The Professional Teaching Portfolio As A Tool For Formative Evaluation: A Case Study

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THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PORTFOLIO
AS A TOOL FOR FORMATIVE EVALUATION: A CASE STUDY

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Professional Teaching Portfolio as a Tool for Formative Evaluation: A Case Study

The purpose of this study was to assess teacher and principal perceptions of the use of the professional teaching portfolio in facilitating growth-oriented teacher evaluation. Growth-oriented teacher evaluation systems are more effective since they can provide information on the strengths of teachers and the areas in which they may need improvement. These systems allow teachers to direct their own path for growth and evaluation.

The study research questions focused on the effect of the professional portfolio on the quality of teacher evaluation, the accuracy of the portfolio to reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice and the usefulness of the portfolio as a tool for teachers and administrators. The portfolio process was examined as to the level of difficulty, the time involved in creating a portfolio and its value in formative evaluation. Finally, the use of the professional portfolio as a differentiated supervision option was investigated.

Using a case study design, teachers and an administrator from one elementary school volunteered to be personally interviewed by the researcher. These structured interviews provided the qualitative data of the study. The results of this study indicated that both teachers and the administrator perceived the professional portfolio had an impact on their teaching practice. Both the teachers and administrator indicated that the professional portfolio is an effective tool for reflecting a teacher’s knowledge and skill. They believed that the professional portfolio could provide sufficient evidence of a teacher’s knowledge and skill, serve as a tool for professional development, and provide a more
comprehensive picture of teacher performance over time. Although the teachers and administrator did perceive the professional portfolio to be extremely time-consuming, they still believed it was a valuable process and a valid option in differentiated supervision.

The results of the study point to a need for more research in the field of supervision and evaluation. In particular, alternative teacher evaluation or differentiated supervision plans need to be closely scrutinized for their contributions to change that lead to enhanced student learning. Questions remain concerning the link between professional development and enhanced student learning.
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“To all that has been, Thank You!
To all that will be, Yes!”
Dag Hammarsjöld
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Introduction

As education in America has evolved, the professional training, evaluation and development of teachers has also evolved. Many evaluation programs in use today were developed in the early to mid-1970s and reflect what educators believed about instruction at that time. Current programs rely heavily on the documentation of a small number of “observable behaviors”. These evaluation programs are grounded in the conception of instruction that prevailed in the 1970s and many are based on the work of Madeline Hunter (1983). The research on student learning that accompanied these programs relied on the only available measures of student achievement: norm-referenced tests. The goals for student achievement have evolved into an interest for more complex learning that includes problem solving and the application of knowledge to unfamiliar situations, the utilization of the higher order thinking skills. Also, the recent research on the nature of the brain and how it learns indicates that new approaches to teaching are necessary (Jensen, 1998; Sprenger, 1999). As a result, there is a need for new approaches to the evaluation of teaching.

The earlier models of evaluation represented the best of what was known at the time. However, education is built around a conception of practice based on current and emerging research findings. As those findings suggest new approaches, pedagogical practices must also move forward (Danielson, 1996). Because educational research has advanced over the past 25 years, and classroom practice is following suit, the evaluation of teaching must reflect these newer techniques. The evaluative criteria used should represent the most current research available.
As the conception of learning and good teaching has shifted from a "behaviorist" to a more "constructivist" view, in line with emerging research, many educators have developed their own personal views of what constitutes good practice. The evaluation of these practices must evolve to include the constructivist view (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). The professional portfolio, assembled and presented as part of an evaluation program, has gained some notice recently (Danielson, 1996; Martin-Kniep, 1999). These portfolios can offer a significant vehicle for professional reflection on practice. However, the evaluative criteria for providing the evidence of professional practice and then the use of the criteria for evaluating professional practice must be well designed and well presented.

Statement of the Problem

In America today, educational leaders are exceedingly concerned with school reform as is evidenced in President George W. Bush's (2001) recent publication of his blueprint for education "No Child Left Behind". It has become apparent that well-prepared teachers are essential to educational reform efforts. Without the continuous improvement of teaching as well as improvement of professional teachers, the reforms will fail. Evaluation and professional development programs must serve the purpose of promoting teachers' continuous learning of integrating new knowledge about teaching and learning within the social contexts in which teaching takes place (Danielson and MacGreal, 2000; Darling-Hammond and Sclan, 1992).

In order to be of greater value to teachers and students, programs of evaluation and professional development must be re-conceptualized. The evaluation of teachers, organized according to a competency-based approach, will shift teachers away from dependency on external sources for the solution of their problems and toward
professional growth and self-reliance in instructional decision making. The reflective approach will sharpen teachers’ skills in problem solving, determining students’ needs, and conducting action research that is designed to develop new knowledge and skills related specifically to their schools and classrooms. Reflection has proven useful in the preparation of prospective teachers who are asked to maintain journals and portfolios (Danielson and McGreal, 2000).

Significance of the Study

Most of the literature on teacher portfolios has not been rooted in empirical data. Much has been written on the design of portfolios; what they should include, and examples or proposals for use (Wheeler, 1993; Glatthorn, 1996). There is a fair amount of rhetoric discussing portfolio philosophy (Murray, 1994). Additional articles include “how to” guides and information about pilot programs (Fisher, 1994; Campbell, Melenyzer, Nettles, and Wyman, 1997). As far back as 1988, Stiggins and Duke, in their work with teacher evaluation, expressed a need for continued research in growth-oriented teacher evaluation through replication of prior studies and development of new studies.

Nearly all of the teacher portfolio research has been conducted at the university level where the teaching “dossier” is used for tenure decisions (Robinson, 1993). In Florida, where teacher portfolios are used as part of the Florida Performance Measurement System, staff development becomes the focus. In her 1994 study, Clark investigated the use of the “Professional Development Portfolio” finding a positive impact on 97% of the teachers studied. Clark encouraged additional research in other locations, as well as research in the principal’s role as instructional leader.
In a more recent study in California, Stone and Mata (1996) examined two elementary schools that experimented with teacher portfolio evaluation. Portfolios were found to be less stressful than teacher observation while focusing on long-term performance rather than just one lesson. The researchers outlined a need for further study and replication.

Many principals believe assuming the role of both staff developer and evaluator is a point of role conflict. Leithwood (1990) concluded that principals are skeptical about the contribution they can make to teacher development because they believe that the strategies required would place unrealistic demands upon themselves and the teachers. It is not usually the lack of know-how that causes principals stress. Rather, it is the lack of congruence between the demands formal strategies place on principals' work and the day to day demands of that work. Can principals use teacher portfolios to assist in their instructional leadership role? Studies have not been conducted which view the teacher portfolio as a tool from the principal's perspective.

In his model of differentiated supervision, Glatthorn (1984) insisted that master teachers do not need a "clinical" model of supervision. Expert teachers need options, including peer and individual projects or administrative monitoring. Glatthorn (1997) believes the portfolio when used with formal observation is a strong supervisory tool for beginning or problem teachers. Additionally, the portfolio can complement informal classroom observation, especially for competent, veteran teachers. Glatthorn suggests portfolios may be included as an additional option for use in differentiated supervision and growth-oriented teacher evaluation. Research has not been conducted to examine this option of differentiated supervision.
The studies suggest that there is a clear need for additional studies of portfolios in order to provide clarification of the usefulness and impact of teacher portfolios to promote growth-oriented evaluations.

*Purpose of the Study*

The effectiveness of an evaluative and professional development program would be intrinsically connected to improved teacher practice and teacher effectiveness. The research must determine that professional portfolios utilized for both evaluative and professional development programs will be successful in creating the necessary improvements in instruction and learning.

The purpose of the study is to assess teacher and principal perceptions and acceptance of the use of the teacher portfolio. First, this study will examine the teacher portfolio as an instrument that can provide sufficient evidence of a teacher’s knowledge and skills and serve as a tool for reflection for professional development. The second focus area of this study will investigate the perception of teachers and principals concerning the process of using portfolios as a valid and effective means of evaluation. Thirdly, this study will report teacher and principal perceptions of the use of portfolios as an additional approach to differentiated supervision. Finally, this study will add to the current body of literature designed to investigate and advance current practices in teacher supervision and evaluation.

*Research Questions*

Many unanswered questions define this study. This study will add to what is currently known about teacher portfolios by attempting to answer three research
questions, with related sub-questions. Given the current theories based on research in
education, this study should be designed to answer the following questions:

1. Do teachers perceive the use of the teacher portfolio to have an effect on the
overall quality of teacher evaluation?

Sub-questions related to the impact of teacher portfolios on the quality of teacher
evaluation include:

a) Does the teacher portfolio have an impact on attitudes about teaching,
teaching behaviors and strategies, and the understanding of the teaching-
learning process?

b) Does the teacher portfolio clarify expected teaching standards and goals
and can teacher portfolio “artifacts” and “evidence” be used as
checkpoints in meeting those standards and goals?

c) Does the use of the teacher portfolio have an impact on teacher perception
of the role of teacher evaluation?

2. Do teachers and administrators perceive that teacher portfolios can accurately
reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice?

Sub-questions related to teacher portfolios and their accuracy include:

a) Can the teacher portfolio be used as an option in differentiated
supervision?

b) Must a formal observation be used in combination with the teacher
portfolio for summative evaluations?

c) Is there a certain group of teaching professionals, such as novice or master
teachers, who benefit more from the development of teacher portfolios?
3. Is the teacher portfolio a useful tool for teachers and administrators?

Sub-questions related to the usefulness of the teacher portfolio include:

a) How difficult is the task of development of a teacher portfolio for the teacher?

b) How difficult is the task of reviewing teacher portfolios for the administrator?

c) Is the teacher portfolio useful in reflective teaching?

d) Is the portfolio process “worth” the effort on the parts of both the teacher and administrator?

Definitions of Terms

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

**Action Research** – The process of seeking answers to important, meaningful questions about one’s classroom, one’s school, or other professional practice (Martin-Kniep, 1999).

**Artifacts** – The term “artifact” refers to the tools of teaching (McGreal, 1983) or documentation of the teaching (Campbell et al., 1997). Teaching artifacts include instructional materials used to facilitate student leaning — tests, quizzes, worksheets, audiovisual materials, study guides, handouts, rubrics, anecdotal records, or any other items which may reflect a more comprehensive view of a teacher’s instruction and assessment methods.

**Authentic assessment** – Relevant and realistic methods of evaluation as alternative to paper-and-pencil tests (Brooks and Brooks, 1993).
Classroom observations, informal and formal – Periodic, short, drop-in visits to classrooms throughout the year would be considered informal observations of a teacher (Glatthorn, 1997). In informal observation the supervisor makes an initial scan of the learning process at work. More formalized observations require pre and post conferencing, detailed scripting of the lesson activities, observation analysis, and comprehensive reporting.

Evaluation – The primary means by which people learn what is expected and the primary means by which they come to value their performances in regard to these expectations (Stiggins & Duke, 1988). Stiggins (1986) defines evaluation as the process that serves the purpose of providing information for use in personnel management decisions such as hiring, firing, promotion, tenure, and salary.

Formative evaluation – Evaluation with the emphasis placed on development, growth, and improvement is categorized as formative evaluation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Formative evaluation may suggest strategies for improvement prior to a final, summative evaluation.

Growth-oriented evaluation – Growth-oriented evaluation expands the role of the teacher in his or her evaluation, looks at peer support, and expands the role of the principal as partner as opposed to solely evaluator (Senge, 1990).

Professional Development – An inclusive concept that is the totality of educational and personal experiences that contribute toward an individual’s being more competent and satisfied in his or her professional role. (Showers, B., Joyce, B., and Bennett, B., 1987).
Reflection – The practice of documenting or discussing the quality or artifacts of a teacher’s work focusing on improvement (Danielson, 1996).

Summative Evaluation – An evaluation of summary used in decision making for future employment. The focus of summative evaluation is on rating, ranking, and making decisions about the adequacy of the performance of teachers as they carry out their professional responsibilities. (Danielson and McGreal, 2000).

Teacher effectiveness – Teaching that includes: interactions with students in a supportive way, higher order questioning, planning which ensures daily learning outcomes, a variety of teaching and assessing methods designed to meet varied learning needs of students, keeping students on task using positive classroom management strategies (Duke and Stiggins, 1990).

Teacher (Professional) Portfolio – A teacher (professional) portfolio is a structured collection of work produced by a teacher that is selective, reflective and demonstrates the teacher’s knowledge and skills in teaching. The portfolio is designed around key dimensions of teaching such as planning, instruction, assessment and/or professional development (Doolittle, 1994).

Limitations

The following are offered as possible limitations to the study:

1. The unit of analysis for this study is a single-case sample in that participating individuals were solicited from one particular school which may not be representative of the general population of teachers and administrators. The results of this study may not be generalizable to other teachers and principals.
2. Participants in the study will be self-selected volunteers. The results may be skewed in that these self-selected volunteers may already have an enthusiastic optimism concerning the results of the study.

3. Data collection will be limited by the participants’ willingness to respond honestly and accurately to interview questions.

4. The study cannot assess the long term effects on the participants as it will be time limited study determined by the number of years the individuals have been involved in the development of teacher portfolios for evaluation and growth.

5. Due to the many possible interpretations for the implementation of teacher portfolios, the study may not be conclusive concerning their effectiveness for evaluation and growth.

**Summary**

Chapter I has presented the statement of the problem and the purposes and significance of the study. Professional literature and research studies in the use of teacher evaluation and teacher portfolios were discussed to provide a rationale for examining the effective use of teacher portfolios in evaluation and professional development.

Chapter II contains a review of the literature in reference to teacher evaluation and professional development. This review focuses on the historical perspective of evaluation, its relationship to professional growth, the impact of leadership on its effectiveness and current trends in evaluation and professional development.

Chapter III consists of the description of the methodology used in this study.

Chapter IV defines the teacher portfolio evaluation process at the school. Chapter V
presents an analysis of the data. Discussion and conclusions concerning the study are offered in Chapter VI.
CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

By the year 2000, the nation's teaching force will have access to programs for continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century. (United States Department of Education Goals 2000, 1996)

School improvement, professional development and evaluation of teachers are intrinsically intertwined. DuFour and Eaker (1995) believe that school improvement and staff development are so interdependent that an institution simply cannot have one without the other. The addition of the goal "Teacher Education and Professional Development" to the original six goals of the United States National Education Goals (1996) is indeed recognition that well-prepared teachers are essential to educational reform efforts. The formation of this goal suggests that teachers are key to the transformation of schools. In order for teachers to lead this reformation, they must be provided with the opportunities for effective and meaningful evaluation as well as to be involved in expanded and enriched professional development experiences.

Throughout the decades there have been debates over the "most effective" way to evaluate teachers while promoting professional development. Throughout the 1990's, teacher evaluation and professional growth appear to be closely linked to discussions about school reform and restructuring. According to Darling-Hammond (1990), "teacher professionalism" and "school restructuring" are the major watchwords for describing the
more recent efforts to redefine teaching and schooling to better respond to the needs of learners. (p. 17)

A review of related literature provides a framework designed to give direction to this study. The review is presented in five sections. The first section provides an historical perspective of premise and practice of teacher evaluation and professional growth. The second section examines the relationship between evaluation and professional growth. This leads to a discussion of the role of leadership in the implementation of systems of evaluation and professional development in the third section. The fourth section discusses current trends in educational theory and practice that affect teacher evaluation and professional development which offer a foundation for this study. Section five explores the professional teacher portfolio as an alternative process which can facilitate growth-oriented evaluation.

*Traditional Teacher Evaluation in American Education*

The evolution of teacher evaluation in American education can be distinguished by a number of main periods (Lovell and Wiles, 1983). The “administrative inspection” period was prominent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This period was marked by supervisory functions performed by a “principal teacher” or a superintendent with a checklist to evaluate effectiveness. The “administrative inspection” period then flowed into the next period in the evolution of supervision that has been termed the “scientific management” period. The “scientific management” period was prominent in the latter part of the nineteenth century as well as the first quarter of the twentieth century. During the “scientific management” period, the evaluation process reviewed the efficiency of education. Once again teachers were viewed as passive individuals, who were expected
to follow the objectives set by the administrators. Both of these periods had a foundational organization of bureaucracy with top-down formation of objectives.

During the second quarter of the twentieth century, supervision became concerned with the humanity of the worker, his needs and nature (Lovell and Wiles, 1983). This was the first time the teacher was viewed as being capable of participating in decisions concerning curriculum and instruction. This led to the status of supervision which is based on human relations. There were many flaws in supervision based upon the "human relations" theory. As a result, the "structuralist" approach was born, which is a synthesis of the classical (or formal) school and the human relations (or informal) school (Etzioni, 1964). In the later part of the twentieth century, the impetus was to replace the bureaucracy with a new organizational arrangement, one which would address organizational life of the future (Bennis, Benne, Chin, and Corey, 1976).

Administrative Inspection Period

The early part of the eighteenth century offered a supervision model in which appointed committees of citizens inspected the plant and equipment as well as checked on student achievement. The primary focus of these committees was to determine the extent to which teachers were "doing their job" and to take appropriate actions (Burton and Brueckner, 1966). As schools became larger, it became necessary to have multiple teachers. In order to evaluate these teachers, one was designated as the "principal" teacher. The building "principal" would be assigned managerial duties, but at this time was not responsible for improvement in the instructional program. (Lovell and Wiles, 1983).
During the common school movement of the nineteenth century in America, three important steps were conceived to provide effective education. The first step was to create an inexpensive teaching force that would uphold the moral ideals of the common school movement. The second was to standardize school organization. Of importance was the function of supervision of instruction. As school systems became larger, the responsibilities of lay boards and citizens' committees were transferred to superintendents. County superintendents and city superintendents began to take over the functions of school committees and the supervision and evaluation of teachers became an important function of their positions (Spring, 1997).

Spring (1997) lists the elements that made up this bureaucratic organization of the school system as "(1) a hierarchy with a superintendent at the top and orders flowing from the top to the bottom of the organization, (2) clearly defined differences in roles of superintendent, principals and teachers, (3) graded schools in which students progressively moved from one grade to another, (4) a graded course of study for the entire school system to assure uniformity in teaching in all grades in the system, and (5) an emphasis on rational planning, order, regularity and punctuality" (p. 138-139).

Lovell and Wiles (1983) refer to this period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the “administrative inspection” period. Supervision during this period was conducted with workers (teachers) who were assumed to be passive tools of the organization. Supervision consisted of telling, inspecting, checking, rating and monitoring. The later part of the nineteenth century saw that the improvement of teachers and teaching became a well-established function of instructional supervision.
Scientific Management Period

At the beginning of the twentieth century, "scientific management" became the dominant theory for organizational improvement (Lovell and Wiles, 1983). As the industrial revolution was a major factor in American life, efficiency in organizations became the thrust for supervision of workers. Frederick Taylor became a spokesman for "scientific management" which influenced education as a whole (March and Simon, 1961). The "scientific management" theory held that workers were motivated by extrinsic rewards such as economic gain. Supervisors determined the conditions for work, the methods for completing work and then inspected the job.

Bobbitt (1912) was one of the advocates for the use of "scientific management" in the schools. He was concerned with the most efficient and effective educational methodology and utilizing supervisors to see that teachers carried it out. At this time, there was a definite move toward the standardization and particularization of educational objectives and methods. This had an important impact on the evolvement of educational supervision (Lovell and Wiles, 1983). Objectives were predetermined, and the best way of achieving them was scientifically established. The function of the supervisors then became overseeing that the workers achieved these objectives.

The practices of this era embraced an autocratic philosophy in which teachers were once again viewed as instruments to carry out the manager's objectives. This philosophy emphasized a clear bureaucratic management system, a working relationship of boss with subordinates. There was little or no concern with teachers as human beings. The heads of the organization focused on the teacher's ability to accomplish the tasks prescribed by them (Spring, 1997).
Structuralist Movement

The landmark Hawthorne studies conducted by Elton Mayo (1933) challenged the scientific management principles. Concurrently the studies on leadership behavior conducted by Lippitt and White (1947) and many others placed focus on the behavior of leaders and its effect on the organization. Education followed suit with the "human relations" movement. The fact that the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development emerged as a powerful and influential organization during the forties underscored the fact that each individual could contribute to the success of an organization. Unfortunately, during this period of flux, roles, responsibilities and authority were unclear and contributed to poor communication between central office personnel and local school personnel (Lovell & Wiles, 1983).

In response to the dysfunctions of the "human relations" movement, organizational theorists such as Etzioni (1964) developed a structured view of organizations referred to as structuralism. The structuralist position gleaned from both the scientific management movement and the human relations movement and synthesized these movements into one approach. Structuralists built their movement on the concept of bureaucracy. However, many theorists of the period, developed ideas about the ineffectiveness of the bureaucratic system for organizations. Not only did the formal bureaucratic model hold serious disadvantages for business organizations it was especially inadequate for the institution of education. It was inadequate because of certain special characteristics which Lovell and Wiles (1983) reference including "the relative isolation of the teacher-pupil system and, therefore, the lack of a comprehensive system of supervision" (p. 35).
Developments in Instructional Supervision

A review of the literature indicates that in the last quarter of the twentieth century, educational institutions realized a greater movement toward bureaucratic decision-making. This movement was from the local school districts to state departments of education and the federal government. This shift occurred as a result of the growing criticism of education which was underlined by reports such as *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* in 1983. There was a perceived need for greater efficiency and equity. State legislatures took control of local schools by enacting state standards and requirements. Darling-Hammond (1988) reported that nearly every state enacted teacher reform legislation, totaling over 1,000 mandates, which impacted teacher education, licensing, and compensation during the 1980s. Since the 1970s, there have been increased top-down controls until finally a shift in external control from a state to a national level appeared in the 1990s, evidenced by the adoption of the United States National Goals 2000 (1996).

Throughout the history of American education, the efforts to control the supervision of teachers have created repercussions. At the start of the twenty-first century, the teaching profession is in great flux. Evidence of crisis was reflected in curtailed funding to support legislated mandates, a shift in political sensitivity to domestic issues, a curriculum and management system that was not keeping up with the rapidly changing needs of the nation’s schools and the students they served, and plummeting teacher morale (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Glickman, 1989). This crisis in education has the power to bring about the necessary transformation of evaluation systems. The behaviorist view with its emphasis on strong controls may give way to a
constructivist view with an emphasis on teachers constructing their own understandings of pedagogy.

*Evaluation and Professional Growth*

"Today's schools face enormous challenges. In response to an increasingly complex society and a rapidly changing, technology-based economy, schools are being asked to educate the most diverse student body in our history to higher academic standards than ever before. This task is one that cannot be "teacher-proofed" through management systems, testing mandates, or curriculum packages. At its root, achieving high levels of student understanding requires immensely skillful teaching -- and schools that are organized to support teachers' continuous learning."

(Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 6)

The goals of teacher evaluation in education remain consistent in the literature. Teacher evaluation systems can be summative or formative. Teacher evaluation, in addition to its summative function of establishing a basis for promotion, retention, or dismissal of teachers, can also be formative and used as a valuable tool for improving instructional effectiveness. As Haefele (1993) points out, a clear sense of purpose should govern the design of a teacher evaluation system. He identifies the following purposes which must be served, arguing that an evaluation system should 1) screen out unqualified persons from certification and selection processes, 2) provide constructive feedback to individual educators, 3) recognize and help reinforce outstanding service, 4) provide direction for staff development practices, 5) provide evidence that will withstand professional and judicial scrutiny, 6) aid institutions in terminating incompetent or
unproductive personnel and 7) unify teachers and administrators in their collective efforts to educate students.

McGreal (1983) views teacher evaluation as evaluation for enhancing instruction. In his research, he has found that an evaluation system is more likely to encourage a teacher's professional growth if it: "1) includes clear criteria, established with significant teacher involvement, 2) provides opportunity for increased teacher involvement within the actual functioning of the system, 3) provides opportunity to use multiple sources of data to ensure the fullest possible picture of teaching, and 4) allows and encourages feedback activities that have been shown to encourage professional growth" (p. 13).

Haefele (1993) indicates that the purposes of teacher evaluation can be divided into the two broad categories of summative evaluation (for the purpose of making consequential decisions) and formative evaluation (for the purpose of enhancing the professional skills of teachers). In McGreal's (1983) view of teacher evaluation, he focuses on the formative purpose leading to professional growth. Legislators and policymakers value the summative purpose of evaluation. It provides quality assurance. On the other hand, educators believe that teacher evaluation should have as its purpose the professional development of teachers and the improvement of teaching.

Through the review of the literature it is apparent that individuals and groups disagree about the relative importance of these two purposes of evaluation. In addition, several factors contribute to the perceptions that these two purposes might even be incompatible. The culture surrounding teacher evaluation is not one of collegiality or professional inquiry. Unfortunately, perceptions also indicate that neither purpose is served in some evaluation systems. In actuality, the incompatibility between the two
purposes is contingent upon the evaluation systems and procedures that are utilized by individual schools. Danielson and MacGreal (2000) believes that properly designed evaluation systems will assist educators not only in achieving the dual purposes of accountability and professional development but will seamlessly merge these two purposes.

*Differentiated Supervision*

In his examination of differentiated supervision, Glatthorn (1997) indicates clearly that the dual purposes of evaluation can indeed be merged. Glatthorn suggests that supervision must be individualized in order to provide teachers with options about the kinds of evaluative services they receive that will promote professional growth. In general the differentiated model provides intensive development to nontenured teachers and to tenured teachers with serious problems. Teachers not in the stated category are given options concerning their professional development. They may either work in collaborative teams or in a self-directed approach. In his rationale for differentiated supervision, Glatthorn (1997) examines the issue from the perspectives of the profession, organization, supervisor and teacher.

If teaching is to become more of a profession, teachers must be empowered. Teacher professionalism begins with the premise that teachers have authority and responsibility to make decisions in the best interests of their students (Sykes, 1991). Teachers, as professionals, work together, learning from each other, establishing clear standards, exposing and solving problems, facing ongoing and meaningful reviews of their practice, listening and responding to concerns and continuously improving students’ learning opportunities (Wildy and Wallace, 1998). With this in mind, there must be more
options for supervision. Differentiated supervision operates on the belief that teaching is a profession. As professionals, teachers should have more control over their professional development. No direct evidence exists that schools utilizing a differentiated approach to supervision are more effective. However, an indirect correlation can certainly be made. Evidence shows that more effective schools possess a climate of collegiality (McLaughlin and Yee, 1988). One way to foster collegiality is to implement a differentiated system that strongly emphasizes cooperation and mutual assistance. The differentiated approach allows teachers to work cooperatively and to help each other grow professionally. Glatthorn's (1997) differentiated supervision enables the supervisor to focus clinical efforts on those teachers needing or requesting them for summative evaluations. Alternatively, differentiated supervision then also allows the supervisor the time to focus on formative evaluation for those teachers on that track.

From the teacher's perspective, Burden (1990) concluded that teachers require varying development assistance dependent upon their stages of professional development. Experienced teachers do not need intensive development. Research provides convincing evidence that with the right types of organizational support, teachers can learn from experienced colleagues. Little (1988) concludes from her studies that teachers welcome and profit from qualified observers, either peers or administrators. Glatthorn (1997) makes the assumption that differentiated supervision can exert a positive influence on the professional development of teachers which will in turn achieve school improvement. He concludes that schools can improve without a differentiated model of supervision, however, they will have a better chance if they provide teachers with options for growth.
**Formative Evaluation**

Few educators have considered evaluation as a way to provide teachers with feedback on performance and stimulate reflective thought as seen through the review of the literature. Professional development – clearly the more beneficial purpose of evaluation, regrettably has less formal support in schools (Furtwengler, 1992; Rooney, 1993). Danielson and McGreal (2000) write that learning almost always involves formative assessment. They believe formative assessment is so embedded in the process of teaching and learning that it is easy to overlook.

In the 1970s researchers began to look at the effects of instruction on student achievement. The findings of the landmark Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, et al (1966) report *Equality of Educational Opportunity* indicated that school really made little difference in the achievement of students. Coleman and his colleagues concluded that the quality of schooling a student receives accounts for only about 10 percent of the variance in student achievement. The researchers concluded that the vast majority of differences in student achievement might be attributed to the student’s individual abilities or aptitude or environment. These findings were corroborated by the research of Jencks, Smith, Ackland et al (1972) in his book *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effects of Family and Schools in America*.

This research indicates that there would be no need to formatively develop teaching skill if in fact it has no apparent effect on student achievement. However, researchers in the 1990s in reviewing the findings of Coleman et al (1966) and Jencks et al (1972) interpreted the results in terms of percentile gain in achievement. They believed that the finding that schools account for only about 10 percent of the differences
in student achievement translates into a percentile gain of about 23 points. That is, the average student who attends a "good" school will have a score that is 23 percentile points higher than the average student who attends a "poor" school (Rosenthal, 1991; Hunter and Schmidt (1990). This perspective then indicates that schools can make a difference in student achievement.

Not only does the research now indicate that schools can impact on student learning, but recent studies also indicate that an individual teacher can have a powerful effect on her students even if the school does not. Researchers Brophy and Good (1986) commented: "The myth that teachers do not make a difference in student learning has been refuted" (p. 370).

The more recent findings of the researchers as it appears in the current literature leads to the conclusion that the development of teaching practice is imperative for school reform as well as for student achievement. Formative evaluation, then, must be available for teachers to improve teaching practice. Those who commit to "continuous improvement see change as a journey, not a destination." (Glatthorn, 1997). These individuals understand that there is not one final solution to education's problem, the "silver bullet". Instead they understand that the road to excellence is built on incremental change. As Fullan (1991) determined from his review of the research on organizational change, highly effective schools were committed to incremental and continuous improvement.

The Role of Leadership in Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

As the world becomes more interconnected and business becomes more complex and dynamic, work must become more "meaningful." It is no
longer sufficient to have one person learning for the organization, a Ford or a Sloan or a Watson. It's just not possible any longer to "figure it out" from the top, and have everyone else following the orders of the "grand strategist." The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization. (Senge, 1990, p. 4)

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in and excitement about the "human dimension" of the organization. The success of such works as *The One Minute Manager*, *Megatrends* and *In Search of Excellence* among others, has directed much attention to the human resource development focus that successful organizations maintain (Hughes and Ubben, 1989). Today, businesses seeking organizational excellence recognize that they cannot treat their employees as commodities. The theory of total quality leadership promotes that management must empower its people to achieve creativity, commitment and quality service (Covey, 1990). People are more important than things in all situations and in all achievements. A school building may be state-of-the-art, however, it may not be a very "good" school. It is imperative for leadership to recognize that people are the real value; leaders are key in enhancing productivity and satisfaction (DeBruyn, 1997).

Rogers (1992) states that the most successful corporations are those that are "learning organizations". These organizations can adapt quickly in a rapidly changing environment. In such organizations, learning is an organic growth process that stimulates higher levels of thinking and creative expression. Although the maximally adaptive learning organization is still an ideal, many schools and businesses are moving toward
less bureaucratic, decentralized structures and are using problem-focused teams to improve performance. The challenge facing leaders in both business and education is how to help the learning process in organizations in order to generate and internalize new knowledge and innovations.

The Georgia State Board of Education in compiling a resource guide for staff development (Rogers, 1992), classified staff developers "as part of an emerging group of educators who envision schools as learning laboratories where students, faculty and staff are actively engaged in continuous learning" (p.I-1). In such schools, continuous staff development and improvement become a way of life. School development is inextricably linked to personnel development. Staff development is a strategy for basic organizational change in the way school personnel work and learn together. From this perspective, staff development is the process for developing a long-term capacity for continuous improvement in schools.

In order to move organizations forward with excellence, a strong emphasis must be placed on the professional development of its human resources. Businesses and schools have begun to recognize this phenomenon and have enacted programs and practices that will encourage professional development to ensure success. In schools, it is the leadership of the principal that will provide the impetus for human resource development, and through this professional development, create schools of excellence.

*Instructional Leadership*

A report from the National Staff Development Council (2001) indicated that instructional leaders shape the environment in which teachers and students succeed or fail. Skilled leaders ensure that teachers can operate in an environment that values and
takes advantage of what they know. This is one reason the principal’s job has become so challenging. According to Elmore (2000) today’s instructional leaders must be able to coach, teach and develop the teachers in their schools. They must be steeped in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to supervise a continuous improvement process that measures progress in raising student performance. They must build learning communities within their schools and engage the broader school community in creating and achieving a compelling vision for their schools.

Studies of effective urban schools (Mendez-Morse, 1992) have found that a key factor in the success of these schools is the presence of a skilled principal who creates a sense of shared mission around improving teaching and learning and delegates authority to educators who have the trust and support they need to get the job done. Meanwhile, research shows that schools which have raised student achievement in spite of students’ socioeconomic backgrounds almost invariably do so with the guidance of an effective leader (Keller, 2000).

DuFour and Berkey (1995) state that school districts devote the greatest portion of their expenditures to personnel, therefore, it makes sense that the development of this human resource must be at the very heart of any improvement effort. Boyer (in Sparks, 1984) observed:

When you talk about school improvement, you are talking about people improvement. That’s the only way to improve schools unless you mean painting the buildings and fixing the floors. But that’s not the school, that’s the shell. The school is people, so when we talk about excellence or improvement or progress, we’re really talking about the people who make up the building. (p. 9)
Focusing on people is the most effective way to change any organization. In fact, it can be argued that organizations do not change, individuals change (DuFour and Berkey, 1995). It is only when enough of the people within an organization change that the organization can be transformed (Fullan, 1993). If this premise that people are the key to school improvement is correct, then it follows that the fundamental role of the principal is to help create the conditions which enable a staff to develop so that the school can achieve its goals more effectively. A key to school improvement is the willingness and ability of principals to assume the role of staff developers who make it their mission to “alter the professional practices, beliefs and understandings of school personnel toward an articulated end” (Fielding and Schalock, 1985, p. 14).

**Principal as Staff Developer**

According to DeBruyn (1997) “a leader does not have the right to evaluate, criticize, judge or reprimand those being led until the leader has first fulfilled the function of instruction” (p. 192). In order for any type of school improvement to be realized, the leader must provide opportunities for evaluation of the teacher that first provide assistance in improving teacher practice and then in evaluating that practice.

The National Staff Development Council (2001) notes that effective principals who are good instructional leaders spend large amounts of time in classrooms, observing teaching and encouraging higher performance. They track student test score results and other indicators of student learning to help teachers focus attention where it is most needed. Equally important, instructional leaders focus much of their time on staff development, helping teachers assist all students in reaching high standards. Instructional leaders challenge staff members to examine traditional assumptions about teaching and
help provide opportunities for them to share information and work together to plan curriculum and instruction. (National Staff Development Council 2001)

California State University Professor Linda Lambert (1998) argues:

Leadership is about learning together, and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. It involves opportunities to surface and mediate perceptions, values, beliefs, information and assumptions through continuing conversations; to inquire about and generate ideas together; to seek to reflect upon and make sense of work in the light of shared beliefs and new information; and to create actions that grow out of these new understandings. Such is the core of leadership." (p. )

DuFour and Berkey (1995) see principals as leaders who promote organizational development by focusing on the professional growth of staff. Among their list of suggestions for principals, they believe that principals who hope to convince others to grow professionally must model their own commitment to professional development. Principals who pursue training opportunities, participate in study groups, forward articles to staff members and solicit their comments, make presentations at conferences, write articles for professional journals, and engage in action research at the school site are using their own behavior to communicate the importance of professional growth.

Additionally, DuFour and Berkey (1995) state that principals who serve as staff developers will utilize supervision models that enable them to provide one-on-one staff development. Although staff development is usually associated with group activities, principals must also seize opportunities to develop one teacher at a time. Good staff development procedures result in teachers reflecting about effective teaching practices.
At times this reflection can only occur in a systemic individualized staff development model.

An extensive study of schooling practices across the nation found that staff development programs are generally fragmented and unfocused with no clear priorities or in-depth attack on school problems (Goodlad, 1994). Programs are often based on a current trend rather than on a clear, compelling vision of the school’s future (Sparks, 1994). If professional growth initiatives are to be effective, principals must abandon the potpourri approach to staff development and support ongoing, purposeful learning until there is evidence that the learning is having the desired impact on the school (DuFour and Berkey, 1995).

Principals must be committed to continuous improvement. Schools can become learning organizations capable of significant change only if those within them recognize that school improvement is a complex, ongoing process rather than a task to be completed (DuFour and Berkey, 1995). The successful organizations of the twenty-first century will be learning organizations that build continuous learning into jobs at all levels (Drucker, 1992). Schools have traditionally looked to external sources in attempting to promote learning for staff. School personnel must begin to think of professional growth, not in terms of workshops, but in terms of their workplace. Principals who hope to promote such an environment in their schools will embrace their role as staff developers (DuFour and Berkey, 1995).

**Current Trends in Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development**

When students work with adults who continue to view themselves as learners, who ask questions with which they themselves still grapple, who
are willing and able to alter both content and practice in the pursuit of meaning, and who treat students and their endeavors as works in progress, not finished products, students are more likely to demonstrate these characteristics themselves. (Brooks and Brooks, 1993, p.9)

There is a potential impact on instruction and therefore on the supervision of instruction due to contemporary theories on learning and teaching in the literature. Nolan and Francis (1992) propose that there are five fundamental beliefs that capture the traditional view of the learning-teaching process. These can be stated as “1) learning is the process of accumulating bits of information and isolated skills, 2) the teacher’s primary responsibility is to transfer his knowledge directly to students, 3) changing student behavior is the teacher’s primary goal, 4) the process of learning and teaching focuses primarily on the interactions between the teacher and individual students, and 5) thinking and learning skills are viewed as transferable across all content areas” (p. 45-46).

These beliefs result in a teacher-centered conception of teaching and supervision in which the teacher’s observable behavior during instruction, occupies the focus of evaluation. The supervisor works one-on-one with each teacher in a two-step process. The first step involves the supervisor using paper-and-pencil observation instruments to carefully capture and document the teacher’s observable behavior during instruction. The second step allows the supervisor and teacher to come together in a conference designed primarily to relate the teacher’s observable behavior to both individual student behavior and to research findings on generalizable teaching behaviors that seem to be effective in promoting student learning (Nolan and Francis, 1992).
Constructivism and the Evaluation of Teaching

Since the 1980s there has been a paradigm shift in educational practice. Some of this evolution is due to relatively new theories of learning. However, others are based on theories of learning that have existed since the early part of the twentieth century, but until recently have had little impact on practice. This current paradigm of learning and teaching is founded on the theories of Dewey and Piaget. Dewey (1938) urged that education be viewed as a process of living and not a preparation for future living. Piaget’s (1930) research led him to conclude that the growth of knowledge is the result of individual constructions made by the learner. Learners construct meaning by taking new information, relating it to their prior knowledge, and then putting their new understandings to use in reasoning and problem solving. In this process, each person is continuously checking new information against old rules, revising the old rules when discrepancies appear and reaching new understandings or constructions of reality (Brooks, 1993).

This paradigm shift on learning and teaching has serious implications for the forms of supervision that set teachers as passive individuals in the supervision process. Teachers are learners who are constantly re-educating themselves (Putnam, 1990). Before teachers gain control over complex teaching models, they must be allowed at least thirty to forty hours of study, practice and feedback. Teachers must be viewed as generators of knowledge on teaching and learning. When driven by this paradigm shift on teaching and learning, supervision becomes a vehicle for inquiry and experimentation. The primary purpose for supervision becomes the improvement of teaching and learning.
by helping teachers acquire a deeper understanding of the learning-teaching process” (Nolan and Francis, 1992, p.52).

**Supervisory Practices**

Sergiovanni (1992) described a vision for supervision as “a day when supervision will no longer be needed” (p. 203). He believes when current methods of supervision are forced upon teachers, the results can typically be counterproductive. Supervision according to Sergiovanni can lead to improved practice, academically and developmentally sound learning experiences for students and ultimately improved schools. He believes that all of these benefits can be more easily obtained in the natural events of teachers and students learning together in schools. “Supervision, in other words, can just as easily come from the inside as the outside” (p. 204).

Cogan (1973) was one of the originators of clinical supervision. In his model, supervision, grounded in the traditional beliefs of learning, saw the teacher merely as the adopter of practices that had been shown as effective through the work of researchers and developers. However, Garman (1986) indicated that clinical supervisors must engage teachers in self-supervision through reflection and knowledge generation. It is only when teachers are allowed to generate their own knowledge about teaching and learning that they will benefit and instruction will improve.

The supervisor’s role will inevitably change when teachers are viewed as constructors of knowledge. The supervisor cannot take on the role of critic. Instead the supervisor assumes the role of co-creator of knowledge about teaching and learning. In this venue, the teacher is more receptive to grant the supervisor access to the core issues of teaching. Because the supervisor has abandoned the role of critic, the teacher does not
fear critique from a supervisor. Rather, the teacher is a partner in the construction of
knowledge necessary for effective teaching methods. (Nolan and Frances, 1992).

The traditional view of learning as observable behavior led to the use of paper and
pencil observation instruments as the primary and often sole vehicle for gathering data in
supervision. When learning is viewed as an active process of knowledge construction by
the learner, student cognition becomes the critical element in the learning process (Nolan
and Francis, 1992). Learning is then viewed as a collaborative process between teacher
and learner. In this respect, data collection must go beyond the paper-and-pencil
techniques. Data collection techniques would include videotapes, student products,
student interviews and written student feedback.

Garmon (1986) explains that a lesson generally means an episodic event taken out
of context within a larger unit of study. The unfolding lesson should be viewed as a
major concept in clinical supervision. Garmon (1986) believes there must be ways to
capture how a teacher unfolds the content of a particular unit of study and how students,
over time, encounter the content. When the teacher becomes a collaborator in the process
of supervision, and multiple data collection techniques are used, the supervisor need not
be present for every period of instruction which takes place during the data collection.
The teacher can assume the primary responsibility for gathering the data. This data
would allow that the larger unit of study could be analyzed by supervisor and teacher.
Then together, teacher and supervisor can discuss the implications of the data and its
effect on teacher performance (Nolan and Francis, 1992).
Collaborative Supervision

When the supervisor is viewed as a collaborator, his/her primary task is to assist teachers to reflect upon and learn about their own teaching through the process of data collection and interpretation of that data. With this view it becomes possible to use a very different process of supervision. This process then could include group supervision, peer coaching or colleague consultation. Students benefit when they are placed in groups and must cooperate with each other in the learning process.

Fullan (1990) indicated that linking collaboration to norms of continuous improvement is a necessity. “There is nothing particularly virtuous about collaboration per se. It can serve to block change or put students down as well as to elevate learning. Thus, collegiality must be linked to norms of continuous improvement and experimentation in which teachers are constantly seeking and assessing potentially better practices inside and outside their own school” (p. 15).

Nolan and Francis (1992) hypothesize that “if supervision were carried out as a group process in which the supervisors and teachers were interdependent in achieving group and individual goals, the process of supervision would become more effective in helping teachers learn about and improve their teaching practice” (p.58).

Policy Reform

Throughout the decades, teachers have had few opportunities in this country for ongoing learning. Other nations, however, have taken seriously the task of building a knowledgeable, expert teaching force. Nations like Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Japan provide more extensive preparation and carefully structured internships for teachers, greater subsidies for training, higher salaries, and much more
time during the day for professional learning, working with colleagues and meetings with parents and students (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1995). They invest primarily in building the expertise of teachers who take on broader decision-making responsibilities, rather than in administrative structures to direct and augment the work of teachers. By investing directly in teachers and their knowledge, these countries rarely experience the recurring shortages or dramatically uneven teaching quality experienced in the United States. They spend their educational resources on the core functions of schools: well-trained teachers who have personalized connections to students and continuous opportunities for improving their work (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

The literature indicates that there have been many policy changes in education that can be useful in a reform undertaking such as charters, choice plans and curriculum changes. Yet every reform strategy is constrained or supported by the availability of talented teachers, by the knowledge those teachers possess and by the ways their abilities are used (Darling-Hammond, 1997). In the 1980s a wave of reports, in particular the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy’s (1986) A Nation Prepared, the National Governors’ Association’s (1986) Time for Results, and the Holmes Group’s (1986) Tomorrow’s Teachers, drew attention to teaching and the need for much greater teacher knowledge. These reports emphasized the need for such structural changes in teaching as increased intellectual rigor in teacher education programs, professionalized teacher working conditions, new versions of differentiated staffing and career structures for teachers, and the empowerment of lead teachers to guide school restructuring.

Most state policy makers, however, did not embrace the proposals of these reports for addressing teaching concerns. During the 1980s, most states enacted changes in
teacher preparation, certification, and compensation that regulated admission to teacher education, changed course requirements for initial licensing and state program, approval and imposed tests for a continuing license (Darling-Hammond and Berry, 1988). However, these initiatives tightened rather than transformed existing approaches to preparing and licensing by requiring more courses and tests that were based on extremely limited views of teaching practice. More recently, the profession has begun to engage in serious standard setting that reflects a growing knowledge base about what teachers should know and should be able to do in order to help all students learn (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was established in 1987 to certify accomplished veteran teachers through standards and assessments that respect the complex demands of teaching as well as its intellectual quality. The board’s assessments are the first teacher examinations in the United States developed by members of the profession rather than by government agencies or commercial testing firms. Additionally, the board 1) assesses teaching directly through videotapes, artifacts, and commentaries about teaching; 2) captures the complexity of teaching decisions as they are grounded in knowledge of students, knowledge of subjects and knowledge of research and professional practice; and 3) examines the relationship between teaching and student learning (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

The work of more than 30 states and major professional organizations involved in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) offers the prospect that these initiatives will affect all teachers. This consortium has established a set of model standards for beginning teacher licensing that are based on the NBPTS’s
standards (Interstate National Teaching Assessment and Support Consortium, 1992). The efforts of the NBPTS and the INTASC coincide with the efforts of the Holmes Group, which is composed of more than 100 major research universities committed to reforming teacher education and the teaching profession. The Holmes Group's second report *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990) created the principles of professional development school (PDS), partnerships between schools and universities. The focus of the PDS is on the professional preparation of novice and veteran teachers, school-based theory melding theory and practice, and the improvement of teaching. In addition, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education began implementing a more rigorous system of accreditation for professional schools of education in 1988, and it incorporated the INTASC standards into its requirements in 1995 (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

Darling-Hammond (1997) indicates that to transfer the isolated projects to a renewed educational future, these initiatives must be supported by a teacher development system. She claims that a coherent set of policies must be developed which are linked to educational goals. This then would allow schools to provide development activities which invest rationally and systematically in a career-long continuum of powerful learning and productive teaching conditions for teachers. Darling-Hammond concludes that if major changes are to occur in learning possibilities, then policies must begin to focus systemically and intensely on the improvement of teaching.

*The Teacher Portfolio*

Portfolios are history in the making. They are fluid, even though they can freeze a moment and make it look as if it has a clear beginning and end. They are museums of our work and thinking — displaying our successes,
experiments, and dreams. Portfolios are mirrors, albeit distorted, of an evolving reality. They tell us what we want to see and what we wish we would not see. In addition to a looking glass into the self, portfolios are a professional looking glass. (Martin-Kniep, 1999, p. 3)

A development in the school reform movement has been the use of alternative forms of assessment to evaluate student learning. One of the emerging forms of authentic assessment is the use of portfolios. The point of the portfolio (electronic or paper) is to provide a “richer picture” of an individual’s abilities. Portfolios are being developed at all phases of education, beginning in early childhood, through kindergarten to grade 12 and higher education, and on to professional teaching portfolios. Martin-Kniep (1999) notes that teacher portfolios are being developed in various contexts including inservice programs, collegial circles, or as part of an evaluation/supervision system. She states that these portfolios can be developed in a formal and directed manner whereby the developer is directed as to what to include and annotate. The portfolio can also be developed in a self-directed and informal manner with the developer identifying the type of artifacts that ought to be included. Teachers can develop portfolios to document their own learning in the areas of curriculum, planning, instruction and assessment (Martin-Kniep, 1999).

Painter (2001) writes, “if teachers want to be involved in their own development and supervision, they must take ownership of the evaluation process. The best avenue for teachers to engage in such practice is the teaching portfolio” (p.31). The portfolio becomes a portrait of the teacher’s practice and knowledge based upon philosophy and standards. This picture of the teacher is further enhanced with the artifacts that the teacher has thoughtfully chosen and his reflections upon these artifacts.
According to co-directors William Roberson and Christine Reimers (2001) of the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning at the University of Texas at El Paso, for those who value good teaching, portfolios offer a means to promote better teaching and to document teaching achievement. Portfolios in education are considered useful because they are performance-based and can reflect the context in which teaching occurs (Wolf, 1991). Shulman (1992) described a teacher portfolio as a structured set of accomplishments substantiated by samples of students' work. A portfolio is a purposeful collection of selected materials by and/or about the teacher that can be used for both formative and summative evaluation (Wheeler, 1993). At the website of the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning (2001), the following definition of the uses of teacher portfolios is offered:

Portfolios can be multi-purposed. Along one dimension, they can address an administrative need to summarize one's teaching contribution in a teaching institution; a form of summative evaluation. Along another axis, one can use the assembly or development of a portfolio as an occasion for self-reflection and growth: a formative evaluation. In teaching, as in research, we may profit from blurring the distinction, or seeing the two as complementary, not antithetical.

Teacher Portfolio Design

Wheeler (1993) indicates that one of the primary decisions to be made concerning portfolios is that of purpose. A teacher can use his portfolio for professional development, reflection and self-evaluation. When used for formative evaluation a portfolio is a working portfolio. For summative evaluation, the portfolio is referred to as a presentation portfolio.
While the experts suggest that the design of the teacher portfolio is critical to its success (Wolf, 1991; Wheeler, 1993), little empirical research details teacher portfolio development. Many experts offer opinions, however. Roberson and Reimers (2001) write that the teacher's own statement of educational philosophy should be the central standard for the starting point of the portfolio. Beyond this, teaching practice should reflect teaching philosophy. There should be valid and definitive evidence of this philosophy in teaching practice available through the portfolio.

Danielson (1996) believes that an effective means to enhance professional practice, which will lead to professional growth, is the utilization of the teacher portfolio. She believes that a teacher's portfolio can serve many purposes. The portfolio can provide an opportunity for self-reflection and analysis. When a teacher makes a decision to include one teaching unit over another, she is reflecting on which instructional practices are most effective. A portfolio will support mentoring and coaching relationships. Reviewing a collection of artifacts in the portfolio will allow greater discussion of instructional techniques and practices. When the teacher is allowed leverage in determining what will be evaluated, the evaluation process will be more meaningful and thus will enhance instruction. Additionally, when a teacher wants to move to a more professionally rewarding or more challenging position, the teacher must document excellence. Supporting an application with evidence of work with students and colleagues in a teacher portfolio can supplement the interview process.

The design of the portfolio that is recommended by Danielson (1996) is meant to document the framework for professional practice. The entries into a teacher portfolio in terms of the Danielson's (1996) framework illuminate a teacher's professional skills. She
recommends inclusion of a three-week unit plan. Traditional evaluation involves the observation of a single lesson plan. This does not allow the observer to view how the content is being developed fully. Therefore, the inclusion of a brief, single page that notes the topic and how students will engage in that topic allows an evaluator a more complete view of instructional practice. A comprehensive instructional plan for a single lesson plan in the unit that offers samples of assessment procedures is included as well. To further enhance the evaluator’s perception of the teacher’s skills, a videotape of a lesson could also be included in the teacher portfolio.

Danielson (1996) maintains that there are artifacts necessary for the portfolio that extend the evaluator’s understanding of teacher practice. These include samples of in-class or homework assignments and samples of student work. These artifacts demonstrate a teacher’s skill in engaging students and the extent of student engagement. Since the teacher portfolio is a means for self-reflection, a reflection sheet should be included which allows the teacher an opportunity to reflect upon a particular lesson to insure that instructional goals were met. These reflections are more substantive when they are associated either with a videotape or instructional artifact. Since the practice of teaching also includes contacts with publics other than students, artifacts in the teacher portfolio should include logs of family contacts, participation in school and professional projects, and evidence of professional development. The teacher portfolio can also provide the teacher with a vehicle for action research. Teachers question issues such as the effectiveness of instructional methods, materials and learning activities. By utilizing a research log that can be included in the portfolio, a structure for answering these questions and conducting action research is provided.
Doolittle (1994) agrees that what is included in a teacher portfolio is incumbent upon its defined purpose. He believes that a portfolio may include some or all of these: teacher background, class schedules and responsibilities, written examinations (National Teacher’s Exam, State licensure tests), personal teaching philosophy, goals, documentation of professional development, implemented lesson plans, handouts and notes, graded assessments, videotape of classroom lessons, written reflections, photographs, and colleague observation records. He defines a portfolio as a document created by the teacher that reveals, relates and describes the teacher’s duties, expertise and growth in teaching. Further, he states that each assertion in the portfolio must then be documented in an appendix or a reference to outside material, such as videotapes.

Martin-Kniep (1999) believes that teacher portfolios can assume different forms and contain varied artifacts. Some may resemble journals that contain reflections about teachers’ thinking and work. However, teacher portfolios extend beyond journals as they also include the objects that frame the teachers’ reflections. These objects include lesson plans, assessment measures, videos of classroom lessons or of students’ performances and samples of student work.

In her work at the Center for Expertise in Teaching and Learning in Sea Cliff, New York, Giselle Martin-Kniep (1999) has developed a taxonomy of portfolios centered around four different areas of specialization: teacher-as-learner, teacher-as-researcher, teacher-as-curriculum-and-assessment-developer, and teacher-as-professional-developer. She promotes that each of these areas warrants a different form of portfolio. These four areas are not mutually exclusive, and educators will be involved in activities that connect one area with another. She believes, however, that teachers will devote most of their time
to fully developing one area. She is convinced that as teachers gain considerable experience, they will merge different portfolios or produce more than one portfolio.

*Examples of Portfolio Development*

Giselle Martin-Kniep (1999) details three separate experiences of portfolio development that have aided in her understanding of portfolios. The first, the Hudson Valley Portfolio Assessment Project (HVPAP) was a regional initiative led by seven Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) in New York from 1993 to 1996. It included 100 teachers from 50 school districts whose goals were to 1) develop and implement alternative student assessments, including student portfolios, performance and authentic assessments, and process assessments, 2) identify regional K-12 standards and exemplars in literacy and communication, and 3) facilitate the learning of teachers in their districts. Each year during the three years, the teachers developed and shared a portfolio of their work. Teachers were given a checklist to help them compile and monitor their portfolio assessment work. The checklist was compiled based upon the components of the educational programs that teachers used, the literature on assessment and consultation with the experts on curriculum and assessment. The checklist had its merits and shortcomings. It articulated specifically the portfolio inclusions and criteria which would be used to assess these. However, the teachers did not have ownership of this checklist and as a result, they had great difficulty packaging their learning according to the checklist.

The second portfolio experience of Martin-Kniep (1999) was the Hendrick Hudson School District Portfolio Initiative. Administrative staff from the school district itself launched this initiative after members of the teaching and administrative staff
participated in the Hudson Valley Portfolio Assessment Project. In this project from 1996 to 1999, faculty members designed classroom portfolios. Additionally, the faculty members also developed a portfolio of their own. The portfolio guidelines and criteria for its development emerged from several brainstorming sessions with participating faculty. In the Hendrick Hudson initiative, exemplars were shared with teachers, who, in turn, used these exemplars and their own insights to develop the criteria for assessing their work. The rubric they generated articulated these criteria and differentiated among portfolios at different stages of development. It also provided the teachers with the ability to personalize the development of their portfolios.

The final example is current having begun in 1994. It is the Hilton School District's (Martin-Kniep, 1999) initiative known as CLASSIC (Curriculum Learning Assessment Initiative for Children). The four major goals of this endeavor include 1) develop and use appropriate and authentic assessment, 2) increase reflective practice among teachers, 3) develop integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum and 4) align curriculum to district and state standards. CLASSIC works with staggered cohorts of teachers for three years in the areas of exit outcomes, curriculum design and integration, and assessment design. Each member of the cohort produces a portfolio at the conclusion of the second year and refines it in the third year. In CLASSIC, teachers involved in the first cohort developed a scoring rubric to guide the development of their professional collections by examining and adapting rubrics and checklists developed by other initiatives. Because every cohort refines it, the rubric is a work in process.

According to Martin-Kniep (1999), "the different portfolio structures and guidelines presented underscore that there isn't a single best way to construct a portfolio."
Rather, professional portfolios, like student portfolios, are highly contextualized and need
to be customized to the needs of both developers and readers" (p. 12).

Evaluation of Teacher Portfolios

While the aim of portfolios is to promote better teaching and document more
effectively teaching achievement, evaluating portfolios can be as much a challenge as
assembling them. Sheer bulk, poor organization, and lack of clear evaluation standards
(Lang and Bain, 1996) can potentially frustrate administrators, in particular. A teacher
portfolio is an educational tool, which is primarily used in two ways (Doolittle, 1994).
First, portfolios are used as a means of authentic assessment in evaluating the
effectiveness of a teacher for licensure and/or employment decisions. Second, teacher
portfolios are used to provide feedback to teachers so that they may improve their
teaching and level of professionalism.

The University of Colorado at Boulder, Marquette University and Murray State
University among others are currently utilizing the portfolio to make personnel decisions
(Doolittle, 1994). Many states and institutions are using the portfolio to supplement
traditional assessment measures. However, the use of the portfolio for decisions such as
certification and advancement is not common practice nor is it endorsed. The reasons
cited for caution included the subjectivity involved in evaluating portfolios, the viability
of content and construction of portfolios and the lack of consensus in what constitutes
effective teacher practice (Doolittle, 1994). Today preservice education programs have
mostly embraced the use of the teacher portfolio in order to increase self-reflection and to
measure teacher growth.
Doolittle (1994) believes that portfolios used to make personnel decisions come under a high level of scrutiny. Because of the importance of the consequences involved in using portfolios for personnel decisions, several concerns surface. One continuing area of concern regarding the evaluation of portfolios is the level of flexibility and subjectivity surrounding the development of a portfolio. Each portfolio is uniquely developed according to the individual. Although this is a positive aspect for professional development, it becomes a detriment when comparability between teachers is a necessity. In this instance the lack of standardization becomes a major concern.

According to Doolittle (1994), this lack of standardization in portfolio development can be addressed by requiring the addition of particular items in the portfolio. At the university level, included in these mandated items could be a statement of teaching responsibilities, a statement of teaching philosophies and methodologies, a description of efforts to improve one’s teaching, representative course syllabi and a summary of institutional instructor evaluations by students.

The second major concern of the evaluation of portfolios is the subjectivity of the evaluator. In some cases, in order to make the evaluation of portfolios as reliable and valid as possible, a Likert-type evaluation form of predetermined qualities based on the mandated items is used (Doolitte, 2000). Questions are grouped into categories and then weighted.

*Research in Teacher Portfolios*

Much of the research in teacher portfolio assessment has occurred at the university level in both faculty assessment (Robinson, 1993; Murray, 1994) and preservice teacher education (Shulman, 1992; Barton and Collins, 1993). The bulk of
empirical data has come from the Teacher Assessment Project (TAP) research conducted at Stanford University (Athaneses, 1993). The research is sparse in the area of K through 12 education. While the purpose of portfolio development varies across many different contexts, the purpose of improving teaching effectiveness remains the common link.

Research conducted at the University of Central Florida clearly revealed that professional portfolios are constructive instruments for authentic assessment for students and that this process has provided a substantive catalyst for faculty professional dialogue and development (Johnson, Kaplan, & Marsh, 1996). In 1992, the College of Education began the process of an external program review and the role of this committee became one of documenting congruence between the Conceptual Framework and the College of Education programs. Simultaneously, the Teacher Education Committee recommended to the Dean of the College of Education that a portfolio assessment instrument, based on the College Conceptual Framework, should be an application requirement for their Internships I and II.

The study conducted at the University of Central Florida was an ongoing single case study of the implementation of an innovation, the teacher portfolio. The data collection methods were designed to illuminate the factors affecting the implementation of teacher portfolios and the impact of their implementation on faculty and program. Data sources included formal and informal interviews, surveys, documents, and field observations. The study began during the Fall semester of 1994 and continues as new data and insights are collected.

This research clearly reveals that portfolios are constructive instruments for instructional improvement and authentic assessment. Because portfolios contain a broad
repertoire of performances over time, they can paint a rich, developmental view of
teaching and learning. In addition, the research also uncovered that the review of the
portfolios provides a panoramic view of the teacher education program from which it was
derived, as well as a forum for discussion among faculty. The portfolio review process
fosters professional development of faculty and served as a catalyst for substantive
analysis of teaching philosophy, methods, and goals.

Johnson, Kaplan and Marsh (1996) construct the following conclusions from their research:

Teachers for the 21st century must have unique professional knowledge, personal
qualities and attitudes and effective instructional strategies. Furthermore, they
must leave their professional education with the skills of self-renewal, reflective
practice, and habits of the mind that will assure that they will continue to grow
and learn as their career progresses. While the College of Education Conceptual
Model provides a perspective and direction for students in the College of
Education, it is clear that implementation of these concepts may not be uniform
and consistent. The professional teaching portfolio assessment development has
become a tool to rethink existing epistemology, to conceptually align programs,
and to assess these efforts. In a deeper sense, it is providing fertile ground for
learning about how the need for continuous change is juxtaposed with a
continuously conservative system.

Another study conducted by the Western Australian Education Department
(Wildy and Wallace, 1998) brings together the notions of teacher professionalism and the
portfolio culture in the context of a system-wide program for the professional
development of school leaders. This study explores the use of portfolios as a vehicle for assisting school leaders to improve school performance through the development of accountability relationships. Specifically, the study examines the effectiveness of portfolios as a means of helping school leaders to understand their own accountability relationships and to account for their practice to their peers.

This study involved the 73 school leaders, principals, deputy principals, and department heads, who were participants in three courses. Of these all but five participants compiled a portfolio. Participants completed written surveys at the time of the final presentation of portfolios in small collegiate groups. Analysis of the survey data revealed that leaders had four broadly distinct perceptions of how the portfolio could be used: as evidence of improvement, as organizer, as record of achievement, as collection of work samples.

Wildy and Wallace (1998) concluded from this study that the portfolio is a complex idea which is capable of being interpreted in many ways. The portfolio notion was both the vehicle and the content for the ideas about accountability promoted in the course. Participants were, at the same time, expected to be responsible for their own learning and accountable to their peers for their learning. The researchers state:

Portfolios in this study showed some evidence of leaders connecting theoretical notions of responsibility and accountability with their own practice. A small proportion of the portfolios showed a candid picture of what these leaders were learning. However, the portfolio is a human document and the variation in portfolio styles represented the range of approaches by participants. Ultimately, the effectiveness of the portfolio as a tool for learning and accountability requires
a balancing of the tensions between the real world in which leaders' work and the theoretical notions of the portfolio culture. The evidence from this study is that, despite significant cultural and logistical problems, the portfolio has considerable potential as a vehicle for developing the professional knowledge of school leaders (p. 138-139).

From 1986 to 1990, The Teacher Assessment Project (TAP) at the Stanford University School of Education, under the leadership of Lee Shulman, conducted major research studies that examined alternative methods of teacher assessment. The project was designed to provide guidelines for teacher assessment usable for national board certification. The researchers experimented with three varied methods of teacher performance-based assessment: assessment center exercises, portfolios, and simulations.

The TAP research revealed three findings. First, teachers can develop portfolios that reveal their actual teaching practices. Second, a critical component to teacher portfolio development was the inclusion of explanations and reflections. Finally, portfolio development by teachers encouraged them to become more reflective about their own instructional practices (Vavrus and Collins, 1991).

The TAP studies highlighted three important limitations in portfolio use. First, researchers found that it was difficult for evaluators to avoid bias in judging a portfolio if the portfolio itself, regardless of the contents, was attractive. Second, determination of exactly what to include in the portfolio was a concern. A third limitation was the issue of too much or too little structure or standardization. Limited standardization resulted in wide variability in the kinds and amounts of evidence. However, the researchers found rigid guidelines inhibited creativity (Vavrus and Collins, 1991).
Athaneses (1993) reported that the Teacher Assessment Project found teacher assessments influenced instruction. Through exit interviews, the TAP researcher found that most of the teachers who participated in the project reported growth in their teaching and thinking about teaching as a result of the year of portfolio documentation.

**Summary**

The literature review has discussed teacher supervision and evaluation and its evolution from a strictly summative process to the continued need for formative evaluation techniques. Evaluation systems have evolved to include a dual purpose. They can be summative for purposes of promotion, retention, or dismissal. But they must also be formative in order to encourage the professional growth of teachers. The literature indicates that these two purposes must merge into a process of authentic assessment. Experts elaborate on the weaknesses of teacher supervision practices that focus on the elements of effective instruction but do not address changing paradigms in educational theory.

As the literature on leadership explains the needs for grassroots approaches to evaluation, at the start of the 21st century, there is still a bureaucratic approach to supervision and evaluation. The creation and implementation of standards has moved from the local school and district to the state and federal bureaus. Leadership behaviors must recognize the value of the human resources in the institution. The literature reveals the necessity to create "learning organizations" where individuals can reach higher levels of thinking and expression. Studies of effective schools have underlined the importance of a skilled principal who invites shared decision-making and continually offers opportunities for authentic evaluation and continuous professional development.
Educational theory has shifted from a behaviorist view to a constructivist view with the emphasis on individuals constructing their own understandings. This paradigm shift has had great impact on systems of teacher evaluation and professional development. It is clear in the literature that in order for systems of evaluation and professional development to be effective, they must recognize teachers as co-designers of these systems.

Supervision and evaluation of teachers is only effective if there is a differentiated approach (Glatthorn, 1997) in order to address each individual's needs. New teachers and seasoned teachers may actually have the same needs for intensive development, yet other teachers may require options for their professional development. The research has indicated that teacher effectiveness impacts dramatically on student achievement. As a result, the necessity for continued professional development and opportunities for formative evaluation are vital for school reform and for student achievement.

An emerging form of authentic assessment is the use of portfolios. The development of a teacher portfolio is aligned with current theory on educational practice. Teachers are allowed to construct their own meanings from their experience by selecting and reflecting on artifacts they have chosen to indicate their growth in teacher practice.

There has been much written about teacher portfolio theory. However, there have been few empirical studies completed. Experts offer guidelines for development and evaluation as well as opinions on the effectiveness of the teacher portfolio as an evaluation tool. The common thread woven among the research and the rhetoric is the necessity for further study and additional empirical data.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

Qualitative research is typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants’ point of view. The qualitative approach is also referred to as the interpretative, constructivist, or postpositivist approach (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, p. 101)

This chapter describes procedures and methodology that were used in this study. The sections in this chapter address qualitative research, data collection and data analysis. The purpose of this study was to qualitatively assess the perceptions and acceptance of the Teacher Portfolio for formative teacher evaluation at one elementary school. An in-depth case study was conducted of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process including individual teachers who participated in the process, teachers who have not participated in the process, and the administrator who designed and implemented the process.

Due to the nature of the investigation, the qualitative case study design is the appropriate method for closely examining the needs of the individual with respect to evaluation. Case study is one research design that can be used to study a phenomenon systemically.

Qualitative Research

This study utilized a constructivist methodology that is unlike traditional evaluation paradigms that are characterized by measurement-oriented, description-oriented, and judgement-oriented approaches. Guba and Lincoln (1989) defined the
constructivist approach as an interpretive or hermeneutic paradigm shift in evaluation that:

Unites the evaluator and the stakeholder in an interaction that creates the product of the evaluation, utilizing a hermeneutic dialectic approach aimed at establishing that interaction and maintaining it within quality bounds. Moreover, the product of the evaluation is not, in sharp contrast to conventional methodology, a set of conclusions, recommendations, or value judgements, but rather an agenda for negotiation of those claims, concerns, and issues that have not been resolved in the hermeneutic dialectic exchanges. (p. 13)

Guba and Lincoln (1989) believe that the claims, concerns and issues of the stakeholder, together with whatever may be substantively implied by them, constitute the "stuff" of which their constructions are made.

Qualitative or naturalistic research is focused on discovery, insight and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied. Qualitative inquiry requires a data collection instrument sensitive to uncovering the underlying meanings when gathering and interpreting data. The human researcher is best suited to this task, rather than the use of some instrument. The methods that best serve the data collection of qualitative research are interviewing, observing and analyzing.

Merriam (1988) writes that a research design is similar to a blueprint for an architectural design. It is a plan for assembling, organizing and integrating information or data and its results into a specific end product or findings. Non-experimental research used in this design, is used when description and explanation are the desired outcomes rather than prediction based on cause and effect factors. There is no manipulation of the
subjects in qualitative case study research. The researcher is expected to take things as they are (McMillan and Schumacher, 1984, p. 26).

In descriptive case studies, it is not always possible to identify all the important variables ahead of time. These are expected to emerge as the research study progresses. Qualitative researchers build theory step by step from the examples and experiences collected in the interviews. The purpose of the interviews is to collect rich or “thick” data. Thick description is a term used by anthropologists to mean complete, literal description of an incident or entity being investigated. It can also mean interpreting the meaning or demographic and descriptive data in terms of social or cultural norms, deep-seated attitudes and values (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 119). Qualitative case study design is chosen for this type of research because researchers are interested in insight, discovery and interpretation, rather than hypothesis testing.

Guba and Lincoln (1981) believe characteristics of the qualitative case study are “thick” description, grounded, holistic and lifelike, conversation-style format, illuminating meaning, and building upon tacit knowledge. Stake (1981) describes the characteristics of the qualitative research case study as inductive, containing multiplicity of data, descriptive, specific and heuristic. Heuristic means that the case study can explain the reasons for a problem, the background of a situation, what happened and why. It can discuss and evaluate alternatives not chosen. It can explain why an innovation worked or failed to work. It can evaluate, summarize and conclude, enabling application to other situations. Inductive means that the case study uses inductive reasoning to come to generalizations and to discover new relationships or concepts and new understandings.
Qualitative research builds theories and concepts, rather than testing existing theory. Stake (1981) explains that knowledge from case study is different from other research in that it is more concrete (vivid and sensory), more contextual (rooted in experience), more developed by reader interpretation, and based more on reference populations determined by the reader (p. 35-36).

According to the literature, the qualitative research case study is concerned with process rather than outcomes or products. The questions usually discussed are how and why do things happen. These inquiries ask how people make sense of their lives, what they experience, how they interpret these experiences, how they structure their world are all questions for the case study researcher. The researcher is the primary instrument used for data collection and analysis. This human researcher is responsive and adaptive to the context, is sensitive to nonverbal cues, can process data instantly, can clarify and summarize as the research progresses, and is free to explore unusual or varying responses and the reasons why. Qualitative research is fieldwork that requires the researcher to become intimately involved and familiar with the case being studied.

The use of the qualitative case study was most appropriate for this particular research study because a bounded system was investigated, that being one school. The objective was to develop a better understanding of the dynamics of a particular program, the teacher portfolio for formative evaluation. This study employed the inductive and heuristic features of qualitative case study research. It was the intent of this research to offer a vivid, thick description of the investigation, as well as a holistic approach that explores and presents a multiplicity of data.
The researcher traveled to Texas to conduct a structured interview regarding the participants’ experiences with the teacher portfolio and other forms of evaluation. The interviews were conducted in person. All interviews were tape recorded for greater accuracy in reporting. Upon completion of the interviews, the researcher transcribed the recordings for analysis.

Data Collection

In a qualitative case study, the use of multiple methods of collecting data is called triangulation (Mathison, 1988). The objective of triangulation is the combination of different methods such as interviews, observations and physical evidence to strengthen the case study. “The rationale for this strategy of data collection is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies” (Denzin, 1970, p. 308). Using multiple methods of data collection makes case study research more effective. Because the purpose of gathering and analyzing data is to construct a “comprehensive holistic portrayal” of the social and cultural dimensions of a particular context, each case must be treated as a unique entity with its own particular meaning (Patton, 1980). This study relied on in-depth interviewing, observation in the setting, field notes and document review.

Setting of the Study

In searching for a population to study, the researcher contacted Dr. Robert Kealey, President of the Elementary Division of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in Washington, DC. As President of this national organization, Dr. Kealey has available to him information about the types of programs that are used
throughout the Catholic Schools of the nation. Dr. Kealey indicated that there was indeed a school with an administrator who had used and was currently using a Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program worthy of study.

The administrator of the school discussed the study with the researcher at the NCEA Annual Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Upon returning to the school, the administrator discussed the study with the prospective population. All agreed the study would be beneficial to the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program.

The setting for this study took place in an elementary school in Dallas, Texas. This is an elementary school for students in kindergarten through grade 8. Structured interviews were conducted in the school building after school closed for summer vacation. Interviewees returned on one specific date to meet with the interviewer to discuss the interview questions. The focus of the interview was based on the research questions posed in Chapter I.

Sample Population

The administrator of the school began a Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program in the 1995-1996 school year with teachers on different grade levels with at least five years of teaching experience who agreed to participate in this evaluation process. Each year since, different teachers have been selected and they have agreed to participate in the program. Some of the teachers who initially piloted the program are still employed at the school. Others who were involved in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program have since left the school.

For this study, interviewees consisted of 5 teachers currently employed by the school who have participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program. Four teachers
currently employed by the school who have not yet participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program were also interviewed. Additionally, one teacher who is no longer employed at the school but who had participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program participated in the interview. The school administrator was interviewed as the designer of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program. All participants in the interview voluntarily agreed to participate.

*Interview Instrument*

A structured interview regarding the participants’ experiences with the various components of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program was conducted in person. The researcher traveled to Texas for the purpose of the interviews. A tape recorder was used to record interviews for greater accuracy in reporting. The researcher then transcribed the recordings. The questions posed in Chapter 1 provided the direction and focus of the interviews.

A. Teacher Participants Interview Questions:

1. List all the strengths or positive aspects of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program.

2. List all the weaknesses or negative aspects of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program.

3. What changes that you have made in your own classroom can be traced to your participation in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program?

4. How does participation in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program foster collaboration with other teachers, schools, the community, etc.?
5. What do you perceive as the administrator’s role in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program?

6. How did the administrator participate in your Teacher Portfolio Evaluation?

7. Can the Teacher Portfolio accurately reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice?

8. Is the Teacher Portfolio useful in advancing professional growth?

9. Would you consider participating in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program again?

B. Administrator Interview Questions:

1. List the strengths or positive aspects of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program.

2. List the weaknesses or negative aspects of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program.

3. What changes in classroom instruction can be traced to participation by teachers in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program?

4. How has the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program encouraged collaboration with other teachers, schools, the community, etc?

5. What do you see as the role of the administrator in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program?

6. How did you, as the administrator, participate with teachers in their Teacher Portfolio Evaluations?

7. Can the Teacher Portfolio accurately reflect teachers’ knowledge and skill in teaching practice?

8. Is the Teacher Portfolio useful in advancing professional growth in the teachers?
9. Is the Teacher Portfolio process "worth" the effort on the parts of both the teacher and the administrator?

C. Non-participating Teacher Interview Questions:

1. Describe the format of the teacher evaluation program in which you most recently participated.
2. What do you perceive to be the advantages or positive aspects of this form of evaluation?
3. What do you perceive to be the weaknesses or negative aspects of this form of evaluation?
4. How would you rate your current teacher evaluation process?
5. In what ways does your current teacher evaluation process assist you with teaching practice?
6. What do you see as the role of the administrator in evaluating teachers?
7. Have you witnessed any classroom changes as a result of your evaluation process?
8. Are you familiar with the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process?
9. Do you perceive the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program as a tool that encourages professional growth among the teachers?
10. If you had the opportunity would you choose to participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Program?

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the researcher's process of systemically arranging and rearranging interview transcripts, field notes, and other documents to increase one's
understanding of the data and to present discoveries to others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). Strauss and Corbin (1990) note that analysis of the data represents the operations by which data are broken down, conceptualized and put back together in new ways. Data analysis is the final stage of listening to hear the meaning of what is said (Strauss, 1987).

Erlundson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) feel that when humans collect and analyze data it is done in an interactive process. It mirrors the way that humans solve their daily problems. As soon as data are collected, tentative meanings are applied to them. Then whenever new data are collected, the meanings are revised and restructured.

Patton (1980, p. 505) states that documentation is based on observation, which is an individual response to what is immediately observed and to the broader purposes of the research. This observation occurs at the primary level of seeing and recording information and at the secondary level of re-observing through a volume of records and documents. The usefulness of these observations to other researchers depends on the original documenter rendering them as finely as she is able, with as many points of correspondence to both the phenomena and the context of interpretation as possible. This then invites other perspectives.

The case report method surfaces as the preferred reporting mode utilized in a constructivist inquiry for evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). These researchers believe that a case report should not yield a series of evaluator conclusions and recommendations, but rather provide a framework for action. A case report offers the potential to provide in-depth descriptions, give vicarious experience and challenge constructions in ways that may lead to re-constructions. Thus the role of the evaluator evolves from investigator to learner to teacher. Guba and Lincoln (1989) emphasize that
“the evaluator cannot simply test certain a priori hypotheses or answer certain questions but must learn what the various stakeholders’ competing constructions are and teach them to all of the stakeholders” (p. 261).
CHAPTER IV
The Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process

Introduction
I was dissatisfied with the Diocesan forms for teacher evaluation. I wanted a true picture of what my teachers were doing. Teachers know fully all they do – the preparation for lessons, the modifications of instruction, lesson webbing and planning, all the extra time spent on working with students and their parents, all of the extra-curricular activities. The portfolio was meant to reflect all of these. (Administrator of school in Texas, 2001)

The school participating in this study is an elementary school for students in kindergarten through grade 8 with an enrollment of approximately 650 students. The school is located in Dallas, Texas. The current principal of the school was appointed in 1991. During this tenure as administrator, she was studying for her doctoral degree at The University of San Francisco. In a Personnel Leadership course, she became familiar with the Professional Teaching Portfolio as a tool for teacher evaluation. Concurrently, she was becoming dissatisfied with the process of teacher evaluation that she utilized. She began searching for alternatives for assessing the teaching staff of the school.

The Schools Office of the Diocese of Dallas requires its administrators to utilize the Diocesan Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Diocesan policy requires that each teacher in the Diocese of Dallas shall be evaluated on an annual basis. The evaluation form is a part of the process. In 1996, the administrator made a formal request to the Superintendent of Schools to utilize an alternative means of evaluating a select group of
teachers at the school. The proposal involved utilizing the Teacher Portfolio for evaluating those teachers.

The administrator wanted to uncover more in-depth revelations about the teachers. She was searching for a multi-faceted view of the teachers. She recognized that there is much more to instruction and learning than can be uncovered in classroom visitations and post-observation conferences. The administrator desired a process of evaluation that would lead to more self-reflection by the teachers. Additionally, she believed that if teachers created a portfolio, they would be much more comfortable utilizing alternative assessment methods for their students, including the student portfolio.

After review of the administrator’s proposal, the Superintendent of Schools granted permission to utilize the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for evaluation of teachers at the school. The Teacher Portfolio was to be used in lieu of the Diocesan Evaluation Instrument. This process of Teacher Portfolio Evaluation was begun in the 1996 – 1997 school year. It has been continued until 2000. It is currently under review again by the Schools Office of the Diocese of Dallas. The Superintendent of Schools will decide upon the continued utilization of the Teacher Portfolio for Teacher Evaluation.

*The Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process*

The administrator determined that only teachers who had been teaching for at least five years and had been at the school for at least three years would be eligible to participate in this Portfolio Evaluation process. The school has a staff of over 40 individuals. The administrator decided tochoose approximately six teachers to participate in this evaluation process each year. She believed that this process would be
very time-consuming and therefore decided to concentrate on a smaller population more intensely. Of the six teachers who were invited to participate, all accepted the invitation.

The six teachers who were to participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program signed an agreement formulated by the administrator that indicated their agreement to be evaluated by Portfolio in lieu of the Diocese of Dallas Teacher Evaluation Form. This was all completed prior to the new school year. At the beginning of the school year, the administrator met with the teachers as a group. At this time, she assigned each teacher a partner, an individual also going through the Portfolio Evaluation process. The partners were to have their own separate meetings throughout the year. Additionally, the partners were to visit one another’s classrooms during the year.

The administrator met informally with the six teachers individually throughout the year to assess the progress of the Portfolio and offer support. She also scheduled one formal meeting with each teacher involved in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process at the mid-point of the school year. Again, this meeting was to assess progress of the Portfolio and to offer necessary resources and support. Throughout the year, the administrator continued to informally visit the classrooms of the six teachers involved in the Portfolio process.

The teachers were informed that the completed Teaching Portfolio would be submitted on May 1 of that current school year to the administrator for her review and final evaluation. Once the Teaching Portfolios were submitted to, she reviewed each one thoroughly. After reviewing each one, she wrote a narrative evaluation of approximately two to three pages for each teacher who had participated in the Portfolio Evaluation process. This narrative included in-depth comments on presentation and organization,
content, and over-all evaluation. At the conclusion of the narrative, suggestions and recommendations were offered to further enhance the Portfolio and ultimately teaching practice.

The Teacher Portfolio

At the initial meeting she conducted with the teachers, the administrator offered suggestions and guidelines for the contents of the Portfolio. She expected each teacher to include her own philosophy of education, her own personal goals, summaries of inservices attended, and the objectives and action plan for achieving the school goals for the year. Certificates and awards, classroom photos of videotapes of lessons, student evaluations of lessons or the teacher (dependent upon the age of the students), correspondence to and from parents and/or students, reflections and self-evaluations of lessons, and any type of professional journal completed by the teacher were also recommended for inclusion in the portfolio.

The design of the portfolio was left open-ended. The administrator explained to the teachers that as they are distinct individuals, the design of their portfolios would all be distinctly different. The design, she felt was not as important as the reflective process necessary to compile this portfolio. One absolute guideline for the portfolio was that it must indicate evidence of learning on the part of the teacher. In some way, it must indicate a process of growth in teaching practice and skill. Additionally, the portfolio must clearly indicate that the philosophy and educational experiences of the teacher guide the teaching. As well, the connection to the stated curriculum must be clear. The self-evaluations should clearly indicate the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the teachers.
An Informal Survey on the Teaching Portfolio Evaluation Process

After completion of the Teaching Portfolio Evaluation process for the first year, the six teachers who had participated in the process were informally interviewed by the administrator. The questions she asked of these teachers were:

1. What is your opinion of portfolios as a means of evaluating teachers?
2. What do you see as the advantages of a teaching portfolio?
3. What do you see as the disadvantages of the teacher portfolio?
4. How helpful was the peer partnering in this process?
5. What would you change in this process you participated in and why?
6. What was the most beneficial aspect of completing the portfolio and why?
7. Would you recommend this form of evaluation on a yearly basis or every few years and why?
8. What advice would you give to someone who was to complete a portfolio for evaluation?
9. What advice would you give to an administrator who is going to use portfolios to evaluation teachers?

The teachers involved in this process believed that overall it was an extremely insightful experience. Overwhelmingly, the teachers responded that the process of completing a Teacher Portfolio for evaluation was extremely time-consuming. They enjoyed the peer partnering; however, it could have been more helpful if the partner was someone at the same grade level. Each teacher felt that as a part of the Teacher Portfolio process, the administrator should include regular observations with feedback. The teachers felt that this process would not be beneficial if completed annually.
Additionally, they did not believe that this process would be beneficial for every teacher. Inexperienced teachers in their estimation would not benefit from this process. As well, teachers in crisis would need more intensive support than what is offered through the Portfolio process. Each teacher stated that she would be willing to participate in this form of evaluation again.
CHAPTER V
Qualitative Data and Analysis

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for formative evaluation. A primary source of data resulted from structured interviews. This chapter presents the qualitative results of investigating the responses to interview questions of teachers and an administrator. Also included in this chapter is a review of the field notes on the documents examined, specifically the teacher portfolios.

The participants in this study are currently employed as teachers of the school. The one exception is a teacher who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, but is no longer a teacher at the school. That one teacher is currently teaching at another school. Six teachers who were interviewed participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process. Four interviewees have never participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process. Finally, the administrator of the school, who designed and implemented the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, was interviewed. Table 1 provides a graphic definition of the participants of this study.
Table 1

Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Participants</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Teachers who did not participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>C. Teachers currently employed at the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Teachers no longer employed at the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Administrator</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL INTERVIEWS</td>
<td>11</td>
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This discussion is guided by the research questions explored through the data gathering process:

1. Do teachers perceive the use of the teacher portfolio to have an effect on the overall quality of teacher evaluation?

Sub-questions related to the impact of teacher portfolios on the quality of teacher evaluation include:

a) Does the teacher portfolio have an impact on attitudes about teaching, teaching behaviors and strategies, and the understanding of the teaching-learning process?

b) Does the teacher portfolio clarify expected teaching standards and goals and can teacher portfolio “artifacts” and “evidence” be used as checkpoints in meeting those standards and goals?

c) Does the use of the teacher portfolio have an impact on teacher perception of the role of teacher evaluation?
2. Do teachers and administrators perceive teacher portfolios to accurately reflect teacher's knowledge and skill in teaching practice?

Sub-questions related to teacher portfolios and their accuracy include:

a) Can the teacher portfolio be used as an option in differentiated supervision?

b) Must a formal observation be used in combination with the teacher portfolio for summative evaluations?

c) Is there a certain group of teaching professionals, such as novice or master teachers, who benefit more from the development of teacher portfolios?

3. Is the teacher portfolio a useful tool for teachers and administrators?

Sub-questions related to the usefulness of the teacher portfolio include:

a) How difficult is the task of development of a teacher portfolio for the teacher?

b) How difficult is the task of reviewing teacher portfolios for the administrator?

c) Is the teacher portfolio useful in reflective teaching?

d) Is the portfolio process “worth” the effort on the parts of both the teacher and administrator?

The teachers participating in this study ranged in experience. There were beginning teachers with one year of experience. Additionally, there were seasoned veterans with more than 20 years of experience. The administrator has completed ten
years as the administrator of the school with a total of 18 years of administrative experience. She has been in education for 27 years.

Structured interviews were conducted in the summer of 2001 by the primary researcher. The administrator, having explained the research project to all of the teachers at the school, distributed the researcher's letter of invitation and Informed Consent Form. These volunteers did not have to be former participants in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program. Volunteers were also sought who had not participated in the Portfolio Evaluation process, but who had participated in the Diocese of Dallas Evaluation process or another form of teacher evaluation. From this initial request, a total of nine teachers offered to take part in the study. Another teacher, formerly employed at the school also wanted to be interviewed having participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process.

Interviews were conducted at the school after it had closed for summer vacation. Participants returned to the school for the day of the interview. Three participants were unable to return to the school on the scheduled date as they were away at that time. Those individuals were interviewed via phone. Four of the interviewees, who had participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, brought their portfolios to the interview so that the researcher might review them. One teacher, who was interviewed on the phone, sent her portfolio to the school on the interview date so that the researcher would be able to review it. During the administrator's interview, the researcher was allowed to review copies of the Diocese of Dallas Teacher Evaluation Instrument and the administrator's own Narrative Evaluations on the completed Teaching Portfolios. The average length of each interview was 40 minutes. The interviews were completed in a
one-week time frame. All interviews were tape-recorded. Following the completion of all interviews, the researcher transcribed the tapes for analysis.

**Data Preparation**

The initial steps of qualitative data analysis, as suggested by Maxwell (1996), begin with reviewing the interview transcripts. Analytic options include categorizing strategies such as thematic analysis. Utilizing this option, the data are sorted into broader themes and issues. The structured interview questions for the teachers and the administrator which appear in Chapter III were designed around themes in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the data. The themes that emerged from the literature and the study research questions guided the interviews. These three themes were quality, accuracy, and usefulness.

Tesch (1991) stated that the process of qualitative data analysis is eclectic therefore there is no right way. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest analysis of qualitative data to consist of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in notes or transcriptions. It is not something separate from analysis but part of analysis. Qualitative data can be reduced and transformed through selection, summary or paraphrase.

The interview data are presented in a reduced format. Summaries and paraphrasing have been used in analyzing the data presented through the interview process. Information has been gleaned from the teacher and administrator responses and summarized. Actual quotations from teachers and administrators, which appropriately support the summaries, are inserted in the text.
Data Analysis

Field Notes on Teacher Portfolio Documentation

The administrator who had designed the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process delineated her guidelines for the components of the Portfolio. According to her directives, the components to be included in the Portfolio were a philosophy of education, personal goals, summaries of in-services attended and the objectives and action plan for achieving the school goals for the year. The administrator made recommendations on artifacts that might also be included in the Portfolio. These artifacts included certificates, awards, classroom photos or videotapes of lessons, student evaluations of lessons and/or the teacher (dependent on the age of the students), correspondence to and from parents and/or students, reflections and self-evaluation of lessons, and any type of professional journal completed by the teacher. The administrator left the design of the Portfolio open-ended.

Five of the six teachers interviewed, who had participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation Process, presented their completed Portfolios to the researcher for review. These five Portfolios were uniquely different in design. All Portfolios were presented in binders, yet each bore a separate personality, much as each interviewee possesses a unique personality. The Portfolios were similar in content as was dictated by the guidelines presented by the administrator at the initiation of the process. Yet each Portfolio’s contents were arranged and highlighted in a uniquely personal manner. It was very apparent to the researcher upon reviewing the Portfolios that each teacher was concentrating on different facets of instruction and learning while completing the Portfolio.
One teacher focused on analyzing and reflecting on the different programs she had created to enhance the learning process in her classes. She included in her Portfolio artifacts that highlighted these programs. The Portfolio included photos, students’ work, parents’ notes, and her reflections on these special programs such as the “Reading Restaurant” she had created with her students. It was evident that she was self-evaluating the effectiveness of these special programs. The teacher related that after completing the Portfolio, and reviewing it with all its contents, she thought, “Okay, I actually do some good stuff! It was like a pat on the back for myself!”

Another teacher focused on the developmental growth of the children she taught during the year. Her Portfolio included photos of the children in her classes completing a variety of activities at different times throughout the year. It was abundantly clear that she was seeking evidence that the children were truly learning and growing under her tutelage. This teacher stated that a strength of the Portfolio was “if you need to see what the kids have done (throughout the year) it’s right there.”

Two teachers focused on student feedback as part of their reflective process in completing the Portfolio. For one teacher the writing of one of her students who explained his viewpoint on “Life in the Fourth Grade” was a focal point of the Portfolio. She also included student evaluations of her lessons. This teacher was evidently utilizing her students’ reflections to provide her with a different perspective in reflecting on her instructional methods. She commented that upon completion of her Portfolio, she looked at the many notes from students and realized, “I do not mean to brag, but I am competent. I am going out of my way in a lot of areas to make their (the students’) learning meaningful.” The other teacher also made a conscious effort to view herself
professionally from a different perspective. The focus of her Portfolio was the evaluations of her students on her lessons and on herself as instructor. She stated that the portfolio is “a beneficial way of evaluating because I saw what they (the students) thought about my teaching style.”

The fifth Portfolio reviewed by the researcher highlighted the teacher’s personal philosophy of education and how that philosophy guided her professional growth. The binder was full of artifacts of student work that reflected her philosophy. The teacher’s reflections included in the Portfolio all made reference to her philosophy. This teacher concentrated on her professional growth by including summaries of workshops she had attended. She included with the summaries, her practical applications of what she had learned. In reflecting on the Portfolio process, she commented:

When I got finished with it, I was so proud, you know. I had accomplished so much. It is something that I can hand onto my grandchildren and say this is what grandma did. That’s how I feel about it now. In fact when I heard that you were doing this, I got it out. I hadn’t looked at it in 3 years. And it started to make me cry (Teacher #3).

Amazingly to the researcher, not only did the Portfolios possess a different focus for each teacher, each Portfolio also reflected the personality of the teacher. The teachers who were very vivacious during the interview process presented a Portfolio full of bright colors and cheerful papers. For those teachers who possessed quiet reflective personalities, the Portfolios were created in softer tones with soothing papers. One reflective teacher began each section of her Portfolio with a quote on education printed
on paper that highlighted nature. Another teacher focusing on improving computer skills utilized various fonts, borders and clip art created with the computer.

Summary of Field Notes on Teacher Portfolio Documentation

Although specific guidelines can be communicated to teachers concerning the creation of a Teacher Portfolio, the individual needs and personalities of the teacher direct the development of the Portfolio. A review of the Portfolios indicated that the teachers experienced professional growth during the process. Yet each individual’s professional growth was governed by her own needs and therefore each Portfolio had a unique focus. The Portfolios become an anecdotal extension of the teacher and are reflections of their skill, practice and teaching style.

Structured Interviews

Theme #1: Quality

Research Question #1: Do teachers perceive the use of the teacher portfolio to have an effect on the overall quality of teacher evaluation?

Perceptions of Evaluation Processes

The data gathered from each interviewee who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process indicate that the portfolio allowed for introspection of teaching practice that was not available in other forms of evaluation. It was indicated that this was a strength of the Teacher Portfolio. Teacher participants indicated that they now had a vehicle for reflecting on their philosophy of education and their daily practice in light of that philosophy. One teacher when asked about the positive aspects of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process responded:
I think it (the teacher portfolio) makes you delve into yourself. You think about why you are doing what you are doing, your philosophy, why you have the room set up the way you do, why you do what you do. Also, (you think about) where you have come from that brought you to this point where you are at now. It was really a major experience for me (Teacher #3).

Another teacher responded similarly when asked about the value of the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for evaluation:

It's a piece of self-reflection. You can reflect on what you are doing well and what you need to continue. Even if there are some activities you'd like to discontinue, you realize that they have become a school tradition, so you know you are going to continue them because the children look forward to those activities each year. You wouldn't always realize that if you didn't see the pictures in the portfolio (Teacher #9).

The teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process indicated that this evaluation process was beneficial because it allows an evaluator a more in-depth view of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. One participant of the process in discussing the strength of the Teacher Portfolio for evaluation stated:

It (the Teacher Portfolio) gives you (the evaluator) a clearer outlook. You can see in picture form, in word form, everything you are doing. And maybe (you see) some areas that you need to work on and some activities that were great and some activities that didn’t work very well (Teacher #6).

A component of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process at the school allowed the teachers to include student evaluations of lessons and teaching practice. The teachers
who included student evaluations in their portfolios indicated a benefit from having
someone other than the administrator, in this instance the students, offering valuable
insights into the effectiveness of teaching practice. A teacher who had asked her students
to evaluate her lessons found:

What I did was I organized it (the Teacher Portfolio) by evaluating the units I
covered for that year. I would list my goals and my objectives and then I would
go back and reflect on how I thought the students reacted to these various units. I
then had the students evaluate me. I gave them an evaluation sheet and I felt that
was quite good too. I was able to see what they thought about my teaching style
and this led to beneficial changes in my instruction (Teacher #2).

In discussing the positive aspects of the Teacher Portfolio, the administrator stated
that:

the biggest benefit is the thinking, the conscious effort that they (the teachers)
then have to put into what they’re doing. So they are not just doing things
because they did it 10 years ago and it worked. It leads to their examination of
what they’re doing, to that self-examination.

It is that self-examination that she believes leads teachers to self-improvement.

Clearly, as an administrator, she believes that each teacher is uniquely different with
different needs. In her estimation, it is the administrator’s responsibility to insure that
those needs are met by appropriate supervision techniques.

The administrator compared the experience of evaluating these teachers with the
use of the Teacher Portfolio and then returning to the Diocesan Evaluation Instrument.
She believed there was truly a palpable difference in these two forms of evaluation. She
felt that there was "a kind of let down". She experienced this "let down" because as she put it, "I saw so much of what they did through the portfolio". Accordingly, she felt she was missing something valuable when she returned to the observation and evaluation process.

She also believed that the Teacher Portfolio did impact teachers' perceptions of evaluation. On this point, she stated:

Teachers see the evaluation as a report card. I think that is how they view the diocesan evaluation because it includes a form of a grading scale. I believe they didn't view the Teacher Portfolio in the same way because not only did it not have any grading scale, it was all very positive. There were suggestions made as to how to improve. But I think they viewed the portfolio as a more positive experience and not so much as that report card.

The teachers, who did not participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, did participate in an evaluation process with the scheduling of a visit, an observation visit and a post-conference with a review of a formal evaluation instrument. Interestingly, the responses of these teachers support the fact that this form of evaluation does not foster self-reflection. Their perception is that an evaluator is necessary to list strengths and weaknesses and areas of improvement. Never having had the opportunity to participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, they did not make a connection between self-reflection and teacher evaluation.

When asked about the positive aspects of an evaluation that involved an observation and evaluation instrument, one teacher responded:
The thing I like about it as a teacher is that I feel like when you are in a classroom, you get a very narrow view of how you are doing. When somebody else walks in, she has a fresh look at what's going on. The observer is able to give you some feedback on some things you are possibly not going to notice (Teacher #4).

Yet every teacher who participated in a formal observation with an evaluation instrument, listed many weaknesses of this type of evaluation. They all believed that when an observer visits a class, he would not always get an accurate picture of what is happening in the classroom. The teachers are well prepared for this visit and as a result what an observer sees may not truly reflect the teacher's true teaching style. At times, the interaction with the children is very different than it might be on a regular basis. Another perception is that some teachers are very nervous during observation, so the observer in this case also cannot really get an accurate picture of the teaching ability of the teacher. In contrast, some teachers may simply be on their best behavior for the visit, making the situation contrived and difficult to evaluate. In a non-evaluative situation, the classroom might be run very differently.

When asked how she would rate her current evaluation process, one teacher commented:

I don't think it would be a perfect way to evaluate. I think that this type of formal visit, plus more informal visits would be better. It does have its pluses, but twice a year is not enough. It is really very fine, but it shouldn't be the sole way to evaluate (Teacher #5).
Another aspect of the observation and evaluation format that was found lacking was the fact that there was little time for processing the information offered during the post-conference. In her discussion of this weakness a teacher stated:

I personally do not like our evaluation, the diocesan, because, first of all, unless you have gone through the process once you have no idea what you are being judged on. Afterwards, it would be nice to, before you sign off on it, to think about what is there and reflect upon it. If a conference is scheduled for a half-hour, you really do not have the time to process everything. There is not enough time to disagree, to add anything or even to agree. You just go back to class and teach (Teacher #10).

Those teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process were asked to compare this form of evaluation with other types of evaluation. It is surprising that these teachers still value formal evaluative observations even though they perceive that the Teacher Portfolio can affect teaching practice to a greater magnitude. When they responded to the question, it was not always clear that they fully believed that formal observation was a better evaluation process. It appeared that their perceptions were based more on which process was familiar to them, thereby making it a more comfortable form of evaluation for them.

One teacher clearly stated that she would prefer the formal observation and evaluation instrument. She stated, “I still would prefer the 45 minute evaluation instead. Because, I mean, the portfolio does give a stranger an idea of what goes on, but the administrator needs to be in the classroom” (Teacher #8).
Summary of the Perceptions of Evaluation Processes

Teachers' perceptions of the value of the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for formative evaluation are guided by their participation in developing a Teacher Portfolio for evaluative purposes. Those teachers, who had created a Teacher Portfolio for the purposes of evaluation, clearly believe in its ability to provide a vehicle for self-reflection on practice that ultimately leads to professional growth. These individuals saw their own strengths and weaknesses and adapted teaching practice appropriately while they were creating their Teacher Portfolios. They took an active role in the evaluation of their own teaching practice. Their experience with this form of evaluation had been positive. They had led the evaluation in the direction that was best suited for them.

In contrast, those teachers who had not been involved in the process of developing a Teacher Portfolio for evaluation held the perception that evaluation of teaching practice must come from an observer who could analyze strengths and weaknesses. Their perception of evaluation is that it should be a passive activity on the part of the teacher. The observer/evaluator guides the process. Since they had never developed a Teacher Portfolio, these teachers did not perceive evaluation as a vehicle that could lead to self-reflection on teaching practice. They believed that evaluations would lead to growth, but only if an evaluator could lead them through the steps toward that growth.

Clearly, the administrator who had designed and implemented the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process views the process as an effective tool for formative evaluation. She believes that the Teacher Portfolio gives a more complete picture not only to the administrator, but more importantly to the teacher of her own teaching practice. As a result, the Teacher Portfolio will lead to the self-analysis of strengths and
weaknesses. Therefore, the teachers take ownership of the direction of their evaluation. Teachers can then decide the appropriate direction for improvement of their practice. Additionally, teachers' perceptions of evaluation are impacted by their completion of a Teacher Portfolio. They no longer perceive evaluation as a “report card” of their teaching practice.

A review of the data indicates that both administrators and teachers who have been involved in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process view it to have a great impact on the overall quality of teacher evaluation. Participation in the development of a professional portfolio is clearly a positive experience for both teachers and administrator. The teachers involved immediately connected to the value of a portfolio as a tool for formative evaluation.

These findings are important for school leadership. As administrators design and implement evaluation processes, it is important to focus on the professional growth of the teachers. Professional portfolios may be the evaluative tool that will provide that focus.

*Perceptions of the Impact of the Teacher Portfolio on Professional Growth*

When the teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process were asked their opinion on the ability of the portfolio to promote professional growth, the majority responded positively. However, one teacher who did not negate the ability of the portfolio to promote professional development, did not feel in its current format, it could be fully formative in nature. Another teacher commented that an electronic portfolio would create a greater benefit for professional development. However, this individual did state, “while you are doing your portfolio you are definitely advancing because you are thinking about and analyzing each piece you add” (Teacher #10).
The teachers who felt the Teacher Portfolio promoted professional development cited examples of their own growth as a result of having completed a portfolio. All of these teachers believed because they were constantly reflecting on their own skills and abilities, they were making continuous changes and improvements in instruction throughout the year.

One teacher stated multiple reasons for her belief that the Teacher Portfolio would promote professional growth:

Once I did the portfolio it more or less made me think about so many other areas that I could maybe change. I could see also that I was doing more professional reading than before. Certainly, I learned to use portfolios in my own class. I also think that at this stage the portfolio allowed me to feel good about my status as a teacher (Teacher #1).

The administrator indicated that she felt the Teacher Portfolio was a useful tool for “expanding teachers’ horizons”. She believed that by completing a Teacher Portfolio, teachers rely upon themselves for their professional growth rather than an outside evaluator who will provide a list of areas for improvement. She stated that if the portfolio were properly utilized the teacher “would discover her strengths and weaknesses, focus on some areas and work on improving her teaching.”

During the year that the teachers are completing the portfolio, the administrator encourages the teachers to make a greater effort to attend workshops or read professional journals aligned with what they are discovering about themselves and their teaching practice. She additionally encourages them to journal their discoveries on their readings
or attendance at workshops for inclusion in their portfolios. She believes this portion of the portfolio makes it highly effective for the teachers in promoting professional growth.

The teachers who had not participated in completing a Teacher Portfolio indicated that their evaluation did lead to changes in their teaching practice. However, none responded that this form of evaluation would lead them to grow in the profession. These teachers were asked, even though they had limited knowledge of portfolios, if they believed the Teacher Portfolio could be an instrument that would encourage the professional growth of teachers. One teacher was not familiar enough with the Teacher Portfolio to determine its value in the professional growth of teachers. Notably, however, three of the teachers felt that the portfolio could encourage professional development. Their reasoning was that the portfolio would provide greater feedback on overall teaching practice.

One of these teachers responded:

I can see where the Teacher Portfolio would be different. It would not just be for a specific lesson you are going to present. You would have more time for reflection on lessons. What was my purpose? What was the outcome? What were we actually doing? (Teacher #7).

**Summary of the Perceptions of Professional Growth**

A review of the data indicates that, overall, the perceptions of both teachers and the administrator align in the view that the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process can encourage professional development. The underlying reason for this belief is that the Teacher Portfolio encourages reflection on all aspects of teaching practice. There was a strong emphasis in the responses on the ability to take the time to appropriately reflect
upon teaching practice. This reflection leads to self-evaluation. Ultimately, it is this self-evaluation which leads to professional growth in the individual teacher. All interviewees believed that it was this self-analysis that would assist a teacher in her growth in the profession.

The data additionally indicates that the Teacher Portfolio assists teachers in uncovering their strengths and weaknesses. This allows them to guide their own evaluation. When teachers guide their own evaluations, the potential for professional growth greatly increases. Teachers can then provide for growth opportunities that are specific to their own particular needs.

_Theme #2: Accuracy_

Research Question #2: Do teachers and administrators perceive teacher portfolios to accurately reflect teacher’s knowledge and skills in teaching practice?

_Perceptions of Evaluation Accuracy_

When asked if the Teacher Portfolio could accurately reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice, the teachers who had completed portfolios offered responses that went in two distinct directions. 50% of these teachers stated that the Teacher Portfolio definitely reflected teacher’s knowledge and skill. While the other 50% stated that it could not accurately reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill.

The teachers who perceived that the Teacher Portfolio could reflect teacher’s knowledge and skill concurred that the Teacher Portfolio provides a complete overview of teaching practice. They believed that even frequent classroom observations would not provide the evaluator with a definitive idea of the educator’s total instruction during the course of the year. It would be administratively impossible, in their estimation, for an
evaluator to observe even one whole unit of instruction by one teacher in one content area, let alone, gain an in-depth knowledge of everything that is happening each day in each class throughout the year. The Teacher Portfolio allows for a deeper insight into the overall instruction of the teacher.

One teacher in discussing the value of the Teacher Portfolio in reflecting teaching practice and skill stated:

I think the Teacher Portfolio reflects a teacher’s skill even more so than the classroom observation. The principal may observe me on a day when the kids aren’t so great or I’m not so great or something really exciting is going on. The fact that she drops in from time to time is good, but if she comes in at the same time every day, or if I was teaching the same subject for each of her visits, she could not see the different things I do. She can’t obviously sit in our room for a whole day, and even if she does she still would not be able to see everything we do (Teacher #6).

The teachers who believed that the Teacher Portfolio could not accurately reflect teachers’ knowledge and practice indicated that this portfolio could be a deceiving instrument. One teacher who had showed the researcher her own portfolio stated, “I impressed you when you first looked at my portfolio. But, do you really know that I actually do what you see there” (Teacher #8). These teachers believed if the evaluator did not really know the instructors who were participating in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, it would be difficult for the evaluator to accurately assess their teaching ability. Another teacher stated, “You can put a lot of things on paper, but they might not necessarily reflect your teaching ability” (Teacher #9).
When questioned about the accuracy of the Teacher Portfolio in reflecting teachers' knowledge and skill, the administrator responded that she believed it truly gave an accurate picture. "In many ways, these are the true pictures, through the sample lessons included along with the teacher’s reflections on the lessons." She expanded on her perception:

I think you get so much more from the portfolio than you would get from one or two isolated instances of walking into a classroom. I think, really, that it is the portfolio along with what the principal gathers simply by walking around the building and being in the classrooms that contributes to fully understanding that teacher’s style and practice. I do think the portfolio gives a more complete picture, because you get additional input. You can get the teachers' reflections on the lessons and in some cases student evaluations of the lessons. So, you don’t normally get that in a classroom observation.

Interestingly, the teachers who were involved in the Diocesan Evaluation process perceived this form of evaluation as a good indicator of teacher’s knowledge and skill. Yet, all the comments of these teachers focused on the deficiencies in teachers’ knowledge and skill. Although, they did not perceive this as a negative, it is notable that not one interviewee mentioned positive feedback from the evaluation.

One teacher commented that on her last evaluation, she was encouraged to offer more positive feedback to the students. Another stated that the evaluation "helps me to eliminate unnecessary ‘things’" from instruction. Yet, a third teacher offered, “I am not always good at time constraints, so an evaluation reminds me or shakes me a little to
remember.” The final teacher stated that perhaps it would be pointed out that she “did not have closure in her instruction”.

Summary of the Perceptions of Evaluation Accuracy

An analysis of the data indicates that individual perceptions of the ability of the Teacher Portfolio to accurately portray teacher's skill and practice are distinctly different. On the one hand, interviewees believe that the Teacher Portfolio definitively provides an accurate picture of teaching knowledge and skill. In contrast, other interviewees believe that the Teacher Portfolio simply cannot provide a true picture of teaching knowledge and skill.

The underlying reason for these opposing views is the fact that the portfolio could be deceiving. A valid concern is that presentation and actual practice may not align. A magnificently created portfolio might not necessarily indicate a truly outstanding professional. Yet, the data indicate that the Teacher Portfolio does have the potential to accurately provide an in-depth view of the teacher and her teaching knowledge and skill. In order for the Teacher Portfolio to provide an accurate picture, all interviewees believe that the administrator must have an in-depth knowledge of the teacher as well through frequent visitations and observations.

It is noteworthy that as other educational themes and practices have evolved through the last one hundred years from the Scientific Management movement at the beginning of the last century, the data of this study indicate that the perceptions of these teachers concerning evaluation processes still embrace that philosophy. Clearly, these teachers are still comfortable with the top-down management style of an administrator/supervisor insuring that teachers utilize the most efficient and effective
educational methodology. Even after having participated in a program that encouraged self-evaluation and self-improvement, these educators perceived that the views of the observer are most valid in the evaluation process. While much of educational practice is moving toward the constructivist view of teaching and learning, the perceptions of evaluation still center on learning occurring from a “principal teacher” (Lovell & Wiles, 1983).

Perceptions of Differentiated Supervision

The data reveal interesting perspectives on the options for supervision of teachers. All the teachers interviewed as well as the administrator indicated in some fashion that the process for evaluating teachers through a Teacher Portfolio must define the participants clearly. In designing the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, the administrator set a guideline that only those teachers with at least five years of experience and at least three years at the school would be invited to participate in this evaluation process. The teachers who were interviewed commented that this process of creating a portfolio would be inappropriate for an inexperienced teacher. The administrator indicated that “it would really be a bit much to ask a new teacher to complete a portfolio, just coming in as a brand new teacher."

One teacher who had not participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation indicated that beginning teachers do not possess enough experience to truly reflect on their teaching practice. At that point, they still need a great deal of mentoring and observation to assist them in finding strengths and weaknesses. Reflecting on whether she would choose this form of evaluation she stated:
I think doing a portfolio would have been very overwhelming to me during my first year. I think that would have been very hard for me. I think it would have made me too nervous if I was expected to do that for my first year. I would rather the evaluation I was used to, just because it was a process I had already been through (Teacher #4).

Throughout all the interviews, respondents clearly indicated that they believed any process for evaluation of teachers must include frequent formal and informal observations by the evaluator. This was emphasized in the discussion on the Teacher Portfolio for evaluation. A strong advocate for evaluation through observation felt that only through observation would some teachers be prompted to make changes in their instruction. She commented: "There are some teachers who don’t keep abreast of anything. They don’t read articles. They need to be supervised and pushed to advance. Someone needs to make sure that they are doing their jobs" (Teacher #8).

Another teacher indicated that the Teacher Portfolio is more beneficial to younger teachers or for teachers who have made a change in the grade levels they teach:

A younger teacher would have a use for it (Teacher Portfolio), like to take it to an interview for a job. Having done a portfolio once, I see what I am doing and I know where I am going. I don’t think I need this kind of thing anymore. If I was going to change the grade I teach, then I think it would be a valuable thing to do (Teacher #6).

In discussing the true value of any evaluation process, one teacher put it most eloquently: "It is important that any form of evaluation helps the teacher to grow professionally and become a more effective teacher" (Teacher #4).
The administrator indicated that she would not consider using the Teacher Portfolio for summative evaluation. She would use the diocesan evaluation instrument in cases where the renewal of contract was in jeopardy. She believed teachers in crisis needed a very specific guideline to aid them in meeting the expectations of the evaluator. Additionally, diocesan policy mandates that particular documentation be kept on file concerning the non-renewal of contracts.

Summary of the Perceptions of Differentiated Supervision

It becomes clear when unraveling the data that the perceptions of differentiating evaluation are focused on teacher experience and performance. According to those interviewed, the perception is clear that the Teacher Portfolio would not apparently be an appropriate evaluation process for inexperienced teachers. The perceptions indicate that these teachers needed frequent observation and continuous guidance. Additionally, for purposes of summative evaluation, the Teacher Portfolio might not be the best choice for evaluation. Teachers in crisis need direct intervention with concrete feedback.

The perception of these interviewees is that the Teacher Portfolio alone does not offer a complete evaluation process. Rather, frequent formal and informal observations must be a part of the total evaluation process. The belief is that these observations would provide the evaluator with yet another piece of information on teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice.

Once again, the favoring view of these educators is that an administrator/supervisor would be better equipped to evaluate teachers if in fact the process involved frequent observations of the teachers. The perception of “principal
teacher” is so ingrained in the minds of these educators they do not perceive the professional portfolio as a vehicle for differentiated supervision.

**Theme # 3: Usefulness**

Research Question #3: Is the Teacher Portfolio a useful tool for teachers and administrators?

**Perceptions on the Development of a Teacher Portfolio**

The data are most conclusive concerning the perceptions on the development of the Teacher Portfolio. Each individual interviewed believed that the development of a Teacher Portfolio is extremely time-consuming and strenuous both on the part of the teacher and the administrator. Every teacher who had participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process indicated that a negative aspect of the Teacher Portfolio was the amount of time it took to complete the project.

In talking about the disadvantages of the portfolio, one teacher commented: “It was the worst all-year-round project. It was a lot of work. I hated it when I was doing it. I couldn’t take vacations. I worked during Christmas and all the holidays” (Teacher #6).

The teachers believed the Teacher Portfolio is time-consuming to complete because they are taking the time to reflect on each item that they choose to include. One teacher felt this process was extremely strenuous for her because her husband is a college professor who has his students complete professional portfolios. She humorously commented:

My biggest mistake was to come home and to tell him (my husband) that I had to complete a portfolio. I would work on my portfolio and then I’d go to bed and he would review it. The next day he’d say, ‘This isn’t good enough. Are you going
to put your maiden name on this or are you going to put my name on it?’ I’m really glad I went through all of that because it was much more intense, more in-depth than what I would have put together (Teacher #3).

Even those teachers who had not completed a Teacher Portfolio perceived its development to be very time-consuming. When these teachers were asked if they would consider participating in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process, all but one responded affirmatively. However, they expanded on their affirmative responses by stating that they were concerned about the amount of time it would take to complete the Teacher Portfolio adequately. They believed that it would be detrimental if the development of the Teacher Portfolio in some way detracted from their instructional preparation and planning. One teacher indicated that she would not be willing to participate in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process again. She responded: “My time is too valuable. As I spent two or three hours working on it, I set aside (student) work that had to be graded” (Teacher #9).

The administrator indicated during her interview that the insight she gained from her informal survey with the teachers after the first year of implementation was that the Teacher Portfolio was considered time-consuming and this detracted from its usefulness for the teachers. Her own perception of the Teacher Portfolio is that it is time-consuming on both the parts of the teachers and the administrator. As an administrator, she does not feel she could adequately evaluate more than six Teacher Portfolios during one school year. She believes an administrator must devote a substantial period of time for review of the portfolio. Then, the narrative evaluative report must be very thorough as well. A checklist or a rubric would simply not be sufficient for feedback on the Teacher Portfolio.
Summary of the Perceptions on the Development of a Teacher Portfolio

The perceptions on the development of a Teacher Portfolio are very clear concerning the time factor involved. All interviewees believed that the Teacher Portfolio is very time-consuming to complete and to evaluate. Accordingly, this is viewed as a disadvantage of the Teacher Portfolio. This perception is pervasive, as even the teachers who have not completed a Teacher Portfolio perceive that it would definitely be time-consuming.

Perceptions on the Value of the Teacher Portfolio

A review of the data indicates that the teachers perceive the Teacher Portfolio as an alternative tool for evaluation, however, the responses were not strongly affirming concerning the value of this form of evaluation. Due to the fact that the teachers kept comparing this process of evaluation to the observation visit with evaluation format, they perceived that frequent formal and informal observations would be sufficient.

The teachers who have participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process were asked if they would consider participating in this process again. Only 50% of the interviewees responded positively. Their positive responses reflected that they were proud of their accomplishment on the compilation of the portfolio. One of these teachers indicated that it would be easier to participate again since she has already done so once before. She commented: “Well, I’ve done it before, so I think it would be easier. I don’t think the portfolio should be completed every year, perhaps, every 5 years as a refresher” (Teacher #3).

The administrator clearly perceived the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process as well worth the effort. In her comments during the interview, she explained:
I think the fact that these teachers put the portfolio together three or even four years ago and they still retain it indicates that it is a valuable piece of information. One of the teachers said that whenever she gets it out she still gets teary-eyed over it. So obviously, it was a meaningful experience for them. I think that shows that the portfolio is effective.

She continued to explain that even though the completion of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process is time-consuming, she firmly believes that it is a very worthwhile and effective tool. She reiterated that the Teacher Portfolio develops self-reflection that ultimately leads to professional growth. In explaining her perception of the Teacher Portfolio as a valuable tool, she offered the following:

Perhaps it is because I am an introspective person. I believe the only way you improve is by looking at yourself and seeing where you stand. And I do that on a regular basis. But I know there are some people who wouldn’t do it unless they were made to reflect. Reflection, I feel, is the vehicle for growth. And despite the time, because it is very, very time-consuming, I think it is extremely worthwhile and I think that the products you see, although distinctly individual, indicate tremendous growth.

Summary of the Perceptions of the Value of the Teacher Portfolio

A review of the data once again indicates that the perception that the development of the Teacher Portfolio is a time-consuming process is so pervasive, that the teachers could not determine its absolute worth. It is interesting to note that all of the teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process indicated that it was a positive experience. At times, they were adamant that the whole process was extremely
beneficial in enhancing their teaching practice. Yet, only half of those teachers would consider participating in this form of evaluation again.

The data indicated throughout the interviews that the teachers along with the administrator perceive the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for self-reflection. All interviewees saw this as a necessity for improving and enhancing teaching practice. Clearly, all individuals saw great value in the development of a Teacher Portfolio. Yet, the responses of the interviewees did not indicate that they fully embrace this form of evaluation. At last one-half of the teachers indicated in their responses that they felt that observation and evaluation would be adequate for supervisory purposes.

According to the analysis of the data presented, it is apparent that as school leadership prepares evaluation processes, the views of the educators involved in these processes must be considered. It is evident from this small community of educators that in order to provide for differentiated supervision there must first be an opportunity for these educators to understand the entire process more fully. The development of policy involving evaluation processes must consider teachers’ beliefs and perceptions concerning evaluation. In order to provide meaningful and comprehensive evaluation processes, there may need to be a paradigm shift in the views held by the educators involved.

*Summary of Emerging Themes*

The chart that follows on the next page graphically indicates the themes which emerged from the interviews. Column A indicates the perceptions of the teachers who participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process. Column B indicates the perceptions of the teachers who had not participated in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation
process. Column C indicates the perceptions of the administrator who had designed and implemented the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process. This graphic interpretation clearly indicates the varying perceptions of the teacher portfolio as a valid option for formative evaluation.
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<td><strong>Theme #1: Quality</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1a) Teaching Skill</td>
<td>Portfolios allow the teacher to assess her own strengths and weaknesses and address each.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1b) Professional Growth</td>
<td>Portfolios can encourage professional development through self-reflection on teaching practice.</td>
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<td>1c) Perception of Evaluation</td>
<td>Portfolios allow the individual to direct evaluation in the most appropriate manner.</td>
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<td><strong>Theme #2: Accuracy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2a) Evaluation Accuracy</td>
<td>Portfolios can be deceiving. Presentation and actual practice may not align.</td>
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<td>2b) Evaluation Option</td>
<td>Portfolios should be used with frequent observations.</td>
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<td>2c) Differentiated Supervision</td>
<td>Portfolios would not be an appropriate evaluation tool for beginning teachers.</td>
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<td><strong>Theme #3: Usefulness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3a) Portfolio Development</td>
<td>Portfolios are overwhelmingly time-consuming.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b) Portfolio Review</td>
<td>Portfolios can be deceiving. Presentation and actual practice may not align.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3c) Worthwhile Option</td>
<td>Traditional evaluation is adequate for supervisory purposes.</td>
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CHAPTER VI

Summary

Introduction

Chapter VI presents a summary and discussion of the study’s findings as well as recommendations for further study. The study investigated teacher and administrator perceptions of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process at an elementary school in Dallas, Texas. This chapter contains a brief summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the findings, and implications for future research that became apparent as a result of the study.

Summary

Traditional summative views of teacher evaluation conflict with the instructional improvement models of growth-oriented supervision (McGreal, 1983). The literature supports a number of findings which indicate traditional teacher evaluation focuses on the elements of effective instruction, yet rarely did the process address changing teaching behaviors (Stiggins and Duke, 1988). McGreal (1983) defined teacher evaluation as evaluation for enhancing instruction. He listed the components of an evaluation system that are necessary to encourage professional growth:

1) it includes clear criteria, established with significant teacher involvement; 2) it provides an opportunity for increased teacher involvement within the actual functioning of the system; 3) it provides opportunity to use multiple sources of data to ensure the fullest possible picture of the teacher; and 4) allows and encourages feedback activities that have been shown to encourage professional growth (p.13).
Growth-oriented evaluation enhances the role of the teacher in his or her self-evaluation, includes the use of peer teachers for support, and expands the role of the principal as a partner in the evaluation process (Glatthorn, 1984). Glatthorn first proposed a model of “differentiated supervision” that provided options for teachers and principals. His growth-oriented options included clinical supervision for inexperienced teachers or teachers in crisis, peer supervision, self-directed development, and administrative monitoring. In 1996, Glatthorn added to his differentiated supervision model the Teacher Portfolio.

The purpose of this study was to uncover the perceptions of teachers and an administrator concerning the Teacher Portfolio as an effective tool for formative evaluation. The researcher contacted Dr. Robert Kealey, Director of the Elementary School Division of the National Catholic Educational Association, to locate a Catholic school in the nation where the Teacher Portfolio was being utilized for formative evaluation. Dr. Kealey directed the researcher to an administrator of a school who had designed and implemented a Teacher Portfolio evaluation process.

The administrator explained to the teachers of the school the proposal of the researcher to conduct a study of the Teacher Portfolio as a tool for formative evaluation. The school community found this study worthwhile and the decision was made to participate in the study. A group of teachers volunteered to participate in the interview. The administrator also agreed to be a part of the interview process. The study consisted of structured interviews that were conducted at the school after the school had closed for summer vacation. Additionally, field notes were written on a review of the Teacher Portfolios.
Conclusions

The literature cites a number of findings in which teachers made a strong indictment of traditional supervision, perceiving it as an organizational ritual that had little or no impact on their professionalism (Garman, 1987). Stiggins and Duke (1988) found traditional teacher evaluation focused on the elements of effective instruction yet rarely did the process address changing teaching behaviors. These researchers proposed growth-oriented evaluation to be more effective than traditional evaluation thus having the potential for much greater impact on schools.

Limitations of the Study

When drawing conclusions from this study, it is important to note its limitations. First, the unit of analysis for this study was a single-case design with a limited sample of teachers and an administrator from one particular school. These teachers and administrator may not be indicative of the general population of teachers and administrators. The results of this study should not be interpreted as generalizable.

Second, the teachers and administrator were all volunteers who chose to participate in the study. As a result, these individuals themselves might have possessed favorable views of the Teacher Portfolio and professional development initially. Therefore, this sample of teachers and administrator may not be representative of all teachers and administrators.

Third, the accuracy of the data collected from the structured interviews relies on honest, accurate responses. Fourth, the study was time limited determined by the single year of participation, therefore, long-term effects could not be assessed. Finally, the development and implementation of the Teacher Portfolio is uniquely individual.
Therefore, this study may not offer conclusive evidence of its effectiveness for evaluation and growth that can be transferred from one individual to another.

*Importance of the Study*

With an understanding of the limitations, the findings of this study are important in a discussion concerning formative teacher evaluation practices. The purpose of this study was to analyze teacher and principal perceptions of the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process at one elementary school. The study focused on three themes raised by the questions formulated through the review of the literature. These themes were quality, accuracy, and usefulness.

The first focus area of the study investigated the perceptions of teachers and the administrator concerning the process of using the Teacher Portfolio as an effective means of evaluation which would impact on teacher skill and practice. Traditional teacher evaluation focused on the elements of effective instruction, but rarely addressed changing teacher behaviors (Duke & Stiggins, 1986). Teachers have also perceived evaluation as an organizational practice that had little impact on their professionalism (Garman, 1986).

A growth-oriented evaluation process enhances the role of the teacher in her self-evaluation, allows for peer support, and shifts the role of the principal from supervisor to collaborator in the evaluation process (Senge, 1990). Teachers and the administrator commented on the power of the Teacher Portfolio to promote reflection on teaching practice. Relying on the teacher as the initiator and primary interpreter of data is an important component of evaluation (Haertel, 1993). Practitioners have stated that self-evaluation through reflection occurs when teachers take time to examine and analyze their portfolios (Haertel, 1993). This reflection results in improved teaching practice.
Schon, 1983). The teachers used the Teacher Portfolio as a basis for reflection on their teaching, thus having an effect on their teaching practice. The teachers perceived that the Teacher Portfolio had indeed had an impact on their teaching practice.

Nolan and Francis (1992) indicate that in teacher evaluation when an administrator is viewed as a critic who judges the teacher’s performance, supervision tends to concentrate on surface-level issues. When the administrator becomes a collaborator, the teacher is more willing to grant the administrator access. In this study, the administrator reported her role in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation program to be one of facilitator and supporter rather than critic. The administrator was eager to view each portfolio and was impressed with the breadth and depth of its contents.

This study concluded that the Teacher Portfolio is a growth-oriented evaluation option. Stiggins and Duke (1988) proposed growth-oriented evaluation to be more effective than traditional evaluation thus having the potential for much greater impact on teaching practice. Evaluation is viewed to be growth-oriented when the purpose of the evaluation moves from summative to formative, when the expectation is not just for accountability but for improvement, and there is a strong relationship to professional development. Teachers reported changing their teaching behaviors as a result of their participation in the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process. The administrator indicated that there was indeed evidence of change in teaching practice.

The second focus area examined the accuracy of the Teacher Portfolio to reflect a teacher’s knowledge and skill in teaching practice. Both the teachers and the administrator perceive the Teacher Portfolio as an effective tool for reflecting a teacher’s knowledge and skill. The basic domains of teaching according to Wheeler (1993) include
diagnosing student needs, planning and designing lessons, methods of presenting information to students, measuring student learning, and classroom management. The only domain of teaching that is perceived as difficult to portray in written format is classroom management.

Teachers collected artifacts related to their stated goals in the Teacher Portfolio. These teachers included lesson plans, student work, assessment instruments, and work assignments as artifacts. Thus most domains were portrayed through the portfolio. The teachers and the administrator perceive the selection of these artifacts as useful to the portfolio process as well as providing a more comprehensive view of teacher performance than formal or informal observations. The Teacher Portfolio was able to provide evidence of teaching practice over time.

In his model of differentiated supervision, Glatthorn (1996) indicated that master teachers do not require a clinical model of supervision. Expert teachers, in his estimation, require options including individual and/or peer projects and administrative monitoring. He also believes that the portfolio, when used with observation is a strong supervisory tool for beginning or problem teachers. Additionally, the portfolio can compliment informal classroom observation especially for competent, veteran teachers. Glatthorn suggested portfolios could be used as an additional differentiated supervision option, however, no research had been conducted to affirm his theory.

This study supports Glatthorn’s premise with qualitative data. Both the teachers and administrator indicated that they believe the Teacher Portfolio can provide a broader picture of teacher practice than that of an observation. However, both teachers and administrator believed that some teaching behaviors such as student-teacher interaction
are difficult to document in writing or even through video-taping. Thus, they felt strongly that observation and administrative monitoring should be a component of the Teacher Portfolio process.

Third, this study focused on the teacher and administrator perceptions of the usefulness of the Teacher Portfolio. Leithwood (1990) identified demands of the job of the principal to be in conflict with the perceived importance of the principal’s role as staff developer. Fisher (1994) discussed usefulness of Teacher Portfolios from the principal’s perspective. According to Fisher, portfolios assist a principal who is not familiar with the material being presented by providing a comprehensive view of teacher performance. The portfolios accomplish this by first providing the administrator with artifacts that reflect multi-dimensions of teaching. Second, when the teacher is consistently modifying and improving entries within the portfolio during its development, the administrator can confirm the improvement.

This study provides the perceptions on the value of the portfolios as it relates to time constraints. Both the teachers and administrator believe that the process of completing a Teacher Portfolio is very time-consuming. The administrator believed that the time required is invaluable because the breadth and depth of information on teaching practice provided in the portfolio far surpasses what could be gained through formal observation. Although the teachers believed the Teacher Portfolio Evaluation process was time-consuming on both the parts of the teachers and administrator, they still believed it was a valuable process.
Impact of the Study

The results of this study indicate that the Teacher Portfolio can be an effective tool for formative evaluation. The perceptions of the teachers and the administrator uncovered during the interview process indicate that the Teacher Portfolio can improve the quality of teacher evaluation, can be accurate in evaluating teaching practice and skill and finally can be a useful tool for formative evaluation. These findings ultimately impact the development and implementation of teacher evaluation systems.

Virtually every public school district and non-public school, by order of state law or regulation, has a formal procedure for the evaluation of teachers. The system typically consists of one or two observations of teaching by a supervisor who then writes up his findings, providing feedback to the teacher and completes an evaluation for the teacher's file. Current educational literature indicates that this traditional approach to teacher evaluation is no longer adequate.

Danielson and McGreal (2000) propose that teacher evaluation should be founded on a research-based set of teaching standards. Their proposal indicates that teacher evaluation should be founded on a range of sources of data and information, allowing teachers to demonstrate their mastery of the standards. Thirdly, Danielson and McGreal underline the importance of differentiation in stating that teacher evaluation should provide opportunities for teachers at different stages to be involved in different processes and activities. Finally, they believe that teacher evaluation should be heavily focused on the formative aspects of evaluation, using staff-directed activities for the purpose of promoting professional learning.
The Teacher Portfolio as analyzed through this study provides a vehicle for the aspects of teacher evaluation and development that are considered vital as reviewed in the current literature. Throughout the literature on teacher evaluation, emphasis is placed on differentiation, data-rich documentation, promoting professional growth and self-reflection.

Differentiated evaluation practices are available when the Teacher Portfolio is utilized for formative evaluation. In this study, every teacher who developed a portfolio began with a philosophy statement and goals. The fact that these were reviewed with the administrator rather than developed by the administrator, provides the teacher with the opportunity to be co-evaluator. Each portfolio in this study was found to possess a uniquely different focus determined by those areas of teaching practice and skill that each teacher chose to highlight as a result of her determined goals.

The Teacher Portfolio is data-rich. It is comprised of artifacts that the teacher has determined are worthy of inclusion in the portfolio. This process of determining which artifacts to include is steeped in self-reflection and self-evaluation. Teachers are continually analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating their teaching practice through the varied artifacts they choose to include in the portfolio. This self-reflection on practice as indicated in this study provides the momentum for self-improvement in changing teaching behaviors.

The Teacher Portfolio can provide an accurate picture of teaching practice to the evaluator. Through the review of the artifacts included in the portfolio, the evaluator can determine the breadth and depth of the teaching practice. The Teacher Portfolio utilized
in connection with classroom observation can be a powerful tool in evaluating teaching practice and skill.

There are important implications uncovered through this study of the Teacher Portfolio that can be considered when school leaders are setting policy concerning teacher evaluation. The Teacher Portfolio can provide a differentiated evaluation system. The evaluation system must provide the opportunity for the educator to determine her own goals for professional development. The level of professional development will be distinctly individual determined by each teacher's current teaching practice and skill. As the teacher is compiling his Teacher Portfolio, he is reflecting on his skill and practice and making changes in instruction and assessment. Not only should school leaders establish systems of evaluation which will support differentiation and self-reflection, the policy setters must allow time for that self-reflection. The Teacher Portfolio allows for self-reflection, however, as indicated in this study, that is a very time-consuming practice. If the Teacher Portfolio is considered a valid tool for formative evaluation, then policies must be put in place to provide teachers ample time to develop these portfolios.

The review of the literature and the findings of this study indicate the need to develop teacher evaluation systems that are differentiated and formative. This practice is paramount to promoting excellence in schools. Schools will only affect change and achieve excellence when the value of the human resources within the school is recognized. With the importance of these human resources in mind, leaders must develop that resource to its fullest potential. Teachers are the individuals who make a difference in the implementation of the curriculum. Recognizing that the teacher wields the greatest power to create excellence within the class and within the school, leaders
must provide the necessary tools for these same teachers to reach their potential and to achieve excellence. More school leaders and policymakers must recognize the importance of creating learning environments in which all members of the school are encouraged to continually learn and develop professionally. The findings of this study could be utilized by National Teaching Organizations to create evaluation systems which included the Teacher Portfolio for differentiated supervision. The Teacher Portfolio is an evaluative instrument that can create those learning environments.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study has provided additional empirical data to the body of teacher portfolio literature. While providing a qualitative database of information regarding teacher and administrator perceptions on the use of the Teacher Portfolio for growth-oriented evaluation, areas for further study remain. The following recommendations are made for further research:

1. Replicate with a larger sample. While this study represented a small sample, a larger sample would provide data that could be interpreted to be more generalizable. A larger sample would allow for a wider variety of statistical methods to be used for a quantitative study.

2. Include additional qualitative data in the study. In particular, the Teacher Portfolios could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the process if each interviewee brought it for review by the researcher. Appropriate qualitative processes, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984) could be used to collect and analyze portfolios.
3. Explore the utility of the Teacher Portfolio for specific professional development goals. It has always been very difficult to link student achievement with professional development. The teacher portfolio may be able to accomplish this goal if artifacts directly related to specific staff development initiatives are collected, reflected upon, examined by supervisors, and then tied to student achievement via standardized or other assessments.

4. Further development in the use of the teacher portfolio with specific groups such as new teachers, marginal teachers, master teachers, etc., could be examined. This study provided general information as to the usefulness and perceived success with experienced teachers. Studies of portfolio effectiveness with other particular types of teachers could be conducted to provide more defined practice.

5. Further development of a portfolio model could be examined. This study did not identify useful components of the portfolio. Are there specific components that could be useful to the portfolio process?

6. Further development of one particular aspect of the Teacher Portfolio such as self-reflection could be studied. Such an aspect could be traced throughout the supervision process in conjunction with the portfolio.

Teacher evaluation experts believe a successful teacher evaluation system should have more than one way to collect data besides the principal’s observation (Nolan and Francis, 1992; Glatthorn, 1996). As traditionally practiced, evaluation required teachers to perform for someone else’s approval (Bryant and Currin, 1995). Senge (1990) has
argued that this is an outmoded and extrinsic form of motivation and that what organizations need are people who are intrinsically motivated. The participants in teacher evaluation need not be limited to the evaluator and the teacher being evaluated. Traditional methods of evaluating students have shifted to include conferencing, performance-based assessments, and portfolios that measure growth over time. In alignment with authentic methods of assessing students, the teacher portfolio provides a form of authentic teacher assessment that captures the knowledge of teaching methodology, promotes professional growth and allows for the attainment of personal and school goals.

The Teacher Portfolio provides a natural link between formative and summative evaluation. Portfolios can lead to professional growth by providing a vehicle for self-assessment through goal selection, reflection, peer coaching and a paradigm shift in the perception of the principal as evaluator to principal as facilitator. The intrinsic motivation that leads to excellence as discussed by Senge (1990)n can be achieved by meeting the needs of the individual. If allowed to grow professionally and be evaluated on that growth with time provided for reflection and discussion, teachers will move forward with excellence. The Teacher Portfolio utilized as a tool for formative evaluation has the potential to create highly successful teachers who promote excellence in all aspects of the learning organization.
References


McLaughlin, M. W., and Yee, S. M. (1988). School as a place to have a career.


Appendix A

Letter of Solicitation
Letter of Solicitation

May 8, 2001

Dear «Title» «LastName»:

I am a candidate for a doctoral degree in Educational Administration and Supervision at Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey. Additionally, I am the principal of Our Lady of the Magnificat School in Kinnelon, NJ in the Diocese of Paterson.

I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation. This dissertation will be a study of the use of the Teacher Portfolio for Formative Evaluation. In searching for participants for my study, I contacted Dr. Robert Kealey, President of the Elementary Division of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) for his assistance in locating a school utilizing the Teacher Portfolio for evaluation of teachers.

Dr. Kealey indicated that your school has a program of Teacher Portfolio Evaluation that is worthy of study. I would like to invite you to participate in this study. The study will involve structured individual interviews that will last no longer than 45 minutes. All interviews will remain confidential. Each subject will be assigned a unique subject code. This number will be placed on the bottom of the consent form and will correspond with the subject’s interview, session notes and tape recording. In this fashion, only the consent form will contain both the subject name and code. Each interview will be number coded (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4...) to identify the interview but not the participant. Data will be analyzed collectively; therefore, individual’s names are not necessary for this study. The consent form and all interview notes and tape recordings will be kept in the researcher’s personal filing cabinet and will be destroyed two years following the study. Participation is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subject’s privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. The Chairperson of the IRB may be reached through the Office of Grants and Research Services. The telephone number of the Office is 973-275-2974.

If you are interested in becoming part of this study on the Teacher Portfolio, please complete the enclosed “Informed Consent Form” and return it to me in the self-addressed envelope included with this communication.

Sincerely,

Karen P. Fasanella
Appendix B

Informed Consent Form
Informed Consent Form

The following has been explained to me and I understand that:

1. I am being asked by Karen P. Fasanella, a student in the Department of Educational Administration and Supervision at Seton Hall University, to participate in a study examining the Teacher Portfolio for Formative Evaluation. The study will consist of one session (no more than 45 minutes) in which I will be asked to discuss questions posed by the interviewer.

2. Because my individual information is anonymous and, thus, not identifiable, I will gain no direct personal benefit from this research. However, my participation may help researchers develop a more thorough understanding of the effectiveness of the Teacher Portfolio for Formative Evaluation.

3. There will be no identifying information during the interview, thus, my participation and responses are completely confidential. Results of this study will be reported only collectively - no individual data will be reported.

4. Any questions about this research project can be answered by the project director, Karen P. Fasanella, or her advisor, Dr. Elaine Walker. Karen can be reached at KarenF2094@aol.com or 973-838-6222. Dr. Walker can be reached at walkerel@shu.edu.

5. Participation is completely voluntary. I may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

6. This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subject's privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. The Chairperson of the IRB may be reached through the Office of Grants and Research Services. The telephone number of the Office is 973-275-2974.

I have read the material above, and any question I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realizing that I may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

Participant's signature (please print and sign your name)  Date