teachers at their schools and ask for their voluntary participation in completing the survey. Teacher responses will remain secure and confidential.

The IRB requires that your approval be sent to me on official letterhead paper from your district. As per IRB requirements, please state specifically in your letter of approval that you give your permission for me to give the survey to third and fourth grade teachers in your district if my dissertation proposal is approved by the Institutional Review Board at Seton Hall University.

Please return your signed letter of approval to me by November 15. I have enclosed a stamped addressed envelope for your convenience. I gratefully appreciate your time and consideration in this matter and, upon your request, will share with you my research findings.

Sincerely,

Joanmarie Penney
APPENDIX B

Letter of Solicitation/Reply Form – Principals
January 8, 2007

Dear Principal:

As part of the requirements for obtaining a doctoral degree from Seton Hall University in Educational Administration, Management, and Policy, my doctoral dissertation research seeks to examine the impact of the attributes of teacher efficacy as perceived by elementary teachers who participated in the Self Directed Model of Evaluation.

The superintendent of schools has granted me permission to conduct this study. I need your help in identifying teachers evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year through the Self Directed Model of the Differentiated System of Evaluation.

Research Affiliation
The researcher is a New Jersey Principal, with several years of experience in the field of education. Additionally, the researcher is currently a doctoral student at Seton Hall University.

Purpose of Research
Through this research, the researcher hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the critical factors influencing teacher efficacy in schools.

Subjects Participation
The researcher plans to interview teachers in four elementary schools in Marlboro, New Jersey from December, 2006 through February, 2007. Participation in this study will involve no less than 45 minutes and no more than one hour of time.

Procedure
It is the researcher’s intention to interview elementary teachers at four elementary school site. The questions asked will focus on the attributes of teacher efficacy and the teacher’s perceptions of the Self Directed Model of Evaluation. There will be ten open ended questions and thirteen background information questions.

Voluntary Nature of Participation
All participation in this study is voluntary in nature. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. No negative consequences, penalties, or loss of benefits will be delivered.

Anonymity
Anonymity will not be preserved throughout the study. This means that the researcher and the members of the researcher’s research committee are aware of the sources of data. However, the reporting of results will be by group analysis only. All responses, notes, audiotapes, and documents will be coded using a random number coding system which will link data to a master list.
Confidentiality
All information obtained from the study will remain confidential. All notes, tapes, and documents that could be linked to specific schools or teachers will be stored in a locked safe at the researcher’s home.

Please complete the attached form and return in the enclosed stamped envelope to:
Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Marlboro Memorial Middle School
71 Nolan Road
Morganville, NJ 07751
or email to jpenney@marlboro.k12.nj.us.

This study is conducted under the direction of Dr. Daniel Gutmore, Professor at Seton Hall University. Any questions concerning this study may be addressed to the researcher at her office (732-972-7115), to Dr. Gutmore’s office (973-275-2853), or Dr. Ruzicka, Director of Seton Hall’s Institutional Review Board (973-313-6314).

Sincerely,

Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Principal, Marlboro Memorial Middle School
Marlboro Township Schools
PRINCIPAL REPLY FORM

A Case Study of the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

Please list the teachers who participated in the Self Directed Model of Evaluation during the 2005-2006 school year.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Signature of Principal: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Please complete the attached form and return in the enclosed stamped envelope to:
Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Marlboro Memorial Middle School
71 Nolan Road
Morganville, NJ 07751
or email to jpenney@marlboro.k12.nj.us.
APPENDIX C

Letter of Solicitation/Reply Form – Teachers
January 9, 2007

Dear Teacher:

As part of the requirements for obtaining a doctoral degree from Seton Hall University in Educational Administration, Management, and Policy, my doctoral dissertation research seeks to examine the impact of the attributes of teacher efficacy as perceived by elementary teachers who participated in the Self Directed Model of Evaluation. Your principal has identified you as one of the teachers evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year through the Self Directed Model of the Differentiated System of Evaluation.

Research Affiliation
The researcher is a New Jersey Principal, with several years of experience in the field of education. Additionally, the researcher is currently a doctoral student at Seton Hall University.

Purpose of Research
Through this research, the researcher hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the critical factors influencing teacher efficacy in schools.

Subjects Participation
The researcher plans to interview teachers in four elementary schools in Marlboro, New Jersey from December, 2006 through February, 2007. Participation in this study will involve no less than 45 minutes and no more than one hour of time.

Procedures
It is the researcher’s intention to interview teachers at each school site. The questions asked will focus on the attributes of teacher efficacy and the teacher’s perceptions of the Self Directed Model of Evaluation. There will be ten open ended questions and thirteen background information questions.

Voluntary Nature of Participation
All participation in this study is voluntary in nature. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. No negative consequences, penalties, or loss of benefits will be delivered.

Anonymity
Anonymity will not be preserved throughout the study. This means that the researcher and the members of the researcher’s research committee are aware of the sources of data. However, the reporting of results will be by group analysis only. All responses, notes, audiotapes, and documents will be coded using a random number coding system which will link data to a master list.
Confidentiality
All information obtained from the study will remain confidential. All notes, tapes, and documents that could be linked to specific schools or teachers will be stored in a locked safe at the researcher’s home.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please complete the attached form and return your response in the enclosed stamped envelope to:

Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Marlboro Memorial Middle School
71 Nolan Road
Morganville, NJ 07751

This study is conducted under the direction of Dr. Daniel Gutmore, Professor at Seton Hall University. Any questions concerning this study may be addressed to the researcher at her office (732-972-7115), to Dr. Gutmore’s office (973-275-2853), or Dr. Ruzicka, Director of Seton Hall’s Institutional Review Board (973-313-6314).

Sincerely,

Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Principal, Marlboro Memorial Middle School
Marlboro Township Schools
TEACHER REPLY FORM

A Case Study of the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

Name: ___________________________________________________________

School: _________________________________________________________

Best time of day to be contacted: ________________________________

Phone number/s that are best to reach you: _________________________

Signature: ______________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

Please return this reply form in the enclosed stamped envelope to:
Joanmarie Baggs Penney
Marlboro Memorial Middle School
71 Nolan Road
Morganville, NJ 07751
APPENDIX D

Informed Consent
Research Affiliation
The researcher is a New Jersey Principal, with several years of experience in the field of education. Additionally, the researcher is currently a doctoral student at Seton Hall University.

Purpose of Research and Duration of Participation
Through this research, the researcher hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the critical factors influencing teacher efficacy in schools. The researcher plans to interview teachers in four elementary schools in Marlboro, New Jersey from December, 2006 through February, 2007. Participation in this study will involve no less than 45 minutes and no more than one hour of time.

Procedures
It is the researcher’s intention to interview teachers at each of the four elementary schools who participated in the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation during the 2005-2006 school year.

Interviews
The interview guide that will be used in this study is researcher-generated based on an extensive literature review. Interview questions will be open ended and are designed to solicit information about the attributes of teacher efficacy and the teacher’s perceptions of the Self-Directed Model of Evaluation.

Voluntary Nature of Participation
All participation in this study is voluntary in nature. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. No negative consequences, penalties, or loss of benefits will be delivered.

Anonymity
Anonymity will not be preserved throughout the study. This means that the researcher and the members of the researcher’s research committee are aware of the sources of data. However, the reporting of results will be by group analysis only. All responses, notes, audiotapes, and documents will be coded using a random number coding system which will link data to a master list.

Confidentiality
All information obtained from the study will remain confidential. All notes, tapes, and documents that could be linked to specific schools or teachers will be stored in a locked safe at the researcher’s home. No other person has access to the safe.

Access to Research Records
The researcher and the researcher’s four person research committee will have access to the information contained in research notes and tapes. The research committee includes two members of Seton Hall faculty, as well as two colleagues in the education field.
**Risks**
There are no inherent risks involved in this study. The study is not experimental in nature.

**Benefits**
Conversely, to the statement articulated in the previous paragraph, there are no benefits to research participants. Participants will not receive monetary reimbursement.

**Contact Information**
This study is conducted under the direction of Dr. Daniel Gutmore, Professor at Seton Hall University. Any questions concerning this study may be addressed to the researcher at her office (732-972-7115), to Dr. Gutmore’s office (973-275-2853), or Dr. Ruzicka, Director of Seton Hall’s Institutional Review Board (973-313-6314).

**Audiotaping**
Participation in this study will include audio-taped interviews. The researcher requests your permission to audio-tape at the time. As a participant, you have the right to review all or any portion of the tape and request that it be destroyed. All tapes will be stored for a period of three years and subsequently destroyed.

**Copy to Participants**
All participants will receive a copy of this signed and dated Informed Consent Form.

(Signature) ___________________________ (Date) ___________________________
APPENDIX E

Interview Guide
Interview Guide on the Attributes of Teacher Efficacy

Sixteen open-ended interview questions regarding teacher efficacy and the self-directed model of evaluation will be preceded by three questions intended to elicit background information.

Background Information Questions

How many years have you been teaching?

How long have you been teaching your current grade level?

What grade levels did you teach prior to your current assignment?

For the next set of questions, the subject will be informed that he or she is being asked for his or her perceptions as they pertain to teacher efficacy.

1. What attributes of teacher self-efficacy are essential to advance student achievement?

   1.1 What teaching practices do you believe are critical for setting high standards for student learning?

   1.2 What efficacy strategies do you utilize in designing and delivering instruction that support student learning?

   1.3 How do you implement and evaluate new content knowledge?

   1.4 What relevant strategies have you developed for instructional improvement?

   1.5 To what extent does your planning and preparation strategies demonstrate your content knowledge, teaching skills, lesson designs and assessing student learning?

   1.6 What does good teaching look like in the classrooms of teachers with a strong sense of teacher efficacy?
For the next set of questions, the subject will be informed that he or she is being asked for his or her perceptions as they pertain to the Self Directed Model of Evaluation.

2. How has participation in a Self Directed Model of Evaluation influenced the attributes of teacher efficacy practices in schools?

2.1 In your opinion or perception, how important is the freedom you have in directing your own evaluation processes?

2.2 In your opinion or perception, what aspects of the Self Directed Model of Evaluation were most satisfying?

2.3 In your opinion or perception, what aspects of the Self Directed Model of Evaluation were least satisfying?

2.4 How have you applied the Self Directed Model of Evaluation practices to enhance teaching and learning?

2.5 To what extent did the Self Directed Model of Evaluation impact your decisions about creating a respectful culture for learning, managing procedures, supervising student behavior and organizing the physical space?

2.6 What common instructional practices do teachers share that contribute to the school’s vision and mission for achievement?

For the next set of questions, the subject will be informed that he or she is being asked for his or her perceptions regarding the Self Directed Model of Evaluation to impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

3. How does the implementation of the Self Directed Model of Evaluation impact the sustainability of exemplary teacher efficacy attributes?

3.1 How did the Self Directed Model of Evaluation impact your choices about professional responsibilities in the ways you reflected on your teaching, student assessment and professional activities at school?

3.2 How would you describe the Self Directed Model of Evaluation as a way to provide teachers with opportunities for self assessment and self directed growth?

3.3 What opportunities are in place for you to share feedback on relevant and meaningful instruction with your colleagues?

3.4 How did the Self Directed Model of Evaluation encourage you to expand your own learning?
APPENDIX F

The Differentiated System of Evaluation
THE DIFFERENTIATED SYSTEM OF EVALUATION

THREE-TIER EVALUATION SYSTEM

The three-tier evaluation system provides three models for evaluating teachers.

TIER 1. Non-tenured Teacher or Replacement Teacher* (Traditional Model)

Non-tenured teachers will be evaluated in the traditional model of supervision.

Proficiency in the Teaching Standards of Professionalism (Four Domains) will be a primary but not the only basis used to make tenure decisions. On-going staff development is provided to non-tenured teachers. Professional development is promoted in collaboration with an administrator and includes, but is not limited to, multiple observations, coaching, analyzing and conferencing toward continuous professional growth.

Procedures for Non-Tenured Teachers

- A minimum of three formal classroom observations by an administrator is required annually, one of which will be a clinical observation. Each observation will be followed by a post conference.
- Non-tenured teachers receive an interim and summative evaluation.
- Opportunities for self-reflection will be encouraged.
- A Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) will be developed collaboratively by the teacher and the administrator.
- May require a Specialized Growth Plan

*Replacement teachers do not accrue time towards tenure.
TIER 2. Tenured Teachers (Traditional Model)

- An observation by an administrator, at least once a year, with an annual summative evaluation based on the Teaching Standards of Professionalism (Four Domains).

Procedures for Tenured Teachers

- A minimum of one formal classroom observation by an administrator is required annually. The observation will be followed by a post conference.
- Tenured teachers receive a summative evaluation.
- Opportunities for self-reflection will be encouraged.
- A Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) will be developed collaboratively by the teacher and the administrator.
- May require a Specialized Growth Plan

TIER 3. Tenured Teachers (Self-Directed Model)

- A PIP is developed with the administrator to create a professional growth activity. The voluntary self-directed model chosen will replace the traditional model and include an annual summative evaluation based on the district’s professional standards.
- Teachers who have approval of their building principal may participate in a self-directed model.

Procedures for Tenured Teachers (Self-Directed Model)

Tenured teachers may choose a self-directed model that must be mutually agreeable to the teacher and administrator. Options include:

- Portfolios
- Peer Coaching
- Interactive Journals
- Collegial Partnerships
- Curriculum Research/Projects
- Action Research

All options required specific goal setting, time-lines, designated responsibilities and ongoing discussions with leaders regarding progress and outcomes. Self directed staff members received an annual summative evaluation by an administrator focused on the Teaching Standards of Professionalism.