

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK, LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION, AND SELF-EFFICACY

by

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(Under the Direction of Sheneka Williams)

ABSTRACT

This case study analyzed the implementation of a classroom observation feedback process aimed at improving the feedback that teachers receive from evaluators. Research questions focused on understanding the extent to which an effective feedback process influences learning goal orientation and teacher self-efficacy. This study employed action research through the facilitation of Likert scale survey questions and teacher-evaluator conference transcripts. Findings indicate the following: the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention positively influenced teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback; positively influenced teacher efficacy; feedback to the individual professional goals of educators resulted in the perception that the feedback was more specific and useful; the interventions implemented by the action research team positively influenced teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback and self-efficacy, resulting in positive changes with teacher pedagogy.

INDEX WORDS: Action Research, Teacher Evaluation, Classroom Observation, Feedback, Learning Goal Orientation, Self-Efficacy

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by

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DEDICATION

To Dennis Joseph Dooley and Jennifer Lynn Dooley

My father and mother

Thank you for being my biggest fans. You have always encouraged me to work hard and never give up to accomplish my goals. This would not have been possible without your many sacrifices, ongoing encouragement, and support.

and

James Richard Dougherty

My husband

Without your support, encouragement, and love this would not have been possible. Thank you for being the rock of our family and keeping me motivated me throughout this entire process.

and

Everly Rose

My daughter

I hope that one day you will reflect on this process and understand the importance of perseverance and dedication to accomplish your dreams. I am so proud of the person you are and look forward to watching you grow into the person you will become.

I love you to the moon and back!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

After completing my first year as an assistant principal of an elementary school and my sixth year as an educator, I began a doctoral program focusing on the development and improvement of my skills as a school leader. In my current role, I directly influence teacher pedagogy, which has an indirect impact on the achievement and growth of the students at my school. During the 2012-2013 school year, my school district began implementing the new state evaluation system, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). Since the initial onset of the evaluation system, there have been a variety of changes. Two of the most significant changes have been the use of student growth data and the inclusion of progress toward individual professional learning goals to make up a percentage of the teacher's overall score. From TKES' initial implementation in 2012 to the most current version, I have worked on both the receiving end of the evaluation as a teacher, and now on the implementation end as an administrator. As with many reforms, this evaluation system has had both positive and negative outcomes, specifically conducting evaluations related to the feedback process and the necessity for teachers to engage in professional discourse about their professional practices.

Context of the Case Study

District and School Context

Metro Elementary is part of the Metro School District¹, located in the southeastern portion of the United States. The school system has over 130 schools, 102,000 students, and 6,600 teachers. The student population at Metro Elementary consists of 450 students. During

the 2017-2018 school year, the demographics of the student population were 44 percent Black, 27 percent White, 19 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian, and 5 percent Multi-Racial. Sixty-six percent of the students were classified as Economically Disadvantaged, and 22 percent are Limited English Proficient.

As Simmons (2009) explained, providing detailed biographical information relating to the backgrounds and significant characteristic or features of key personnel is necessary in case-study research to provide the reader with information about how these factors may have influenced the case. As one of 76 elementary schools in Metro School District, Metro Elementary is an average-performing school in a suburban area. The school has been open since 1966, is identified as a Title I school, and holds the distinction of being a nationally certified Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) and International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) school. The staff at Metro Elementary is comprised of 43 teachers (19 of whom are general education homerooms), 16 special education paraprofessionals, one pre-Kindergarten paraprofessional, two counselors, one assistant principal, and one principal. Of the 43 teachers, 56 percent hold a bachelor's degree, 33 percent hold a master's degree, 9 percent hold a specialist's degree, and 2 percent hold a doctoral degree. The average teaching experience is 12 years. The principal at Metro is in her third year and the assistant principal is in her fourth year. The teachers at Metro engage in professional collaboration with each other and the administrative team on a weekly basis and are supportive of the school's mission and vision.

The physical appearance of Metro Elementary is less than impressive, resembling other similarly aged elementary schools in Metro School District. The school is located in a suburban neighborhood that has winding sidewalks and tree-lined streets. Upon entering the parking lot at Metro, one can see the multi-acre field and several student playgrounds. At the main entrance of

the building, there is a large mural that includes flags from countries from all over the world. This mural represents the multicultural community at Metro as well as the IB PYP status of the school. The building itself is shaped like a horseshoe, with a central hallway down the middle. That hallway provides access to the media center, cafeteria, and courtyard. The courtyard is a place where students are responsible for growing and harvesting vegetables and fruits, selecting and planting appropriate plants for the butterfly garden, preserving the pond, and maintaining the greenhouse. The courtyard serves as the hub of the school as the students utilize this space in a variety of hands-on, inquiry-based, active learning experiences.

When I began my role as the assistant principal at Metro and decided to complete an action research case study, my teachers, the school community, and experiences I have had provided me with the confidence to move forward with the research process. The above description of the school, students, and staff should give the reader a full picture of the environment in which this case study has occurred, as well as provide details that will enable others to understand the context in order implement a similar study in other school buildings. In regard to the current evaluation system, the principal and assistant principal have attempted to implement the requirements of TKES with fidelity. However, due to the frequent changes to the TKES process and other unrelated mandates from the school district, the school administrators have found themselves shifting the purpose of classroom observations, as required by TKES, to compliance as opposed to teacher growth. Metro Elementary leaders would like to increase their effectiveness in supporting teachers through the evaluation requirements of classroom observation and feedback. They also strive to utilize teacher's individual professional goals better to support this process, with the belief that more relevant and specific feedback will lead to sustained professional growth and increased self-efficacy for teachers.

Historical Context

Since the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001, federal law has required that all states provide students with access to highly qualified teachers (USDOE, 2005). The label of *highly qualified* refers to the federal requirement that teachers hold a bachelor's degree and full state certification in the subjects they teach. Until recently, indicators such as certification and experience set the standard for measuring teacher quality. These indicators have also served as the primary qualifications in determining appropriate compensation for educators. Over the past decade, the standard for defining teacher quality has become a significant focus of educational policies and research efforts. As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Obama administration put forth the competitive Race to the Top (RTTT) grant program. States awarded with funding through the RTTT grant have implemented policies designed to more accurately evaluate teacher quality using non-traditional measures. Through the RTTT grant, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) has awarded 19 states with over \$4.35 billion to implement educational reform (USDOE, 2014).

In an attempt to better assess teacher quality, one of the USDOE required educational reforms through the RTTT grant was for states to improve teacher and principal effectiveness by developing comprehensive educator evaluation systems. The USDOE required that the new evaluation systems include components to (a) measure student growth; (b) include multiple rating categories that include student growth; (c) evaluate teachers and principals annually and provide feedback; and (d) use evaluation ratings to inform decisions about professional development, compensation, and certification (USDOE, 2009). In addition to the components listed above, many states have added a component for professional development and feedback to support educator growth.

The Problem

The problem this study will attempt to address is the effectiveness, or the lack of effectiveness, of the feedback process from classroom observations. Specifically, the feedback process that is currently used by evaluators is criticized for not sufficiently supporting teacher growth, and informal data suggests that it is having a negative influence on teacher efficacy. Furthermore, evaluator feedback, as provided through TKES, is not currently linked to teachers' self-set professional goals, which appears to make the feedback less useful based on teacher professional aspirations and needs.

Through comprehensive teacher evaluation systems, building leaders use classroom observations, student growth data, and various other tools to evaluate teacher effectiveness and provide teachers with feedback to support professional growth. Depending on how evaluation tools are implemented, they can either promote or hinder an instructional leader's attempt to support teacher professional growth and build an efficacious school culture. Educational leaders and policymakers must determine if the teacher support and growth opportunities provided through comprehensive evaluation systems are at the level intended by the revised policies.

TKES is the current evaluation system used throughout the state, which supports and is modeled after the most recent national policies on teacher evaluation. It is promoted as an evaluation system that supports the continuous growth and development of teachers. Unfortunately, through informal conversations with the staff at Metro, I have found that the current system is often not viewed as a growth instrument, but rather as a means to judge and rate teacher quality.

At my school, Metro Elementary, and at the district level, Metro School District, the morale of teachers is low, and the pressure to improve pedagogical practices and increase student

learning is higher than ever before. A significant component to supporting teachers' professional growth is the feedback they receive on evaluations from administrators. Based on teacher survey data from the 2014-2015 Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) teacher survey, eighty-one percent of teachers within the state and seventy-seven percent at the district level felt that their administrator was committed to helping teachers develop their performance. Additionally, eighty-one percent of teachers in the state and seventy-six percent of teachers in the district felt that their administrators provided them with useful feedback (see Figure 1).

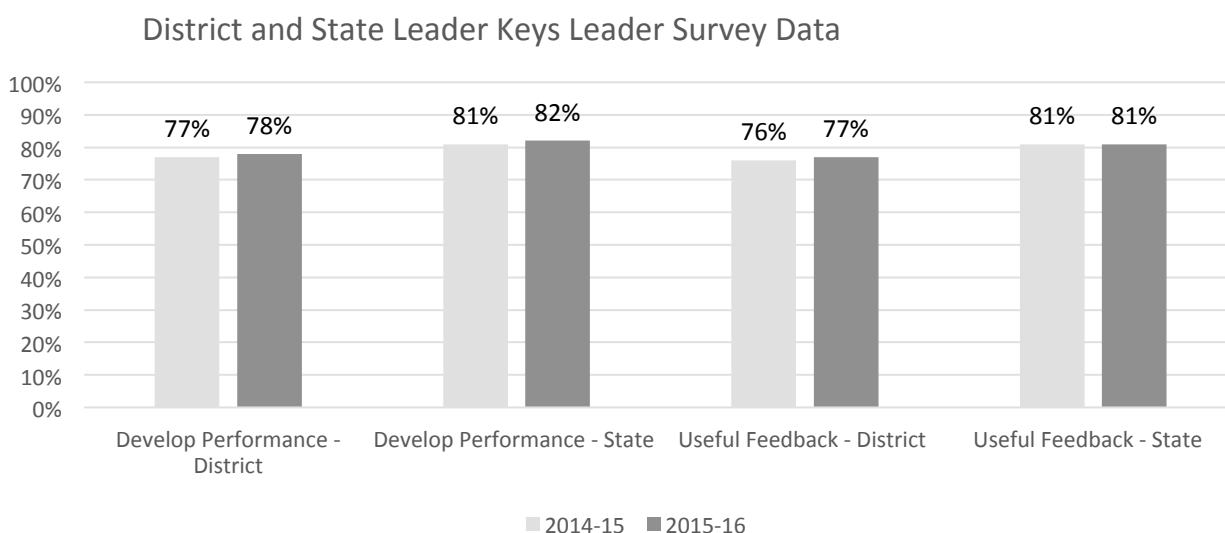


Figure 1: District and State Leader Keys Survey Data

During the 2015-2016 school year, teachers at Metro Elementary completed the annual LKES teacher survey, and it was found that eighty-four percent felt their administrator was committed to helping them develop their performance. Eighty-six percent of teachers felt that the feedback they were provided with was useful (see Figure 2). When looking at the specific data from Metro Elementary teachers, the percentages are not low enough to initially raise concerns. However, with 19 general education homeroom teachers, the percentage of teachers that did not feel supported equates to approximately three teachers, which at Metro Elementary is

an entire grade level. When utilizing a teacher evaluation system that was developed to support teacher growth, the percentages of teachers that feel supported and feel that their feedback was useful should be significantly higher.

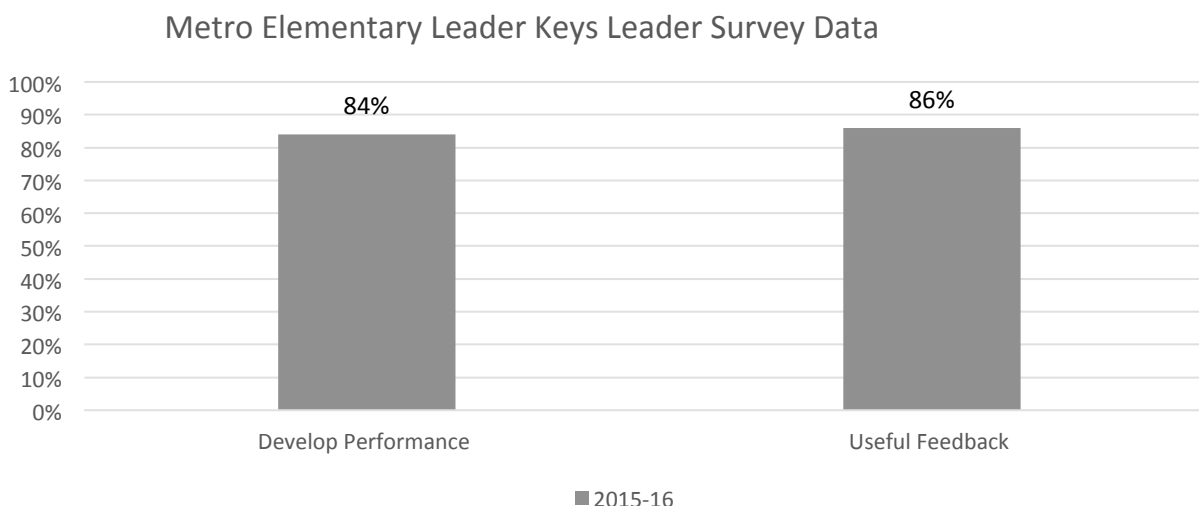


Figure 2: Metro Elementary Leader Keys Survey Data

As part of the district accreditation process at Metro Elementary, staff members, students, and parents completed surveys about their perceptions of various aspects of Metro Elementary. From those survey results, two survey items explicitly related to this study's focus on classroom observation feedback and findings confirmed the results from the LKES staff survey data shared previously. The first finding was that eighty-five percent of the staff members felt that building leaders ensured that staff members used supervisory feedback to improve student learning. The next survey item found that eighty-five percent of the staff felt that there was a professional learning program designed to build capacity among all professional and support staff members. These combined pieces of data supported the need for an intervention that specifically focused on supporting teachers through observation feedback.

Action Research Focus. As policies that impact teacher evaluation have changed, the purpose of teacher evaluation systems has moved from one solely focused on identifying proficient teachers to one that allows for analysis of teacher and student data to determine effectiveness and provide educators with feedback and opportunities for growth. Evaluation measures, such as student growth data and classroom observation, have been used to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses to provide proper feedback and support. The goal of the feedback is to support professional growth, increase teacher self-efficacy, and ultimately to improve instruction and student achievement.

Hoy and Miskel (2013) define teacher self-efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute a course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific task in a particular context” (p.163). When linking classroom observation feedback to a teacher’s perceived self-efficacy, research shows that when evaluators provide teachers with specific constructive feedback that does not link directly to the teacher’s ego, self-efficacy can increase, and pedagogical growth can occur (Feeney, 2007; Khachatryan, 2015). And, when feedback is tied to the teacher’s individual professional goals, the teacher’s receptiveness to the feedback increases and changes in pedagogy are more likely to occur (Runhaar, Sanders, & Yang, 2010).

Based on the LKES teacher survey data and informal conversations with teachers at Metro Elementary, it is apparent that the feedback does not effectively support teacher growth. Through an action research case study, I will attempt to determine how feedback can be provided to better support the professional growth of educators and determine if the nature of feedback can positively influence the individual self-efficacy of educators.

Personal Attitudes and Beliefs. Based on the literature I have read and my personal beliefs, it appears that to build teacher self-efficacy, educational leaders must focus more on teacher's individual goals for professional growth rather than evaluative measures. Teachers are often told the purpose of evaluation systems is to promote teacher development; however, "in the real world, theory often fails to inform practice" (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p. 48). While the role of the teacher evaluation and feedback is important, developing a culture that recognizes pedagogical abilities and promotes teacher growth through feedback should outweigh the politics in assigning evaluation ratings. By incorporating research-based feedback strategies into classroom observations, it appears that leaders can provide appropriate support to enhance the individual growth of educators.

It is also my personal belief that the feedback administrators provide to teachers to support their pedagogical growth can be improved. At Metro Elementary, the principal and I agree that the process we use to provide feedback to teachers can and should be improved. With this belief, my attitude towards the study was one of hope, with the assumption that a positive change will occur. My biggest concern and worry with this action research study was that change would not occur in the manner that I had hoped, or that this change will not be sustainable.

A challenge with completing the action research case study in my role as school administrator, researcher, and study participant was disconnecting myself from the position of evaluator during feedback sessions with teachers. It is essential that feedback to the teachers is constructive and relevant and not related to their TKES evaluation, but also that the teachers are honest and receptive to the feedback and the research process. Also, I had concerns that pre-established relationships with staff might make it difficult not to infuse personal opinions into

the data collection. It was critical that the teachers felt comfortable giving their ideas about the feedback they received, how that feedback supported their areas of growth, and how it influenced their self-efficacy.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this action research case study is to change the classroom observation feedback process that evaluators provide to teachers as it relates to their individual goals, to positively influence teacher efficacy. The building administrators at Metro Elementary desire to improve the manner in which they support teachers through feedback with the hope that changes in the process will lead to sustained pedagogical changes that will ultimately have a positive impact on student achievement.

The action research study will seek to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?
2. How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?
3. How can the individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?
4. How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?

At the onset of the action research case study, the action research (AR) team was provided with the research behind the characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy. This research in conjunction with data supported the selection and design of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. The interventions were designed to support the current TKES feedback process that is utilized by the

principal and assistant principal in classroom observations. The intervention was not to take the place of the requirements outlined by TKES, but to serve as an additional layer to enhance and improve the current process.

The information gathered from this action research case study fills in gaps in current literature related to classroom observation feedback, self-efficacy, and learning goal orientation. School administrators and leaders who are interested in building the capacity of their teachers through classroom observation feedback will benefit from the findings of this study. Specifically, those who are using teacher selected professional goals to serve as a guide to providing more relevant and actionable feedback will benefit.

Conceptual Framework

For teachers to improve their pedagogical practices and increase their capacity to provide students with relevant and meaningful learning opportunities, they must possess the ability and skills or must have access to the necessary tools to be successful. Teachers must be reflective of their practices as well as have opportunities to receive feedback from others. The feedback should be relevant and meaningful to their individual goals and provide them with the opportunities to implement sustainable changes in the classroom. With this in mind, the conceptual framework selected to guide this action research case study centered on the characteristics of effective feedback. It is necessary for evaluators to be aware of these characteristics and have a feedback process in place that utilizes them with teachers. Surrounding the feedback characteristics are the theories of learning goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and self-efficacy (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). These two theories drove the development of the action research case study with the focus on how they relate to a teacher's ability to receive and utilize observation feedback to make pedagogical changes. Research has

found that self-efficacy has a direct influence on teaching performance, while feedback indirectly affects performance through an individual's self-efficacy and personal goals (Akkuzu, 2014; Anast-May, Penick, Schroyer, & Howell, 2011; Feeney, 2007; Locke, 2001).

Figure 3 below outlines the conceptual framework of the action research case study at Metro Elementary. Based on theoretical and empirical research studies on self-efficacy, learning goal orientation, and characteristics of effective feedback, this framework guided the study.

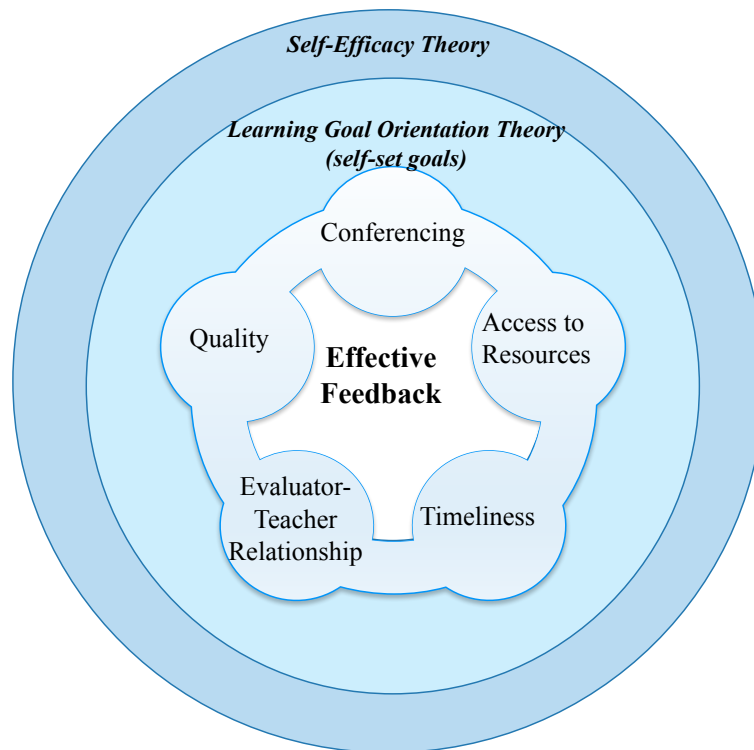


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework for Providing Effective Feedback to Increase Teacher Efficacy

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

What follows is an overview and discussion of the scholarly work related to professional practices for leaders who implement classroom observations and provide feedback, as required by comprehensive teacher evaluation systems. This research examines various characteristics of effective feedback that leaders can use to support the professional development of teachers. A small body of research exists on teacher self-efficacy and the connection to learning goal orientation theory as they relate to a teacher's ability to reflect and ask for feedback. Along with those findings, there is a small amount of research relating to observation feedback and its impact on teachers' self-efficacy. While more research has been conducted on effective feedback characteristics, there are still limitations regarding how and if they correlate to self-set professional goals and self-efficacy. Though there have been numerous research studies that separately address learning goal orientation theory, teacher self-efficacy, and feedback, studies that make a connection between the three areas are minimal. While there is a gap in the research, this review will address school leaders and teachers with information about the theories of self-efficacy and learning goal orientation as well as provide evidence relating to effective observation feedback strategies.

To better support the needs of teachers who receive observation feedback and to support building leaders who provide observation feedback, this review analyzes theoretical perspectives that support a teacher's ability to receive and make pedagogical changes as suggested by evaluators through comprehensive evaluation systems. This is important because the feedback

evaluators provide to teachers should be tied to individual performance goals, encourage collaboration, reflection, change, and ultimately have a positive impact on students.

Self-Efficacy

Hoy and Miskel (2013) define teacher self-efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute a course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific task in a particular context” (p.163). Efficacy within teachers has been linked to positive outcomes, such as motivation, commitment to the profession, instructional pedagogy, and to student successes ((Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001a). When linking classroom observation feedback to a teacher’s perceived self-efficacy, research shows that when evaluators provide teachers with specific constructive feedback that does not link directly to the teacher’s ego, self-efficacy can increase, and pedagogical growth can occur (Feeney, 2007; Khachatryan, 2015).

In a study on teacher efficacy as it relates to teacher practices, Bedir (2015) found that teachers felt the least amount of confidence in their instructional strategies. When evaluators are appropriately trained and a relationship of trust exists between the teacher and evaluator, commentary and dialogue provide the opportunity for self-reflection, which can help teachers improve their self-determined areas of weakness. Relevant feedback also validates and affirms teachers’ areas of strength, which in turn supports their individual efficacy.

Accordingly, when using teacher evaluation systems with classroom observation as the primary component for feedback, it is critical that school leaders establish an efficacious culture of trust and collaboration among staff. When this culture is not in place, teachers can view the feedback process as a way to weed them out of the profession rather than help them grow

(Education First, 2015), which can negatively impact their efficacy and their ability to improve their pedagogy.

Learning Goal Orientation Theory

Dweck and Legett (1988) explain learning goal orientation as the motivation one has to improve competencies through learning new skills. Runhaar et al. (2010) state that this theory “is associated with the belief that with effort, one can learn how to deal with difficult situations” (p. 1156). Evidence has shown that people with strong learning goal orientation are receptive to feedback, which helps increase skills and capabilities. Having teachers set individual performance goals that support their pedagogical growth not only helps increase their capabilities, but also encourages those who may not be naturally inclined to reflect and be receptive to feedback, and to increase their learning goal orientation capacity (VandeWalle, 2001).

Research has empirically shown that learning goal orientation leads to increased self-efficacy and that self-efficacy leads to an increase in learning goal orientation (Elliot, 1997; Phillips & Gully, 1997; Runhaar et al., 2010). Though not causative, it can be deduced based on these findings that there is a positive correlation between the two theories. These correlations support the Runhaar et al. (2010) findings that when teachers set individual goals, they are more willing to engage in learning activities, reflect on their practices, and be receptive to feedback. Locke (2001) determined that self-efficacy impacts an individual’s ability to achieve self-set goals and that self-efficacy and goal setting directly impact performance.

Teacher Evaluation Systems

As policies that impact teacher evaluation have changed, the purpose of teacher evaluation systems has shifted from one solely focused on identifying proficient teachers to one

that allows for analysis of teacher and student data to determine teacher effectiveness and provide educators with feedback and opportunities for growth. When designing educator evaluation systems to support the national RTTT initiative (USDOE, 2014) there was “considerable debate as to whether we should judge teacher effectiveness based on teacher inputs (e.g., qualifications), the teaching process (e.g., instructional practices), the product of teaching (e.g., effects on student learning), or the composite of these elements” (Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011, p.340). Studies have shown that using individual measures exclusively, such as student growth or classroom observations, is flawed and does not give a comprehensive picture of teacher quality. Stronge et al. (2011) state “teacher evaluation, teacher pay or any other teacher-specific decision should never rely on a single source of evidence” (p.351). When considering teacher evaluation systems and their outcomes as a predictor for teacher quality, it is necessary to use multiple data sources to reduce potential errors that can occur with individual evaluation measures.

Kane (2012) explains that when using a single measure, it increases the high stakes potential for that measure and increases the potential for error. For example, if a teacher’s evaluation was based solely on student survey data, educators may be tempted to offer student incentives for good survey results, or students may use surveys as a way to retaliate against teachers for personal reasons. Multiple measures “not only spread the risk but also provide opportunities to detect manipulation or gaming” (Kane, 2012, p.39). Multiple measures provide evaluators the opportunity to examine numerous forms of data for individual teachers and gain a more comprehensive picture of teacher quality. When analyzing multiple data sources, conflicting evaluation results can be identified and signal evaluators to take a closer look at classroom practices. For example, a teacher may be using an instructional method that is not

viewed favorably based on performance indicators from the classroom observation tool.

However, that teacher may have exemplary student growth and student survey results. These conflicting results would provide an evaluator the opportunity to meet with the teacher, reflect on classroom observation data, and determine next steps (Kane, 2012).

Within the framework of evaluation systems that use multiple measures to determine teacher effectiveness, the notion of using teacher evaluation systems to serve as pathways for professional growth is one that has not only been spurred by federal initiatives, such as the RTTT grant (USDOE, 2014), but also by educators. In New York, the New York State United Teachers created the Teacher Evaluation and Development (TED) system. The goal of TED is to provide educators with a “more comprehensive, meaningful review that involves multiple measures of teacher performance and are designed to promote teacher learning and growth” (von Frank, 2013, p.1). This evaluation system utilizes all measures to provide teachers with specific and relevant feedback to enhance their individual development needs.

Research has found that even though a professional development component has been included in many new evaluation systems, many systems fail to ensure that the professional development opportunities are of high quality and valuable for improving individual teacher’s practices (Smylie, 2014). Smylie (2014) provides three recommendations to address his findings on professional development: (a) the links between professional development and teacher evaluation need to be strengthened; (b) the quality of professional learning available to teachers needs to be improved; and (c) school and district level capacity need to be built to provide higher quality professional development. In conjunction with those recommendations, Darling-Hammond (2014) explains that teacher evaluation should be part of a comprehensive teaching and learning system that promotes continuous growth. It should be designed to support and

enhance pedagogy while ensuring that student learning effective. She also explains that for a teacher evaluation system to be productive evaluation must be connected with individual professional learning to support the development of effective teaching practices.

For professional development to be effective, it needs to be specifically related to the multiple measures that are being used to assess teacher quality. Evaluators must provide teachers with relevant and continual feedback to enhance their pedagogical practices. Also, professional development opportunities should be differentiated and support individual teacher's needs.

In order to support teacher's individual professional development needs, feedback should support professional growth, increase teacher self-efficacy, and ultimately to improve instruction and student achievement. Additionally, some teacher evaluation systems now include professional development goal setting as a component.. The purpose of professional goal setting within an evaluation system is for teachers to reflect on their practices and set goals that will encourage growth, provide a focus for professional development, and improve instructional practices. Darling-Hammond (2014) explains, "evaluation should be accompanied by useful feedback, and connected to professional development opportunities that relevant to teachers' goals and needs, including both formal learning opportunities peer collaboration, observation, and coaching" (p. 12).

The requirement of goal setting in teacher evaluation systems is supported by research, which has found connections between self-efficacy, goal setting, and increased performance (Locke, 2001). However, most of the research that has been conducted in this area is not specific to the field of education. Feeney (2007) states, "constructive and meaningful feedback is needed

to promote reflection and allow teachers to plan and achieve new goals, which will ultimately lead to an increased sense of efficacy in their teaching” (p. 193).

Classroom Observation. Classroom observations have been in place as a teacher evaluation tool for decades. With an increased focus on student growth data in evaluations, the effectiveness of subjective classroom observations to determine teacher quality has been questioned. Multiple research studies have been conducted to evaluate the relationship between data generated by student growth measures and overall teacher ratings developed from classroom observations. These studies have found that, with multiple years of student growth data, positive correlations exist between the two evaluation measures. Harris and Sass (2009) explain that using ratings from classroom observations “significantly improves the ability to predict future teacher performance” (p.28). However, using student growth data as a method to evaluate teacher performance has been called into question. There are various factors outside a teacher’s area of control and can negatively influence student performance (Goe, 2007).

Even with the increased use of student growth data to measure teacher effectiveness, student growth data does “not provide information about instruction to teachers, and cannot support improvement of individual teaching performance” (Loeb, 2013). Data from observations provide necessary insight into instructional practices, teacher behaviors, the learning environment, and the relationship between teacher and student (Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011). Classroom observations not only generate a rating of teacher effectiveness, but when coupled with relevant feedback, they also provide teachers with information to support their individual growth.

Another important element to classroom observation is the reliability of the system in place. In some cases a single evaluator observes teachers during the course of a school year. Ho

and Kane (2013) found that having multiple observers increases the validity of observation data. They also found that when multiple observers are used, a system should be in place to train evaluators to ensure a higher reliability among evaluators' ratings. Even though trained evaluators can demonstrate inter-rater reliability in training, the notion that subjective observations will provide objective data for educators is unlikely. Hill, Charalambous, and Kraft (2012) found that, although reliability among raters is preferable, "it may not be feasible for some complex performance areas within teaching" (p. 63).

Characteristics of Effective Feedback

As required by the national RTTT grant program for teacher evaluation systems, feedback is a necessary component that should support professional growth component and be tied to a teacher's overall evaluation. Akkuzu (2014) describes feedback as a door for teachers to open to obtain data about themselves through the eyes of others. According to the report published by Education First (2015) "a cycle of inquiry during which a teacher and instructional leader work collaboratively to reflect on the teacher's practice, examine the evidence about the relationship between the teacher's work and student outcomes, and make changes that improve learning for that teacher's students" (p.15).

An effective feedback process begins before a classroom observation occurs and before any discussion between an observer and teacher transpires. To provide teachers with useful feedback, it is necessary to have a structure and protocols in place that serve as a guide to all parties involved (Feeney, 2007; May et al., 2011; Myung & Martinez, 2013; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014). Roussin and Zimmerman (2014) explain that to balance the power administrators have in the evaluation process, a feedback protocol should be in place so that teachers and observers know how and when feedback conversations will occur. For feedback to

positively impact performance, the teacher must have a positive perception of the feedback. For the feedback to be effective, the following elements should be considered: conferencing, access to resources, timeliness, evaluator-teacher relationship, and the quality of feedback.

Conferencing. Conducting pre- and post-observation conferences is a common feedback strategy that has been used by observers for many years. May et al. (2011) studied the perception of pre and post observation conferences with teachers and found that all teachers who participated in the conferences found them to be beneficial and support their professional growth. Teachers from the study explained that face-to-face conferences were more useful than written feedback, as they were able to engage in relevant discourse about the observation. Research also suggests that establishing protocols and using agendas when conferencing can lead to more meaningful discussions between the evaluator and teachers in addition to improving the quality of feedback that is provided (Myung & Martinez, 2013).

Pre-conferences are useful as they provide teachers with the opportunity to frame the upcoming observation for their evaluator. Though many teacher evaluation systems promote the use of unscheduled observations, Ho and Kane (2013) found that removing the element of surprise increased the reliability of observations and allowed evaluators provide more relevant feedback. Unscheduled observations are designed in an attempt to increase teacher accountability but have been found to heighten anxiety and reinforce the notion that observations are punitive and not intended to support teacher growth. With scheduled observations, a preobservation conference can occur in which teachers and evaluators can discuss the lesson objectives, instructional strategies, assessment methods, and any other pertinent information. A preobservation conference provides both parties with a common understanding of what is expected to occur during the lesson and allows for a more meaningful observation and post

conference (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2016). Carpenter (2016) found that when pre-conferences focus on teacher's individual goals it can lead to evaluators providing more actionable feedback which in turn will have more of an influence on classroom practices.

Evaluators have expressed concern that having a preconference, and ultimately a scheduled observation, provides teachers the opportunity to prepare, which may mask areas of deficit. However, research has found that when comparing scheduled and unscheduled observations, the difference in ratings for teachers was minimal, and the differences in practices among educators were still evident (Ho & Kane, 2013). Also, a scheduled observation coupled with a preconference provides teachers with the opportunity to select the lesson that will be observed, which can lower anxiety and allow for mental preparation (Ho & Kane, 2013; Khachatryan, 2015; Myung & Martinez, 2013).

After a classroom observation has occurred, there is an opportunity for a face-to-face post conference. Feeney (2007) found that an observation is not meaningful and will not lead to professional growth if it is not interpreted, discussed, and reflected on by the teacher and observer. Range et al. (2016) found that teachers viewed postconferences as significantly more important than pre-conferences and viewed the feedback from them as more useful. During the postconference, the observer and teacher should review and reflect upon the data collected from the observation, link the teacher's strengths and weaknesses to personal goals, and collaboratively decide on the next steps for the teacher. Zepeda (2002) noted that postobservation conferences are collaborative and "provide[s] opportunities for teaches to talk about, inquire into, and reflect on their practices with the assistance for the supervisor" (p. 247). A recent action research study conducted by Carpenter (2016) found that having the opportunity to communicate with their evaluator about the observation and provide their opinion about the

feedback resulted in more meaningful feedback to the teacher that was better aligned to individual goals and needs. Zepeda (2002) noted that

Access to Resources. The collaborative postconference discussion of next steps for the teacher is a critical component to using the feedback and to implement change. Research suggests that in addition to a collaborative feedback conversation, teachers should be provided with access to resources that are aligned with the teacher's content area and specific need. When evaluators provide specific feedback and guidance in helping teachers acquire tools and resources, it has a positive impact on educator pedagogy (Carpenter, 2016). Resources can include peer observation, opportunities for support from academic coaches or peer mentors, and support in planning and implementing new instructional strategies (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001).

Timeliness. The timeliness of the postconference is imperative. Feedback should be given no more than five days after an observation has occurred. Providing timely feedback has been shown to relate to more effective use of feedback data and has a positive impact on teacher responsiveness. Research has found that immediate feedback allows teachers to acquire targeted behaviors faster and more efficiently (Cherasaro, Brodersen, Yanosku, Welp, & Reale, 2015; Scheeler, Ruhl, & McAfee, 2004). Scheeler et al. (2004) found that immediate feedback impacts the efficacy of teachers and that evaluators should find ways to provide feedback as close to the observed teaching as possible.

Evaluator-Teacher Relationship. Classroom observation ratings and feedback can impact teacher efficacy and motivation. Khachatryan (2015) explains that the goal of evaluator feedback is "to encourage learning and improve performance" (p. 168) among educators. Depending on the evaluator-teacher relationship, feedback can have a negative or positive impact

on efficacy and motivation. A relationship of mutual respect between the evaluator and teacher should be in place so that a balance of support and challenge can be established and used for professional growth. Additionally, if the relationship is not in place, teachers may feel pressure to implement instructional practices recommended by the evaluator, which can stifle instructional innovation (Kane, 2012; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014; Stuhlman, Hamre, Downer, & Pianta, n.d.)

To ensure that evaluator feedback has a positive impact on instruction, there must not only be a relationship of respect, but one of trust. Trust is a critical component that needs to be in place so that teachers are comfortable and receptive when discussing growth opportunities with their evaluators. When there is an established rapport between both parties, data can be used as a route to provide teachers with meaningful feedback and opportunities for self-reflection. Goe, Biggers, and Croft (2012) explain, “building trust and strong relationships among teachers, and between teachers and evaluators, is critical to ensure that teachers can benefit most from evidence-based conversations, resulting in successful use of evaluation results for teacher learning” (p.1). If a culture of trust does not exist, the feedback conversations will be ineffective, will not result in changes to instructional pedagogy, and can negatively impact the efficacy of teachers (Goe et al., 2012; Khachatryan, 2015; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014).

In addition to mutual respect and trust, a collaborative culture must exist for feedback to effectively support professional growth. Roussin and Zimmerman (2014) explain that to make “feedback useful is to understand that it is not the observer’s story, but rather the narrative that the teachers create from the feedback to plan for future actionable results” (p. 39). The narrative is best created in a collaborative, face-to-face manner, with the teacher and evaluator working together to engaging in reflective discourse and establish professional goals that positively

impact student learning (Feeney, 2007; Range et al., 2013; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014).

When a collaborative and trusting culture exists, and when teachers feel that they have a positive impact on the lives of their students, it builds teacher efficacy and supports a culture of collective efficacy within the school (Bandura, 1997; Hoy, Sweetland & Smith, 2002; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014).

Quality. Classroom observations not only play a critical role in identifying effective teachers, but also serve as a way to provide educators with quality feedback to enhance their pedagogical practices. Research studies have found that teachers feel feedback is not specific enough, and it often only affirms what they are doing well or states what was observed in the classroom, with minimal constructive commentary or suggestions for improvement. When the recipient of the feedback perceives that it is constructive, the feedback identifies specific areas for change and relates to pre-identified professional goals, the individual is more likely to reflect and take ownership of their professional growth (Akkuzu, 2014; Feeney, 2007; Roussin & Zimmerman, 2014; Scheeler et al., 2004).

Product feedback, which focuses on the product or end result, and process feedback, which specifies how tasks were performed, result in positive effects on performance. Alternatively, when feedback includes commentary, positive or negative, that directs attention to one's self or ego, referred to as self-feedback, it reduces teacher motivation and leads to disengagement (Khachatryan, 2015). Khachatryan (2015) summarizes the types of feedback and the impact of each on teacher pedagogy: If a teacher receives self-feedback, teaching is unlikely to change. If a teacher receives product feedback, his motivation is likely to increase, and teaching is likely to change. If a teacher receives process feedback, she can learn about her teaching, moves and will likely be able to change practice. (p.171)

As evaluators use classroom observations as a platform to promote instructional change and educator growth, it is necessary that they understand the types of feedback and the implications that are tied to them. Research has found that general feedback, which is vague and unspecific, does not promote teachers to self-reflect or make changes to their pedagogy (Feeney, 2007; Stuhlman et al., n.d.).

Another important element in providing relevant feedback is the use of student data to support the observer findings and enhance the quality of feedback conversations. In an era where student growth data directly impacts teacher evaluation ratings, it is beneficial when student data is included in feedback. In Lochmiller's (2016) study on instructional feedback in the secondary school setting, he found that when student data was used, administrators and teachers were able to have more meaningful and specific conversations about pedagogy. This finding is supported by Feeney's (2007) previous research, which found that when data is used in the evaluative process and coupled with meaningful feedback, it promotes a structure where teachers can reflect and internalize the feedback and make adjustments to their teaching.

Empirical Findings

In the following table, empirical studies relating to classroom observation and the feedback effectiveness provide the context for the literature review regarding other studies that have influenced and relate to the proposed action research case study. These studies include quantitative and qualitative research with findings that provide guidance and perspectives into the use of classroom observations to provide teachers with effective feedback. Some of the most relevant studies in listed did not take place in the United States, which does pose some limitations to the relevance of their findings.

Gaps in Literature

Evaluation systems continue to change as policymakers search for a tool that provides information for growth and supervision. The research on the correlation between individual goal setting coupled with classroom observations as a component of teacher evaluation systems and the impact on teacher self-efficacy is limited. Although there have been various research studies that focus on learning goal orientation theory, teacher self-efficacy, and characteristics of effective feedback, there is a gap in the research in terms of explaining the connection between the three areas. The studies that are similar to the areas of feedback, self-set professional goals, and self-efficacy have not been conducted in the United States (Akkuzu, 2014; Bedir, 2015; & Runhaar et al., 2010). While the information provided from the studies is useful, there are limitations due to the differences in the setting in which they were conducted.

While research on characteristics of effective feedback has been conducted in the United States, many of these studies have not been conducted in an elementary school setting. Though possible limitations from those studies exist because of setting was not in an elementary school, findings from those studies show there are possible positive correlations between self-set professional goals, self-efficacy, and observation feedback. However, the findings are limited because the studies on feedback were not designed to specifically measure influences on self-efficacy and professional goals. Although not causative, bodies of research in all three areas suggest that there could be a possible correlation between teacher goal setting, evaluator feedback from classroom observation, and teacher self-efficacy.

To build teacher self-efficacy, educational leaders should focus more on relating feedback to individual goals and professional growth rather than evaluative measures. Teachers are often told the purpose of evaluation systems is to promote teacher development; however, “in

the real world theory often fails to inform practice” (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p. 48). While the role of the teacher evaluation is important, developing a culture that recognizes pedagogical abilities and promotes teacher growth through feedback should outweigh the politics in assigning teacher ratings that indicate effectiveness. By incorporating research-based feedback strategies into classroom observations, it appears that leaders can provide differentiated support to enhance the individual growth of educators.

Table 1. Themes in Empirical Literature

Bibliographic Information	Methods/ Context	Findings
Akkuzu, N. (2014). The role of different types of feedback in the reciprocal interaction of teaching performance and self-efficacy belief. <i>Australian Journal of Teacher Education</i> , 39 (3), 37-66.	This mixed methods study was conducted with student teachers in a Chemistry Teacher Program in Turkey. The study was designed to bridge the gap between feedback, self-efficacy, and teaching performance.	Results indicated that different types of feedback directly impacted self-efficacy beliefs.
Bedir, G (2015). Perception of teaching efficacy by primary and secondary school teachers. <i>International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education</i> , 8(1), 509-522.	This study was conducted with primary and secondary teachers in Turkey. It utilized the Teacher Efficacy Scale to collect quantitative data about teacher perception in six key areas (course design, instructional strategies, classroom management, technology use, interpersonal relations, and learning assessments).	The study found that teachers had the most self-efficacy in the area of classroom management followed by course design, interpersonal relationships, learning assessments, and technology use. Teachers felt the least effective in instructional strategies.
Hill, H. C., Charalambous, C. Y., & Kraft, M. A. (2012). When Rater Reliability Is Not Enough: Teacher Observation Systems and a Case for the Generalizability Study. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 41(2), 56-64.	This qualitative study used teacher data from non-specified area of the United States. It used rater evaluations from middle school math teacher’s videotaped lessons to analyze the elements that must be in place for evaluations to be reliable.	Observation instrument, rater training, and scoring impacts validity. Inter-rater reliability should not be the sole measure in valid observational systems. Ratings varied from lesson to lesson.
Ho, A. D., & Kane, T.J. (2013). <i>The reliability of classroom observations by school personnel</i> . Seattle, WA: Measures of Effective Teaching Project.	Quantitative study in Florida that used a video library from 67 teachers to determine the reliability of different observation scenarios by varying the amount of time and type of raters for each observation.	Multiple observes reduce the possibility of error in teacher evaluation. Interrater reliability is key for effective observation feedback and scoring. Notification before observation found observations to be more reliable

Khachatryan, A. (2015). Feedback on teaching from observations of teaching: What do administrators say and what do teachers think about it?. <i>NASSP Bulletin</i> , 99(2), 164-188.	This qualitative study took place at a high school in California. It examined written observation feedback from a Vice Principal to teachers. Teachers use 'think aloud' to provide their response on the observation feedback.	Process and product feedback on classroom instruction activates teacher learning and motivates. Teachers felt validated by the feedback, which led to increased motivation and reflection.
Lochmiller, C. R. (2016). Examining administrators' instructional feedback to high school math and science teachers. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i> , 52(1), 75-109. DOI: 10.1177/0013161X15616660	This was a multicase qualitative study that took place in the western United States. It included more than 50 participants, teachers and administrators, from five high schools. The goal of the study was to determine how different content areas impacted the types of feedback administrators provided to teachers.	Three major findings: 1. The feedback was general and focused on pedagogy as opposed to content understanding, 2. Administrator feedback was dependent upon past experiences as a teacher, 3. Administrators used student assessment data to try and make feedback more meaningful.
Runhaar, P., Sanders, K., & Yang, H. (2010). Stimulating teachers' reflection and feedback asking: An interplay of self-efficacy, learning goal orientation, and transformational leadership. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i> , 26, 1154-1161.	This qualitative methods study was conducted in a Dutch College for secondary vocational education and training. Likert scales were used to measure reflection, feedback, self-efficacy, and transformational leadership. The goal of the study was to investigate how teachers' reflection and feedback requests can be explained by self-efficacy, learning goal orientation, and transformational leadership.	1. There was a positive relationship between occupational self-efficacy and reflection and asking for feedback. 2. There was a positive correlation between learning goal orientation on reflection and feedback. 3. There was a positive correlation between occupational self-efficacy, reflection, and feedback.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To fully support teachers in making pedagogical growth, it is necessary to have a feedback process in place that takes their needs and ideas into consideration. A mixed methods action research case study is the best methodological approach to ensure the incorporation of teacher's perceptions in the design and implementation of the observation feedback process intervention. Case study research is an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon within its authentic context. This exploration took into account multiple perspectives and the uniqueness of the authentic organizational context (Simons, 2009). Coghlan and Brannick (2014) describe action research as a cyclical process of deliberate change. Within this process participants engage in assessing the call for change, planning for action, taking action, and evaluating action. The experiences gained by action research participants are invaluable, and through the experiences of "constructing, planning, and taking action they might experience some success in some of their activities, and not in others" (p.103). Utilizing the perspectives and perceptions of the teachers at Metro Elementary was critical in developing a feedback process that was both beneficial and meaningful.

This mixed methods action research case study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative data collection. As Sagor (2011) explains, most action research studies include both quantitative and qualitative data-collection methods. Using both types of data was important for this study, as the situationality and context of the study were paramount in understanding the findings. In this study, quantitative data from the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-

Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) were used to inform the design of an intervention for the classroom observation feedback process. The action research team consisted of four teachers, one representative from the Metro School District office, and administrators from Metro Elementary, collaboratively designed the intervention. During the implementation of the intervention, qualitative data from teacher participants was collected and analyzed to inform potential changes or updates to the classroom observation feedback process. Qualitative research was appropriate for this case study as it could “paint a robust picture of a phenomenon” that cannot always be found through quantitative means (Sagor, 2011). At the conclusion of this study, the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) were re-administered to provide data to compare with the results obtained before implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. Lastly, the action research team collaborated to create recommendations for the future classroom observation feedback process used at Metro Elementary and provided insight into how the findings from this study could inform future research and feedback processes at other elementary schools who also used TKES as their teacher evaluation tool (Georgia Department of Education, 2016).

Action Research Approach

Sagor (2011) defines action research as an investigation conducted “by the person or the people empowered to take action concerning their own actions, for the purpose of improving their future actions” (p.5). Researchers conducting action research studies complete them within their own organization with the goal of making a positive change. During the study, the action research team, typically comprised of the researcher and other staff members within the

organization, investigate problems, collaboratively develop interventions, and make modifications to the interventions with the intent of finding solutions to improve the organization. When this type of research is conducted in schools, it transmits the idea that through thoughtful reflection and continuous improvement efforts it is possible to improve the educational system and achieve the vision of the organization's members (Sagor, 2011).

Coghlan and Brannick (2014) use several broad characteristics to define action research explaining that it is “research in action, rather than research about action; a collaborative democratic partnership; and a sequence of events and an approach to problem solving” (p.6). For this study, the team will use three cycles of action research embedded within an overarching 90-day cycle (Figure 4).

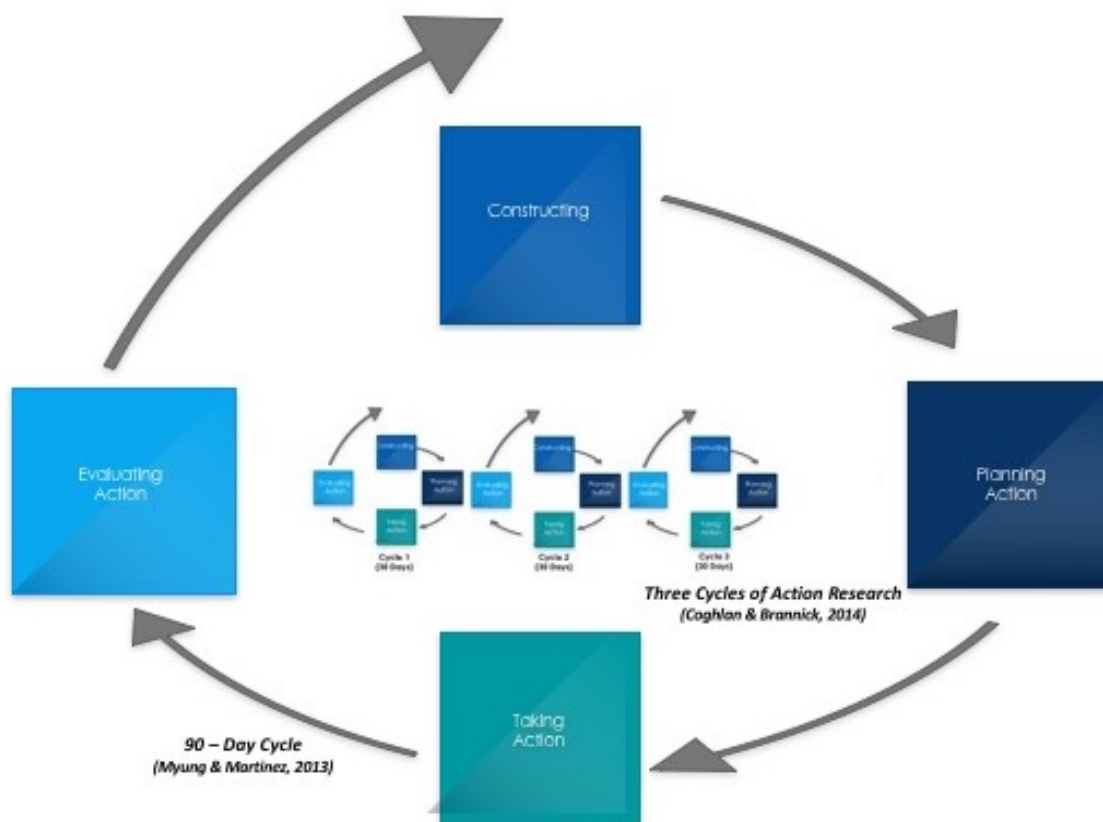


Figure 4: Model for action research. The methodology of action research includes four steps: constructing, planning action, taking action, and evaluating action.

As explained by Coghlan and Brannick (2014) in a study using multiple cycles of action research, the cycles may have different time spans and may be overlapping or running concurrently to one another. In a mixed methods action research case study, there is flexibility within the cycles, as they are meant to guide not hinder the action research process. In this study, the overarching 90-day cycle (Myung & Martinez, 2013) served as the overall timeframe for implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention with shorter embedded action research cycles, lasting approximately 30 days, to allow for changes to the intervention as identified by qualitative data. Myung and Martinez (2013) explain the purpose of a 90-day cycle is its use as a "disciplined and structured form of rapid inquiry aimed at developing timely and useful information for practitioners" (p.3).

There were several goals in using multiple cycles of action research in this study. The first goal was to work with the action research team to review the literature surrounding classroom observations, the characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory in order to collaboratively decide on an intervention that would improve the current classroom observation feedback process. The second goal was to implement the intervention and assess the teacher's perception of its effectiveness by collecting qualitative data. Lastly, the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention was modified based on the qualitative data, which was collected from the post-observation feedback conversations during the 90-day cycle. Multiple cycles of action research allowed the intervention process to be fluid so that changes could be made when and if necessary.

A mixed methods action research case study was the preferred methodology for this problem because it enabled the team to find and implement an intervention to address a problem that was occurring within Metro Elementary. When using action research to design

interventions, team members not only served in a research capacity but also served as active participants in the collaborative process that leads to organizational change. Action research was appropriate in this proposed study because it developed a culture of inquiry within the school, and empowered educators and help them work as more reflective practitioners.

Study Design

In designing the research plan for this study, it was necessary to review various research strategies to determine the most appropriate method. Research can be categorized into three main approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. As explained by Creswell (2013), these approaches should not be viewed as distinct categories, but rather a representation of different approaches within a research continuum. Qualitative research is exploratory, and typically provides insights into problems while gaining an understanding of reasons, opinions, and motivations. Quantitative research emphasizes objective measurement of information that is usually collected through the use of instruments that provide numbered data. While a mixed methods approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods, to provide a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach could provide in isolation.

Creswell (2013) identifies three components for selecting the appropriate research approach: philosophical worldviews, research design, and research methods. In looking at these components in combination with the aim of this study, which is to explore, understand, and improve the factors influencing teacher perceptions and self-efficacy as they relate to classroom observation feedback, a mixed methods approach is appropriate. Utilizing this method in this study allowed for a holistic and a more complete understanding of the data as it relates to the surrounding theories.

Specifically, a mixed methods case study action research design was employed in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

- How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?
- How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?
- How can individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?
- How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?

Case study research focuses on instance in action, utilizing the authentic context of the problem surrounding the case, while taking place within a bounded system, in this case, Metro Elementary. It uses an authenticated anecdote that takes into consideration the lived experiences of participants as part of the study that would not be possible with other research methods (Simons, 2009).

In conjunction with the case study approach, action research was also be employed for this study. Some important components that were considered when choosing action research as the preferred method were its interactive nature, the aim to develop a holistic understanding, the inclusion of various data-gathering methods, a breadth of preunderstanding, and the conducting of research in real time (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

Research Samples

This action research case study was a mixed methods study, with data coming from both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data from teacher participants was anonymously collected through two surveys, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-

Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) (see Appendix A) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback (Cherasaro et al., 2015) (see Appendix B), before the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. The same two surveys were re-administered in March 2018, following the implementation of the intervention, to compare teacher self-efficacy and the teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback. Qualitative data was be collected from the Feedback Conversation Protocol (Appendix C), used by the teacher and evaluator following each classroom observation.

Study Participants. Study participants included seven action research team members and eight teacher participants. The action research participants included the assistant principal for Metro Elementary, who is also the principal investigator for the study, the principal of Metro Elementary, the school's International Baccalaureate and STEM Coordinator, an instructional support teacher, the lead teacher support specialist for the school, a special education teacher, and a representative from the human resources department at the Metro School District. The study also included eight teachers from Metro Elementary who participated in the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. Participation was open to all teachers at Metro Elementary School who were teachers during the 2016-2017 school year. For the purpose of this study, it was necessary for participating teachers to have previous experiences of feedback from the current principal and assistant principal at Metro Elementary, as outside experiences could skew the pre-survey results and their experiences with observation feedback may have been different.

Informed Consent. A recruitment letter and consent form (Appendix D) was provided to teachers at Metro Elementary to recruit their participation in the study. The form was sent through email, and a hard copy was placed in teacher workboxes. The consent form explained

that participation in the study is voluntary and unrelated to job performance. Teachers had the opportunity to set up a private or small group meeting to discuss the study and any questions about participation. Several teachers volunteered to participate but had questions, so after the consent forms were returned by eight teacher participants, a meeting was set up to answer and clarify questions they had related to study participation. During the meeting, the primary investigator reiterated that participating or not participating in the study would have no impact on their job performance or the perception of job performance by their evaluators. The participants who were recruited as members of the action research team also completed the consent form, and through this, they agreed to participate in constructing an intervention for the classroom observation feedback process that is currently in place at Metro Elementary. All study participants were informed and understood that they could stop participation in the study for any reason at any time.

Data Collection

The action research team worked collaboratively to develop an intervention to improve the classroom observation feedback process using data collected from teacher participants through two quantitative surveys. The first survey, Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b), was designed to provide quantitative data on teacher's perceptions of their efficacy, or ability to make changes effectively (see Appendix A). The second survey, Examining Evaluator Feedback (Cherasaro et al., 2015), was designed to provide quantitative data about how teachers view and internalize feedback provided by evaluators after a formal observation (see Appendix B).

Both the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), were administered twice

during the study, once before the intervention was implemented and once at the conclusion of the intervention. The comparative data from the pre and post surveys was used to inform the effectiveness of the intervention designed by the action research team for the classroom observation feedback process. Survey data was analyzed to determine whether changes in the observation feedback process had a positive influence on teacher's self-efficacy and their perceptions of evaluator feedback.

A final data collection piece was the Feedback Conversation Protocol (see Appendix C) developed by the action research team and modeled after a feedback conversation protocol developed by Myung and Martinez (2013). This protocol was selected by the AR team and was modified to fit the parameters of the study and to ensure that specific and relevant feedback related to teachers' professional goals was provided. Qualitative data from this protocol informed the intervention throughout the 90-day implementation, and as themes are identified, data provided the action research team with information to make modifications to the original intervention.

Data Collection Methods

Quantitative Data Collection. Two quantitative surveys were administered to teacher participants, as part of the preintervention data collection process. The first survey, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b), was designed to provide quantitative data on teachers' perceptions of their individual efficacy, or the ability to make effective change (Appendix A). In this survey, participants responded to individual questions that were then grouped into three efficacy themes: (a) efficacy for student engagement, (b) efficacy for instructional strategies, and (c) efficacy for classroom management, to assess overall teacher efficacy in these areas. The validity and reliability of this survey, originally named the

Ohio State teacher efficacy scale, was examined in three separate studies and was modified to become what is today, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy scale. This new scale was tested by assessing the correlation of this measure against other existing measures of teacher efficacy and was found to be reasonably valid and reliable in the areas of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001a).

The second survey administered with teacher participants, the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), was designed as a tool for educational leaders and administrators to learn more about teachers' perceptions of the feedback they receive as part of the evaluation system (Appendix B). This survey was developed by researchers and practitioners in response to needs identified by the Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance to examine relationships between feedback characteristics, access to resources related to feedback, teacher response to feedback, and teacher performance (Cherasaro et al., 2015). The validity and reliability of this survey were examined by researchers using a variety of statistical techniques, including Rasch analysis and confirmatory factor analysis, and was found to be valid and reliable in informing leaders about teachers' perceptions of evaluator feedback. The survey utilized five categories for data analysis purposes: (a) background information, (b) feedback characteristics, (c) importance of feedback characteristics, (d) beliefs about instructional improvement, and (e) teacher demographics. The quantitative data gathered from this survey was reviewed as aggregate responses to each category and as a whole, or by individual questions that provided specific insight into each category (Cherasaro, et al., 2015).

Both the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro, et al., 2015) were administered twice during the action research cycle, once at the beginning of the study for use by the action research

team to provide data in designing the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, and again at the conclusion of the study to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

The quantitative pre and post survey data that was collected was used to inform the effectiveness of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention that was designed by the collaborative action research team and implemented by the building principal and assistant principal. The quantitative survey data was analyzed using the themes and categories provided by the survey creators to determine whether changes in the classroom observation feedback process had a positive influence on a teacher's sense of self-efficacy.

Qualitative Data Collection. Qualitative data was collected using the Feedback Conversation Protocol, developed by the action research team, modeled after a similar protocol designed by Myung and Martinez (2013) (see Appendix C). This protocol was designed to scaffold listening strategies to foster improvement-oriented conversations related to a teacher's professional goals, sequence the feedback conversation into a predictable format, address the teacher's areas of strength and need, and collaboratively develop next steps with a focus on what each party will do and the necessary resources. This protocol was used as part of the intervention; data was collected using this tool after each classroom observation. Qualitative data from this protocol was used during monthly action research team meetings to inform potential changes to the intervention throughout the 90-day cycle.

Validity and Reliability

The research plan for this action research case study (Table 2) outlined the proposed data collection tools and methods to answer and provide insight into the research questions. Utilizing a mixed methods approach with both quantitative and qualitative data tools allowed the triangulation of data by the action research team. Also, using a mixed methods approach

provided information that was collected through quantitative means to be explained in more detail through the ongoing qualitative data collection.

The teachers that participated in the study were asked to review the transcripts from their feedback conversations to verify accuracy. This served as a checkpoint for the reliability of transcription. The use of NVivo software to organize data into themes to assist with analysis ensured the accuracy of the qualitative data. The action research team served as a final checkpoint because they reviewed the themes that were found in the qualitative data to determine commonalities among teachers and their evaluator feedback conversations.

Timing

The teachers who participated in the study provided approximately two and a half hours of their time over the 90-day cycle. This information can also be found in the recruitment and participant consent letter. At the beginning and conclusion of the study, teacher participants anonymously completed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015).

Completion of both items took approximately 30 minutes, totaling one hour of participation. During the 90-day cycle, teachers participated in pre or post observation conferences to discuss the feedback they have received. Completion of either of these tasks occurred for three classroom observations and took approximately 30 minutes, totaling one and a half hours of participation.

The action research team, which was composed of two teachers, two instructional support staff members, a human resources representative from Metro School District, and school administrators, dedicated approximately 24 hours of time between August, 2017 and March, 2018. Also, four one-hour meetings were scheduled after the 90-day intervention cycle concluded to look at post-survey data and determine future recommendations.

Data Analysis

Data from the quantitative studies was analyzed using the methods provided by the authors of each study. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) provided participants with twenty-four questions using a five point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Data analysis for this survey utilized a factor analysis to determine participant efficacy related to each question. The responses were then grouped into three correlated factors that made up the overarching themes: efficacy for student engagement, efficacy for instructional strategies, and efficacy for classroom management. Data was reviewed holistically by theme and individually for more in-depth analysis to determine strengths and weakness within broader efficacy areas (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001a).

The Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), utilized five main categories for data collection on feedback characteristics: (a) background information, (b) feedback characteristics, (c) importance of feedback characteristics, (d) beliefs about instructional improvement, and (e) teacher demographics. It also included components for the importance of feedback and beliefs about instructional improvements as it relates to feedback. The quantitative data gathered from this survey was analyzed by aggregate responses to each category as a whole and by individual questions that allowed for more insight into specific areas within each category (Cherasaro et al., 2015).

Qualitative data was collected through the post observation conferences that occurred during the 90-day implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process. To analyze this data, a coding and categorizing strategy utilizing themes that emerge from the Feedback Conversation Protocol was used (Simons, 2009). NVivo software was used to assist with organization and analysis of the qualitative data. NVivo software provided structure to

unstructured qualitative data by identifying trends, themes, and patterns. During monthly action research team meetings, members used the Data Driven Dialogue protocol (Teacher Development Group, 2002) to interpret and analyze the data that is collected from teacher-evaluator post-observation conferences. This data was collected continuously throughout the 90-day intervention cycle and was used to inform potential changes to the intervention. Transcripts from post observation conferences were shared with the teacher participants following transcription to verify accuracy.

Table 2. The Research Plan

<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Anticipated Data to be Collected</i>	<i>Analysis Approach</i>	<i>Proposed Timeline</i>
How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?	Quantitative: Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Qualitative: Feedback Conversation Protocol	- Transcribed and coded by theme for analysis -NVivo to organize -Member check	October 2017 – March 2018
How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?	Quantitative: Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Quantitative: Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Qualitative: Feedback Conversation Protocol	- Transcribed and coded by theme for analysis -NVivo to organize -Member check	October 2017 – March 2018
How can the individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?	Quantitative: Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Qualitative: Feedback Conversation Protocol	- Transcribed and coded by theme for analysis -NVivo to organize -Member check	October 2017 – March 2018
How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?	Quantitative: Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Quantitative: Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale	Quantitative data disaggregated by theme of question	Pre-Survey August 2017 Post-Survey March 2018
	Qualitative: Feedback Conversation Protocol	- Transcribed and coded by theme for analysis -NVivo to organize -Member check	October 2017 – February 2018

Study Limitations

Evaluation systems continue to change as policy-makers search for a tool that provides information for growth and supervision. The research on the correlation between individual goal setting coupled with classroom observations as a component of teacher evaluation systems and the impact on teacher self-efficacy is limited. Although there have been various research studies that focus on learning goal orientation theory, teacher self-efficacy, and characteristics of effective feedback, there is a gap in the research in terms of explaining the connection between the three areas. The few studies that are similar and focus on the areas of feedback, self-set professional goals, and self-efficacy have not been conducted in the United States (Akkuzu, 2014; Bedir, 2015; Runhaar et al., 2010). While the information provided from the studies is useful, there are limitations due to the differences in the setting in which they were conducted; specifically, the school structures and organizational systems found in different countries may influence the study outcomes.

While research about characteristics of effective feedback has been conducted in the United States, many of these studies have not been conducted in an elementary school setting. Though possible limitations from those studies exist because of setting was not in an elementary school, findings from those studies show possible positive correlations between self-set professional goals, self-efficacy, and observation feedback (Akkuzu, 2014; Bedir, 2015; & Runhaar et al., 2010). However, the findings are limited, as the studies on feedback were not designed to specifically measure influences on self-efficacy and professional goals. Although not causative, bodies of research in all three areas suggest that there could be a possible correlation between teacher goal setting, evaluator feedback from classroom observation, and teacher self-efficacy.

To build teacher self-efficacy, educational leaders should focus less on evaluative measures and more on relating feedback to individual goals and professional growth. Educational leaders often tell teachers that the purpose of an evaluation system is to promote teacher development; however, “in the real world theory often fails to inform practice” (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p. 48). While the role of the teacher evaluation is important, developing a culture that recognizes pedagogical abilities and promotes teacher growth through feedback should outweigh the politics in assigning teacher ratings that indicate effectiveness. By incorporating research-based feedback strategies into classroom observations, it appears that leaders can provide differentiated support to enhance individual growth of educators.

Upon completion of this study, it is my belief that the research will positively impact the classroom observation feedback process at Metro Elementary. The findings from this study could also inform the observation practices that administrators within Metro School District and the state of Georgia utilize within teacher evaluation systems. In addition to informing the classroom observation feedback process, it is my hope that the teacher participants and action research team members in this study can grow professionally and in ways that will have a positive impact on the students at Metro Elementary.

Subjectivity in Research

Simons (2009) explains that within case study research subjective data plays an integral part in the qualitative research process. As the principal investigator, a member of the action research team, and a participant in the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention; I served as the primary instrument in gathering, analyzing, and reporting data. While an understanding and insider view of the organization is significant in action research case study

design, it is necessary to monitor the influence and perspective that one has of the research process and its outcomes.

Serving as the assistant principal at Metro Elementary over the last four years has afforded me the opportunity to get to know the staff members on a deep professional level. It has been challenging for my principal and me to balance our teachers' individual professional development needs with the way we implement classroom observations through the TKES model. Our desire to improve the current process has led me to this action research case study, with the hopes to learn and change our current classroom observation feedback process.

Through the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, it was necessary to keep my personal beliefs separate from the data collection and analyzation process. To help with objectivity, NVivo software was used to assist with organization and analyzation of the qualitative data. This software helped to provide structure to unstructured qualitative data by identifying trends, themes, and patterns that did not infuse any personal biases. The action research team and teacher participants also assisted in keeping the qualitative data collection process as objective as possible through member checks of the transcripts and data collected. The outcomes of this study can help improve the classroom observation feedback process with teachers and positively influence their efficacy, resulting in pedagogical changes that will positively impact students.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY

At Metro Elementary and throughout Metro School District, the morale of teachers is low and the pressure to improve pedagogical practices and increase student learning is higher than ever before. With a heightened focus on student growth, teacher accountability, and school performance ratings, there was a need for a more supportive and effective teacher feedback process. The TKES evaluation system in Metro School District is promoted as one that supports the continual growth and development of teachers and students. However, the teachers' perception of TKES was that the feedback provided by evaluators was not useful, did not help to develop their performance, and did not make them feel supported. This information led me to begin an inquiry into research and actions that could be utilized to make the observation feedback process more effective and be more impactful on teacher pedagogy.

Description of the Context

Metro Elementary is a Title I school that holds the distinction of being the only International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) and nationally certified STEM elementary school in the state, which provides students with a student-centered, transdisciplinary, inquiry-based approach to instruction. As mentioned previously, Metro is located in a suburban area of the southeastern United States. It is one of 83 elementary schools in a school district that serves over 100,000 students. The student body at Metro is extremely diverse, serving families who speak over 20 different home languages and come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. During the 2017-2018 school year, the demographics of the

student population were 44 percent Black, 27 percent White, 19 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian, and 5 percent Multi-Racial.

The teachers at Metro come from a variety of backgrounds and experience levels, and since the current principal began in 2015, there has been an increased amount of teacher mobility. The current teaching staff consists of forty-three teachers. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers have been at Metro for less than three years, and 36 percent of the teachers are in their first three years of teaching. While the staff is dedicated to increasing student growth and achievement through utilization of the IB PYP and STEM approach to learning, there is a need for a more effective classroom observation feedback process to support the teachers in continuously improving and refining their pedagogy.

TKES became the evaluation system for Metro School District during the 2013-2014 school year. When it first began, my role was a classroom teacher, and I was able to experience the classroom observation feedback process firsthand. With my appointment as the assistant principal of Metro Elementary in 2014, my role changed from a teacher to an administrator, and I was able to experience the TKES feedback process through a different lens. As an evaluator I noticed discrepancies in the type of feedback I provided to teachers through TKES, due to its evaluative nature, and the feedback I provided them through informal conferencing and instructional conversations. My perceptions coupled with LKES teacher survey data indicated that evaluator feedback was not useful, did not promote teacher growth, and could have a negative influence on teacher efficacy.

With a need for change from the current classroom observation feedback process as outlined by TKES, the story of this action research study began. Before beginning this study, I worked to identify key research findings that would help inform the next steps for Metro. The

current TKES feedback process included providing teachers with written feedback and a numeric rating on ten performance standards. Research shows that when teachers are given general feedback, it does not promote reflection or lead to changes in pedagogy. Nonspecific feedback can also reduce motivation. When feedback is specific and relates to a teacher's individual goals, it can be correlated with increased self-efficacy and motivation to make changes in pedagogy (Khachatryan, 2015). Current research is available on learning goal orientation theory, teacher self-efficacy, and characteristics of effective feedback; however, there is a gap in the research regarding a possible connection between the three areas.

After identifying the focus of the action research study, it was necessary to determine the major stakeholders whose input and support in the change process could promote success and ultimately have a positive impact on the classroom observation feedback process at Metro Elementary. The primary stakeholders addressed through this action research case study are the teachers and administrators at Metro Elementary. The administrators, which included the building principal and me, were required to put in additional time, effort, and understanding of ourselves as evaluators and instructional leaders to better support teachers. We were required to be transparent with one another and the action research team regarding our ability to give meaningful feedback and be open-minded and willing to change our current practices. The teachers at Metro Elementary will be influenced by the outcomes of the study, as the findings will inform the future classroom observation feedback processes at Metro Elementary. The effects of this action research study will indirectly impact students, parents, and community members. Though they did not have a direct role in the study, the outcomes of the study may influence student performance, which in turn could affect parent and community perceptions of Metro Elementary.

Action Research Team Members and Study Participants

The process of creating an Action Research (AR) team began with a conversation with my principal about teacher perceptions and data as it relates to the TKES classroom observation feedback process. Knowing the type of change that would need to occur to better support teachers and to improve our current feedback practices, it was imperative that I recruited individuals who would be honest, constructive, and reflective while also be willing to participate throughout the research process. My principal and I had numerous discussions about staff members who we felt would understand and embrace the need for change while still being transparent with us as their administrators.

The AR team was comprised of teachers, instructional support staff, administrators, and a representative from the human resources department at Metro School District county office. Each team member brought a unique skill set to the team. The two teachers on the team both have over twenty years' experience. One of the teachers is an interrelated special education teacher, has been at Metro Elementary for over ten years, and serves as a teacher support specialist with our preservice teachers. Her knowledge of the culture and community at Metro coupled with her teaching and mentoring roles made her an excellent fit for the team. The other teacher on the team is the gifted resource teacher at Metro. It was her second year in the building but her fifteenth year with Metro School District. Her experiences outside of Metro and her sound instructional pedagogy brought a different viewpoint and set of ideas about supporting teachers. Two instructional support staff members also participated on the AR team: Metro's IB/STEM coordinator and the Instructional Support Specialist. Both staff members have been at Metro for over ten years and work in a collaborative and supportive role with teachers. They bring instructional and professional insight into the needs of the teachers at Metro.

In addition to the teachers and support staff, the building principal, who had been at Metro for three years, served as a sponsor to the AR study, an AR team member, and a collaborator with me to implement the intervention with teacher participants. As the assistant principal, I served as the lead researcher conducting the study, a member of the AR team, and a study participant in the implementation of the intervention. The final AR team member was a representative from the human resources department at Metro School District. Previously she has been a teacher and administrator within the school district and had a particular interest in the study because one of her current responsibilities includes conducting exit interviews with teachers. She was interested in learning about the research and sharing her experiences as an administrator and district level employee. She shared that in exit interviews many teachers expressed that they had experienced a lack of instructional support from building administrators, so she felt that serving as an AR team member would allow her to better support principals and teachers within the school district.

In addition to the action research team, eight teachers volunteered to serve as participants in the action research study. Teachers in pre-Kindergarten thru fifth grade participated in the study, with the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention focusing specifically on their professional goal areas. Chapter three includes a description of the selection process used to gain commitment from AR team members and study participants.

Cycles of Action Research

The action research team followed Coghlan and Brannick's (2014) model for action research in conjunction with the Myung and Martinez (2013) 90-day cycle for rapid inquiry. The Coghlan and Brannick (2014) action research cycle is composed of a pre-step followed by four steps, which include constructing, planning action, taking action, and evaluating action. The

overarching 90-day cycle (Myung & Martinez, 2013) served as the overall timeframe for implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. Within the 90-day cycle, there were three embedded, shorted action research cycles, each lasting approximately 30 days, which provided the opportunity for changes to the intervention as identified by qualitative data collected through teacher-principal post-observation feedback conversations.

The action research team participated in designing the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention and modifying the intervention throughout the cycles of research as needed. The study participants took part in the implementation of the intervention designed by the action research team.

Implementation Plan

This mixed methods action research case study followed the Coghlan and Brannick (2014) three-cycle model for action research in conjunction with the Myung and Martinez (2013) 90-Day Cycle for rapid inquiry (see Figure 4). The Coghlan and Brannick (2014) action research cycle is comprised of a Pre-Step, which includes identifying the context and purpose, followed by four basic steps: constructing, planning action, taking action, and evaluating action. A general timeline of the events and steps that occurred within the framework of this action research case study are outlined in Table 1.

Table 3

General Timeline of Events by Action Research Cycle Phase

Date	Event
<i>Pre-Step: Context and Purpose</i>	
January 2017 – August 2017	• IRB Approval • Identify AR Team • Gather preliminary data (LKES survey and AdvancED survey) • Review of Literature (teacher evaluation- specifically classroom observation, characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory) • Provide Recruitment Letter and Consent Form (Appendix D) to all eligible teachers and action research team members
<i>Constructing</i>	
September 2017 – October 2017	• Administer pre-surveys: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Appendix A) and Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Appendix B). • AR Team Meetings (review/analyze/interpret research and survey data)
<i>Planning Action</i>	
October 2017	• AR Team Meetings (intervention design) • Classroom Observation feedback Process intervention shared with teacher participants
<i>Taking Action</i>	
October 2017 – March 2018	• Implement Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention (90-day cycle with three embedded 30-day AR cycles) • AR meetings (review qualitative data and make changes to intervention if necessary)
<i>Evaluating Action</i>	
March 2018 – April 2018	• Administer post-survey: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy scale (Appendix A) and Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Appendix B) • AR Team Meetings (review and interpret post-intervention survey data)

Pre-Step. The first phase of the action research cycle consisted of the Pre-Step, in which the context and purpose of the study were established. During this phase, teacher evaluation, specifically classroom observation, evaluator feedback, and teacher goal setting, were identified as an area of improvement by the teachers and administrators at Metro Elementary. The teachers provided informal data regarding their views of the current classroom observation feedback

process, which is a component of TKES (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). Many teachers expressed concerns that the feedback was not valuable or relevant to them because the instructional initiatives within Metro School District change frequently, leaving them no other choice but to make changes in their pedagogy for compliance purposes and not for their professional growth. The teachers also explained that they appreciate constructive criticism. However, they felt that observations were a way to identify what was wrong with their teaching and was only about their evaluation score and not educator growth. This further supported the need to implement an intervention to modify the feedback process, with a goal of changing the way feedback is perceived by teachers so that it positively impacts their efficacy and supports sustained pedagogical changes.

After the collection of informal data from the teachers and administrators at Metro Elementary, the action research team reviewed teacher survey data from the LKES to determine if there was an actual need for change. This survey is completed by teachers at the end the school year and allows them to anonymously provide feedback to their evaluators about their leadership. Based on the data from the 2014-2015 LKES teacher survey (Georgia Department of Education, 2016), 81 percent of teachers within the state and 77 percent at the district level felt that their administrator was committed to helping teachers develop their performance, while 81 percent of teachers in the state and 76 percent of teachers in the district felt that their administrators provided them with useful feedback. During the 2015-2016 school year, 84 percent of teachers at Metro felt their administrator was committed to helping them develop their performance while 86 percent felt that the feedback provided with was useful. When looking at the specific data from Metro Elementary teachers, the percentages are not low enough to initially

raise concerns. However, because of the size of the teaching staff, the percentage of teachers who did not feel supported is equivalent to an entire grade level of teachers at Metro Elementary

Metro Elementary staff survey data from the Metro School District AdvancED accreditation review was also examined (AdvancED, 2017). The survey results included two major findings that aligned to feedback and teacher growth, which supported the data retrieved from the LKES survey (Georgia Department of Education, 2017). Eighty-five percent of the teachers felt that building leaders ensured that supervisory feedback was used to improve student learning. The survey also found that 85 percent of the staff felt that there was a professional learning program designed to build capacity among all professional and support staff members.

Once the preliminary survey data had been reviewed and it supported the identified area of improvement, the action research team solidified the decision that classroom observation feedback and teacher goal setting were areas that needed change. The team reviewed literature about teacher evaluation, specifically classroom observation, characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory.

Constructing. As noted by Coghlan and Brannick (2014), this step is a collaborative venture and involves members of the action research team constructing what the organizational issues are through shared inquiry into the problem by looking at data and literature. During this step, the action research team participated in a deep exploration into changing the classroom observation feedback process used by evaluators with the goal of better supporting teacher growth and positively impacting teacher efficacy. The team participated in dialogue about the problem, current teacher evaluation state legislation, key literature findings, preliminary school data, and pre-survey data from the teacher participants.

Teacher participants were identified during this phase. Participation in the study was voluntary and open to teachers who were not in their first year at Metro Elementary. The consensus among the team was that participants should have received feedback from the same evaluators during the previous school year so that the pre-survey data was consistent and relevant to the current administrators at Metro. This requirement limited the pool of potential participants, and eight teachers volunteered to participate. The participants anonymously completed two pre surveys, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015).

During this phase, the action research team reviewed key literature related to teacher evaluation, classroom observation, effective feedback characteristics, learning goal orientation theory, and teacher self-efficacy. The team engaged in data talks surrounding the preliminary school data and the anonymous pre-surveys that the teacher participants completed. The data conversation protocol Data Driven Dialogue, developed by the Teacher Development Group (2002), was used to guide team discussions about data, as it allowed all participants to have an equal voice while building awareness of individual viewpoints, beliefs, and assumptions. This protocol helped guide the conversations of the action research team, so they focused on data-based facts as opposed to participant feelings, which can lead to subjectivity when interpreting data.

Planning Action. The findings from the administration of the pre-surveys, Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), that the teacher participants completed were analyzed in conjunction with key literature to plan for an intervention to the classroom observation feedback process. Results showed that the teachers had the least amount of

confidence in their instructional strategies, which reflected the findings from a study conducted in Turkey with primary and secondary teachers (Bedir, 2015). Some of the major needs that were identified from the surveys included: (a) relevant professional development, (b) access to resources, and (c) specific feedback related to individual areas of growth. Some of the strengths reported by the teacher participants were: (a) strong relationships between the teacher and their evaluators, and (b) trust in the observation process as it relates to accuracy in feedback and the reliability of the evaluators.

The action research team collaborated to develop a Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention (Table 2), with the intent of making feedback for teachers more meaningful and providing them with enough support to feel comfortable in implementing changes with the goal of increasing their own efficacy. The team designed an intervention based on the areas of need identified by the teacher participants, along with the research surrounding the characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory.

Table 4. The Intervention Plan

<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Action Research Team Activities</i>	<i>Anticipated Outcomes/ Connection to problem, theoretical framework</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>What data will be collected on the intervention?</i>
Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention	Research, design and evaluate, and improve a feedback process intervention that focuses on the characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation, and teacher self-efficacy	Changes in the feedback process based on the characteristics of effective feedback and learning goal orientation theory will positively impact teacher efficacy and improve the feedback process at Metro Elementary	90 days (October 2017 - March 2018)	Qualitative data from teacher-principal conversations using the Feedback Conversation Protocol Quantitative data from post-surveys

The intervention occurred over 90 days (Myung & Martinez, 2013) and included three 30 to 45-minute classroom observations completed by a single evaluator. Before the first

observation, the teacher and evaluator participated in a pre-conference to review the teacher's professional goal. This conference was held in the same manner that the TKES initial pre-evaluation conferences are held due to the fact that one of the overarching goals of this intervention was to improve the TKES feedback process for all teachers during the next school year. TKES pre-evaluation conferences are used to inform the individual being evaluated of the expectations of observations based on performance appraisal rubrics (Georgia Department of Education, 2016). A teacher's professional growth goal is reviewed, and professional learning opportunities that align with the teacher's areas of need are addressed.

Within three days of each observation, the teacher and evaluator participated in the Feedback Conversation Protocol, which was modeled after a protocol developed by Myung and Martinez (2013). This protocol is designed to: (a) scaffold listening strategies that foster improvement-oriented conversations related to a teacher's professional goals, (b) sequence the feedback conversation into a predictable format, (c) address the teacher's areas of strength and need, and (d) collaboratively develop next steps with a focus on what each party will do and the necessary resources. The use of this protocol supports research about the need for collaborative postobservation conferences with the teacher and evaluator, which has found that during this type of conversation "the teacher does not listen passively as the supervisor reads from notes; rather, the teacher reconstructs the events of the classroom with the supervisor" (Zepeda, 2002, p.248). The qualitative data collected from this protocol was used to inform three embedded action research cycles. During each cycle, which lasted approximately 30 days, the action research team met to determine whether adjustments needed to be made to the intervention.

Taking Action. During this step of the action research cycle, the administrators at Metro Elementary worked with teacher participants to implement the intervention for the classroom

observation feedback process. The intervention was implemented over a 90-day cycle, which has been identified as an approximate timeframe. Research defines a 90-day cycle as a “disciplined and structured form of rapid inquiry aimed at developing timely and useful information for practitioners” and these types of cycles “are not intended to be exhaustive studies, but rather quick turn-around pieces on timely topics” (Myung & Martinez, 2013, p. 3). Several issues arose during the implementation of the classroom observation feedback process action research study. As Coghlan and Brannick (2014) explain, action research “provides a structure for shared inquiry into the planned and unanticipated events that occur through the implementation, so as to create the conditions and opportunity for learning and for the change to be sustainable” (p. 83). Utilizing the three embedded action research cycles, the action research team was able to analyze the qualitative data and find solutions to challenges.

Throughout the embedded cycles several modifications to the original Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention were proposed and agreed upon. The first was to change the three-day feedback timeframe to three business days. The administrators found it challenging to meet with the teachers within three days. There had been several inclement weather days and teacher illnesses that made it extremely difficult to achieve the original feedback timeframe. The next change to the intervention was to encourage the post-observation feedback conversations to take place in the teacher’s classroom, when possible, as opposed to the evaluator’s office. This change was designed to increase the collaborative nature of the conversation and to allow the teacher and evaluator to have access to student work samples and materials from the observation. The last modification was to increase the depth of instructional feedback provided to teachers by their evaluator. The qualitative data from the classroom

postobservation transcripts showed that the instructional conversations were surface level and did not go into specific instructional strategies and pedagogy.

Evaluating Action. At the conclusion of the overarching action research cycle, the teacher participants and action research team members evaluated the intervention. The post-intervention surveys were administered with teacher participants. Post-intervention survey data was collected from the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), and was reviewed by the action research team. The post-intervention survey data was analyzed by the action research team and indicated increases on the scales in all areas. Findings for each research question will be explained in detail in Chapter 5.

Story and Outcomes

I began my doctoral program in August 2015 and immediately began to explore a research topic that would be close to my circle of influence as well as something I was passionate about. In my role as assistant principal, I found myself providing teachers with written feedback from formal observations that was general and, in my opinion, didn't support teacher pedagogical growth. Also, during the 2016-2017 school year, the state evaluation system, TKES, began to include a component for teachers to set individual professional goals.

After researching a variety of topics in the realm of teacher evaluation and professional development, I became inspired to see how Metro might be able to modify the current classroom observation feedback process that is in place as part of the state evaluation system. Ongoing research and evaluation of studies led me to areas of teacher observation, evaluation feedback, teacher efficacy, and professional goal setting.

To begin the process of conducting an action research study, the first person I sat down with to discuss the potential project was my principal. I work under her leadership, so her support and sponsorship in this endeavor were critical. After conversations with her about implementing an AR study to address the implications of observation feedback and goal setting on teacher self-efficacy, she was in agreement that we had room for improvement. The principal and I agreed that as administrators and TKES evaluators, an intervention designed to increase the effectiveness of the feedback we provide teachers would benefit us as well as teachers and should have a positive impact on our students.

Following the conversations with my principal, I had informal discussions with teachers throughout the building. I wanted to get a consensus as to whether the teachers found that goal setting and observation feedback were useful in supporting their professional growth, as well as hear their opinions about how these components affected their feelings about their pedagogical abilities. The responses from the teachers I spoke to were mixed. All of the teachers said they would like to receive feedback to improve. However, a few of the most experienced teachers expressed that teaching initiatives change so frequently that they will make changes for compliance but do not think that feedback improves their practices. The newer teachers seemed to be the most eager to receive feedback and often come to find me following any formal or informal observations. Lastly, the teachers said that though they appreciated constructive criticism, they felt that observations were a way to identify what was wrong with their teaching. The teachers' informal feedback further supported my beliefs that an intervention to modify the current classroom observation feedback process was necessary.

After speaking with my principal and having conversations with teachers, I decided to proceed with an AR study that addressed the need for an improved classroom observation

feedback process, with the goal of increasing teacher efficacy. I spoke with my district's research department to get information about their Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements to gain approval for research. I also began the IRB process through the university to obtain their approval for my study.

As I waited for approval from the district and university, I began to have informal conversations to solicit interest in the action research process and gain the preliminary commitment of AR team members. My principal and I had discussed the AR study, and we identified staff members who we felt would be reflective and conscientious when looking at data, reviewing research, and working collaboratively on an intervention that would elicit change in the classroom observation feedback process. As part of the unofficial discussion with the potential AR team members, possible meeting dates and times were reviewed. We anticipated that most meetings would take place after school so that all team members could attend. These discussions led to the implementation of an action research team, which included seven members. These individuals would help drive the overarching cycle of intervention, as well as the embedded research cycles. The team members were identified and chosen based on the different backgrounds and experiences they have had, with the hope that a diverse group could provide differing perspectives and feedback throughout the process.

Once I received IRB approval from the university and the district, I found teacher participants for the study. Participation in the action research study was open to all teachers at Metro Elementary who had taught there during the previous school year. It was necessary for the participating teachers to have previous experiences with TKES and the administrators who provided them with feedback to ascertain accurate pre-survey data that was relevant and related to Metro's current feedback process.

After explaining the expectations of the study to the staff members, eight teachers volunteered to participate. The participating teachers ranged from pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade and had general and special education interrelated roles. The teachers had various experiences in education, with years of experience ranging from two to fourteen years. Detailed information about the recruiting process and consent forms can be found in Chapter 3.

Throughout the action research study, updates were reported to action research team members and teacher participants to keep them updated on the process. Upon completion of the implementation of the intervention, the action research team collaborated in thoughtful work and debriefing to review the data and study outcomes and to identify next steps.

Reflections

As I reflect on the action research process described in this chapter, it is evident that having the collaborative action research team added value to the change process at Metro Elementary. In my role as the leader of the team, I was not only responsible for sharing research and data but also for facilitating conversations that were sometimes uncomfortable and forced team members to think outside of their comfort zone. As a leader, this process taught me how to improve my collaboration with colleagues from different backgrounds and how those experiences in conjunction with my own can work together to have a positive impact.

Through this process, I also learned how important it is that team members and study participants feel comfortable speaking honestly and sharing their thoughts and ideas. As an administrator, it was a challenge to break down the barriers that exist between an evaluator and teacher. In the end, by establishing an open-minded, trusting, and collaborative process, the outcomes of this study have provided insight into the feedback process at Metro Elementary and have informed future practices.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The purpose of this action research case study was to change the classroom observation feedback process that evaluators provide to teachers as it relates to their individual goals, with the hope of positively influencing teacher efficacy. The following research questions guided the action research study:

1. How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?
2. How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?
3. How can the individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?
4. How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?

In this chapter, data from multiple sources were evaluated to inform findings for each of these questions. Pre- and post-survey data, post-observation feedback conversations, and AR team meeting conversations were all considered in understanding the impact that the intervention had on the Classroom Observation Feedback Process at Metro Elementary.

Table 5

Research Findings

Research Questions	Findings
1. How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?	A. Teacher perceptions of classroom observation feedback showed positive increases after the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. B. Teachers perceived post-observation feedback as supportive.
2. How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?	A. Teacher efficacy increased. B. Teachers felt more confident in their instructional practices. C. Feedback provided support and improved teacher confidence in all efficacy areas.
3. How can the individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?	A. Feedback was useful and included improvement suggestions and specific instructional strategies. B. Teachers responded to feedback suggestions to improve progress towards their individual professional goals.
4. How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?	A. The use of the Feedback Conversation Protocol for post-observation conferences that the AR team designed had a positive influence on teacher perceptions of classroom observations. B. The enhancements to current teacher evaluation requirements for timeliness and frequency of classroom observations, positively influenced teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback.

Research Question 1: Teacher Perception of Observation Feedback

This action research case study sought to understand the perceptions teachers have of the classroom observation feedback process that is in place through the current teacher evaluation system, TKES, at Metro Elementary. Data were obtained from quantitative and qualitative sources. Quantitative sources included the administration of the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) before and after the implementation of the intervention to the classroom observation feedback process. Qualitative data was acquired from post-observation conferences with teachers and their evaluator, utilizing the Feedback Conversation Protocol

designed by the AR team and modeled after a similar protocol developed by Myung and Martinez (2013). Data aligned with this research question demonstrated two significant findings:

1. Teacher perceptions of classroom observation feedback showed positive increases after the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention.
2. Teachers perceived post-observation feedback as supportive.

Feedback Perceptions were Positively Influenced

The AR team evaluated how the perceptions of teachers changed over the 90-day implementation of the study. At the onset of the study, participating teachers anonymously completed the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) to inform the intervention design in regarding five feedback characteristics, the importance of feedback characteristics, and beliefs about instructional improvement. Based on the pre-survey results, teachers rated their evaluators highest in credibility and accuracy of feedback. The most considerable areas for growth were identified as access to resources, responsiveness, and usefulness of feedback. The Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention was collaboratively designed by the AR team to address the most significant areas of need. Following the 90-day implementation, which included three classroom observations and face-to-face post-observation feedback conversations, the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) was re-administered and showed positive increases in all areas (see Figure 5).

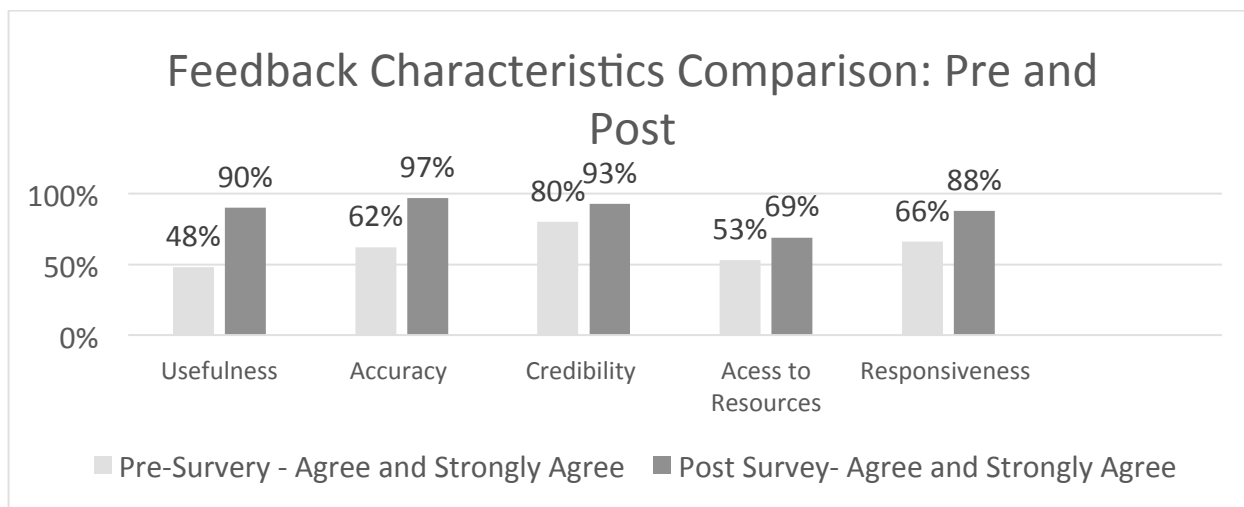


Figure 5: Teacher Perceptions of Feedback Characteristics Comparison: Pre and Post

The AR team analyzed the pre- and post-survey data holistically and then as individual indicators within each feedback characteristic. Over the duration of the 90-day study, an increase was seen in the percentage of teachers who selected agree or strongly agree with the five feedback characteristics. Though the Classroom Observation Feedback Process was designed to specifically focus on the highest areas of need that were identified during the pre-survey, positive increases were seen in all categories.

Usefulness. The usefulness of evaluator feedback data, which pertains to both the specificity of feedback and the timeliness and frequency of feedback, showed that before the intervention, only 48 percent of the teachers provided a rating as agree or strongly agree and was identified as the lowest scoring area. The AR team hypothesized that this might have been because the feedback teachers received during the previous school year was not related to their specific goal area, and was not provided in what may be perceived as a timely fashion. As required by TKES, feedback was provided to teachers based on what the evaluator determined as an area of growth and written feedback was provided within ten business days. After implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process, which provided teachers with

specific feedback related to their individual professional goal within three business days, the survey data showed a significant increase, with 90 percent of teachers responding agree or strongly agree to the question about usefulness of the feedback.

Related to the timeliness of the feedback, 62.5 percent of teachers who responded to the pre-survey stated that they agreed that feedback was provided to them in time a timely manner. Post-survey results found that 100 percent of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the feedback was provided to them promptly and could be used to inform pedagogical practices. Pre-survey data indicated that 62.5 percent of teachers believe the feedback they received from their evaluator included specific improvement strategies as well as specific instructional strategies that could be used to improve teaching. After the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process, which specifically targeted teachers' individual professional goals, 100 percent of the teachers felt that the feedback given to them included specific improvement suggestions as well as ones that were explicitly focused to instructional practices and could improve pedagogy.

Accuracy. The accuracy of evaluator feedback is defined as the “extent to which the person receiving feedback believes that the feedback accurately represents his or her performance” (Cherasaro et al., 2015, p. B-2). After the pre-survey was administered, the AR team identified accuracy as a strength in the teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback, with 62 percent of the teachers selecting agree or strongly agree. At the conclusion of the 90-day intervention, the percentage of teachers who selected agreeing or strongly agree on the question about feedback accuracy increased to 97 percent.

In comparing the data from pre- and post-surveys two areas related to accuracy showed the most significant increases. During the administration of the pre-survey 37.5 percent of

teachers stated that different evaluators would provide the same ratings with the same evidence. Post-survey data found that this increased to 87.5 percent. The AR team hypothesized that since the classroom observations were pre-scheduled, and because both the teacher and evaluator had knowledge and expectations related to the instructional content being observed before the classroom observation, that the teacher's perceptions would be more consistent. The other accuracy indicator that showed the most substantial gains was that that the teacher would receive the same feedback from his or her evaluator, even if the evaluator were examining different evidence or observing additional lessons. The percentage of teachers who selected agree or strongly agree increased from 62.5 percent to 100 percent over the course of the intervention.

Credibility. The credibility of evaluator feedback refers to the extent to which the teacher receiving the feedback believes that the evaluator is qualified to do so. Research has shown that teachers who receive more specific and frequent feedback perceive the source as more credible (Cherasaro et al., 2015). After administration of the pre-survey, the AR team identified that teachers viewed this feedback characteristic the most positively, with 80 percent of the teachers selecting agree or strongly agree when asked if their evaluator was credible. At the conclusion of the 90-day study, this percentage increased to 93 percent.

In the analysis of specific credibility indicators, the AR team found that the overall perception of credibility increased; however, particular indicators showed a small percentage increase in the disagreement of evaluator credibility. During the pre-survey administration, 0 percent of teachers disagreed with any credibility statements. In the post-survey administration 12.5 percent of the participating teachers, which equates to one teacher, disagreed that the evaluator (a) had knowledge of the content/subject to effectively evaluate him or her, (b) had knowledge of effective teaching practices to effectively evaluate him or her, and (c) had an

understanding of the curriculum being observed to effectively evaluate him or her. Those same credibility indicators also showed that 87.5 percent of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with their evaluator's credibility. The AR team hypothesized that the disagreement might have been from a teacher who was upset that the feedback received was not favorable, or that it highlighted pedagogical deficits that the teacher was not receptive to hearing.

Access to resources. Access to resources on the evaluator feedback tool refers to providing teachers with the knowledge and skills to change their practices by allowing them to observe other teachers, engage in conversations with colleagues about specific strategies, and assist teachers in planning and implementing new practices (Cherasaro et al., 2015). Pre-survey results found that 53 percent of participating teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient access to resources. This percentage increased to 69 percent during the post-survey administration. The AR team agreed that access to resources was still an area for growth, specifically as it relates to the ability for teachers to informally observe peers and engage in conversations about instructional strategies.

As the AR team desegregated and analyzed the pre- and post-survey data, they had several hypotheses about the findings, specifically why the increase wasn't as significant as it had been with the other characteristics. The survey used for this study included the following indicator, "I was able to observe expert teachers modeling skills that related to my feedback" (Cherasaro et al., 2015, A-3), which was not addressed explicitly in the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention or the Feedback Conversation Protocol. During the pre-survey, 50 percent of participating teachers selected disagree or strongly disagree, and 37.5 percent selected agree. The percentage of teachers who disagreed or strongly disagreed went down to 25 percent during the post-survey, but the percentage who agreed also decreased to 12.5 percent;

62.5 percent of participating teachers neither agreed nor disagreed. The purpose of the intervention was to establish a framework for face-to-face feedback conversations between the evaluator and teacher, but the intervention did not explicitly address the need to observe expert teachers. The AR team hypothesized that since many teachers stated in the post-observation feedback conversations that they felt the discussion was providing them with adequate support, a next step would be to address this need.

Responsiveness. Responsiveness as a characteristic of feedback refers to the steps the teacher takes in response to the feedback provided by his or her evaluator. Pre-survey results indicated that 66 percent of participating teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they were responsive to evaluator feedback, which increased to 88 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing after the duration of the study.

During the pre-survey, 37.5 percent of participating teachers indicated that they sought professional development opportunities in response to feedback, with post-survey results showing that this increased to 87.5 percent. Fifty percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they tried new classroom management strategies during the pre-survey, which increased to 87.5 percent of teachers in post-survey data collection.

Classroom Observation Feedback as Support

The AR team analyzed qualitative data in conjunction with the quantitative data from the pre- and post-surveys. Qualitative data from post-observation conferences found that teachers were receptive to their evaluator's feedback and perceived it as a means of support. All teachers who participated in the intervention shared that the feedback was helpful and valuable as they worked towards achieving their individual professional goals. One teacher reported the following

when asked if the feedback from the evaluator/teacher post-observation conference had been helpful:

This feedback process has really helped me with different strategies that could be used to improve my own professional development. The different ideas made it better for the kids in my classroom as they were able to benefit from new learning strategies that improved their learning environment and academic success.

Another teacher participant, who shared the following, echoed a similar sentiment:

When I volunteered to participate in the study I was a little nervous about how honest the conversations would be because I don't want to be viewed as an ineffective teacher. But, since we have started and had great conversations about instruction, my classroom, and my kids, I am really excited about the type of support this has given me.

The AR team felt that these statements demonstrated not only the perception that the changes to the Classroom Observation Feedback Process had been successful, but that these changes had given teachers a welcomed layer of support from building administrators. Teacher perceptions in conjunction with the post-survey data solidified the finding that teachers perceived the classroom observation feedback as supportive.

Research Question 2: The Influence of Classroom Observation Feedback on Efficacy

At the beginning of the action research process, the AR team at Metro Elementary identified that the classroom observation feedback process did not adequately support teachers and could be correlated to low teacher efficacy. To monitor this hypothesis, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) was administered before the intervention implementation and at the conclusion of the study. The purpose of this survey was to assess the influence that classroom observation feedback has on teacher's perceived efficacy.

Qualitative data was also collected during post-observation feedback conversations between the participating teacher and their evaluator. The following findings were related to the second research question:

1. Overall teacher efficacy increased after implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention.
2. Teachers felt more efficacious in their instructional practices, which were related to their individual professional goal.
3. Feedback provided support and improved teacher confidence in all efficacy areas.

Increase in Teacher Efficacy

The AR team used survey results from the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) to monitor the overall efficacy that teachers had before and immediately following the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. At the beginning of the action research process, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) pre-survey was administered to teacher participants to ascertain information on their beliefs in their capability to make a difference in student learning and get through to students. Pre-survey data showed that the mean score in overall efficacy of the participating teachers was 6.50 out of a possible 9.00. After the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process, intervention survey results indicated that the mean score for teacher efficacy had increased to 7.40 (see Figure 6). This increase demonstrates that there may be a correlation between the implementation of the intervention and its influence on teacher efficacy.

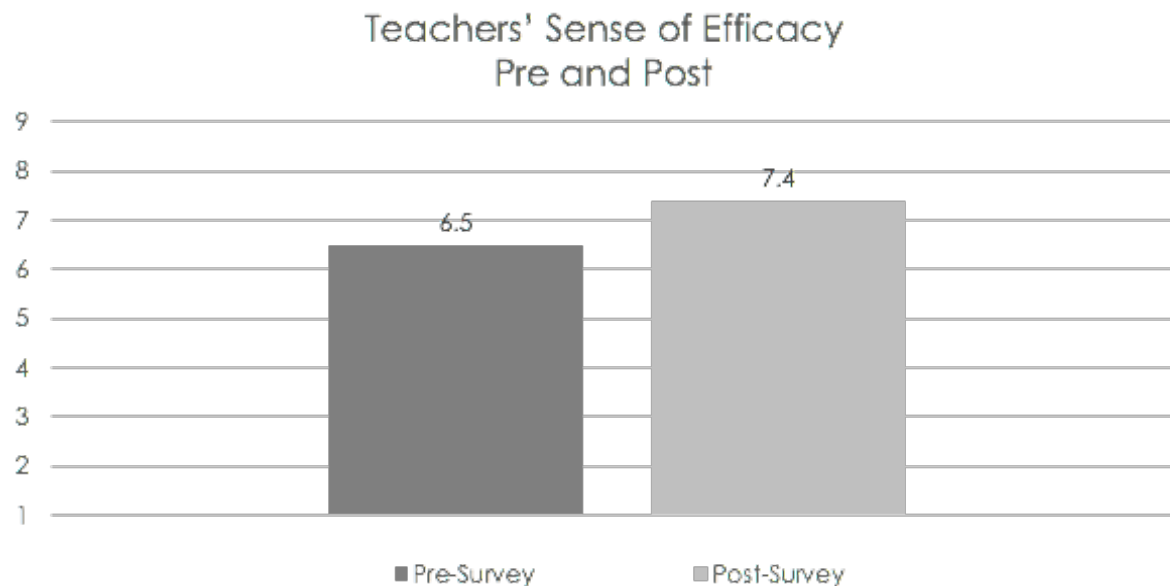


Figure 6: *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy: Pre- and Post-Survey Mean Scores*

Increased Efficacy in Instructional Strategies

The pre-data from the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) found that teacher participants felt the least efficacious in instructional strategies with a mean score of 6.29 out of 9.00. Efficacy in instructional strategies had the lowest mean score on the survey, with the mean scores for efficacy in classroom management and efficacy in student engagement being 6.70 and 6.54 respectively. This data in conjunction with pre-survey results from the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) and research on feedback characteristics and learning goal orientation theory informed the design of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. The intervention was designed specifically to target teachers' individual professional goals, and throughout the implementation of the intervention, the AR team reviewed qualitative post-observation feedback conversation data. The administrators focused heavily on collaborating with the teacher participants to reflect and provide specific feedback related to instructional practices, with the goal of positively

influencing teacher efficacy in that category. During the feedback conversations one teacher communicated the following regarding her implementation of instructional strategies:

These conversations have been helpful because I would have never thought to implement the types of differentiation in my literacy stations without the ideas and suggestions [my evaluator] provided.

At the conclusion of the intervention, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) was readministered with participating teachers. Survey data showed that the mean efficacy score in instructional strategies had increased to 7.60 out of 9.00, and was now the area highest rated by teacher participants (see Figure 7). The AR team hypothesized that this increase could be attributed to the intervention focused on instructional practices related to the individual goal areas of teachers.

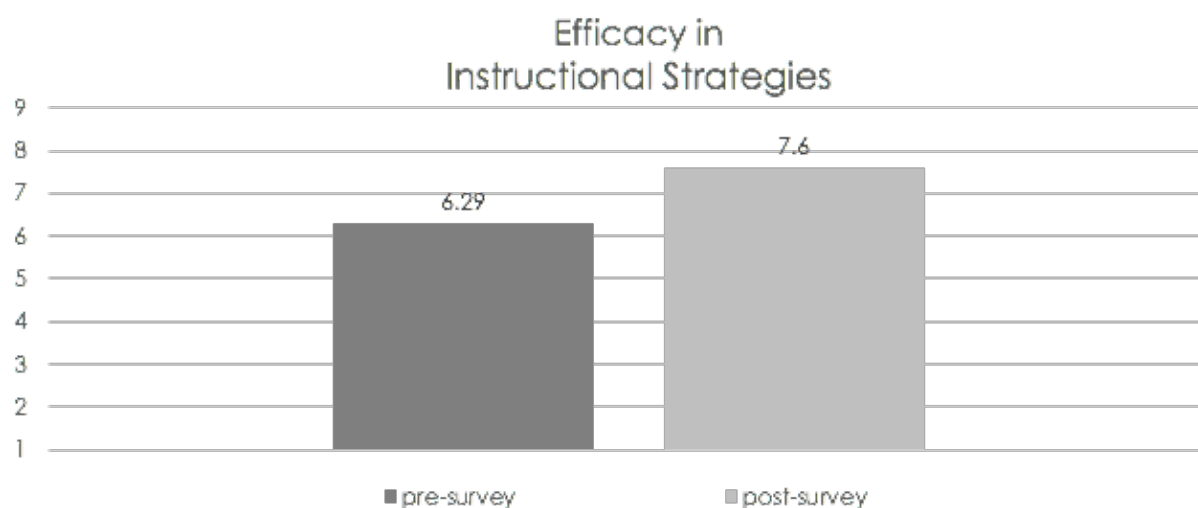


Figure 7: *Efficacy in Instructional Strategies Pre- and Post-Survey Mean Scores*

Feedback Provides Support and Improves Confidence

The intervention that was designed by the AR team to influence the Classroom Observation Feedback Process at Metro Elementary focused explicitly on improving efficacy in instructional strategies, as that was the lowest scoring efficacy area and was most closely related

to the research on learning goal orientation theory and the characteristics of effective feedback. Though efficacy in classroom management and efficacy in student engagement were not the focus of the intervention designed by the AR team, analysis of pre- and post-survey data from the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) showed increases in all efficacy areas (see Figure 8).

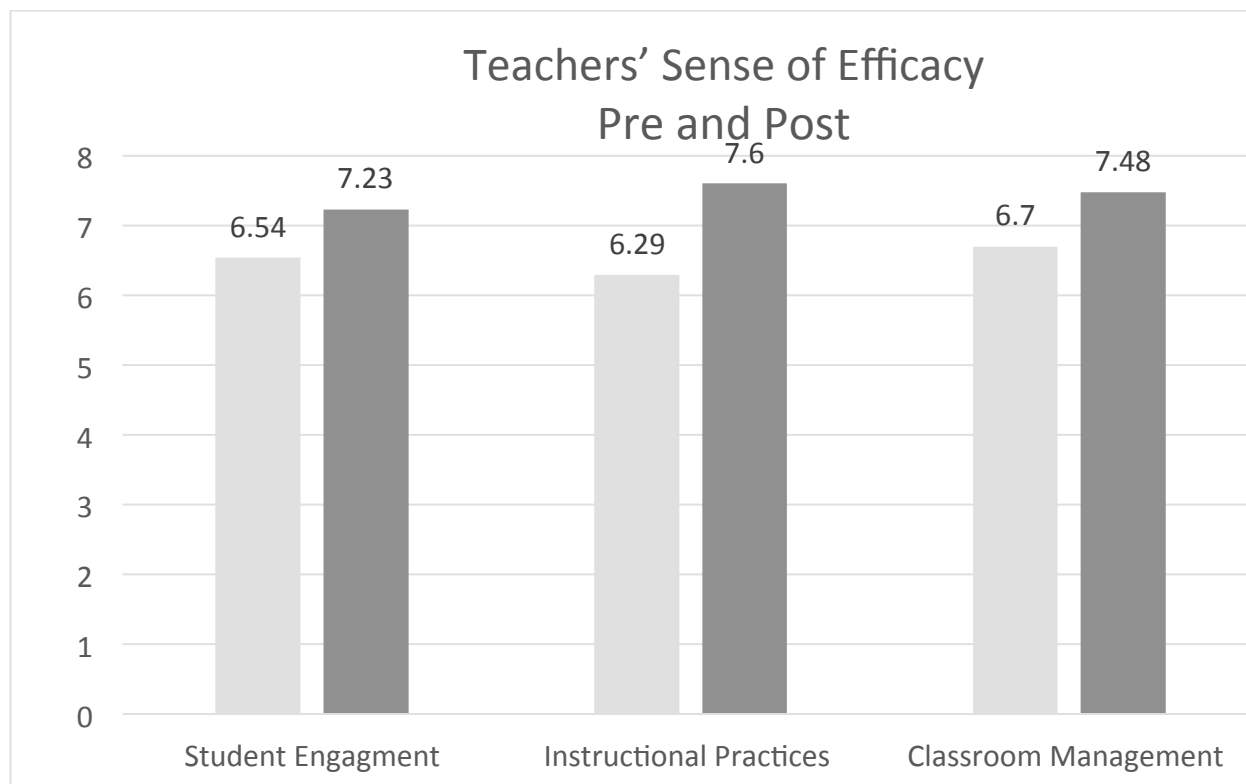


Figure 8: *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Mean Scores by Efficacy Areas: Pre- and Post*

Findings from the pre- and post-survey results indicated the following: (a) increase in mean score of efficacy in student engagement from 6.54 to 7.23, (b) increase in mean score of efficacy in instructional strategies from 6.29 to 7.60, and (c) increase in mean score of efficacy in classroom management from 6.00 to 7.48.

The qualitative findings from the study, as they relate to efficacy focused on teachers' confidence in their practices and identify what went well during the observation as a part of the

structured feedback conversation. After the first round of postobservation conversations, both administrators shared with the AR team that the teachers they were working with struggled to identify positives from their observation. Teachers seemed to immediately focus on areas for improvement, and it wasn't until they were reminded about the positives as a starting point that they shared them. This became easier for the teachers for the second and third observation, as a part of the protocol, but it made the AR team wonder if what appeared to be a lack of confidence is what was influencing teacher efficacy.

At the conclusion of the study, the AR team members were not surprised by the improvements in all efficacy areas; they felt that the areas of efficacy related closely to the classroom setting. However, there was a discussion regarding the need to continue to increase teacher efficacy in all areas and to increase teacher confidence in order to better support students.

Research Question 3: Improving Classroom Observation Feedback Through the Use of Teacher Professional Goals

Using data and research the Feedback Conversation Protocol (see Appendix C) was developed by the AR team and modeled after a similar protocol designed by Myung and Martinez (2013). This protocol was selected by the AR team and was modified to fit the parameters of the study and to ensure that the needs identified by pre-data were addressed, including providing relevant feedback that relates to teachers' professional goals. Throughout the 90-day intervention, feedback was given that related to the individual professional goals of the teacher participants, and the following findings emerged:

1. Feedback was useful and included improvement suggestions and specific instructional strategies.

2. Teachers responded to feedback suggestions to improve progress towards their individual professional goals.

Useful and Specific Feedback

To ensure that the feedback provided to teachers was specific and useful to them, the Feedback Conversation Protocol (see Appendix C) was put in place as a means to scaffold post-observation feedback conversations between the evaluator and teacher in a manner that was conducive to collaborative dialogue related to a teacher's self-identified professional goal area. After the duration of the 90-day intervention, the AR team reviewed pre- and post-survey data from the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015). Individual survey items were analyzed, and positive trends were identified related to the perception of feedback that was useful and included specific instructional strategies. Pre-survey data showed that 62.5 percent of teacher participants felt that their feedback included specific improvement suggestions, while post survey data showed an increase 100 percent. Twenty-five percent of teacher participants stated that they felt their feedback included specific instructional strategies that could be used to improve instruction. This increased to 87.5 percent after the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. Lastly, pre-survey results indicated that 62.5 percent of teachers thought that the feedback they received included specific instructional strategies that could be used to improve teaching. At the conclusion of the intervention, this percentage increased to 100 percent.

In addition to the use of quantitative survey data, qualitative data trends were identified during the post-observation conversations between teachers and their evaluators. Teacher participants shared that they valued the specific instructional suggestions that were provided during their post-observation conferences. During the 90-day intervention, which included three

classroom observations with post-observation feedback conversations, teachers became more proficient at identifying their areas of strength and areas of need in relation to their individual goals. During a post-observation conference, one teacher shared: *The feedback suggestions have helped my students make connections between the current lesson and previous instruction.* As shared by this teacher, the other teacher participants had similar sentiments regarding the evaluator feedback as a means to support their instructional practices.

Teacher Responsiveness to Classroom Observation Feedback

Utilizing the individual professional goals of teacher participants to guide post-observation conversations allowed the evaluator and teacher to have specific instructional expectations for observations. At the beginning of each post-observation conversation, the teacher explained the professional goal and shared the goal for the lesson that was observed. This starting point provided the evaluator an opportunity to check-in regarding how responsive the teacher had been to the feedback that was provided during the previous observation.

A comparison of quantitative data from the pre- and post-administration of the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) found an increase in the responsiveness teachers had to evaluator feedback (see Figure 9). Data from the pre-survey found that 66 percent of teacher participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were responsive to feedback. These percentages increased to 88 percent of teacher participants who agreed or strongly agreed that they took action in response to the feedback they received from their evaluator.



Figure 9: *Teacher Perceptions of Responsiveness to Evaluator Feedback: Pre and Post Survey Percentages*

Qualitative data from the evaluator and teacher post-observation conferences was analyzed by the AR team by themes, specifically responsiveness, instructional strategies, and individual professional goal areas. The data trends showed that teachers consistently responded to the feedback they received from their evaluators. Suggestions about instructional practices that were provided to teachers by their evaluator were implemented, and teachers viewed the recommendations as beneficial to their students and overall instruction. A teacher explained the following about her responsiveness to evaluator feedback:

Getting specific feedback in [my goal area] is helpful so I can be successful with my students. Having frequent face-to-face feedback conversations have allowed me to implement instructional strategies that have been discussed and get quick feedback from [my evaluator] on their implementation.

Another participating teacher had a different, yet still positive, view that focused on her responsiveness to the feedback conversations as a means to monitor implementation:

For me, the best part of these observations and conferences is that the classroom visits are scheduled ahead of time, and they focus on my goal area, specifically the monitoring and providing suggestions relating to our last conversation. For example, at our last

conference, we talked about providing more scaffolding for my higher achieving students so they could become more independent during stations. This time when you came to visit, you focused on that to help me monitor my success but also found new areas that related to my stations so I can continue to improve. If we don't have these frequent and scheduled conversations, I get so busy I that I often forget to follow through with what has been discussed.

As the AR team looked at data, they agreed that the teachers were more responsive to the feedback they were receiving than they had been previously. However, they were unsure whether the responsiveness was due to the focus on the teacher's individual professional goal or because of the frequent observations and opportunities for face-to-face feedback conversations, or a combination of both.

Research Question 4: The Action Research Team Intervention and Influences on Teacher Evaluation

The action research case study results indicated that the interventions implemented by the AR team had a positive influence on teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback and self-efficacy, and that this data could be used to inform teacher evaluations. Based on the data and findings from the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015), Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b), and the Feedback Conversation Protocol, there are steps that evaluators can take when conducting classroom observations as required by the current teacher evaluation system, TKES, to ensure that teachers participate in a classroom observation process that meets their instructional and professional needs. The conceptual framework for this study outlined the framework for creating an efficacious culture for teachers through the use of their individual professional goals and characteristics of effective

feedback characteristics. Administrators have the knowledge and resources available to improve and enhance the feedback process, as required by TKES, with the hopes of making schoolwide changes to the Classroom Observation Feedback Process in the future. Below are the main themes that emerged in response to the final research questions:

1. Teachers' evaluations should include face-to-face feedback conversations to allow for collaborative dialogue, reflection, and support.
2. Timeliness and frequency of classroom observations can influence teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback.

Face-to-Face Feedback Conversations to Support Collaborative Dialogue and Reflection

The AR team designed the Feedback Conversation Protocol to provide a post-observation conversation framework that used pre-intervention survey data from both the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b). The protocol, which was modeled after a feedback conversation protocol developed by Myung and Martinez (2013), was selected by the AR team to: (a) scaffold listening strategies, (b) foster an improvement-oriented conversation, (c) sequence conversations into a predictable format for the teacher and evaluator, (d) addresses the teacher's concerns, (e) and scaffold the co-development of next steps.

At the start of the 90-day intervention, teachers were unsure about the protocol, and one teacher was noted calling it her *conversation script*. After the first round of classroom observation post-conferences using the protocol, the teachers and evaluators became more comfortable with its predictable format and design, which encouraged collaboration, reflection, and support. During each round of post-observation conferences using the protocol, the teachers shared their viewpoints about the conversation. The AR team found that the discussions using

the Feedback Conversation Protocol provided teachers with the opportunity to collaborate with their evaluator in a manner that was conducive to support and mutual respect. During a post-observation conference, one teacher shared the following with her evaluator when asked if the conversation had been helpful:

When I signed up to be in the study I was a little nervous about the process, but once I realized it was for support and to help me and my students, I really embraced the feedback and made a lot of positive changes in my classroom.

Another teacher, who had been working on the use of student data as a means to change her literacy instruction shared the following:

These conversations have been really helpful. I appreciate the honest feedback and that this process has allowed me to self-reflect and work with [my administrator] to determine the next the steps that will support the growth of my students.

TKES provides teachers and evaluators with a platform for feedback and support.

Following the implementation of the intervention and dialogue with the AR team, the consensus was that for feedback and support to be in place through the state evaluation system, there must be a mutual understanding of expectations, trust, and time for the teacher and evaluator to address specific goals.

Timeliness and Frequency of Classroom Observations to Positively Influence Teacher Perceptions of Feedback

Some of the most significant changes to the classroom observation feedback process as required by TKES were related to timeliness of feedback, mode of feedback, and the frequency of feedback conversations. When the AR team began looking at the pre-survey data and research, and when they discussed the potential components of the intervention, several specific

areas stood out. Pre-survey results indicated that 50 percent of teacher participants felt that feedback was provided as frequently as needed, while 62.5 percent of teachers stated that feedback was presented to them in enough time to use it to inform their practices. This data in conjunction with research regarding teacher perceptions of classroom observation feedback provided in written form versus face-to-face conferences led the AR team to make decisions regarding the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. First, the post observation feedback would be provided within three business days. Next, the observations would occur approximately every 30 days, with the opportunity for ongoing feedback as needed. And lastly, the feedback provided to teachers following the classroom observation would be conducted in a face-to-face setting using the Feedback Conversation Protocol designed by the AR team.

After the 90-day implementation of the intervention, the AR team came together to analyze the post-survey results. Data from the same indicators as previously noted were analyzed to determine whether there was a positive increase in teacher perceptions of feedback. . Post-survey results indicated that 87.5 percent of participating teachers believed that feedback was provided to them as frequently as needed, and 100 percent of teachers believed that the feedback was provided in time to inform their instructional practices (see Figure 10).

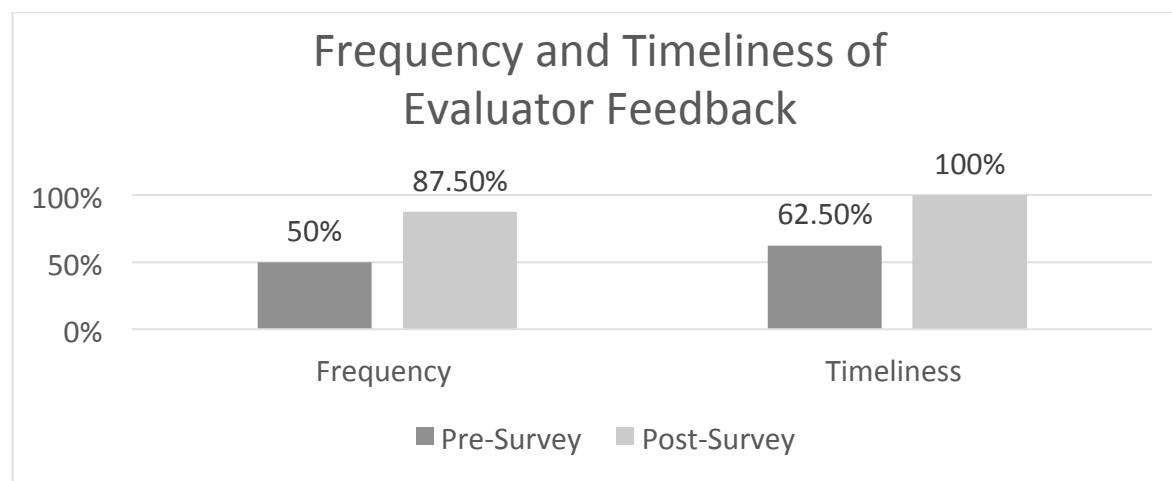


Figure 10: *Frequency and Timeliness of Evaluator Feedback: Pre- and Post-Survey Percentages*

During the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, observations between teachers and evaluator were scheduled and feedback conversations took place within three business days. The teachers shared the consensus that having the prescheduled observations in conjunction with a quick turnaround for a face-to-face conversation made them feel that it was more about support as opposed to compliance. One teacher commented the following when asked by her evaluator if the conversation had been helpful:

Sometimes with TKES observations, I don't get my feedback for over a week. By the time it is put into the system I have forgotten what happened during the lesson and I don't care as much about making changes or reading the feedback; instead I just want to see my rating and move on.

The current requirement of TKES for frequency and timeliness of feedback is determined by several factors. Teachers within the state undergo between two and six classroom observations, the total number dependent on years of experience, length of time in current position, and previous evaluation scores. Written feedback must be provided within ten business days. The intervention designed by the AR team considered these factors and improved the requirements to support the needs of the teachers at Metro Elementary. The AR team's insight into implications for the future was that the changes had a positive impact on teachers' feedback perceptions; however, it may be challenging to implement these changes with all teachers in the building due to time constraints of building administrators.

Summary

The findings from this action research case study support empirical literature and research on the possible correlation between the characteristics of effective feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy. It seems that classroom observations conducted

through the requirements of current teacher evaluation systems, specifically TKES, do not effectively support growth; current teacher perceptions of feedback and their own self-efficacy are low.

Data from the implementation of the intervention to the Classroom Observation Feedback Process suggested that focusing classroom observations and feedback on a teacher's individual professional goal could be correlated to increased self-efficacy and positive perceptions of evaluator feedback. The AR team suggested continuing the intervention on a larger scale for the following school year to provide similar support to teachers through the Classroom Observation Feedback Process.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this action research case study was to change the observation feedback process that evaluators provide to teachers as it relates to their individual goals to positively influence teacher efficacy. The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?
2. How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?
3. How can individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?
4. How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?

This chapter provides a summary of the findings drawn from an action research study conducted at Metro Elementary. Additionally, following the summary of the findings, major conclusions are discussed and implications are explored. Finally, recommendations are made for future research studies exploring how classroom observation feedback provided to teachers by evaluators can positively influence their self-efficacy.

Analysis

The research questions in this study guided the AR team to create a classroom observation feedback process that used research and the self-identified needs of teachers to improve the process that evaluators use to provide feedback. The AR team consisted of various

educators with differing backgrounds; their common interest was working collaboratively with classroom teachers to provide support for students. To understand how they could improve the classroom observation feedback process at Metro Elementary, the AR team explored theories on learning goal orientation and self-efficacy. They also studied research on the characteristics of feedback in conjunction with current state teacher evaluation policies. Data from the teachers' sense of efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b) and the examining evaluator feedback survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015) that were administered with teacher participants also provided a starting point for the design of the intervention.

As the framework for the Classroom Observation Feedback Process was discussed, the AR team members shared their insights about how the intervention could be designed to support teachers. The intervention plan included three cycles of action research that would be embedded within one overarching action research cycle. Each integrated cycle provided an opportunity for the AR team to review qualitative data collected from the evaluator-teacher post-observation conferences, and would provide the opportunity to reflect on the intervention design and make changes if necessary. The intervention included the following: a face-to-face pre-conference between the evaluator and teacher, three scheduled classroom observations that would focus on the teacher's self-identified professional growth area, and a face-to-face post observation conference with the teacher and evaluator that would occur within three days of the classroom observation. The team used insight from pre- and post- intervention surveys and evaluator-teacher post observation conversations to analyze the effectiveness of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention and to provide suggestions for the future implementation of this process.

To prevent any potential biases from an individual researcher, the AR team and teacher participants assisted in keeping the qualitative data collection process as objective as possible, through member checks of the transcripts and data collected. Member checks occurred during this study as a means to provide team members and teacher participants an “opportunity to review the raw data, analyses, and reports derived from research procedures” (Stringer, 2014, p. 93).

During the analysis phase of this case study, team members evaluated quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data from teacher-evaluator post observation feedback conversations. Once the transcripts from classroom observation feedback conversations had been coded by theme, they were used to provide insight into the effectiveness of the intervention implementation and provided opportunities through each embedded action research cycle for changes to be made if necessary. The feedback and insight shared during the AR team meetings generated conclusions and implications that could be used to inform future classroom observation feedback processes at the school, district, and state level.

Conclusions

Findings from this case study had an impact on the processes in place for classroom observation feedback used with teachers by their evaluators. Based on the findings of the study, Metro Elementary leaders plan to evaluate and revise the way that school administrators implement the current teacher evaluation process, as defined by the TKES, to align with the recommendations outlined by the action research team. Preliminary plans are in place to implement improvements to the classroom observation feedback process as required by TKES at Metro Elementary.

Conclusion 1 – The implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention positively influenced teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback.

The first research question focused on how the teachers perceived the classroom observation feedback that was provided to them by their evaluators. Based on the findings from the study, the AR team concluded that teachers viewed the feedback they received during the case study as supportive and found positive increases perceptions feedback, as identified by the Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro et al., 2015). Empirical literature that was used to inform this study indicated that for feedback to be perceived positively, the following elements should be considered: conferencing, access to resources, timeliness, evaluator-teacher relationship, and the quality of feedback (Akkuzu, N., 2014; Anast-May et al., 2011; Khachatryan, A., 2015; Lochmiller, C. R., 2016; Range et al., 2016). Findings from the research on characteristics of effective feedback support the areas addressed by the AR team for the intervention designed in this case study.

As the framework for the Classroom Observation Feedback Process was discussed, each AR team member provided their insight as to how the characteristics of feedback, specifically the areas of greatest need as identified by the teacher participants, could be incorporated into the intervention. The areas that were identified as the greatest need were the usefulness of feedback, responsiveness to feedback, and the access to resources to implement feedback suggestions. As noted previously, when analyzing the findings of the study it is evident that over the course of the 90-day intervention positive increases were seen not only in the areas that were targeted by the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, but perceptions of all characteristics of feedback showed positive increases (see Figure 5).

Empirical literature that was used to inform this study did not identify specific impacts of teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback on professional goal setting, self-efficacy, or performance. Studies solely identified the perceptions teachers had on particular characteristics of feedback. This case study found that when feedback was specific and related to individual teacher professional goal areas, feedback perceptions in all areas improved. The overall findings suggest that there is a correlation between the focus on the characteristics of feedback and teacher perceptions of the value of feedback provided by the evaluator.

Conclusion 2 - The Implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention positively influenced teacher efficacy.

The second research question sought to understand the influence that classroom observation feedback has on teacher self-efficacy. The results from this study led the AR team to conclude that the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process supported teachers and improved their confidence in all efficacy areas. Teachers who participated in the study identified instructional practices as their lowest area of efficacy during the pre-administration of the teachers' sense of efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b). After participating in the 90-day intervention, teacher efficacy in all areas showed positive increases. The area of efficacy in instructional strategies went from being the lowest rated efficacy area for teacher participants to the highest, following the 90-day study (see Figure 7).

Research has found that when evaluators provide a teacher with specific constructive feedback that does not link directly to the teacher's ego, self-efficacy can increase and pedagogical growth can occur. Additionally, relevant feedback validates and affirms areas of strength, which in turn supports individual efficacy (Bedir, 2015). In the analysis of the findings

from this study and evidenced by the literature, feedback conversations using the Feedback Conversation Protocol helped scaffold dialogue between evaluators and administrators that supported specific instructional practices linked to their self-identified growth areas. It is evident that based on these findings and previous literature, there is a possible correlation between the specific relevant feedback and teacher self-efficacy.

Conclusion 3- The implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process which aligned feedback to the individual professional goals of educators resulted in feedback that was more specific and useful.

As the AR team designed an intervention using the conceptual framework that guided this study (see Figure 3), the empirical literature on learning goal orientation theory, self-efficacy, and feedback characteristics were used to ensure the intervention targeted specific feedback needs. Research has found that when teachers set individual goals, they are more willing to engage in learning activities, reflect on their practices, and be receptive to feedback (VandeWalle, 2001). Studies also show that while not causative, a correlation appears to exist between self-efficacy and goal setting, which directly impacts performance (Elliot, 1997; Phillips & Gully, 1997; Runhaar et al., 2010).

The AR team utilized research findings and teacher participant pre and post survey data to analyze the implications of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. The analysis found that teachers found the evaluator feedback to be more specific and useful and they were more responsive to the feedback than when is nonspecific and does not align with individual professional goals.

Overall, as demonstrated by this study and reinforced by literature, there is a need to change the classroom observation feedback process that is in place at Metro Elementary.

Teacher participants and AR team members expressed positive responses regarding the 90-day intervention and would like to see the implementation of a similar process for all staff members during the next school year. Therefore, the creation and implementation of a similar classroom observation feedback process will be necessary to continue effectively supporting teachers at Metro Elementary.

Conclusion 4 - The interventions implemented by the action research team positively influenced teacher perceptions of evaluator feedback and self-efficacy, resulting in positive changes in teacher pedagogy.

The final research question sought to understand how teacher evaluations might be informed by the interventions designed and implemented by an action research team. Literature supports the participation of an action research team as a means to use a systematic process of inquiry to address organizational concerns (Sagor, 2011; Simons, 2009). The research findings from this study echo the literature. AR team members were provided with a valuable learning experience that will hopefully have lasting positive impacts on the pedagogy of teachers at Metro Elementary. Team members used a solutions-based approach to tackle the classroom observation feedback perceptions and self-efficacy growth areas that were identified by teacher participants.

During the analysis of the findings and the discussion of next steps, the AR team agreed that improvements should be made to the way TKES is implemented at Metro Elementary, with an emphasis on changing the focus from evaluation to support. The team members felt that in the future, there would need to be an increased focus from evaluators on teacher professional goal areas for feedback to be perceived as useful. Also, the team would like to plan for a decrease in the turnaround time for feedback, within the three-day window that was used for this

study. Teachers should also be given the option of having a face-to-face feedback conversation following each observation to increase the collaborative dialogue and perceptions of support and in order to target specific teacher identified areas of need.

Additional Considerations

Findings from this study will play a role in informing the future classroom observation feedback process at Metro Elementary and provide insight into future research on teacher evaluation feedback processes at other elementary schools. It is important to note that the results from this study may not be replicated due to potential differences in organizational structures within elementary schools. In addition to possible differences in study design, it is necessary that organizations conducting insider research have protocols in place to ensure that it is conducted ethically.

As explained by Coghlan and Brannick (2014) “action research is research in action, rather than research about action” (p. 6). One of the benefits of action research, as opposed to traditional research, is the ability for the researcher to be a member of the impacted organization and to play an active role in the change process. As a member, the researcher has insider information about the culture and norms that exist within the organization. However, there can also be potential disadvantages for an inside researcher, which can negatively impact the research if not handled proactively.

Preunderstanding

According to Coghlan and Brannick (2014), preunderstanding refers to the knowledge, insights, and experiences that a researcher has of his/her organization before beginning the research process. The preunderstanding not only refers to formal aspects of an organization, which include the goals, mission, resources, organizational reports, but also to the informal

aspects of the organization, which can consist of the culture and norms that are unspoken and embedded within the functions of the organization.

Having insider knowledge can assist the preunderstanding of an organization, but it can also pose disadvantages as it can be challenging for a researcher to step back from the organizational culture to assess and probe as deeply as one would as an outsider. Throughout the research study, and in an attempt to limit the potential biases that can come from teacher participants, AR team members, and having a sole researcher, both quantitative and qualitative data collections methods were used to provide deeper analysis and reflection into the success of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. A team approach was used to help gain different perspectives and opinions during the study.

With the preunderstanding of Metro Elementary and the teachers who volunteered to participate, it should be noted that they were already are viewed by the staff as reflective and conscientious educators. Knowing this about the teacher participants, it does leave questions about the effectiveness of the intervention had it been conducted with a larger sample of teachers within the school.

Role Duality

Coghlan and Brannick (2007) discussed the fact that when conducting an action research study within one's organization, the traditional distinction between the researcher and researched is removed. Within the organization, the role of assistant principal could be perceived by teachers as one of power, so it was necessary to have role boundaries in place throughout the study. To alleviate the potential imbalance of power, the principal and I agreed that the teacher participants we evaluated as part of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process would not be the same teachers as we would evaluate for TKES. Therefore, the principal worked with

teachers in grades three thru five, and I completed their formal TKES evaluations; I collaborated with teachers in pre-Kindergarten through second grade, and the principal completed their formal TKES evaluations.

It is important to recognize that, while I held an organizational role as assistant principal throughout the study, I felt that additional boundaries established assisted with mitigating potential biases from the data collection process. While I had no evaluative power over the teacher participants during the study, my role may have caused teachers to feel obligated to stay committed to the research throughout the process. While I do think that the previously established professional relationships with the members of the AR team and teacher participants helped with the potential imbalances of power, it is essential to consider those when looking at insight from the study. Ultimately, my perception is that my position did not affect the outcome of the investigation nor did it impact the ability or willingness of the AR team and teacher participants in provided accurate insight into their perceptions of classroom observation feedback.

Access

Coghlan and Brannick (2014) explain that conducting a research project not only includes negotiating access to the necessary parts of the organization but it also involves satisfying the needs of various audiences. Doing an action research case-study on classroom observation feedback and its influence on self-efficacy not only filled my requirements as a researcher, but it had a positive impact on the teachers at Metro Elementary as it has provided them, with the opportunity to engage in collaborative dialogue with their evaluator to support professional goal areas. The study will contribute to the broader educational community by providing information about how feedback can be useful in supporting teachers and building self-efficacy.

Implications

The implications for this action research case study are limited due to the investigation being conducted at a specific school, with a focus specifically on the perceptions of feedback of eight teachers at Metro Elementary. However, data from this study can be used to help administrators determine whether a similar classroom observation feedback process would be beneficial at their school.

Individuals

The AR team members and teacher participants in this action research case-study have had the opportunity to develop skills and a strong understanding of the steps necessary to make a change at the local school level. Team members found that though they were not able to make changes to TKES at a district or state level, the research study and intervention provided the opportunity for positive changes to the implementation of the evaluation system at Metro. With the enhancements to the classroom observation feedback process, the study found that teachers began to perceive evaluator feedback more positively and that there was a positive influence on teacher self-efficacy. By changing the method in which feedback was provided to teachers by their evaluators, the AR team felt that it made the TKES process more relevant and meaningful. The intervention designed by the AR team would be a beneficial component to any evaluation system, as long as the system has the elements of teacher goal setting, classroom observation by an evaluator, and feedback.

School Leaders

At Metro Elementary, this action research case study had implications for the building administrators, who also serve as the teacher evaluators. Specifically, implications change the

classroom observation feedback process that is in place through the TKES and the use of the Feedback Conversation Protocol for post observation conversation.

Administrators should have pre conference meetings with teachers that focus on their individual professional goals so that evaluators can have an understanding of what each teacher wants to focus on during that school year. Next, the principal and assistant principal must make time to meet with teachers face-to-face to discuss their classroom observation performance. The use of the Feedback Conversation Protocol is advantageous for scaffolding a collaborative dialogue between the teacher and his/her evaluator. Through face-to-face conversations, teachers and evaluators can collaboratively reflect on the lesson that was observed, discuss progress towards the teacher's professional goal area, and determine next steps. At the AR meetings, team members found that the collaborative nature of the feedback conversations was viewed positively by both the teacher participants and administrators and they felt that the frequency and timeliness of the discussions provided both parties the opportunity to reflect and build a relationship of mutual respect.

School leaders throughout Metro District and the state must embrace feedback processes that support teacher growth, increase efficacy, and provide opportunities for collaboration. Through the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, the AR team found that the administrators and teachers valued the chance to work together to discuss specific instructional practices that support teachers' individual professional goals.

Local Schools

Schools within the Metro School District should use the interventions created by the AR team at Metro Elementary to improve the classroom observation feedback process that is associated with the teacher evaluation system for educator growth. The results of this case study

showed that with the implementation of the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention, teachers showed positive increases in their perceptions of evaluator feedback and individual teacher self-efficacy. Therefore, schools need to provide their evaluators with training and resources so that collaborative dialogue between administrators and teachers can occur.

Additionally, schools need to create a culture where administrators and teachers have time for face-to-face discussions regarding teacher performance and growth areas. To increase the effectiveness of the process principals must be open to allocating the time in their schedules to allow for post-observation feedback dialogue. When implementing a new practice or process, administrators should meet with the teachers to determine what the implementation would look like within the school building and how it would be used to enhance the current evaluation system that is in place. Administrators must also understand that with the additional components added to enhance the current evaluation system in place at Metro Elementary, the implementation of the intervention was time intensive and may not be useful in their entirety within a setting that does not allow flexibility in scheduling to allocate face-to-face dialogue with teachers following each classroom observation.

School Districts

As the impact of state and federal governments expand their impact on educational policies within school systems, district leaders must be compliant yet flexible with their rollout of and implementation educational policies. Though specific policy components prevent flexibility, principals and district leaders should be comfortable with the expectations to ensure that the implementation supports the needs of staff and students. Regarding teacher evaluation systems, specifically TKES, district leaders should ensure that schools use the framework as a

guide but enhance the requirements to provide more meaningful feedback opportunities between administrators and teachers that align to individual goal areas.

Educational Policies

TKES is modeled after the most recent national policies on teacher evaluation, as it is promoted as an evaluation system that supports the continued growth and development of teachers. Unfortunately, the way the current evaluation system is implemented at Metro Elementary and throughout Metro District are not perceived by teachers or evaluators as supportive, nor do they promote educator growth. As national trends in teacher evaluation support the standardization of policies to provide students with universal access to highly qualified teachers it was noted by the AR team that, sometimes, educational policies cannot be one size fits all. The areas of need identified by the teachers at Metro Elementary were for stronger positive perceptions of feedback and increased self-efficacy. As the administrators at Metro Elementary worked collaboratively with the AR team to design a classroom observation feedback process to fit the needs identified by the teaches at Metro, policymakers must determine if the teacher support and growth opportunities provided through comprehensive evaluation systems are at the level intended by the revised policies.

Future Research

While this action research study focused on the implementation of a Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention at one school, the findings from this study provide additional opportunities for research regarding the possible correlation between the characteristics of observation feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory. Because this study focused on the importance of the classroom observation feedback process that evaluators use with teachers as it relates to individual goals, the findings will also

influence literature related to best practices from school administrators who desire to create an efficacious school culture where educators work collaboratively with their evaluators to make pedagogical changes.

Connections Between Feedback, Learning Goal Orientation Theory, and Self-Efficacy

Hoy and Miskel (2013) define teacher self-efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute a course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific task in a particular context” (p.163). For this action research study, the AR team and leaders used the lens of efficacy as a means to promote confidence within the teacher participants and to focus on their individual professional goals to make changes to their pedagogy. At the beginning of the study, the AR team and building leaders reviewed the literature regarding the potential correlation between characteristics of observation feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory. This project expanded on the research that had been previously conducted on the possible correlation between these three concepts and found that a positive correlation may exist.

The literature that was reviewed for this study explored the possible correlation between characteristics of observation feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy theory. The AR team analyzed the findings from this study and explored the correlation between its outcomes with previous studies. Because principals and assistant principals serve as teacher evaluators, it is essential that classroom observations that are conducted as part of required teacher evaluation systems support the growth of educators as it relates to individual goal areas. Research has found that when teachers have an interest in a specific area and set a goal towards accomplishing something in that same area, motivation and efficacy are likely to increase. Also, when teachers set individual goals, they are more likely to engage in professional learning

activities, reflect on their practices, and be receptive to feedback (VandeWalle, 2001). The findings from this action research case study support previously found literature and help address the gaps in the literature that prevented the previously conducted studies from being relevant in an elementary setting within the United States.

Longitudinal Study

While this 90-day study provided rich qualitative and quantitative data regarding the impact of feedback, learning goal orientation, and teacher self-efficacy, the time frame did not provide information on the lasting influence that the Classroom Observation Feedback Process had on the teacher participants at Metro Elementary. Though learning goal orientation theory in conjunction with self-efficacy was used as part of the guiding framework, and correlations were made between those and perceptions of feedback, the results do not indicate whether the collaborative dialogue between the evaluator and teacher will continue or have resulted in sustained changes to pedagogy.

Future research would be beneficial and should be constructed as a longitudinal study, covering multiple school years with the same teacher participants and evaluators. Utilizing a longitudinal study model would provide an even more in-depth look into the effectiveness of using an educator's professional goal with the Classroom Observation Feedback Process to positively influence self-efficacy and perceptions of evaluator feedback.

Replication of the Study

Future research studies should use a similar structure as one used for this study. Based on the teacher evaluation parameters that are in place within the local school, school district, and state, it will be important to note that for this study the evaluators removed themselves from the evaluative role of the teacher participants they worked with to prevent potential biases in data

collection. Given the findings of this study, it is unclear how the collaborative feedback conversations focused on teacher goal areas would have influenced the teachers' perceptions of feedback and overall efficacy had the observations been tied to formal teacher observations. The AR team believes that building a culture of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect between teachers and evaluators at Metro Elementary will allow this feedback process to continue to be successful in the future. However, knowing and understanding the culture at with the staff and administrators that is already embedded within a local school will be necessary when attempting to implement a similar research study.

Summary

This action research case study employed three cycles of action research embedded within one overarching 90-day cycle from September, 2017 through April, 2018. Each embedded cycle took place over a time period of thirty days and included the opportunity for the AR team to construct, plan action, take action, and evaluate action, and to make changes to the Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention. Findings indicated: (a) positive increase occurred in teacher perceptions of classroom observation feedback, and the feedback was perceived as supportive, (b) evaluator feedback provided support to teaches which made them more confident in their instructional practices and resulted in an overall increase in teacher efficacy, (c) feedback focused on individual professional goals was useful and specific and teachers were responsive to it, and (d) the action research team designed Classroom Observation Feedback Process intervention and the Feedback Conversation Protocol enhanced the current teacher evaluation requirements resulting in positive influence on teacher perceptions of feedback and efficacy. Future research studies should consider: (a) the correlations that exist between characteristics of feedback, learning goal orientation theory, and self-efficacy, (b)

utilizing a longitudinal model, and (c) have an understanding of the climate of the local school and expectations of the teacher evaluation system that is in place.

Based on the results of this action research case study, I believe the team successfully answered the research questions and fulfilled the purpose of changing the observation feedback process that evaluators provide to teachers related to their individual goals in order to positively influence self-efficacy. Specifically, the action research process empowered the AR team to use research and data to make decisions that impacted the practice of evaluators and teachers at Metro Elementary. This study has created a platform for administrators at Metro and within the district and state to enhance the required component of TKES and create a collaborative culture of feedback.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b)

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale¹ (long form)

Teacher Beliefs	How much can you do?								
Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.	Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal				
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
19. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

APPENDIX B

Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey (Cherasaro, Brodersen, Yanoski, Welp, & Reale, 2015)

Appendix A. The Examining Evaluator Feedback Survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand your thoughts on the usefulness and accuracy of your evaluator feedback. The survey asks questions about your experiences with the feedback you received as part of your district's teacher evaluation system. As you answer the questions, please consider only feedback that you received from your designated evaluator in your district during the current school year. Your designated evaluator is the person who is responsible for providing your performance rating at the end of the school year.

1. I have read and understand these instructions.
 - ☐ Yes

2. As part of the district's teacher evaluation system, who was your designated evaluator in the current school year? (Select only one. If you have more than one evaluator please pick one and refer to that evaluator as you respond to the remaining questions.)
 - ☐ My principal
 - ☐ My assistant principal
 - ☐ A peer
 - ☐ My department chair
 - ☐ My coach
 - ☐ Other (please describe): _____

3. How often did you have a feedback conversation with your designated evaluator throughout the current school year? Feedback conversations are defined as any conversation with your evaluator in which he or she provided feedback specific to observations, walkthroughs, or artifacts collected as part of your evaluation.
 - ☐ Never
 - ☐ Once
 - ☐ Twice
 - ☐ Three times
 - ☐ Four times
 - ☐ Five times
 - ☐ More than five times

4. How often did you receive written feedback from your designated evaluator throughout the current school year? Written feedback includes feedback specific to observations, walkthroughs, or artifacts collected as part of your evaluation that was given to you in written form (either on paper or electronically).
 - ☐ Never
 - ☐ Once
 - ☐ Twice
 - ☐ Three times
 - ☐ Four times
 - ☐ Five times
 - ☐ More than five times

For the following questions please keep in mind the feedback that you received throughout the current school year from your designated evaluator.

5. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. My evaluator's feedback...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
... included specific improvement suggestions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... included specific suggestions to improve my content/subject knowledge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... included specific instructional strategies that I could use to improve my teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... included specific classroom management strategies that I could use to improve my teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... included recommendations for finding resources or professional development to improve my teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... was provided as frequently as I needed it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... was provided in time for me to use it to inform my practice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The feedback I received was an accurate portrayal of my teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The classroom observations or walkthroughs that informed the feedback I received represented a typical day in my classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The evaluation system is accurate enough that different evaluators reviewing the same evidence would likely give the same ratings.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would receive the same feedback if my evaluator examined different evidence (e.g., if they observed additional lessons or reviewed additional evidence).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. In my opinion, my evaluator had sufficient ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
... knowledge of my content/subject to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... knowledge of how my students learn to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... knowledge of effective teaching practices to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... understanding of the curriculum being observed to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... understanding of the established teacher evaluation system to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I had access to the professional development (formal or informal) that I needed in order to implement suggestions provided in my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had access to an instructional leader (e.g., peer, coach/mentor, administrator) who supported me in implementing suggestions provided in my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was able to observe expert teachers modeling skills that related to my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had time during the school day to plan for implementing new strategies based on my feedback (e.g., collaborative or individual planning time).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Because of the feedback I received from my evaluator ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
... I tried new instructional strategies in my classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... I tried new classroom management strategies in my classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... I sought professional development opportunities (formal or informal).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... I sought advice from an instructional leader (for example, peer, coach or mentor, administrator).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... I changed the way I plan instruction.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. When deciding how to respond to your feedback, how important was each the following? Receiving ...

	Unimportant	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Critical
... specific improvement suggestions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... recommended next steps for finding professional development to improve your teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... feedback within an appropriate timeframe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... feedback as frequently as you needed it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... feedback with specific suggestions to improve your content or subject knowledge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... specific instructional strategies that you could use to improve your teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... specific classroom management strategies that you could use to improve your teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... feedback that was an accurate portrayal of my teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... feedback from classroom observations or walkthroughs that represented a typical day in my classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. When deciding how to respond to your feedback, how important was each the following? Having confidence that I would receive the same feedback ...

	Unimportant	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Critical
... from a different evaluator if they reviewed the same evidence.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... if my evaluator had examined different evidence (e.g., if they observed additional lessons or reviewed additional evidence).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. When deciding how to respond to your feedback, how important was each the following? Having confidence that my evaluator had sufficient ...

	Unimportant	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Critical
... knowledge of my content/subject to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... knowledge of how my students learn to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... knowledge of effective teaching practices to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... understanding of the curriculum being observed to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
... understanding of the established teacher evaluation system to effectively evaluate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. When deciding how to respond to your feedback, how important was each the following?

	Unimportant	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important	Critical
Having access to the professional development (formal or informal) that I needed in order to implement suggestions provided in my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having access to an instructional leader (e.g., peer, coach/mentor, administrator) who supported me in implementing suggestions provided in my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being able to observe expert teachers modeling skills that related to my feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having time during the school day to plan for implementing new strategies based on my feedback (e.g., collaborative or individual planning time).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

For the following question please keep in mind the feedback that you received throughout the current school year from your designated evaluator.

14. To what extent did the feedback you received from your designated evaluator improve your instruction?

- ☐ Not at all
☐ A little
☐ A lot

15. Including this year, please indicate how many years of teaching experience you have.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ 1 | ☐ 8 | ☐ 15 |
| ☐ 2 | ☐ 9 | ☐ 16 |
| ☐ 3 | ☐ 10 | ☐ 17 |
| ☐ 4 | ☐ 11 | ☐ 18 |
| ☐ 5 | ☐ 12 | ☐ 19 |
| ☐ 6 | ☐ 13 | ☐ 20 |
| ☐ 7 | ☐ 14 | ☐ More than 20 |

16. Please indicate the grade level that you teach currently (select one or more).

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Early childhood | ☐ Grade 6 |
| ☐ Kindergarten | ☐ Grade 7 |
| ☐ Grade 1 | ☐ Grade 8 |
| ☐ Grade 2 | ☐ Grade 9 |
| ☐ Grade 3 | ☐ Grade 10 |
| ☐ Grade 4 | ☐ Grade 11 |
| ☐ Grade 5 | ☐ Grade 12 |

17. Please indicate the subject and students that you teach currently (select one or more).

- ☐ Language arts
☐ Math
☐ Science
☐ Social studies
☐ Noncore subjects (physical education, art, technology)
☐ English learner students
☐ Students in special education
☐ Intervention
☐ Other: _____

APPENDIX C

Feedback Conversation Protocol

Feedback Conversation Protocol – Principal

Teacher _____ Principal _____ Obs. # _____

Teacher Goal Area _____

A. Warm and Clear Opening

- 1. **Principal Acknowledges Teacher's Time**
Thanks for meeting with me today.
- 2. **Principal asks Teacher for the Lesson's Aim**
What was the goal for the lesson observed?
Teacher Clearly States Lesson Aim.
- 3. **Principal asks Teacher for the Aim of this Conversation**
What would you like to get out of this conversation?
Teacher Clearly States Aim for this Conversation (related to goal area).

NOTES ON THE TEACHER'S AIMS FOR THE OBSERVED LESSON/ PROGRESS TOWARDS GOAL AND CONVERSATION

Prompts for clarification: Can you elaborate on that? Can you give me an example? Can you say more? What do you mean by...? What progress have you made towards your goal area?

- 4. **Principal Paraphrases and Affirms the Teacher's (1) Aim of the Lesson and (2) Aim for this Conversation.**
Your lesson aim was (LESSON AIM) and by the end of the conversation you would like to (CONVERSATION AIM).
- 5. **Principal Clearly States their Goal for this Conversation.**
That's helpful. For me, by the end of the conversation, I would like to (Evaluator's Aim for the Conversation)...

B. Focus on What's Going Well

- 6. **Principal Begins by Asking Teacher to Reflect on What Went Well.**
What do you think went well during the lesson? What were students doing well? What is something positive that has occurred as you work towards your goal?
- 7. **Teacher Reflects on What Went Well**
- 8. **Principal Paraphrases What the Teacher Identifies as Going Well**
It sounds like what you think went well were (POSITIVES TEACHER MENTIONED in Step 6)
- 9. **Principal Comments on Concrete, Specific Things That Went Well**
In addition to what you mentioned, I noticed (POSITIVES)...

Feedback Conversation Protocol – Teacher

Teacher _____ Principal _____ Obs. # _____

Teacher Goal Area _____

A. Warm and Clear Opening

- 1. **Teacher Acknowledges Principal's Time**
Thanks for meeting with me today.
- 2. **Principal asks Teacher for the Lesson's Aim**
Teacher Clearly States Lesson Aim.
My aim for the lesson was (LESSON AIM).
- 3. **Principal asks Teacher for the Aim of this Conversation**
Teacher Clearly States Aim for this Conversation (related to goal area).
In this conversation I am looking forward to (AIM FOR FEEDBACK CONVERSATION RELATED TO GOAL AREA)
- 4. **Principal Paraphrases and Affirms the Teacher's (1) Aim of the Lesson and (2) Aim for this Conversation.**
- 5. **Principal Clearly States their Goal for this Conversation.**

NOTES ON THE PRINCIPAL'S GOALS FOR THE CONVERSATION

Prompts for clarification: Can you elaborate on that? Can you give me an example? Can you say more? What do you mean by...? How does this relate to my goal area?

B. Focus on What's Going Well

- 6. **Principal Begins by Asking Teacher to Reflect on What Went Well.**
- 7. **Teacher Reflects on What Went Well**
I noticed students were.... I have been able to X because of the focus on the goal of...
- 8. **Principal Paraphrases What the Teacher Identifies as Going Well**
- 9. **Principal Comments on Concrete, Specific Things That Went Well**

NOTES ON THE PRINCIPAL'S GOALS FOR THE CONVERSATION

Prompts for clarification: Can you elaborate on that? Can you give me an example? Can you say more? What do you mean by...? How does this relate to my goal area?

Feedback Conversation Protocol – Teacher

C. Identify Challenges Facing the Teacher

- 10. Principal Transitions Conversation to Reflection of Areas for Improvement
- 11. Teacher Reflects on Area for Improvement/Growth or Challenges in Goal Area
Some areas for growth are... I would like some help addressing student learning such as....
- 12. Principal Paraphrases Teacher's Challenges.

D. Generate Ideas for Addressing Teacher's Challenges

- 13. Principal Offers Ideas and Resources for Addressing the Teacher's Challenges from Step 11.

IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Prompts for clarification: Can you elaborate on that? Can you give me an example? Is this challenge important to you because....?

Resources Needed

E. Identify Other Areas for Improvement

- 14. Principal Offers Ideas on Other Opportunities for Growth Grounded in Evidence and Related to

NOTES ON NEXT STEP**F. Prioritize Next Steps**

- 15. Teacher and Principal Review Ideas for Change/ Growth Towards Goal Area and Assign Priority.

NOTES ON NEXT STEPS

Principal will....

Teacher will...

Future Observation Date (week):

G. End Positively

- 16. Principal Asks if This Conversation was Helpful?
Teacher Gives Principal Feedback on What Worked.
My goal for this conversation was (CONVERSATION AIM) and I appreciated your (SPECIFIC FEEDBACK)
- 17. Principal Makes a Final Positive Statement / Recognizes Growth and Progress Toward Goal Area
- 18. Thanks You for Time and Insights

APPENDIX D

Recruitment Letter and Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Effective Feedback, Learning Goal Orientation, and Teacher Self-Efficacy

Researcher's Statement

You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are a teacher in in a school system that implements the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) as a means to provide educator feedback. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether or not to participate in the study. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you would like to participate or not. This process is called “informed consent.” A copy of this form will be provided to you.

Principal Investigator: *Dr. Sheneka Williams*
 The University of Georgia
 smwill@uga.edu 706-542-1615

Purpose of the Study

In my study, I will address the importance of evaluator feedback and its connection to teacher's professional goals. Furthermore, I will focus how to improve evaluator feedback as it relates to individual goals and how these improvements can have an impact on one's ability to sustain pedagogical change and increase efficacy. Your participation in this study is critical because of your current role as a teacher and your experiences and perspectives on the current evaluation system.

Study Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to ...

- Participate in an action research process to investigate and examine the effectiveness of evaluator feedback provided by the administrators at your school.
- At the beginning and conclusion of the study, you will be asked to complete a Teacher Efficacy Scale and Evaluator Feedback Survey. Completion of both items should take approximately 30 minutes, totally in 1 hour of participation. This procedure is for research and is voluntary.
- During the study, you will be asked to participate in pre/post observation conferences to discuss the feedback you have received, which may be audio recorded, or to complete a form regarding the effectiveness of evaluator feedback. Completion of these tasks will occur for each of the three required TKES observations and should take approximately 30 minutes,

totaling 1 hour and 30 minutes of participation. This procedure is for research and is voluntary.

- This study will last for approximately 90 days, which is equal to 1 semester.
- Through this action research study I will attempt to answer the following questions:
 - How do teachers perceive classroom observation feedback?
 - How might teacher observation feedback be improved to positively influence teacher efficacy?
 - How can the individual professional goals of educators improve the classroom observation feedback process?
 - How might teacher evaluations be informed by the interventions implemented by an action research team?
- Throughout the study two action research teams will address the purpose and questions of the study. A team of teachers and administrators will reflect on the feedback they receive from evaluators. As a group, they will determine if the feedback is useful as a means to improve in their individual goal and provide suggested changes to the feedback process with the potential creation of rubrics, pre and post observation interview protocols, and administrator checklists. Finally, teachers will provide data regarding changes in their pedagogical practices they make in response to the feedback they receive. Because these procedures will generate data for research, they are voluntary. A second team composed administrators and support staff will serve as a monitoring piece to ensure that the interventions decided upon by the other team are implemented with fidelity and accuracy. The building leaders will collaborate on providing useful feedback and offering meaningful resources to help teachers increase their proficiency and ensure consistency in the implementation of the process.

Potential Risks

The primary risk of participation is a breach of confidentiality. However, to ensure that the participants, the school, and the district are not identified during data collection and reporting, there will be pseudonyms in place for all participants as well as the school and the system. Additionally, all paper files and consent forms will remain in a locked cabinet that only I will have access to as the research facilitator. All paper files and electronic files will be deleted or destroyed upon completion of the study. All audio files will be deleted or destroyed upon transcription. Any information that could possibly identify study participants will be indirect and coded to ensure that no one can infer from the report the real identity of those involved.

Because of my role as a school administrator at the study site I have a position of power over the study participants. Safeguards will be in place to ensure that the volunteers do not experience coercion or undue influence. First, participation in the action research process is voluntary and in no way related to job performance or the perception of it. When the teachers make the decision to join the study, they agree to sign the consent form with the knowledge that I do not require their participation for the entire study. Also, study participants should understand that they can end their participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

Second, the team members will examine fictional feedback, created by the administrators, to analyze the effectiveness of feedback as it relates to individual goals. This fictional feedback will not identify any specific person or be related to the observations of any staff members.

Finally, the team members, school, and school district will have pseudonyms in the study. This will prevent identities from being potentially being revealed at any point in the data collection and reporting process.

Potential Benefits

As a school based action research project, the study will directly benefit both the teachers and administrators at the school. The data provided by participants will increase the effectiveness of the observation feedback process that is currently in place. Furthermore, the research will help the district address its focus on teacher pedagogical growth, accountability, increasing student learning, and building capacity in its staff members through professional development opportunities.

Audio/Video Recording

Audio recording of the meetings will occur to ensure proper documentation and collection of data generated throughout the process. Audio recordings will be maintained until transcription is complete. Once files have been transcribed they will be deleted or destroyed.

Please provide initials below if you agree to have the interviews audio recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

_____ I do not want to have my interview(s) recorded.

_____ I am willing to have my interview(s) recorded.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The project's research records may be reviewed by the DeKalb County School District and by departments at the University of Georgia responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

Voluntary Participation

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. While participation in the TKES is mandatory as part of your employment, the decision to take part or not take part in the research study will have no effect on your employment status and is in no way related to job performance.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Questions

The main researcher conducting this study is Dr. Sheneka Williams, an associate professor in the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Sheneka Williams at smwill@uga.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at the University of Georgia at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A photocopy of the signed form will be provided to you upon receipt. Please retain a copy for your records.