

UNDERSTANDING TENURE AND EVALUATION:  
THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

by

SEVDA YILDIRIM

(Under the Direction of Sally J. Zepeda)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation process. This qualitative research was mainly framed within the research design rendering a phenomenological study and situated in the context of the state of Georgia. The research relied on several data collection methods, including interviews, documents/legislations, and memo-writing. Eight teachers and three school principals were recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis and the constant comparative method. The findings from teachers' interviews were summarized in five major themes: (1) Granted with tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the teacher evaluation process; (2) Teachers have become more comfortable being evaluated over the years not because of tenure but because of building their self-efficacy; (3) Although teachers might not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, these professional developments affected

their evaluation process throughout their career; (4) Teachers preferred to be evaluated by school principals with teaching experiences, content knowledge, and enough training to perform the evaluation process regardless of their tenure status; and (5) Although teachers found the current evaluation system to be an effective tool to figure out teachers' strengths and weaknesses, the evaluation process alone was not enough to support probationary teachers and keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for improvement if the evaluation process mainly focused on accountability. The findings from school principals' interviews were summarized in two major themes: (1) School principals follow the state's legislation when evaluating teacher's performance; and (2) School principals acknowledge the teacher's years of experience when providing feedback and support. The findings of this study contribute to the literature when examining teacher tenure and teacher evaluation from the perspectives of teachers and school principals and provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers.

**INDEX WORDS:** Teacher tenure; Teacher evaluation process; Teacher evaluation reform; Tenured teachers' evaluation process; Tenured teachers' professional development; Principal approach to evaluating tenured teachers' performance

UNDERSTANDING TENURE AND EVALUATION:  
THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

by

SEVDA YILDIRIM

B.A., Gazi University, Turkey, 2011

M.Sc., Hacettepe University, Turkey, 2014

M.A.E., University of Florida, 2017

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2022

© 2022

Sevda Yildirim

All Rights Reserved

UNDERSTANDING TENURE AND EVALUATION:  
THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

by

SEVDA YILDIRIM

Major Professor: Sally J. Zepeda  
Committee: John P. Dayton  
Juanita Johnson-Bailey

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
August 2022

## DEDICATION

With deep gratitude, I dedicate this dissertation to my family and my fur baby. To my mom, dad, and my sister, I appreciate the support and encouragement you have given me through all of my many learning endeavors. To my fur baby, I could not have survived this challenging journey without your unconditional love.

I love all of you so much.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who made this dissertation possible. First, I would like to thank my participating district for opening its doors to me to collect data. I thank the Superintendent and all of the participants who sacrificed their time to participate in my study during a global pandemic. Without your willingness to be open and honest during the interviews and critically examine your practices and thoughts concerning teacher evaluation, this project would have never moved forward. Thank you!

I also want to express my gratitude to my friends in Athens, other states, and abroad who supported me throughout this process. All of you provided help and encouragement over these years, and I am truly grateful for your friendship. Thank you!

I could not have survived this demanding process without my fur baby, Angel. She slept near my keyboard and kept me company during this challenging journey. She has been joy of my life by making life sweeter while I have focused on school. Thank you!

My parents are the cornerstones of my identity, and I owe them a world of gratitude for who they have trained me to be. I would like to thank my father, Fahrettin Yildirim, and mother, Dudu Yildirim, for maintaining high expectations for me throughout my life and providing me with an endless supply of love, support, and encouragement. Mom and Dad, I am so proud to be your daughter. Personally, I owe much gratitude to my sister Derya Yildirim for her encouragement and never-ending support. Her belief in me, her constant encouragement, and her love helped me reach this milestone. I am thankful for their understanding and support for something that was extremely important to me. Thank you!

I would like to offer sincere appreciation to my committee members, Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey and Dr. John Dayton, for generously offering their time, support, guidance, and goodwill throughout the preparation and review of this document. I thank them both for their fantastic advice and valuable feedback that helped me throughout this process. Thank you!

Last but not least, to my major professor Dr. Sally Zepeda, I genuinely do not know how I can adequately express my sincere gratitude. One would be hard-pressed to find a better advisor. Thank you for having such high expectations of me; your faith in me allowed me to try harder and gave me the confidence to succeed. The time you dedicated to my research and professional development will never be forgotten. I was so honored and privileged to have worked with you over the past five years. Without your support, I would not be at the final stage of my doctoral studies today. I will be forever grateful.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that this dissertation was accomplished with the support of the Study Abroad Scholarship provided by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey. I would like to thank the Turkish Government for providing this opportunity.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	6
Background of the Study .....	6
Research Questions .....	14
Theoretical Framework.....	14
Significance of the Study .....	15
Assumptions of the Study .....	16
Definition of Terms.....	17
Limitations of the Study.....	18
Overview of the Research Procedures .....	19
Organization of the Dissertation .....	21
2 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE .....	22
Teacher Evaluation .....	23
The Role of the School Principal in the Teacher Evaluation Process.....	36

The Role of Policy and Teacher Evaluation .....	42
Current Issues Surrounding Teacher Tenure .....	51
Teacher Evaluation Practices in the State of Georgia.....	54
Teacher Tenure in the State of Georgia .....	57
Empirical Studies related to Tenured Teachers’ Perspectives about the Teacher Evaluation Processes .....	59
Chapter Summary .....	62
3 METHODOLOGY .....	63
Theoretical Framework .....	64
Design of the Study.....	65
Research Methodology .....	67
The Effect of COVID-19 on Research.....	67
The Research Site .....	69
Data Collection Methods .....	73
Data Management .....	80
Data Analysis .....	80
Trustworthiness.....	93
Ethics.....	93
Assessment of Benefits and Risks .....	94
Limitations of the Study.....	94
Subjectivity Statement .....	95
Chapter Summary .....	97
4 STUDY CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS.....	98

	Profile of the School District .....	99
	Profile of Schools.....	99
	Research Participants .....	100
	Chapter Summary .....	106
5	FINDINGS: TENURED TEACHER’S PERSPECTIVES ABOUT TEACHER EVALUATION.....	107
	Findings from First Round of Teacher Interviews.....	108
	Findings from Second Round of Teacher Interviews .....	120
	Findings from Third Round of Teacher Interviews .....	131
	Chapter Summary .....	139
6	FINDINGS: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS APPROACH TO EVALUATING TENURED TEACHERS’ PERFORMANCE .....	141
	School Principals’ Perspectives about the Current Evaluation Process.....	142
	School Principals’ Approach to Evaluate Non-Tenured Teachers’ Performance.....	147
	School Principals’ Approach to Evaluate Tenured Teachers’ Performance.....	149
	Chapter Summary .....	152
7	BUILDING THEMES .....	153
	Themes: Teachers .....	154
	Themes: School Principals.....	161
	Data Analysis Across the School Level.....	164
	Chapter Summary .....	170
8	DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS .....	172

Summary of Research Design .....	174
Discussion of Findings .....	175
Implications .....	192
Concluding Thoughts .....	196
REFERENCES .....	199
APPENDICES	
A Teacher Consent Letter .....	242
B School Principal Consent Letter .....	243
C School Principal Interview Protocol .....	244
D Teacher Interview Protocol.....	245
E University of Georgia Institutional Review Board .....	247

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 3.1: Demographic Information of Three Schools .....	71
Table 3.2: Overview of School Principals .....	72
Table 3.3: Overview of School Teachers.....	72
Table 3.4: Data Sources .....	74
Table 3.5: Sample of Interview Questions for School Principals.....	76
Table 3.6: Sample of Interview Questions for Teachers.....	77
Table 3.7: Sample of Researcher’s Memos .....	79
Table 3.8: Sample of Initial Data Analysis: Note-Taking on SP 01’s Transcript.....	83
Table 3.9: Sample Codes from School Principals’ Transcripts .....	85
Table 3.10: Teacher’s Transcript Excerpts and Coding.....	86
Table 3.11: Code Mapping of Transcript Data for School Principal Participants .....	90
Table 3.12: Selected Sample of Theme from Teachers’ Data .....	91
Table 5.1: Overview of Teachers .....	108
Table 6.1: Overview of School Principals .....	142
Table 7.1: Teachers Feelings about Being Evaluated across Three Interviews.....	156
Table 7.2: Overview of Participants from Elementary School .....	164
Table 7.3: Overview of Participants from Middle School .....	166
Table 7.4: Overview of Participants from High School .....	169

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1: States requiring evidence of student learning in teacher evaluation .....	48
Figure 2.2: States requiring evidence of teacher performance to inform tenure decisions.....	52
Figure 2.3: Teacher Keys Effectiveness System.....	55
Figure 3.1: Data Collection Methods .....	76
Figure 3.2: Data Analysis Process .....	82

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since teachers play a vital role in the achievement of educational objectives, the evaluation of teacher performance continues to be one of the most controversial processes within the education system (Chetty et al., 2014a; Hanushek, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). Educators and other stakeholders want to ensure that students are receiving an education that will lead to academic success, and the prevalent belief is that the evaluation of those professionals who provide instruction to students can improve teacher's instructional effectiveness (Danielson, 2011; Lunenburg, 2019; Papay, 2012). Because teacher effectiveness is a significant factor for student achievement, teacher quality and accountability have become critical issues for public schools (Ingersoll et al., 2016).

In recent years, the federal government launched several programs that have played a key role in reforming the teacher evaluation system (Popham, 2013). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (2001) and the federal incentive Race to the Top (RTT) (2009) aimed to increase student achievement by improving teaching practices. While NCLB required states to have "highly qualified" teachers in every classroom, RTT required states to have "highly effective" teachers who could illustrate their effectiveness through the evaluation process (Pullin, 2013; Zepeda, 2017; Zepeda & Ponticell, 2019). As a result of these movements, states focused on developing teacher evaluation systems that included statistical and procedural measures to ensure teacher effectiveness (Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Jimenez & Zepeda, 2016; Kraft & Gilmour, 2017; McGuinn, 2016; Zepeda, 2017).

One important component of the discussion about teacher effectiveness is teacher tenure. McGuinn (2010) amplified the nexus between teacher quality and effectiveness coupled to teacher tenure sharing “The debate over reforming teacher tenure in the United States has gained traction in the wake of NCLB and Race to the Top and appears likely to pick up additional momentum in the years ahead” (p. 26). Teachers typically go through a probationary period, which is usually three years, before being granted tenure (Blankenship, 2016). Schools may not renew the annual contract of probationary teachers during this period without written reasons during the first year; however, after the second year of probation more “cause” is needed. Once a teacher is granted tenure, the teacher may only be terminated for just cause and much more documentation is needed as well as legal procedures such as due process (Kahlenberg, 2016; Thomsen, 2014).

The discussions about accountability have led to a debate about the benefits and drawbacks of granting tenure to teachers (Fertig et al., 2014; Hommeyer, 2015; Thomsen, 2014). In the recent court case, *Vergara v. California* (2014), the judge ruled that the teacher tenure law in California made it impossible to remove ineffective teachers from the classroom. Although there is limited research on teachers’ perceptions of tenure, a study by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Mayer & Phillips, 2012) found that 89% of teachers surveyed agreed that tenure should include the evaluation of teacher effectiveness; and, 92% of teacher participants stated that tenure should not protect ineffective teachers. However, the report by Cohen and Varghese (2011) showed that only half of all tenured teachers had been evaluated in the past two years.

Currently, a study which investigated the effects of tenure on teacher behavior found that there is typically a decrease in the time that teachers spend on professional development after

receiving tenure (Jones, 2015). Moreover, non-tenured teachers have been found to be more willing to be observed by principals than tenured teachers, and they agreed more than tenured teachers that observations improved their instruction (Range et al., 2014). As tenure status increases a teacher's job security, it is important to understand teachers' perspectives related to evaluation systems prior to and perhaps more importantly after a teacher is granted tenure. Moreover, it is also crucial to understand whether school principals' approaches change when evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The quality of the teaching force continues as a focus of education reform (Ingersoll & Collins, 2019; Rothstein, 2015; Wiseman, 2012). It has become an important expectation that teachers must have the required professional qualifications and update their knowledge and skills for effective teaching to meet students' needs. Thus, it is necessary to identify the domains of effective teaching to increase a teacher's capabilities. Moreover, properly aligned evaluation tools can support teacher's professional development, which could lead to improved student achievement (Danielson, 2011; Desimone & Garet, 2015; Guskey, 2014; Papay, 2012; Zepeda, 2019a).

As teachers are the cornerstone in the education of students, the appropriate evaluation of teachers' effectiveness has become a topic of policy agendas (Hopkins, 2016). Through political agendas, teacher evaluation systems have been affected by education policies (Hazi, 2017). Over time, the expectations of teacher evaluation have changed, and have become more comprehensive and, therefore, more sophisticated. For instance, the politically motivated American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (2009) and the subsequent reform focus in the Race to the Top (RTT) incentive led states to rethink how teachers should be evaluated, promoted,

granted tenure, or dismissed based on their impact on student achievement (Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2019; Lavigne, 2014; Lunenburg, 2019; Zepeda, 2017; Zepeda & Ponticell, 2019).

Resultingly, RTT has played a significant role on the use of Value-Added Models (VAMs) in teacher evaluation to determine student growth and to relate that growth to the effectiveness of individual teachers (Ballou & Springer, 2015; Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2019; Ingle & Lindle, 2019; Ballou & Springer, 2015). Because of the RTT financial incentive programs, many states altered their teacher evaluation processes (Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2016) since “the thought was that teacher effectiveness could be enhanced through evaluation systems” (Zepeda, 2017, p. 40). One example of this is the inclusion of student achievement scores embedded in teacher evaluation systems (National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), 2015).

Teacher evaluation in the era of accountability has held an important but unprecedented place in the school reform efforts that aim to ensure highly-effective teachers are in every classroom. However, this situation has led to teacher tenure being a point of contention, as “some posit that part of getting the right teachers in the classroom is getting rid of the wrong ones, which has put teacher tenure under fire” (Blankenship, 2014, p. 193). Much of the debates about teacher tenure have focused on whether it makes it impossible for systems to fire ineffective teachers once they have gained tenure (Loeb et al., 2015; McGuinn, 2010).

It is important to underscore that tenure does not require schools or districts to retain ineffective teachers, but instead, it declares tenured teachers could not be dismissed without due process of the law (Kahlenberg, 2016). Critics, however, argue that because of the costs and time associated with ensuring due process, school districts retain ineffective teachers in the classroom, and that this situation reduces the incentives for teachers to improve their instruction (Hannaway & Rotherham, 2010; Loeb et al., 2015; McGuinn, 2010). However, others also argue that

because teaching is not an extremely desirable profession, but it offers job security, that weakening tenure systems may cause a lower-quality teacher workforce (Goldstein, 2014).

Although teachers are the central actors within education and their effectiveness is one of the crucial factors that affect student achievement, most of the time they do not have a voice in the decision-making processes or decisions that affect their work in schools (Bangs & Frost, 2012; Binder, 2012; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011; Ingersoll, 2007). That is, “too often teachers do not have the opportunity to give their opinions about policies that will specifically affect them and their classrooms” (Pressley et al., 2018, p. 39). Perhaps, giving teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives about evaluation processes might, in turn, create a better teacher evaluation practices and align these to policy. The present study examined this area broadly because in the end, “measuring teacher’s perceptions on the new policy helps... policy makers and school principals (as well as other school administrators) to analyze the problems teachers expect caused by the policy and to provide solutions for these problems” (Tuytens & Devos, 2009, p. 929).

While politicians, legislators, and educational researchers have raised questions about the practices of teacher evaluation in K-12 educational settings, tenured teachers’ perspectives of these practices are not readily found in the literature. Therefore, exploring the perspectives of tenured teachers and school principals’ approaches to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance could provide policymakers with a more in-depth look at the teacher evaluation processes when developing and revising policies for them.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examining tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change when evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted.

The main goals of this study were:

- To understand the perspectives of tenured teachers about the evaluation process;
- To examine the influences of being granted tenure on the teachers' perspectives about the evaluation process;
- To analyze the teacher evaluation process in supporting teacher development before and after being granted tenure; and
- To examine school principals' approaches to evaluation teacher performance once tenure is granted.

In addition, this study intended to provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers.

## **Background of the Study**

Performance evaluation of teachers is a crucial process in the sector of education, thus the majority of existing research on teacher evaluation focuses on implementing effective teacher evaluation processes (Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Hopkins, 2016; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016).

Several studies have documented two common purposes of teacher evaluation processes-to measure teacher competence and to develop teacher quality (Danielson, 2011; Hazi, 2019; Marzano, 2012). Moreover, according to the research, effective evaluation systems are built on clear expectations, multiple measures, constructive feedback, and aligned professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Darling-Hammond et al., 2012; Goe et al., 2012; Zepeda, 2017). Despite the research on effective methodologies of the teacher evaluation systems, the evaluation processes do not accurately measure teacher quality because 1) the process does not differentiate among teachers, and 2) the process does not help to develop effective teachers (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2014; Toch & Rothman, 2008; Weisberg et al., 2009).

Although teachers have been evaluated across the United States for many years, teacher evaluation processes have not been viewed as a tool for developing teacher professional learning (McGreal, 1983; Marzano et al., 2011; Zepeda, 2017). Callahan and Sadeghi (2014) stated that evaluation systems have failed because “teachers do not receive the feedback they need, and professional development is not aligned with areas of need” (p. 729). However, the intents of the teacher evaluation are to evaluate the performance not only for promotion and tenure decisions, but also to support teacher professional development (Stronge, 2010; Zepeda, 2006, 2016a, 2017).

Teacher evaluation practices have recently changed as a result of concerns about the quality of America’s public-school teachers (Baker et al., 2010). The Coleman Report showed inequities across schools related to class size, student achievement levels, school quality, school resources, and teacher quality. Teacher quality had a bigger influence on student achievement than all other school-related factors (Coleman, 1966). Following this report, Hanushek (1979) illustrated significant differences in the performance of white children regardless of the

individual student's socioeconomic status. In the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, it stated that "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, para. 1).

The report, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), led to a focus on school accountability (Lunenburg, 2019; Weiss, 2003), and brought attention to effective evaluation systems by suggesting "salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system . . . so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 30). The effect of the dire warnings expressed in *A Nation at Risk* on educational policy was first recognized with the reauthorization of the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in (1965) and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which established a standards-based education model (Lunenburg, 2019; Schwartz et al., 2000).

In 2001, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which was the reauthorization of ESEA, required schools to make adequate yearly progress to receive federal funds (USDOE, 2001). Furthermore, NCLB required all states to test students from the third grade to the eighth grade, as well as one time during high school. Moreover, one of the major goals of NCLB was that all children were taught by highly qualified teachers. To be classified as highly qualified, teachers had to meet three criteria: to hold a bachelor's degree; to have full state teaching certification; and to demonstrate subject matter knowledge (Lunenburg, 2019).

In 2009, The New Teacher Project released the report, *The Widget Effect*, which declared that America's public-school children were in danger because of the failure of U.S. public education to recognize the differences in teacher effectiveness (Weisberg et al., 2009). Moreover,

the authors blamed ineffective teacher evaluation systems for the poor achievement of students and noted that the current systems had rated 99% of all teachers as effective (Weisberg et al., 2009). Since most evaluation systems fail to differentiate performance among teachers, “excellent teachers cannot be recognized or rewarded, chronically low-performing teachers languish, and the wide majority of teachers performing at moderate levels do not get the differentiated support and development they need to improve as professionals” (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 6). Furthermore, the authors also criticized the ability of school principals to classify teachers as “good” or “bad” while likening teachers to “widgets” or simply “interchangeable parts” (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 4).

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education announced the Race to the Top (RTT) grant, which would award \$4 billion to states through a competitive process. To be eligible for the grant, states were asked to prepare plans that would address the following reform areas:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace;
2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals as to how to improve instruction;
3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
4. Turning around the lowest performing schools. (USDOE, 2009, p. 2)

States that wanted to apply for the RTT grant had to meet two requirements: (1) The application had to be approved by the U.S. Education Department (USDOE) before being awarded; and (2) at the time of the application, no legal or regulatory barriers could exist, which prevented teachers or principals at the state-level from linking data related to student

achievement for the purpose of evaluation (Hess et al., 2014). A rubric that consisted of seven criteria with subcategories was provided to reviewers by the USDOE, and one of the subcategories was “improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance” (Hess et al., 2014, p. 609). As a result, RTT led states to rethink how teachers should be evaluated, promoted, granted tenure, or dismissed based on their impact on student achievement.

In response to NCLB and RTT, using evidence of student learning or student outcomes has become one of the fundamental components of the teacher evaluation process (Lunenburg, 2019; Mette, et al., 2017). Moreover, teacher evaluation systems have included algorithms bundled within value-added models (VAM) to identify teachers’ influence on student achievement (American Statistical Association (ASA), 2014). VAM scores are being used to decide educators’ tenure and termination, to calculate merit pay bonuses, and to determine professional development needs (Pullin, 2013). It can be said that VAM is in part of a response to concerns that the current system for selection and recruitment of teachers based on their education and credentials is insufficient to show teacher quality (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012; Harris, 2011).

In 2011, then U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, stated that “82 percent of America’s schools could fail to meet education goals set by NCLB this year” which was to be “proficient” in reading and mathematics by 2014 (U.S. Department of Education, 2011a, para.1). Thus, the USDOE established waivers of NCLB requirements in exchange for plans to improve educational outcomes. In exchange for that flexibility, states had to adopt standards for college and career readiness, focus improvement efforts on 15% of the most troubled schools, and create guidelines for teacher evaluation based in part on student achievement (McNeil & Klein, 2011). The flexibility process required that states develop and implement teacher evaluation systems

which used multiple measurements with at least three performance levels, one of which had to be student achievement data, and to consider evaluation results in making personnel decisions (Pennington, 2014).

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and which went into effect during the 2017-2018 academic year. Under ESSA, states have the flexibility to design teacher evaluation systems to meet teachers' and students' needs, and the systems must moreover include student test scores. However, if Title II funds are used to create or improve teacher evaluation systems, the evaluation system must include student achievement and must be based on multiple measures (Sawchuk, 2016).

Teacher tenure ensures that teacher will be terminated only for adequate cause and due process will be provided (Zirkel, 2010). Because tenure is a statutory right, the regulations vary among states (Blankenship, 2014); however, most states require a probationary period which is typically three years before granting tenure (Christie & Zinth, 2011). Although teacher tenure has been a crucial topic of policy agenda for decades, "teacher tenure legislation remained relatively stable for nearly 50 years, from the late 1960s to the late 2000s" (Blankenship, 2014, p. 198). Because of the RTT grants and one of its focus is "recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most" (USDOE, 2009, p. 2), many states have made changes in their tenure laws such as granting tenure based on teacher evaluation or losing tenure as a result of poor performance evaluation (Blankenship, 2014).

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has frequently presented up-to-date policy trends on how states are evaluating teachers. According to the report published by NCTQ showed that while in 2009 only 15 states required evidence of student learning in teacher evaluation, since then that number has increased to 40 states in 2016 (NCTQ, 2017a). Moreover, 19 states required teacher performance based on the evidence of teacher effectiveness be considered in the tenure process (NCTQ, 2017b), and 37 states award teacher tenure after they have taught three years or less in 2014 (Joseph, 2014). In addition, according to 2018 data in 22 states, districts may use effectiveness data when making dismissal decisions (NCTQ, 2018).

The State of Georgia has granted due process rights to all teachers since 1947 (Georgia Laws, 1947). In 1975, Georgia passed the legislation called the *Georgia Fair Dismissal Act of 1975*. This law provided protections for a teacher who has completed a three-year probationary period. This act also defined eight areas that a teacher may be dismissed for the following: (1) Incompetency; (2) Insubordination; (3) Willful neglect of duties; (4) Immorality; (5) Inciting, encouraging, or counseling students to violate any valid state law, municipal ordinance, or policy or rule of the local board of education; (6) To reduce staff due to loss of students or cancellation of programs; (7) Failure to secure and maintain necessary educational training; or (8) Any other good and sufficient cause. In 2000, Governor Roy Barnes signed into law House Bill 1187 which eliminated the rights to continued employment for teachers who were employed after July 1st of 2000; however, after four years teachers regained their tenure protections (Blankenship, 2013). Teachers in Georgia are awarded tenure after a three-year probationary period; thus, Georgia does not connect tenure decisions to evidence of teacher effectiveness (NCTQ, 2017b).

Despite the attempts to improve teacher's effectiveness by implementing effective teacher evaluation processes, the voice of teachers surprisingly is largely absent. Although several studies showed the benefits of including teacher voice in educational reforms (Binder, 2012; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011; Ingersoll, 2007), most teachers feel that their voices have not been adequately heard (Bangs & Frost, 2012). Highlighting the importance of teachers' voice, Hargreaves and Shirley (2011) stated:

Teachers are at the far end of educational reform. Apart from students and parents, they are often the very last to be consulted about and connected to agendas of what changes are needed in education, and of how those changes should be managed. Educational change is something that government departments, venture philanthropists, performance-driven economics, and election-minded legislators increasingly arrogate to themselves. Even when these policy-setting and policy transporting bodies speak on behalf of teachers, teachers often have little or no voice. Teachers are rarely asked to speak on their own account. (p. 1)

Thus, teachers should have an opportunity to share their perspectives about the policies that influence their work, most especially how they are evaluated. Moreover, current studies (Jones, 2015; Range et al., 2014) have illustrated the urgency to understand perspectives of tenured teachers regarding teacher evaluation processes and what makes sense to their professional practices, as well as to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once teacher is granted.

## **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

## **Theoretical Framework**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. Thus, this purpose can be achieved through the interpretive lens as the aim of interpretivism is to understand personal experiences, with the belief that reality is subjective and constructed by the individual, and there are multiple realities (Lather, 2006).

According to Sipe and Constable (1996), the interpretivist paradigm leans toward reality as "subjective and constructed" (p. 155) with everyone seeing the world differently through multiple perspectives. The position of interpretivism in relation to ontology and epistemology is that interpretivists believe the reality is multiple and relative (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988).

According to interpretivism, "the descriptions of human actions are based on social meanings, people living together interpret the meanings of each other and these meanings change through social intercourse" (Bassey, 1999, p. 43). In other words, knowledge is subjective and

idiographic, and the truth is dependent on the context. This paradigm is value-laden and emphasizes that values influence how we think and behave, as well as what we find to be important.

The interpretivism theory values individual experiences, and collects data through participant observation, interviewing and analyzing documents (Lather, 2006). The move toward the idea that “different representations of constructions lead to different outcomes or products, different ways of expressing experience,” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013) has allowed for more flexibility within research methods and expectations of outcomes. Essentially, interpretivism allows the focus to be fixed on understanding what is happening in a given context rather than just measuring it (Klein & Myers, 1999). This study used an interpretive theoretical approach with phenomenological research methods to examine the phenomenon of teacher evaluation and tenure from the perspectives of teachers and principals.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to examine the perspectives of tenured teachers regarding the teacher evaluation process, and school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance. The process of teacher evaluation has been the main topic of discussion in the educational sector for many years; however, there is a limited amount of literature on tenure teachers’ views regarding the evaluation process. Because, teacher evaluations are vital to the development of supporting effective teachers, as well as student academic achievement, this study was timely. Moreover, the role of the teacher is a vital part of the classroom and when decisions are made that affect teacher, it is very important that their voices are heard and considered by policy makers. Thus, this study will allow researchers to determine if the potential for being granted tenure has any bearing or influence on a teacher’s perspectives related to the

evaluation process. Moreover, by examining changes in the school principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance once a teacher is granted tenure will provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The primary assumption of this study was that all teacher participants in this study had experienced a phenomenon related to being granted tenure, evaluation, and supervision. In addition to this, the researcher believed the following assumptions within the study to be accurate:

- All teacher participants in this study were transparent about their perspectives and experiences related to the teacher evaluation process and being granted tenure.
- Participants provided open and honest answers to all interview questions.
- The selected methodology for this study was well-designed and comprehensively addressed the research questions.
- Participants responses would accurately reflect the data needed to address research questions.
- The number of interviews and the time of data collection were sufficient to provide rich data for analysis.
- Teacher and principal participants in this study recalled and described their experience with the teacher evaluation processes accurately and to the best of their abilities.

## **Definition of Terms**

For the purposes of clarification, the following main terms were identified. These definitions were based on the literature on teacher evaluation and teacher tenure as well as how these terms were used in the study.

Evaluator – In the state of Georgia, “to ensure that evaluators meet proficiency in the implementation of an evaluation system, individuals receive systematic instruction and successfully demonstrate the ability to do the work required” (Georgia Department of Education, 2014a, p. 98). In this study, the term is used for the person who is responsible to evaluate teacher performance.

School Principal – In this study, the profession who is the head of the school is referred as the principal.

Supervision – Supervision was defined by Glanz and Heimann (2019) as “an ongoing process of engaging teachers in instructional dialogue for the purpose of enhancing reflection about teaching and student learning to modify teaching practices aligned with increasing student achievement” (p. 356). In this study, supervision is defined as a primary way to improve teacher’s instructional practices.

Teacher – A teacher is a professional school employee certificated by the State Board of Education (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-942a) whose job is to provide an education to students.

Teacher evaluation – For the purpose of this study, teacher evaluation refers a process to rate teacher’s performance and effectiveness, and according to the findings, to provide feedback as well as appropriate professional development.

Tenure – Dayton (2018) indicated that “Tenure carries with it a legal right to due process of law in actions significantly affecting employment including reprimand, suspension, or dismissal” (p.

213). For the purpose of this study, a tenured teacher was defined as a teacher who had satisfactorily completed a probationary period.

### **Limitations of the Study**

One of the limitations of the study was that the participants were selected from one school district in the State of Georgia; therefore, the generalization of the findings was limited. However, the intention of selecting participants from one school district ensured that all participants had experienced similar teacher evaluation processes and tenure practices.

Since the purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation during the process and after being granted tenure, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance, this research was limited based on the purposive sampling method. As the probationary period in the district where data were collected is three-years, teachers who had no more than five years of teaching experience were asked to participate in the study. Moreover, only the school principals which the teachers were assigned participated in the study.

Although the interviews followed the same protocol with each participant, the attitudes, and confidence levels of the participants as well as their individual levels of experience could have impacted their responses to the questions. The design of the study relied on the teacher participants' lived experience of being evaluated and being granted tenure. Although participants were asked to reflect on their past experiences, it was assumed that participants recalled and shared their experience with the teacher evaluation process and being granted tenure accurately as tenure and teacher evaluation are significant events for teachers.

## **Overview of the Research Procedures**

This qualitative research was mainly framed within the research design rendering a phenomenological study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation. This type of research tries to answer the question, "what is it like to experience such-and-such?" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 141). Therefore, "a phenomenological researcher is interested in describing a person's experience in the way he or she experiences it, and not from some theoretical standpoint" (Bevan, 2014, p. 136). By examining the perspectives of multiple participants, a researcher can begin cautiously to generalize related to what it is like to experience a phenomenon from the perspective of those that have lived the experience.

In a phenomenological study, the purpose is to describe the meaning of a small number of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Thus, the phenomenological study can provide a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Data are collected from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants. The participants in the phenomenological research need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. In this study, the teacher participants only who shared the phenomenon of being granted tenure were chosen, and the principals responsible for evaluating teachers who were tenured were chosen.

A qualitative, phenomenological study aligned with the interpretivist framework provided a mechanism for gathering and analyzing data that represents the lived experience of the study participants. The data for the study were collected predominantly by interviews, since interviews aim at understanding participants on their own terms and how they make meaning of their own

lives, experiences, and cognitive processes (Brenner, 2006). Interviews were held with eight- teachers and three-principals of the schools in which the teacher are assigned. All eight-teacher participants were interviewed three-times using protocols that addressed tenure, evaluation, and supervision. The three school principals were interviewed only one time by focusing their approach to evaluating teachers' performance before and after teachers are granted tenure.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted through Zoom. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyze the data by identifying the emergence of themes or codes, which are characterized by consistent phrases, expressions, or ideas that are common amongst the responses of the participants in the study (Patton, 2015).

Selecting participants for this study was a vital step to the design. The study aimed to focus on elementary, middle, and high school teachers and principals of schools in which teachers are assigned in a single school district. Therefore, the research site was selected based on the following criteria: location (in the same school county) and across school levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Situating the study in one school district allowed for intensity and maximum variation for the emergence of identified common patterns and unique variations of these patterns across the participants.

Regardless of which methodology is used, sampling methods are intended to maximize efficiency and validity (Morse & Niehaus, 2009). Therefore, sampling remained consistent with the purposes and research questions to add clarity to the research. The sampling strategy employed for this study was purposeful and included tenured teachers and principals of the schools in which the teachers were assigned. Thus, purposeful selection starts with choosing participant criteria. To the purpose of this study, only teachers who have met the following four criteria were interviewed:

1. The teacher who is a currently tenured;
2. The teacher whose performance has been evaluated before she/he was granted tenure status;
3. The teacher whose performance has been evaluated after she/he was granted tenure status; and,
4. The teacher who has no more than five years of teaching experiences since being tenured.

In addition, the principals of the schools in which the teachers are assigned were selected regardless of their experience and years as principals at the research sites.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

The dissertation is organized in eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents the introduction, and overview of the study including the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, background of the study, the significance of the study, the research questions, definitions of key terms, the research procedures, the limitations, and the assumptions. Chapter 2 provides the review of related literature and research related to teacher evaluation and tenure. Chapter 3 defines the research design, methodology and data analysis processes used to guide this research study. Chapter 4 presents the context of study and participants. Chapter 5 includes the findings of the data analysis from teachers' interview. Chapter 6 includes the findings of the data analysis from school principals' interview. Chapter 7 further discuss the findings from teachers and school principals, leading the presentation of specific themes. Chapter 8 concludes this study and includes a discussion of the findings, implications and recommendations for future research, practice, and policy.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examining tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. Does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. Do principals' approaches change to evaluate teacher performance once a teacher is granted tenure?

Although the evaluation of teacher performance has been the main topic of discussion in the education system, there is a limited amount of literature that examines tenured teachers views regarding the evaluation process, and principals' approach to evaluate tenured teachers' performance. For this reason, this study was timely to establish a deeper understanding of

tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, and how school principals evaluate their performance which, in turn perhaps, can assist in developing new practices and policies.

This chapter presents an overview of seven areas of the related literature. The areas presented included: (1) teacher evaluation; (2) the role of school principal in teacher evaluation process; (3) the role of policy and teacher evaluation; (4) current issues surrounding teacher tenure; (5) teacher evaluation practices in the State of Georgia; (6) teacher tenure in the State of Georgia; and (7) empirical studies related to tenured teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation processes.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

This section provides the literature about teacher evaluation by focusing on the purpose of teacher evaluation, summative and formative evaluations, the link between teacher evaluation and student achievement, value-added model, teacher's attitude toward evaluation, and the link between teacher evaluation and teacher professional development.

#### *Purpose of Teacher Evaluation*

An effective evaluation system is a crucial process in providing an efficient education system. Thus, it is important to start with a clear and public understanding of the purposes of the teacher evaluation process. Nolan and Hoover (2008) described the teacher evaluation as:

Teacher evaluation is an organizational function designed to make comprehensive judgments concerning teacher performance and competence for the purposes of personnel decisions such as tenure and continuing employment. The process as a whole is aimed primarily at making a summative judgment about the quality of the teacher's performance in carrying

out both instructional duties and other responsibilities. This is a state-mandated function carried out by only those properly certified by the state. (pp. 5-6)

The purpose of designing more effective teacher evaluation systems has been to place emphasis on quality teachers who bring the best teaching practices to classrooms (Danielson, 2011). Effective teacher evaluation systems could serve to improve teaching practices, determine weaknesses for future professional development offerings, and identify and retain highly effective teachers to serve as mentors to inexperienced or struggling teachers, all of which can lead to higher student achievement (Danielson, 2011).

Many researchers have engaged in investigations of teacher evaluation systems and agreed that there are two common purposes—to ensure the teacher’s quality and to promote professional development quality (Danielson, 2011; Hazi, 2019; Marzano, 2012; McGreal, 1983). As reported by Zepeda (2016b), the purpose of evaluation is to ensure teacher quality, to promote growth and development, and to promote problem-solving. Marzano (2012) positions that the main purposes of teacher evaluation are to evaluate teacher performance, to measure the teacher performance, and to develop the teacher effectiveness over time. Moreover, according to Marshall (2009), the priority of the teacher evaluation should be to measure a teacher’s efficiency and his or her ability to lead student academic success.

The key role of teacher evaluation is to provide teachers with feedback on practices that make a difference in student learning. However, the study by Weisberg et al. (2009) found “nearly three out of four teachers went through the evaluation process but received no specific feedback about how to improve their practice” (p. 14). Moreover, Callahan and Sadeghi (2014) stated that teacher evaluation systems have failed because “teachers do not receive the feedback

they need, and professional development is not aligned with areas of need” (p. 729). Thus, teacher evaluation should be used as a tool to support teachers to improve their skills.

The next section of this review of the literature focuses on the summative and formative aspects of teacher evaluation. In the literature, there are inherent tensions between the summative and formative aspects of evaluation (Zepeda, 2017).

### *Summative and Formative Evaluation*

Teacher evaluation systems have been used historically within legislative mandates to use combination of formative and summative evaluation (Popham, 2013). According to Popham (1988), the combination of formative and summative evaluation can be called a “dysfunctional marriage.” Again, the two major purposes of teacher evaluation include accountability and professional growth (Danielson, 2011; Hazi, 2019; Marzano, 2012; McGreal, 1983). Evaluation for accountability—to judge teacher performance for personnel decisions such as awarding merit pay, termination, tenure—may be called summative. Formative evaluation, on the contrary, is used to provide feedback to the teacher and encourage improvement (Marzano, 2012; Popham, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Although these two purposes are usually bound together in the same evaluation system, educators should recognize that summative and formative evaluations each have their own purposes and intents as well as different priorities and implications.

Popham (2013) defined summative evaluation as providing “information associated with negative decisions about a teacher, such as the denial of tenure and termination” or “positive decisions, such as recognition and financial awards” (p. 20); and formative evaluation as an “endeavor intended to supply information that can improve a teacher’s effectiveness” (p. 20). In other words, formative evaluation focuses on teachers’ needs, whereas summative evaluation relates to the organization’s need for accountability (Glickman et al., 2014). Thus, formative

evaluation is continuous improvement, while summative is more concerned with standardization and judgment.

Stake (1976, cited in Scriven, 1991) defined the differences between formative and summative evaluation by stating “when the cook tastes the soup, that’s formative; when the guests taste the soup, that’s summative” (p. 19). Formative evaluation provides feedback, creates the opportunity for the principal and teacher to identify teacher’s strengths and weakness to plan the professional development (Zepeda, 2017). On the contrary, summative evaluation is used to hold teachers accountable to meet state statutes and district policies and to determine employment decisions (Zepeda, 2017). To wit, summative summarizes past performance; formative shapes future performance (Darling-Hammond, 2013).

Researchers found that effective school leaders tended to use teacher evaluation data to inform professional development rather than to make employment decisions (Reinhorn et al., 2017). Moreover, many states seem to encourage districts to look for opportunities to use teacher evaluation with the aim of professional development, rather than for accountability purposes (Close et al., 2018). Furthermore, Popham (2013) suggested that school leaders should engage in both summative and formative evaluations, but to do so separately:

The unthinking mixture of formative and summative teacher evaluation will almost certainly, foster inappropriate teacher evaluations. But because formative and summative teacher evaluation can each make significant contributions to instruction, both should be implemented widely—but separately—as components of emerging teacher-evaluation systems. (p. 22)

In other words, school leaders should separate their roles in summative and formative evaluation to give teacher evaluation systems the ability to achieve its purposes. The next section of this

literature review examines teacher evaluation and student achievement in light of the discussions centered on testing, primarily.

### *Teacher Evaluation and Student Achievement*

At the turn of the 21st century, researchers have been focused on the relationships between teacher effectiveness and student performance. With evidence of the effect that teachers can have on students' achievement (Hanushek, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010), researchers have focused on determining the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and student outcomes (Chetty et al., 2014a; Chetty et al., 2014b; Gordon et al., 2006; Hanushek, 2009) since the purposes of teacher evaluation are to ensure teacher effectiveness and to promote professional development (Stronge, 2010; Zepeda, 2006, 2016a, 2017). Therefore, properly aligned evaluation tools could support a teacher's professional development, which could likely lead to improved student achievement (Danielson, 2011; Desimone & Garet, 2015; Guskey, 2014; Papay, 2012; Zepeda, 2019a).

Most studies agree that teacher evaluation scores are predictive of student success (Jacob & Lefgren, 2008; Kane & Staiger, 2012; Rockoff & Speroni, 2010; Tyler et al., 2010). Some studies showed a positive link between teacher evaluation scores and student outcomes. As reported the study by Milanowski et al. (2004), there is a 'substantial' strong link between teacher's evaluation scores and student success. According to a study by Gallagher (2004), there was a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between teacher evaluation ratings and student outcomes in reading. Moreover, Howard and Gullickson (2010) agree that "The quality of a student's educational experience is a direct result of the classroom teacher's ability to exercise sound professional judgment and skill in creating an engaging learning environment" (p. 338).

Good teaching should produce growth in students, and testing should inform instruction; therefore, test results seem to be a fair way to evaluate teacher performance (Chetty et al., 2014a), and selecting teachers on the basis of value-added measures could serve to increase student achievement (Gordon et al., 2006; Hanushek, 2009). Chetty et al. (2011) found that students assigned to teachers with high value-added measures are more likely to attend college, earn higher salaries, and live in wealthy communities. Moreover, Chetty et al. (2014b) also determined the effect of high value-added teachers on students' long-term outcomes, and they reported that:

replacing a teacher whose current VA is in the bottom 5 percent with an average teacher would increase the mean present value of students' lifetime income by \$250,00 per classroom over a teacher's career accounting for drift in teacher quality over time. (pp. 2635-2636)

Moreover, by using VAMs, Jackson (2013) showed that teachers' effects on cognitive test scores are a crucial predictor of teachers' effects on non-cognitive skills.

Although the majority of the literature concluded that teachers are the most important school-related factor in student achievement, their effects are approximately 10-20% of student achievement score variation overall (Kennedy, 2010; Gabriel & Allington, 2011), and other factors such as health, poverty, and the characteristic of parents are well beyond the control of the teachers, and that these factors largely influence student achievement (Berliner, 2013). At the center of this discussion are the value-added models that attempt to link gains in student learning to the teacher as reported by standardized testing and their "value" measures.

### *Value-Added Model*

Traditionally, teachers have been evaluated based on subjective ratings, and the most common type of evaluation of a teacher's performance is the evaluation completed by a principal relying on relatively few classroom observations per year (Brandt et al., 2007). Moreover, student achievement is not directly evaluated or considered in this process. However, a principal's personal feelings can affect the fairness and objectivity of the evaluation process. In addition, the skill level of the evaluator may affect the validity of the teacher evaluation (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). A lack of subject familiarity can make it difficult for the evaluator to assess the teacher's performance accurately (Donaldson, 2009). Furthermore, recent research has shown little variation among teacher ratings from evaluation systems based only on subjective teacher evaluation (Weisberg et al., 2009).

Using evidence of student learning and student outcomes has become one of the fundamental components of the teacher evaluation process. The value-added models (VAMs) use student scores on standardized tests to estimate the effects of teachers on student learning. Generally, the value-added model uses the current and previous test scores to evaluate the teacher's role in the student growth achievement (Harris, 2011; Lunenburg, 2019). This model uses complex statistical techniques as a way to estimate how much teachers contribute to their students' learning by considering factors such as the status of students including disability, English language, attendance, suspension, and retention, the giftedness (ASA, 2014; Lunenburg, 2019; Pivovarova et al., 2016).

Student achievement depends on input from teachers as well as other factors. As students spend most of their time at school under the supervision of teachers, many argue that teachers are the most important source of input (Harris, 2014). Thus, it seems logical that students' test scores

should correlate with the quality of teaching. Thus, test results seem to be a fair way to evaluate teachers' performance (Chetty et al., 2014a), and selecting teachers on the basis of value-added measures can increase student achievement (Gordon et al., 2006; Hanushek, 2009). Moreover, the score of VAM are being used to decide educators' tenure and termination, merit pay bonuses for individuals or faculties, educator professional development needs, as well as having an impact on educators' professional reputations (Morgan et al., 2014; Pullin, 2013). Although the models have created a great deal of excitement among many policymakers, VAMs have also been criticized for numerous reasons. Indeed, the implementation of the models and the intended uses of the results pose certain practical, technical, and even philosophical problems (Darling-Hammond, 2015).

The debate concerning the use of VAMs to evaluate teachers is intense and controversial. Some stakeholders interested in rewarding high-quality teachers and/or removing poor-performing teachers from the system will find the traditional teacher evaluation systems inadequate and believe that VAMs represent a significant improvement since they differentiate teachers based on their performance (Goldhaber, 2010). Conversely, some criticize not only the validity and reliability of VAMs, but also its use when making high-stakes personnel decisions. Some argue that improved accountability systems based on test scores can improve the quality of education while ignoring inequalities based on socioeconomic factors and race (Au, 2009; Orfield & Kornhaber, 2001). Others claim that these systems produce unintended consequences like teaching to the test, cheating, and excluding underperforming students from test taking (Haney, 2000; Klein et al., 2000).

Critics of the use of the value-added model as a component of teacher evaluations raise a number of concerns, the most prominent of which are the following: (1) Value-added estimates may be biased (Baker et al., 2010, Paufler & Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Rothstein, 2010), and (2) value-added models may not be stable enough to be used for high-stakes personnel decisions (Baker et al., 2010; Newton et al., 2010). Several studies stated that accountability pressures are linked to higher attrition and reduced morale, specifically for teachers who work in high-need schools (Feng et al., 2010; Finnigan & Gross, 2007). Moreover, high-stakes accountability based on VAMs also causes high-performing teachers to leave the teaching profession entirely (Baker et al., 2010).

One of the biggest arguments against the use of VAMs is that students are not randomly assigned to teachers. Under experimental conditions, students would be randomly assigned to teachers, and the growth between the pre- and posttest would be the teacher's input, as researchers assume that other variables are randomly disturbed among the classroom (Baker et al., 2010; Kane et al., 2013). However, in a school system, students are not randomly assigned to classrooms; thus, their performance is also affected by other variables (Baker et al., 2010; Kupermintz, 2003). Furthermore, Goldhaber and Anthony (2004) stated that if successful teachers have an influence on the decision regarding the assignment of students, they are more likely to have highly motivated students. In addition, the study by Rothstein (2009) found that students are assigned to classroom based on their previous test score, and VAMs do not completely control statistically this assignment. This situation also disincentives teachers to collaborate and had led to more teacher competition (Collins, 2014; Scherrer, 2012).

Teachers may seek the strongest students by ignoring the neediest students (Kupermintz, 2003). Moreover, teachers may avoid working with students who are low achievers and in schools classified as “low-achieving” as ways to protect their VAM scores (Baker et al., 2010). Examination now focuses on teacher’s attitudes toward evaluation.

### *Teacher’s Attitudes Toward Evaluation*

Teacher’s attitude has a critical role in the evaluation process, as this process is an important factor for a teacher’s career. Thus, it is necessary to learn the attitudes of teachers on the processes by which they are evaluated (Marzano, 2012). However, teachers have not been included in the discussion of what establishes an effective evaluation practice, although they are the one who holds the most valuable information for this process (Donaldson, 2016).

Teachers are life-long learners and have an inherent desire to continue to learn and improve their skills (Golding & Adam, 2016). The desire for ongoing, timely, and thorough feedback has been one of their greatest needs when it comes to teacher evaluation (Watkins, 2015) since teachers want to know the reasoning behind an evaluator’s decision. Moreover, providing teachers descriptive feedback on their teaching is more useful to improve their instructions than that of a rubric score (Khachatryan, 2015). Thus, the teacher evaluation process should be used to assist the teacher by providing meaningful feedback to improve the quality of teaching.

When teacher evaluation is carried out with fidelity, it supports teachers in the development and revised instruction by using both formative and summative assessments (Zepeda, 2016b). However, Weisberg et al. (2009) stated that “only 43 percent of teachers agree that evaluation helps teachers improve” (p. 14). Moreover, teachers believed that the evaluation

process does not show teachers either their weaknesses and strengths nor account for their individual needs (Flores, 2012).

Teachers' attitudes about evaluation vary based on the type of evaluation and the use of evaluation (Nandi, 2011). Although one of the purposes of teacher evaluation is to improve teaching practice by determining weakness for future professional development, teachers feel that professional development associated with the implementation of the evaluation process has been inadequate (Ruffini et al., 2014). However, teacher evaluation has been more effective when teachers have had the opportunity to participate in professional learning and to receive ongoing feedback on their classroom practices (Tuytens & Devos, 2014).

School leaders play an important role in changing teachers' attitudes toward the evaluation system. Teachers were more likely to have a deeper investment in their evaluation when they trusted their school leaders and believed in their abilities as supervisors (Kim & Youngs, 2015). School leaders should act as a support and resource for teachers in the evaluation process (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). Moreover, teachers want to have frequent visits from their school leaders along with a follow-up meeting on how they can improve their instruction (Donaldson, 2016; Lacireno-Paquet et al., 2016).

Although the perspective of teachers has often been overlooked and disregarded in the evaluation process, it is crucial to understand their views, as they have undoubtedly much to offer to improve the effectiveness of teacher evaluation (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004; Rentner et al., 2016; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Moreover, "measuring teacher's perceptions on the new policy helps... policy makers and school principals (as well as other school administrators) to analyze the problems teachers expect caused by the policy and to provide solutions for these

problems” (Tuytens & Devos, 2009, p. 929). Thus, it is necessary to provide an opportunity for teachers to share their perspectives about the evaluation processes.

The next section examines the link between teacher evaluation and teacher professional development. The nexus between teacher evaluation and professional development became more direct with the inclusion of professional development within most teacher evaluation systems (Zepeda, 2019b).

#### *The Link between Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Professional Development*

Teacher evaluation should not only focus on holding teachers accountable for their instruction, but also it should encourage them to improve their instruction (Stronge, 2010; Zepeda, 2016b, Zepeda, 2017) if the results are used to plan teacher’s professional development (Zepeda, 2019b). In other words, the data collected via teacher evaluation are important resources for school leaders to understand the individual needs of teachers (Derrington & Kirk, 2017). According to Maslow and Kelley (2012), “... evaluation has the potential to provide meaningful feedback to teachers to improve teaching practice and to be an important source of data to inform organizational systems that support teaching and learning” (p. 600). Thus, it is necessary that teacher evaluation and effective feedback should be linked to teachers’ professional learning and practice (Tuytens & Devos, 2014).

It is expected for teachers to keep pace with continuous changes by improving their knowledge and skills to provide quality teaching. Most teachers have to gain knowledge and skills while on the job throughout their teaching careers. This is why professional development for teachers is important and a necessary component of schooling as “student outcomes depend on high quality educators” and high-quality teachers must be supported in their growth and

development (Rice & Hoyer, 2014). Professional development is a way for teachers to enhance their instructional knowledge and strategies to engage with students.

Professional development opportunities should be job-embedded and driven by data (Zepeda, 2012). Zepeda (2019a) further stated that professional development should be focused on student learning, should be offered on an ongoing basis, and should provide teachers the opportunity to engage in multiple forms of learning. Wei et al. (2009) stated that effective professional development opportunities should align with teachers' instructional practices, and be intensive, sustained, and integrated with school-reform efforts while actively engaging teachers in collaborative professional communities. Moreover, effective professional development also emphasizes the importance of integrating teacher voice and decision-making related to the type of professional development opportunities available to teachers (Zepeda, 2018, 2019a) since teacher collaboration is crucial for expanding changes in their teaching instructional practices.

The effectiveness of professional development is affected by teachers' attitudes about the programs in which they participate (Torff & Byrnes, 2011). When teachers have more positive attitudes about professional development, they are more likely to benefit from their efforts to engage as professionals (Torff & Byrnes, 2011). According to Torff and Byrnes (2011), there are three reasons that teachers think professional development is effective – when professional development is content specific, when it is integrated into a teacher's daily work, and when it allows teachers to take leadership roles. Hochberg and Desimone (2010) also identified three essential characteristics of professional development activities that positively affect teachers' change in knowledge, skills, and classroom teaching practices: the training's content focus, opportunities for active learning, and coherence with other teacher learning activities.

Teachers commonly stated the most important problems with professional development programs are that they do not meet teachers' needs (Guskey, 2009). A study by Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) also found that professional development is more likely to be deemed less effective when teachers think that it is not related to what they have to do according to the curriculum. Moreover, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) stated, "Active learning opportunities allow teachers to transform their teaching" (p. 7). For this reason, professional development opportunities should be as different as the professional learners themselves, because a one-size-fits-all approach does not support learning. To support the development of teachers, school-level leaders, especially the principal, play a pivotal role in the evaluation of teachers.

### **The Role of the School Principal in Teacher Evaluation Process**

Principals play an essential role in the overall success of the school organization (Hallinger, 2003; Jackson, 2000). They have an impact on student achievement through their daily interactions with the teaching staff, the curricular choices, and the hiring decisions (Goldhaber, 2007; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013; Stronge, 2013). Moreover, Stronge (2013) explained the expectations from school principals by saying that "in addition to holding the largely managerial responsibilities of the past, today's principals are expected to lead their schools, increase student learning, and help staff to grow professionally" (p. 7). Thus, today's principal clearly must serve as instructional leaders who are focused on improving student achievement by providing guidance and support for their teachers.

Principals also play a critical role in the teacher evaluation process, and the expectation from them in terms of teacher evaluation has increased in recent years (Derrington & Campbell, 2013; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016; Spillane & Kenney, 2012). Moreover, Bradley (2014) stated that "principals serve a key role in shifting the punitive 'gotcha' school climate to a culture of growth

and excitement for teacher learning by creating supportive conditions, so teachers develop confidence and competence as effective educators” (p. 14). Thus, the success of the teacher evaluation process is directly correlated to the skill of school principals in facilitating this process. However, a principal’s personal feelings, skill levels, and lack of subject familiarity may affect the validity of teacher evaluation.

The school principals have different perspectives about the purpose of the evaluation process and the value of evaluation systems; thus, “these differing views led principals to interpret their role in the evaluation process quite differently” (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. 728). Derrington and Campbell (2013) stated that school principals had not been provided enough time to understand the teacher evaluation policies; therefore, they often have been unsure about their role in the evaluation process (Rigby, 2015). Thus, it is important for school principals to receive proper training and ongoing support as they tackle this task (Derrington et al., 2015; Kimball et al., 2015).

School principals’ beliefs about their skills, their knowledge, and their experience as evaluators also shape their practice to evaluate teacher performance (Goldring et al., 2015; Kowalski & Dolph, 2015). A lack of expertise in the subject area may result in narrowed feedback that may not be enough for teachers to improve their instructional practices (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). Although ongoing, specific feedback is essential for teachers’ development and growth, a principal may struggle to provide specific feedback to teachers for improvement (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). Moreover, school principals also struggle to find enough time to provide targeted feedback (Goff et al., 2014).

School principals must have skills in teacher evaluation to be successful as their skill levels may affect the validity of the evaluations. Although the school principal can have the greatest effect on the teacher evaluation process and teacher development when they have appropriately trained, Weisberg et al. (2009) found that the majority of administrators in their study received little to no training on the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, Donaldson (2009) stated that although school principals may receive training for the teacher evaluation process, they barely found time or opportunity for continuous professional development in this manner. Thus, it is crucial to provide proper training, ongoing, specific feedback to the school administrator to implement effective teacher evaluation (Derrington et al., 2015).

The expectation from school principals in terms of teacher evaluation has increased in recent years with the changes in teacher evaluation practices, the demands on principal's time, and the role of them as instructional leaders have expanded (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). In today schools, school principal should be an instructional leader who recognizes effective teachers and improve or remove ineffective teachers through teacher evaluation and supervision, in turn, improve teaching and learning (Zepeda, 2012). Therefore, effective instructional leaders should be visible, and accessible to teachers and students (Stout et al., 2013), since teachers have appreciated an instructional leader who allocates the time for them to improve teachers' practice, and who provides teachers the necessary support to increase student achievement.

Instructional leadership emphasizes the importance of teaching and learning in schools. However, because multiple role expectations exist for school leaders, and they have limited time to accomplish these tasks, it is hard to expect a principal to meet all teachers' instructional needs by themselves. Thus, distributed leadership is necessary (Aspen Institute, 2014; Nappi, 2014), simply because the school organization is so complicated that no single person can handle all of

the leadership tasks. Moreover, principals have an important role in “increasing the leadership activities of other leaders in their schools” (Glanz & Zepeda, 2016, p. 9). In other words, leading instructional efforts in a school is a primary role for school principals. The school principal should focus on building a school vision, sharing leadership with teachers, and influencing schools to operate as learning communities.

School principals can improve instruction by building positive school culture, and Zepeda (2012) stated that “healthy school cultures and climates thrive in environments built through collaboration, trust, and care for the members of the school” (p. 89). Trust is the glue that holds together any group, and the principal is the one who has the power to build a trusting relationship with the school (Cosner, 2009). Moreover, the school principal’s ability to building trust and healthy relationships with teachers is important for teachers to improve their instruction. School principals can promote a trustful relationship with faculty members through accessibility, open communication, flexibility, and clear expectations (Calahan, 2013; Ponticell et al., 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2019). Another way for the school principal to build trust is to provide meaningful opportunities for teachers to collaborate (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Maslow & Kelley, 2012). As Lambert et al. (2016) stated that without trust, it is hard to expect from the participation to talk about their personal thoughts; therefore, teachers have to trust teacher leaders that they do their best to support teachers, and they provide valuable feedback.

The effective evaluation process should be aligned with professional development, as the data collected via teacher evaluation are important resources for a principal to understand the teacher’s individual needs (Derrington & Kirk, 2017). The school principal should be aware of their faculty’s needs, strengths, and provide appropriate support for teacher growth, since “what works always depends on where, when, and with whom” (Guskey, 2014, p. 16). In other words,

the professional learning activities should not take a “one-size-fits-all” approach, and it should meet the professional development needs of each teacher. Moreover, teachers need to differentiate supports and interventions that meet the unique needs of them. The effective principal knows how to support teachers’ professional growth by providing productive feedback that linked with professional development (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2014; Derrington & Martinez, 2019; Zepeda, 2017).

It is impossible to think supervision, professional development, and teacher evaluation separately as “supervision, teacher evaluation, and staff development were closely related, improvement oriented, and interdependent processes” (McGreal & Wood, 1988, cited in Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2016, p. 188). Therefore, effective teacher supervision and evaluation systems that inform the teacher professional development and improve instruction are essential. However, teacher supervision is mostly understood as teacher evaluation (Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009), as Ponticell and Zepeda (2004) found in their study that “for all teachers and for the vast majority of principals, supervision was, quite simply, evaluation” (p. 47). However, the purpose of evaluation and supervision are distinct; teacher evaluation can be described as summative feedback while teacher supervision can be described as the formative feedback that focuses ongoing support for professional growth (Glickman et al., 2014; Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009; Mette & Riegel, 2018; Zepeda, 2017).

The role of the school principal as a supervisor is to provide professional development for teachers as part of implementing the teacher evaluation process (Derrington & Kirk, 2016). Supervision should foster authentic instruction provides the critical role of supervision as “help teachers move away from the common notion” and “to assist teachers to develop the skills to provide authentic instruction to all students” (Glanz & Zepeda, 2016, p. 27). Moreover, one of

the aims of supervision is to increase student achievement by improving the teacher's instruction (Zepeda, 2017).

The trust between the supervisor and the teacher, as well as the supervisor's communication skills, are important factors to motivate teachers for improvement (Zepeda, 2017). Moreover, when school principals identify the appropriate support for teachers, they should consider the several factors such as instructional goals, strengths and needs of a teacher, the career stage of the teacher, and organizational goals (Glickman et al., 2014). Therefore, the supervisor should provide differentiated support for teachers based on these factors. Moreover, as "adult learners have unique learning needs" (Zepeda, 2017, p. 113), the supervisor should consider the needs of the teachers based on their career stage, prior education, and past experiences.

In summary, the principal should be act as an instructional leader within the evaluation and supervision process who provides meaningful feedback and opportunities for ongoing professional growth and focus on improved instruction and professional learning. In the end, "principals' abilities to rate teachers accurately, to facilitate teachers' own self-reflection, to make specific actionable recommendations, and to communicate this feedback effectively are central to any evaluation process intended to improve instruction" (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. 714). Although teacher supervision and evaluation have different outcomes, they complement one another. Therefore, school leaders should ensure that teacher supervision and evaluation is consequential.

Attention now focuses on the role of policy in designing teacher evaluation systems and the intended and unintended consequences of teacher evaluation systems in the context of federal and state roles.

## **The Role of Policy and Teacher Evaluation**

Teacher evaluation has received much attention from policy makers and researchers over time. This section provides an overview of the role of policy in designing teacher evaluation practices.

### *A Nation at Risk*

In 1983, the report *A Nation at Risk* was released by National Commission on Excellence in Education. The report declared that “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, para. 1). The report focused on expansion of high school graduation criteria, enhancement of teacher quality using performance pay incentive programs, and improvement of student performance, determined by standardized test scores (Addonizio, 2014). In other words, the report brought attention to the importance of education policy and led to a focus on school accountability (Lunenburg, 2019; Weiss, 2003).

The language within *A Nation at Risk* suggested increasing attention to preparing teachers and supporting their learning through career ladders and financial rewards (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Moreover, the report stated that decisions regarding salary, retention, tenure, and promotion “should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated” (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 30). As a result, states began to tie yearly evaluations to a teacher’s certification renewal, licensure, merit pay, and career ladders (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003).

No Child Left Behind Act used the recommendations from *A Nation at Risk* and hold teachers accountable for student learning. The next section provides an overview of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

### *No Child Left Behind of 2001*

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) of 1965. The law made academic standards and assessment requirements a condition for receiving a federal Title I funds, which are the largest federal education grant to states and local school districts (Brewer & Duque, 2014). This legislation contained mandates that regulated teacher evaluation systems by defining teacher quality, defining minimum standards for training an evaluator, and requiring data collection on teacher evaluation (Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009).

The major focus of No Child Left Behind was to close student achievement gaps by providing all children with fair, equal, and significant opportunities to obtain a high-quality education (NCLB, 2001). NCLB increased accountability for student achievement and required annual testing of students in math and language arts in Grades 3-8 and 11; in science at Grades 4, 8, and high school. Schools, districts, and states were required to make “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) (NCLB, 2001). States had to issue individual student reports, as well as school and district “report cards” annually that included the results of the student achievement assessments and these report cards had to be made available to parents and the public (USDOE, 2001). Moreover, The NCLB Act required that all students to be proficient in reading and mathematics by the year 2014 (USDOE, 2001).

The U.S. Department of Education emphasized four pillars within the bill:

- Accountability: Ensures those students who are disadvantaged achieve academic proficiency;
- Flexibility: Allows school districts flexibility in how they use federal education funds to improve student achievement;
- Research-based education: Emphasizes educational programs and practices that have been proven effective through scientific research;
- Parent options: Increases the choices available to the parents of students attending Title I schools. (USDOE, 2001)

These four pillars of NCLB are essential areas to set accountability standards for the educational processes.

NCLB also sought to increase teacher quality in schools serving students from low-income families. Starting in 2006, every public-school teacher in core content areas was required to be “highly qualified,” which was defined as meeting three criteria: to hold a bachelor’s degree; to have full state teaching certification; and to demonstrate subject matter knowledge (Lunenburg, 2019). Schools had to notify parents of students in classes taught by teachers who did not meet the state’s standards of a highly qualified teacher (USDOE, 2001).

Although NCLB mandated that all teachers to be “highly qualified,” teacher evaluation was not the main focus of this education reform. Race to The Top incentives moved beyond NCLB by focusing on teacher effectiveness and by linking teacher evaluations and student performance. The next two sections of this review of literature focuses on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and then on the Race to the Top grant.

### *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) primarily intended to stimulate the economy to mitigate the economic downturn (Superfine, 2011). The ARRA devoted approximately \$787 billion to spend in education, health care, infrastructure etc. (U.S. Congress, 2009). The significant portion of the ARRA focused on public education (U.S. Congress, 2009). ARRA reserved nearly \$100 billion to education, and the significant portion of these funds were allocated to K-12 education (Superfine, 2011).

The ARRA provided funds to support a wide range of programs and areas to improve student learning opportunities and achievement through school improvement and reform (Superfine, 2011). Moreover, the ARRA allocated funds to teacher incentive project grants which sought to improve the effectiveness of teachers by establishing and implementing fair and reliable teacher evaluations that were used to inform schools about professional development needs (U.S. Congress, 2009).

The Race to the Top incentive was launched by the Obama administration under the ARRA of 2009 that provided \$ 4.35 billion fund for RTT (Zepeda, 2016a). Unlike the vast majority of education funds, states did not directly receive the RTT funds but competed for funds by submitting applications to the Department of Education. The next section provides more detailed examination of the RTT, a major initiative stemming from ARRA.

### *Race to the Top*

Race to the Top (RTT) was a competitive grant program to support K-12 education reform and innovation in state and local districts with the aims of closing the achievement gap, improving student achievement for all children, preparing students for college and the workforce, and improving low-performing schools by supporting key strategies. The key strategies included

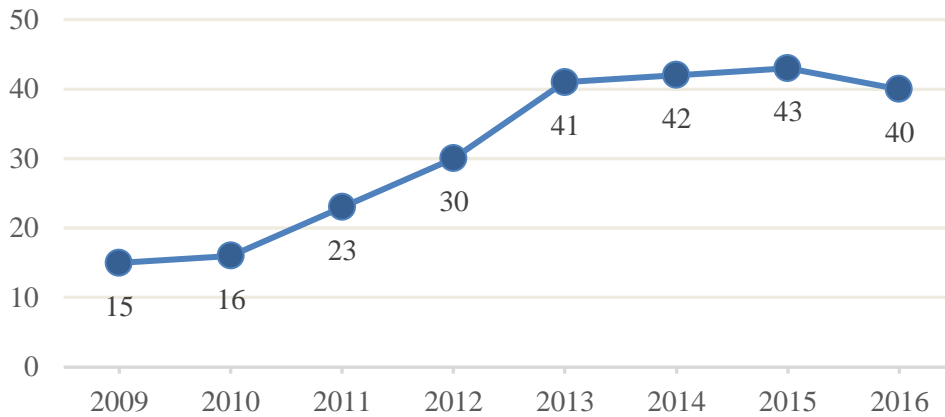
for example, adopting more rigorous standards and assessments; recruiting, evaluating, and retaining highly effective teachers and principals; turning around low-performing schools; and building data systems that measured student success tied to teacher performance (Hess et al., 2014).

The Race to the Top initiative served as a major impetus for revisiting teacher evaluation systems by concentrating more on teacher performance tied to student outcomes (Danielson, 2007; Hanover Research, 2011). The \$4.35 billion were invested into the RTT competitive grant program that enticed states to meet the grant's various criteria. The RTT initiative mandated that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) "establish clear approaches to measuring student growth" and design "rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers . . . that . . . take into account data on student growth" (USDOE, 2009, p. 9). Thus, RTT pushed many states to implement changes in their teacher evaluation systems and the supervisory practices of school leaders (Kraft & Gilmour, 2017).

While the NCLB Act mostly focused on improving student outcomes by holding schools accountable, the RTT initiative also focused on improving student outcomes by holding teachers accountable for student achievement measured by state-mandated standardized tests, and tests that contained Value Added Measures (VAMs) (Braun et al., 2010; USDOE, 2009). The link between teacher effectiveness and student outcomes became a crucial part of teacher evaluation systems that were implemented by states as the primary criteria to receive the RTT money (Hull, 2011; Lohman, 2010). Moreover, RTT guidelines by extension called for more rigorous supervisory practices and the eventual inclusion of professional development as a part of the teacher evaluation process (DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Zepeda, 2012, 2019a, 2019b).

RTT encouraged states to rethink current standards and to raise expectations for all students. Winning states had to use the grant money to implement the programs and plans detailed in their grant applications. Forty states and the District of Columbia applied for funding in the RTT initiative; the recipients of round one funding included Delaware and Tennessee as announced in March 2010; and the recipients of round two funding were California (dropped due to an incomplete application), the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Washington as announced in August 2010 (USDOE, 2011b). Another seven states received round three funding of the RTT initiative: Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania as announced in December 2011 (USDOE, 2011b). As a result, 32 states changed their teacher evaluation systems in response to the RTT initiative, including the requirements of annual teacher evaluation (NCTQ, 2011).

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has frequently presented up-to-date policy trends on how states are evaluating teachers. Figure 2.1. presents the number of States requiring evidence of student learning in teacher evaluation. The NCTQ (NCTQ, 2017a) reported that while only 15 states required to include measures of student achievement in teacher evaluations in 2009, the number has increased to 40 states in 2016.



*Figure 2.1.* States requiring evidence of student learning in teacher evaluation (adapted from NCTQ, 2017a)

States also became interested in reforming teacher evaluation systems to receive waivers from targets that were required by the NCLB Act. The next section examines the No Child Left Behind Flexibility Waivers.

#### *No Child Left Behind Flexibility Waivers*

The NCLB Act required that all students be proficient in reading and mathematics by the year 2014 (NCLB, 2001). However, in 2011, Secretary Duncan announced that the USDOE estimated 82% of schools could fail to meet expectations from the NCLB Act (USDOE, 2011a). Duncan stated, “Whether it’s 50%, 80% or 100% of schools being incorrectly labeled as failing, one thing is clear: No Child Left Behind is broken” (cited in Resnick, 2011, para. 5). As a result, the USDOE (2012) offered states flexibility from the requirements of the NCLB Act in exchange for their agreeing to improve school accountability and teacher effectiveness.

States seeking such waivers had to incorporate student achievement data into teacher evaluation systems and using teacher evaluations to guide decisions regarding teacher pay, promotion/retention, tenure, and professional development (USDOE, 2012). The majority of states applied for a waiver, and 43 states had received them (Klein, 2015).

Through the RTT initiatives and the NCLB flexibility waivers, many states made significant changes in teacher evaluation systems by including such factors as student achievement scores, performance standards, and multiple categories of ratings (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Marzano & Toth, 2013). The federal changes continued with the 2015 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace No Child Left Behind. The next section provides overview of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

### *The Every Student Succeed Act of 2015*

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) is the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, which provides an opportunity for each state to establish its own accountability system by setting standards and assessments (Dulgerian, 2016). The law prioritizes excellence and equity for students and promotes highly-skilled teachers and leaders. Under ESSA, states have more flexibility in defining their standards, controlling their assessments, and adjusting their penalties for failing schools (Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2019). With the passage of ESSA, the responsibility for making decisions related to education policy was shifted from the Federal Government to the states (Dulgerian, 2016).

ESSA does not mandate specific teacher evaluation systems to states (Zepeda, 2017). In other words, with the new law, states can establish teacher evaluation models which meet the needs of educators and students. Moreover, the law does not absolutely require states to use student achievement scores to evaluate teachers (Derrington, 2019). However, the law stated that

... the design and implementation of teacher, principal, or other school leader evaluation and support systems that are based in part on evidence of student academic achievement, which may include student growth, and shall include multiple measures of educator performance and provide clear, timely, and useful

feedback to teachers, principals, or other school leaders ... (ESSA, 2015, pp. 315-316)

In other words, if federal funds are used to create or improve evaluation systems, they must include student achievement, must be based on multiple measures, and must provide feedback to teachers (ESSA, 2015).

The Title II program provides grants that can be used for activities that improve access to strong teachers and leaders. These funds can be used to provide professional development, to improve teacher recruitment and retention, and to develop and implement evaluation systems. However, to use this resource for teacher evaluation, the system has to include measures of student achievement as one of the multiple indicators (ESSA, 2015).

ESSA offers new possibilities for supporting the professional development that builds educators' capacity to serve all students. Some of the new activities under ESSA includes improving the educator preparation programs, establishing educators' preparation academies, providing training for teachers on data-usage, etc. (ESSA, 2015). ESSA states that "the term 'professional development' means activities that ... are sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused" (ESSA, 2015). ESSA encourages states to view professional development as an important element of the state's plan for achieving high academic standards for students. Moreover, under ESSA, professional development programs and activities must be "evidence-based" (ESSA, 2015).

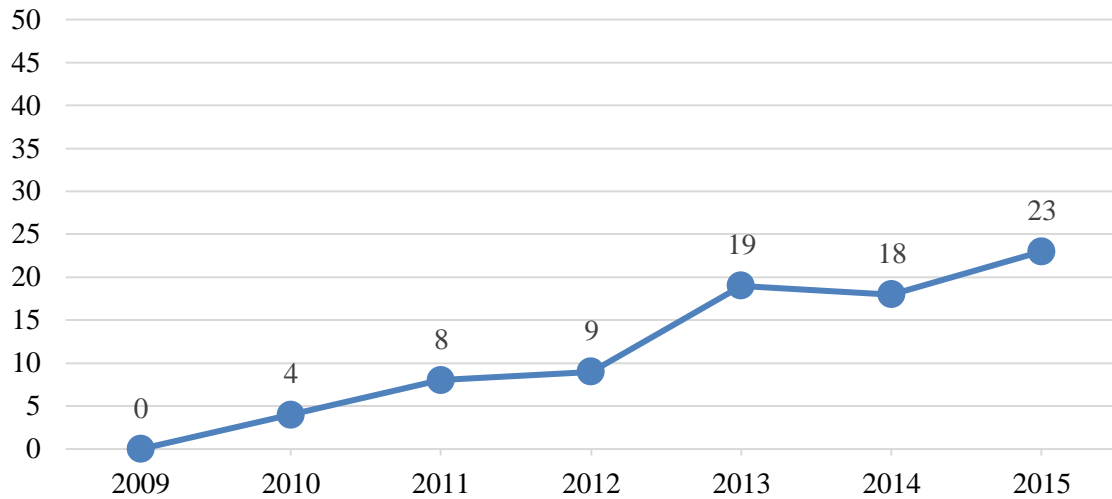
From this history of federal and state involvement in teacher evaluation systems, local systems grapple with current issues surrounding teacher tenure. Tenure is reliant on teacher evaluation during the probationary period, typically the first three years in the profession.

## **Current Issues Surrounding Teacher Tenure**

The first tenure law was passed in New Jersey in 1910, which provided fair-dismissal rights to college professors (Goldstein, 2014). In the 1920s, K-12 teachers also were granted tenure. At that time, job protection was seen as necessary because of prevalent nepotism, political favoritism and arbitrary dismissals (Vandewater, 2012). Although state statutes use a variety of synonyms for tenure—continuing contract or service, permanent status, career status, and post-probationary status—these laws have three main components: tenure requirements, reasons for dismissal, and a process for appeals (Baratz-Snowden, 2009). Teacher tenure is, therefore, not a job guarantee. Rather, it's a job security device protecting against termination of employment in cases where there are no grounds for termination or where the teacher has no fair opportunity to present a defense (Snowden, 2009.)

Due process laws vary by state, but, in general, tenured teachers are entitled to a hearing, and districts must provide evidence of misconduct before a tenured teacher is fired (Hindera & Josephson, 1998). Non-tenured teacher can be dismissed at any time for any reason unless the decision is neither arbitrary or capricious nor discriminatory, while tenured teachers can be dismissed only for the reasons provided in the law (Darden, 2012).

Teachers must generally complete a certain number of years on the job (typically three years) to gain tenure (Christie & Zinth, 2011). Some states also include performance ratings in tenure decisions and/or return teachers to probationary status if their performance is rated unsatisfactory. Figure 2.2 illustrates the change in number of states that require evidence of teacher performance to inform tenure decision between 2009-2015. According to a report by the NCTQ (2015), 23 states require that teacher performance be used in tenure decisions while no state had such a policy in 2009.



*Figure 2.2.* States requiring evidence of teacher performance to inform tenure decisions (adapted from NCTQ, 2015)

Teacher tenure has been a point of contention since the first tenure provisions were authorized over a century ago. Much of the debates regarding teacher tenure has focused on whether it makes it impossible for systems to fire ineffective teachers once they have gained tenure (McGuinn, 2010). Because of the costs of due process, school districts retain ineffective teachers, and this situation often reduces the incentive for teachers to improve their instruction (Rothstein, 2015). However, others argue that because teaching is not an extremely desirable profession, but it offers a good deal of job security, that weak tenure systems may cause a lower-quality teacher workforce (Fertig et al., 2014).

Although the arguments related to the possible effects of tenure reform are straightforward, there is very little empirical evidence that show their value. Most of the arguments about tenure reform focus on how to improve the process while making the system easier to remove ineffective tenured teachers (McGuinn, 2010). Because the dismissal process of tenured teachers can be time-consuming and costly, a very small percentage of tenured teachers are dismissed for poor performance (Weisberg et al., 2009).

Hess and West (2006) found that 78% of teachers reported that there are at least a few tenured teachers in their schools who do not exhibit adequate classroom performance; yet, they are protected by their tenure status. According to a study conducted by the Gates Foundation (Mayer & Phillips, 2012), 89% of teachers surveyed concurred that tenure should reflect evaluation of teacher effectiveness, and 92% of teacher participants indicated that tenure should not protect ineffective teachers. Furthermore, 80% of teachers in the study stated that tenure should be reevaluated at various intervals in a teacher's career (Mayer & Phillips, 2012).

Reeder (2005) stated that many underperforming teachers remain employed, noting that the cost of removing an underperforming tenured teacher can range from \$200,000 to \$400,000 in legal and arbitration fees. In addition, it is typical for tenured teachers to continue to be paid while the lengthy process of arbitration ensues, which could take up to five years, thus adding to the already high cost of the process (Klein, 2011). Over the past two decades in states where teacher tenure is granted, nearly 94% of school districts have never attempted to fire a tenured teacher (Reeder, 2008). Hannaway and Rotherham (2010) suggested that due to the obstacles presented by collective bargaining laws and the politics involved, many principals choose not to undertake the removal of a tenured teacher who is ineffective.

This dissertation study was conducted in the state of Georgia; therefore, it was important to examine teacher evaluation practices in this state as well as teacher tenure in the State of Georgia. Teacher evaluation practices in the State of Georgia helped to situate the present study.

## **Teacher Evaluation Practices in the State of Georgia**

Within the initiative of the Race to The Top competitive educational grant, Georgia designed and implemented the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) in 2012 to evaluate and assess the professional growth and development of each teacher (Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), 2012). The TKES was first piloted in 26 school districts throughout the state in 2012. The components of evaluation included teacher assessment on performance standards, student growth and academic achievement, and surveys of instructional practice (GaDOE, 2012). The main goals of TKES were to:

- Increase academic growth,
- Improve the quality of instruction with teacher accountability,
- Support the goals and visions of Georgia Public Schools,
- Implement an evaluation system that promotes collaboration between teacher and evaluator and improved instructional effectiveness (GaDOE, 2012).

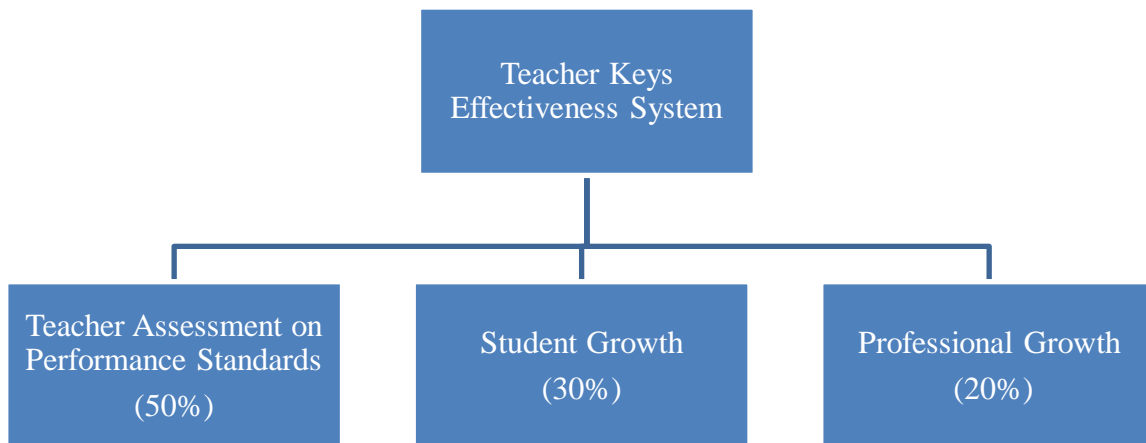
The Georgia Legislature passed House Bill 244 during 2013, which required the use of one state-wide evaluation system for teachers (GaDOE, 2014b).

In 2016, the Georgia Senate Bill 364 was passed and signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal (GaDOE, 2018). Within this law, the weight of student test scores on TKES was reduced from 50% to 30% with the remaining 20% coming from professional growth plans. Moreover, student surveys became optional in the teacher evaluation process rather than a requirement (GaDOE, 2018).

The purpose of the TKES teacher evaluation system is to provide feasible needs of measurement and accurate time for the development of teachers. The teacher evaluation system requires administrators to identify teachers that may need professional development, as well as

those that may be rewarded for recognition of achievement or to plan for promotion or for releasing of employment as needed. Moreover, the evaluation system aims in developing the teachers' performance in the profession by providing timely feedback, adequate information regarding the observation, and it allows administrators more opportunities to observe teachers' performances (GaDOE, 2018).

The TKES evaluation system is designed for use with all teachers, grades Pre-K through 12, who are full-time or part-time employees. A teacher's score is determined by using Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) (50%), professional growth (20%), and Student Growth Percentages (SGP) (30%) (GaDOE, 2018) (as illustrated in Figure 2.3).



*Figure 2.3.* Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (adapted from GaDOE, 2018)

The TKES encompasses a teacher evaluation tool that consists of five domains and ten standards. These five domains are planning, instructional delivery, assessment of and for learning, learning environment, and professionalism and communication (GaDOE, 2018). The evaluation system of the TKES is rubric-based, which has four categories. The categories are exemplary, proficient, needs development, and ineffective. Georgia teachers are evaluated

throughout the year based on all 10 performance standards, which consists of walkthroughs, formative, and summative evaluations.

The second component of TKES is professional growth, which is determined by measuring the progress of growth goals. To do so, teachers have professional learning goals and learning plans. The last component of TKES is based on Student Growth Percentages (SGP), and LEA (Local Education Agency) determined measures. SGP's apply only to teachers who teach state-mandated tested subjects. For teachers teaching non-tested subject areas, they are assessed based on SLO (Student Learning Objective) measures or other measures determined by the LEA (GaDOE, 2018).

According to the Georgia Department of Education's *TKES Implementation Handbook* (2018), the number of observations required is determined by the background, primarily years of experience of the teachers. A teacher with three or less years of teaching experience, teachers on a non-renewable certificate, teachers who recently changed their field of certification or who have been out of the profession for longer than a year, or teachers who have received inadequate evaluation results previously will be on the full formative assessment process which includes four classroom walkthrough observations and two formative observations. A teacher with prior proficient ratings and/or veteran teacher is on the flexible evaluation process that includes a minimum of two classroom observations (walkthroughs and/or formative observations) that are required. It is recommended that they receive at least one walkthrough observation and one formative observation, but the type of observations received is determined by the Local Education Agency (LEA) (GaDOE, 2018).

The next section explores teacher tenure in the State of Georgia. Each state as well as policies and regulations within systems are important to consider given that there is great variation in policies, procedures, and processes.

### **Teacher Tenure in the State of Georgia**

The State of Georgia has granted due process rights to all teachers since 1947 (Georgia Laws, 1947). Due process gives a teacher in Georgia the legal right to a hearing and the right to know the reasons whenever the teacher is nonrenewed or demoted. In 1975, Georgia passed the legislation called the *Georgia Fair Dismissal Act of 1975*. The Georgia Fair Dismissal Act was created to provide teachers with protection against losing their jobs unless there is good and sufficient reason. There are eight grounds under the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act for termination or suspension of a teacher having a contract for a definite period of time. Sanctioned grounds for such actions, according to the O.C.G.A. § 20-2-940, are as follows:

1. Incompetency;
2. Insubordination;
3. Willful neglect of duties;
4. Immorality;
5. Inciting, encouraging, or counseling students to violate any valid state law, municipal ordinance, or policy or rule of the local board of education;
6. To reduce staff due to loss of students or cancellations of programs;
7. Failure to secure and maintain necessary educational training; or,
8. Any other good and sufficient cause.

Although the two pieces of legislation passed after the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act of 1975 have an impact on the attainment of tenure status, the eight reasons identified in this Act have not been

altered. The last two Acts that have had an impact on tenure and due process rights in Georgia are the A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000 and Georgia Senate Bill 193, which was passed in 2004.

In 2000, under the direction of Governor Roy Barnes, Georgia repealed the Fair Dismissal Act of 1975 and its job protections for teachers as part of the state's educational reform efforts. The Georgia House Bill 1187, known as the A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000, stripped teachers of the ability to earn tenure status if they first became employed after July 1st of 2000. This legislation contained language in section (20-2-942d of the Georgia Code) stating,

A person who first becomes a teacher on or after July 1, 2000, shall not acquire any rights under Code section to continued employment with respect to any position as a teacher. A teacher who had acquired any rights to continued employment under this Code section prior to July 1, 2000, shall retain such rights. (A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000, 2000, p. 138)

Essentially, any person who became a teacher on or after July 1, 2000, did not acquire any rights regarding continued employment. Any teacher who had previously received any rights to continued employment under this section before July 1, 2000, retained all rights. Georgia became the first state in the nation to formally eliminate teacher tenure in its K-12 schools (Robinson, 2003).

In 2004, Governor Sonny Perdue signed the Georgia Senate Bill 193 that restored rights afforded to teachers under the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act of 1975 (Georgia Association of Educators, 2004). Among the rights restored to teachers were the right to legal representation and a school board hearing before being nonrenewed or demoted from employment in their school

system. Teachers would be accorded these protections with the promise of the fourth year of employment within the same school district (Georgia Association of Educators, 2004). Thus, four years after the elimination of tenure, Georgia teachers regained their employment protection status (Blankenship, 2013).

Currently, Georgia does not require evidence of teacher effectiveness to be considered in the tenure process. Tenure is granted automatically after the probationary period (NCTQ, 2017b). The next section examined the empirical studies related to tenured teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation processes.

### **Empirical Studies Related to Tenured Teachers' Perspectives about Teacher Evaluation Processes**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. Although there is limited research on teachers' perspectives of tenure, this section presents a review of the directly or indirectly related literature addressing the teacher tenure, tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation and professional development.

In an attempt to understand teachers' views about tenure, Duffett et al. (2008) surveyed 1,010 K-12 public school teachers. The results showed that 69% teachers stated that "when they hear a teacher at their school has been awarded tenure, they think that it's "just a formality—it has very little to do with whether a teacher is good or not" (Duffett et al., 2008, p. 3). Overall, 83% of tenured teachers and 66% of non-tenured teachers surveyed supported strengthening the evaluation system of non-tenured teachers and granted tenure only after teachers proved they were good. Most teachers surveyed thought tenured teachers should be formally evaluated on a

regular basis. Additionally, 31% of tenured and 36% of non-tenured teachers believed evaluation for tenured teachers should occur each year, and 26% of tenured and 30% of non-tenured teachers thought tenured teachers' performance should be evaluated at least every two years. Moreover, 25% of tenured teachers would exchange their tenure for a pay increase of \$5,000 per year, 29% would only consider it if the pay increase were higher, and 29% rejected this idea (Duffett et al., 2008).

In 2009, The Widget Effect study included evaluation practices of 12 districts across 4 different states, which ranged in size, geographic location, evaluation policies, and approaches to assessing teacher performance. Approximately 15,000 teachers, 1,300 administrators, and more than 80 local and state education officials participated in the study. According to the findings of the study, 81% of administrators and 57% of teachers say there is a tenured teacher in their school who is performing poorly, and 43% of teachers say there is a tenured teacher who should be dismissed for poor performance (Weisberg et al., 2009).

A study by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Mayer & Phillips, 2012) found that 89% of teachers surveyed agreed that tenure should include the evaluation of teacher effectiveness; and 92% of teacher participants stated that tenure should not protect ineffective teachers. On average, teachers indicated that tenure should be considered after 5.4 years of teaching experience. Moreover, 84% of teachers view tenure as a signal of teacher competency and effectiveness, and 80% of teachers view tenure as protection against senior teacher losing their job as a result of workforce reductions.

In 2012, nine California public school students filed a lawsuit by arguing that California statutes grant teachers tenure far too easily to “force school administrators to keep teachers in the classroom long after they have demonstrated themselves to be grossly ineffective” (p. 1). In other

words, the plaintiffs argued that existing teacher job-protection laws caused a disproportionately high number of ineffective teachers to be placed in poor and minority schools, essentially violating the equal protection clause of the California Constitution with regard to students' fundamental rights to education (Davis, 2015). The trial court held that the teacher tenure statute was unconstitutional, agreeing with plaintiffs' theory.

A survey by Teach Plus sought to understand full-time California traditional K-12 public school teachers' view about tenure (Stryer et al., 2014). This survey found: 81% of teachers believed tenure was important; 40% believed tenure was granted only to effective teachers; 55% worked with an effective teacher whose tenure protected them from unfair dismissal; 69% worked with an ineffective teacher they feel should have been dismissed but was not due to tenure; 65% thought tenure should be granted between 3-5 years; 21% thought tenure should be granted at 6 or more years; 92% percent of teachers thought they should demonstrate classroom effectiveness before receiving tenure; and 71% thought layoffs should be based either partly or entirely on classroom performance. Moreover, 75% of the teachers believed that it is possible to evaluate teachers fairly.

Another study including 255 teachers sought to understand teachers' perceptions about principals' supervision based on teacher's tenure status and gender (Range et al., 2014). According to findings of the study, 67% of non-tenured teachers reported school principals formally observed their classrooms two to four times the previous year whereas 40% of tenured teachers reported school principals formally observed their classrooms one time the previous year. Moreover, non-tenured teachers were more willing to be observed by principals than tenured teachers, and non-tenured teachers were more positive about receiving feedback from principals than tenured teachers.

In analyzing the data from 2007 Schools and Staffing Survey, Jones (2015) sought to determine the effect of tenure on K-12 teacher behavior. More specifically, the study looked at the changes in teacher behavior during the tenure evaluation. Jones (2015) found that in the year teachers were being evaluated for tenure, they spent more of their own money on classroom materials, and they spent more time on extracurricular activities. However, these efforts returned to the baseline after they were granted tenure.

A review of the literature shows that although several studies examined directly or indirectly teacher evaluation and teacher tenure, the literature on tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation and school principals' approach to evaluate tenured teachers' performance is limited. Thus, this study aimed to fill the gap in the research and literature on the topic by examining the perspectives of tenured teachers about evaluation before and after gaining tenure, and by examining whether school principals' approaches change to evaluate teacher performance once a teacher is granted tenure.

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to highlight the related literature on teacher evaluation and teacher tenure. The chapter started with the examination of the teacher evaluation, the role of the school principal in this process, and the influence of policy in designing teacher evaluation. The literature about teacher tenure focusing on national trends including an in-depth review of teacher evaluation and teacher tenure practices in the State of Georgia. Lastly, the empirical studies that address the teacher tenure, tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, and professional development, as well as principal approaches to evaluating tenured teacher performance were presented. The next chapter outlines the research design and the methodology of the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examine tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research methodology and procedures used in this study and includes the following sections: theoretical framework, design of the study, research methodology, the research site, data collection methods, data management, data analysis, trustworthiness, validity and reliability, research bias and assumptions, ethics, assessment of benefits and risks, and limitations of the study.

## Theoretical Framework

Crotty (1998) defined theoretical perspective as “the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria” (p. 3). To draw from the wisdom and insight of tenured teachers, the study was built on interpretivist theoretical approach to gain a better understanding of how tenured teachers feel about the teacher evaluation process since teachers, being idiosyncratic, would each describe different perspectives based on their own evaluation experiences. Thus, the purpose of this study can be achieved thorough interpretivist lens as the aim of interpretivism is to understand personal experiences with the belief that reality is subjective and constructed by the individual (Lather, 2006).

The interpretivist view invites the researcher to investigate the meaning behind the understanding of human behavior, interactions, and society. According to interpretivists, knowledge is not determined objectively but constructed through people’s ability to assign meanings to objects, events, and interactions (Prasad, 2005). In other words, knowledge is subjective and idiographic, and the truth is dependent upon the context. Interpretivism allows the focus on understanding what is happening in a given context rather than just measuring it (Patton, 2015). Ultimately, the people living the experiences construct their own realities, and interpretivism seeks to understand those differing constructions, without assuming that all people have had the same experiences.

Crotty (2003) described the interpretive theoretical approach as being one of pursuing an understanding of a phenomenon. Moreover, interpretive research understands phenomena through the meanings that people assign to these phenomena. The role of the researcher is to observe a phenomenon and to understand the interpretations that individuals have

already made. For this reason, interpretive research does not focus on isolating and developing generalizations.

Interpretivism tends to use case, ethnographic, phenomenological approach, and ethnomethodological studies as their preferred research methods (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, data gathering techniques are selected depending on the choice of design and the research problem. Data collection methods include interviews, observations, and analyzing documents (Lather, 2006). This study used an interpretive theoretical approach with phenomenological research methods to examine the phenomenon of teacher evaluation and tenure from the perspectives of teachers and principals.

This study used an interpretivist theoretical approach to examine the phenomenon of the evaluation processes of being granted tenure—before and after this milestone in a teacher’s career. A qualitative, phenomenological study was chosen to conduct this research as there is a limited amount of literature on tenure teachers’ views regarding the evaluation process, and school principals’ approach to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance.

### **Design of the Study**

The qualitative method chosen for this study was phenomenology because this method is effective for understanding individual experiences and perspectives from the individuals under study (Lester, 1999). Phenomenological research is designed to “explore the meaning of several people’s lived experiences around a specific issue or phenomenon” (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 9). In this study, the phenomenon was the evaluation processes of being granted tenure—before and after this milestone in a teacher’s career.

Phenomenological studies are effective for understanding individual perceptions of a lived experience to bring to light and to identify phenomena through the perception of those involved (Lester, 1999). Moreover, phenomenological methods are best suited to understanding several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. Thus, the phenomenological approach was well suited for this research as the aim of this study was to understand teachers' perspectives of how being granted tenure affected their perspectives regarding teacher evaluation, and to understand the school principals' approach to evaluate tenured teachers' performance. Researching these experiences could help to establish a deeper understanding about tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation and the changes in school principals' approach to evaluate teacher performance once teacher is granted tenure to assist in developing new practices and policies.

A bounded phenomenon is referred to "a program, an event, a process, an institution, or a social group" (Merriam, 1988, p. 13), and in this study, the bounded phenomenon is to examine if there are effects of being granted tenure on teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation processes. Data are collected from the people who have experienced the phenomenon.

Phenomenological studies mostly have used in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants as a data collection method (Bevan, 2014). According to phenomenological researcher Giorgi (1997), "questions are generally broad and open-ended so that the subject has sufficient opportunity to express his or her view point extensively" (p. 245), and Seidman (2006) also suggested to use open-ended questions for the phenomenological interview.

Phenomenological research was chosen to understand the subjective, lived experiences, and perceptions of teachers regarding being granted tenure. Creswell (2013) stated that "it is important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies, or

to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon” (p. 81). Thus, conducting this research could establish a more in-depth understanding of teacher tenure to assist in developing and revising policies and practices.

### **Research Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative design consistent with the interpretivist paradigm to understand tenured teachers’ perspectives about teacher evaluation processes as well as to understand whether school principals’ approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once tenure is granted. Qualitative research methods are best suited in uncovering the understandings and meanings that people assign to their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

An advantage of qualitative research is the opportunity to capture the stories of the participants from their perspective (Flick, 2002). Merriam (2009) posited that “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p. 5). Moreover, qualitative research is a relevant research approach when the goal of the researcher is to understand the meaning people give to their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009).

### **The Effect of COVID-19 on Research**

COVID-19 was an unforeseen crisis that brought a great challenge to our lives impacting societies worldwide. As one of the main ways to slow down the spread of COVID-19, schools across the world closed their doors and moved to online instruction with little or no warning. The state of Georgia closed K-12 schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. At first, schools closed for two weeks to help control the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state;

however, because cases rose, another four weeks were added to the closure, and eventually, the state announced that schools would remain closed for the remainder of school year.

In June 2020, the Georgia Department of Education, in partnership with Georgia Department of Health, released “Georgia’s K-12 Recovery Plan” as a reopening guidance for schools for the 2020-2021 academic year. This plan was revised and then re-released in July 2020. The plan did not require school districts to submit reopening plans and it stated, “Local school districts have the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to their communities” (GaDOE, 2020, p. 1). Moreover, the plan stated, “Local school districts have authority over school calendars – meaning they have full authority to set start and end dates, holidays/breaks, and school hours, provided instructional requirements are met” (GaDOE, 2020, p. 5).

The school county where the data were collected started the 2020-2021 school year with classes only online beginning on August 4, 2020. On August 11, the Board of Education approved the reopening plan which was developed with the goal of giving students and their families the opportunity to choose between in-person or online classes. Beginning on September 8, 2020, students in Pre-K-2 and special needs students in grades K-5, if they chose to attend in person classes, started to receive two days a week in person classes.

Beginning on October 5, students PreK-5 and special education student in grades K-12, if they chose to attend in person class, started to receive 4 days a week in person classes. Beginning on October 26, 2020 students in PreK-8 and special education student in grades K-12, if they chose to attend in person class, started to receive in person classes four days a week. Finally, beginning on November 9, 2020 students PreK-12 and special education students in grades K-12, if they chose to attend in person classes, started to receive in-person classes four days a week.

In the spring of 2020, when the researcher was preparing to recruit participants for this dissertation research, most schools in the U.S. closed, and many states implemented a ‘shelter in place’ policy to slow the spread of COVID-19. As a result of school closures, the researcher was not able to execute the dissertation study exactly as planned. Firstly, the researcher had to change the school district; secondly, the researcher had to postpone data collection until late October 2020. Moreover, due to COVID-19 school closures, adjustments were required to ensure stable data collection. The interviews were originally planned to take place through face-to-face procedures, but data collection was moved to a Zoom format due to COVID-19.

### **The Research Site**

It is important to examine the research site of research in that it provides a context for the study. This section examined the selection process used to identify the site as well as a description of the site, the demographics of the schools, and participants profiles for school principals and the teachers.

#### *Site Selection*

The study aimed to focus on elementary, middle, and high school teachers and their principals in a single school district. Therefore, the research site was selected based on the following criteria: location (in the same school county in the State of Georgia); across school levels (elementary, middle, and high schools). To gain access to the research site, the researcher first met with the school district’s superintendent to explain the research purpose. After the district approved conducting the study, the researcher proceeded by selecting the schools by using reputational sampling.

The researcher proceeded to schedule a Zoom meeting with each of the potential school principal participants to explain the study's purpose and to ask them to participate in the study. Once the school principals expressed interest in the study, the researcher worked directly with each of the three school principal participants to identify and select teacher participants.

The researcher used a purposeful sampling technique to select teacher participants who could purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). For the purpose of this study, teachers who met the following criteria participated in the study:

1. The teacher who is a currently tenured;
2. The teacher whose performance has been evaluated before she/he was granted tenure status;
3. The teacher whose performance has been evaluated after she/he was granted tenure status; and,
4. The teacher who has no more than five years of teaching experiences since being tenured.

After potential participants were identified with the assistance of the school principals, emails were sent to potential participants to request 10-min Zoom meeting to explain the research objective and goals and to ask them if they would join the study.

The initial Zoom meetings were scheduled based on teachers' schedules and convenience. During this meeting, the researcher provided additional information about the study, outline the expectations of participants who choose to participate, and to answer any lingering questions. The researcher then sent an electronic copy of the consent for participation form (see Appendix A and Appendix B) to participants for their review. Participation was

completely voluntary, and the participants understood they could withdraw from the study at any time.

*Site Description*

The research site was located in northwest Georgia. The school district served approximately 8,500 students in eight elementary schools, one sixth grade academy, one middle school, one high school, and one early learning center supported by 650 teachers and 64 administrators. The percentage of students by race/ethnicity was 38% Hispanic, 37% Black, % 20 White, % 4 Multiracial, and %2 Asian. The percentage of students who were eligible for free/reduced meals was 60 %, and the percentage of student with limited English proficient was %25. The percentage of the graduation rate of the school district was 75.7 %.

Three school (one elementary, one middle, and one high school) were selected with the assistance of school district’s superintendent. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the key demographic information for each school in the study.

Table 3.1. *Demographic Information of Three Schools*

School Level	Grades Served	Total Enrollment	Number of Teachers	Number of Administrators	School Letter Grade
Elementary School	K3-5	320	18	2	A
Middle School	7-8	1,385	94	5	B
High School	9-12	2,518	150	10	B

The participants profiles for school principals and the teachers are detailed in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3, respectively. All participants were assigned pseudonyms according to the number order that they were interviewed. Therefore, Teacher 1 and School Principal 1 were the first

participants interviewed. The numbering system was inclusive of eight participating teachers and three school principals.

Table 3.2. *Overview of School Principals*

School Principal	Years of Experience as a Principals	School Level	Degree Level Completed
School Principal 1	13 years	High School	Specialist degree in Administration and Policy
School Principal 2	7 years	Elementary School	Doctorate in Policy and Leadership
School Principal 3	9 years	Middle School	Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy

The study originally aimed to recruit six teachers (two teachers from each grade level) and those teachers must not have had more than five years of teaching experience after they were granted tenure. However, during the initial meeting with Teacher 1, the teacher shared that she had eight years teaching experience from a different school district, but when she moved to the current school district, she was considered as a first-year teacher. Therefore, the researcher decided to recruit Teacher 1 because of her unique experience. One other teacher (Teacher 6) had 9 years teaching experience in a private school before she started to work at her current school. Following the pattern as with Teacher 1, because of her unique experience, the researcher decided to recruit Teacher 6. Since those two teachers did not exactly meet the selection criteria, the researcher asked assistance from school principals to select two more teachers.

Table 3.3. *Overview of School Teachers*

Teacher Participant	Years of Experience as a Teacher	Years of experience at current school	School Level	Subject	Highest Degree Level Completed
Teacher 1	8	3	Elementary School	Math/Science	Master's Degree
Teacher 2	5	4	Elementary School	ELA/Social Studies	Master's Degree

*(table continues)*

Table 3.3. *Overview of School Teachers* (continued)

Teacher Participant	Years of Experience as a Teacher	Years of experience at current school	School Level	Subject	Highest Degree Level Completed
Teacher 3	4	4	High School	History/ Government and Economics	Master's Degree
Teacher 4	4	4	Elementary School	Physical Education	Master's Degree
Teacher 5	4	4	Middle School	Language Arts	Master's Degree
Teacher 6	13	4	Middle School	Math	Master's Degree (Alternative Certification)
Teacher 7	5	5	High School	Chemistry	Ph.D. (Alternative Certification)
Teacher 8	4	4	Middle School	Language Arts	Master's Degree

To acquaint the reader with the participants and context of this study, Chapter 4 presents a detailed description of the school district, the school, and the participant profiles.

### **Data Collection Methods**

This qualitative research was mainly framed within the research design rendering a phenomenological method that attempted to understand teacher and school principal lived experience related to teacher evaluation and teacher tenure. Semi-structured interviews were the main source of data and were supplemented by and the documents/legislations of the school district related to teacher evaluation and teacher tenure where the research participants were assigned. Moreover, to supplement the data analysis process, the researcher used the memo-writing process. Each data source is summarized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. *Data Sources*

Data Sources	Description
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three interview protocols were used for teacher’s interview.</li> <li>• One interview protocol was used for school principal’s interview.</li> </ul>
Documents	Legislation related to teacher tenure and teacher evaluation.
Memos	Researcher’s reflection on the process of data analysis.

*Interviews*

The data for the study were collected predominantly by interviews since interview data are commonly used for analysis in phenomenological studies (Bevan, 2014; Smith et al., 2009).

According to Stringer (2014, p. 106):

Interviews provide opportunities for participants to describe the situation in their own terms. It is a reflective process that enables the interviewee to explore his or her experience in detail and to reveal many features of that experience that have an effect on the issue investigated.

Thus, the interview was chosen as a data collection method as it provides a researcher with in-depth information about participants’ experiences and viewpoints about a particular topic.

The interviews were intended to be face-to-face; however, because of the current circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom interviews were the most appropriate way to collect data, serving as an alternative to in-person interviews. Archibald et al. (2019) stated several advantages of using Zoom to collect qualitative data, such as convenience, simplicity, security, and they suggested that “Zoom may serve as a highly suitable platform for

collecting qualitative interview data when compared to other commonly used VoIP technologies” (p. 7).

Although it has been argued that it may be more difficult to establish rapport using online interviews compared to face-to-face interviews (Cater, 2011), other studies have found that is more quickly to build rapport when conducting online interviews than face-to-face interviews (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Tuttas, 2015). Moreover, Archibald et al. (2019) stated that Zoom users have agreed on the usefulness of using the platform of Zoom to build and maintain better rapport with researcher. The researcher submitted a change in procedure from face-to-face interviews to Zoom Interviews by requesting permission from the University of Georgia, Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Interviews were held with eight-teachers and three principals of the schools in which the teachers were assigned representing elementary, middle, and high school levels. All eight teacher participants were interviewed three-times using protocols that addressed evaluation and supervision focusing on their experiences as a precursor to being granted tenure. The first round of semi-structured interviews was focused on gaining the perspectives of teachers regarding teacher evaluation practices; the second round of semi-structured interviews was focused on the perspectives of these teachers related to teacher evaluation during their probationary year; and the third interview was focused on their perspectives about teacher evaluation after they were granted tenure.

The principals of the schools in which the teachers were assigned were also interviewed to understand whether school principals’ approaches changed to evaluate teacher performance once a teacher was granted tenure. The principals were interviewed only one time. Figure 3.1 summarized the data collection methods.

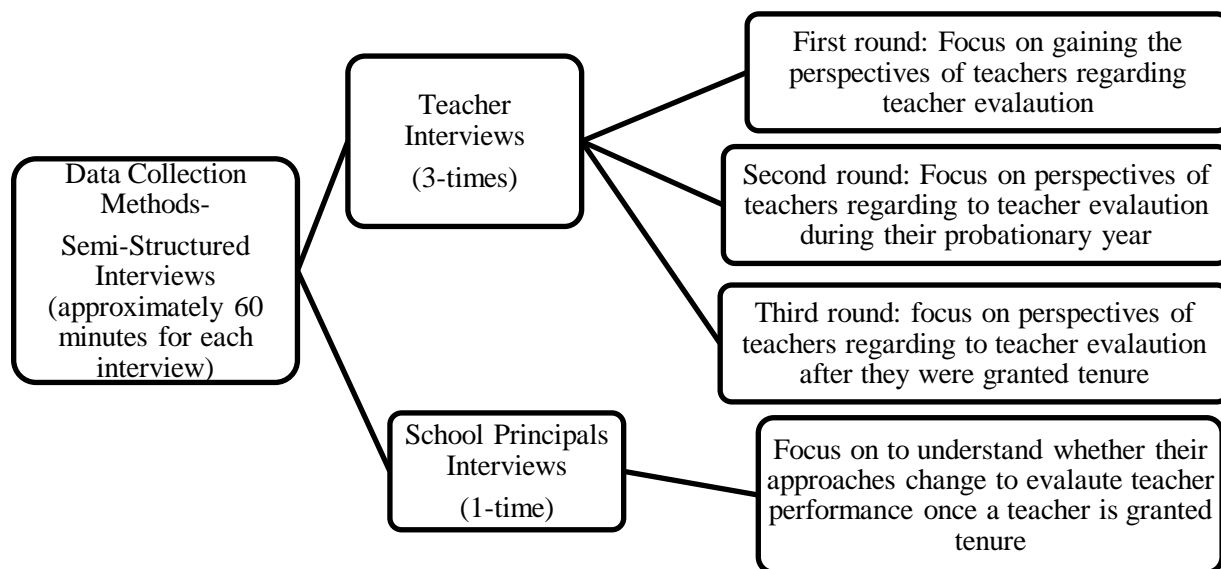


Figure 3.1. Data Collection Methods

The researcher used in-depth, open-ended, and semi-structured interview questions to facilitate data collection and analysis. The interview guide was developed based on the review of the existing literature related to teacher perceptions on the teacher evaluation process, teacher tenure, the role of school principals in the teacher evaluation process, as well as aligning with the research questions. The school principals' interview guide specifically focused on their approaches to evaluate teacher performance during the teacher's probationary period, and after completion of the probationary period (Appendix C). Table 3.5 presents sample of interview questions used when interviewing school principals.

Table 3.5. *Sample of Interview Questions for School Principals*

---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think is the purpose of teacher evaluation?</li> <li>• Could describe your school's evaluation process for tenured and non-tenured teachers?</li> <li>• How much planning time is needed to complete teacher evaluation for tenured and non-tenured teachers??</li> <li>• What do you think that teachers with less experience should be observed and evaluated more frequently, or that tenured teachers should be observed and evaluated less frequently, or not at all?</li> </ul>
--

---

*(table continues)*

Table 3.5. *Sample of Interview Questions for School Principals (continued)*

---

- What do you think that teachers with less experience should be supported more than tenured teachers?
- What do you think that it is fair to evaluate less experience teachers and tenured teachers by using the same evaluation process?
- How does evaluation fit into other professional development opportunities offered by your school?
- What types of professional development have you been involved in as it relates to teacher evaluation?

---

The teachers' interview guides specifically focused on their perspectives about teacher evaluation processes (Appendix D). Table 3.6 presents a sample of interview questions used when interviewing teachers.

Table 3.6. *Sample of Interview Questions for Teachers*

---

First Round of Interviews

---

- What do you think is the purpose of teacher evaluation?
- What are your feelings about being evaluated?
- What do you think about the role of the evaluation system to improve teacher effectiveness?
- What do you think about the fairness of the evaluation?
- How important is it to you that people who do evaluations are trained to performance this task?

---

Second Round of Interviews

---

- Please describe the nature of any evaluation process that you went through during your probationary years.
- Describe your most successful teacher evaluation experience. What made it successful?
- What types of emotions did you have when you were being evaluated during your first three years?
- How did you feel about the frequency of observations and the [announced/unannounced] status?
- What types of support you needed most in these years?
- What kind of feedback did you receive?
- Did you make any decision about your own personal growth and professional development that was influenced by the feedback? What were they?
- Have you ever worried about your contract for the next year? Why?

---

*(table continues)*

Table 3.6. *Sample of Interview Questions for Teachers (continued)*

---

Third Round of Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please describe the nature of any evaluation process that you went through once you are granted tenure.</li><li>• Describe your most successful teacher evaluation experience. What made it successful?</li><li>• What types of emotions did you have when you were being evaluated?</li><li>• How did you feel about the frequency of observations and the [announced/unannounced] status?</li><li>• What types of support you needed most in these years?</li><li>• What kind of feedback did you receive?</li><li>• Have you ever worried about your contract for the next year? Why?</li><li>• How might your beliefs about teacher evaluation have changed over time? What are the reasons for these changes?</li></ul>

---

Each interview was scheduled at a time determined by the participant, and all interviews were conducted through Zoom, lasting approximately 60-minutes. Prior to conducting each interview, the researcher provided each participant with an interview guide to allow for thoughtful consideration of and reflection on each question. Each interview was recorded using the Zoom video call recording, and as a backup, the researcher used a voice memo application on cell phone. All recordings were later transcribed by the *Temi* speech to text algorithm transcription software. After the transcription of an individual interview was completed, the researcher sent an electronic copy of the transcription to give the participant the opportunity to review and verify the accuracy of the documentation from the interviews.

#### *Documents*

The documents collected for this study included any used as part of the districts' evaluation protocol and teacher tenure legislation. These documents were found on the state websites and district-level websites. These documents were obtained to understand the general

context of the evaluation process and teacher tenure. Before conducting research, the researcher informally reviewed and analyzed these documents to understand the district contexts better.

*Memos*

To supplement the data collection and data analysis process, the researcher used the memo-writing process. Memoing can help the researcher to engage in critical thinking as well as to explore the data, since “it is through memoing that the researcher is able to articulate, explore, contemplate and challenge their interpretations when examining data (Birks et al., 2008, p. 71). The researcher wrote several memos throughout the process, including self-reflection about the interviewing process, participants, code choices, emergent patterns, and themes (Saldaña, 2016). These memos allowed for immediate reflection of the interviews and began an initial search for emerging themes (Saldaña, 2016). In other words, memoing especially helped the researcher rewording interview questions for the next interviews, creating the prior codes, and deciding to categorize the data. The memos in this study were about events, interview protocols, coding, and categorization (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7. *Sample of Researcher’s Memos*

Memos	Purpose
<p>I have just completed this interview, and I feel that I did not do my best. I have waited 15 minutes on Zoom, and then I sent the email to participant. She said she forgot the interview and requested to reschedule the afternoon. But then again, she showed up 30 min late because she got a parent call. Although I really appreciate her time and efforts when considering her busy schedule, because of the delay and because of the interruptions several times during the interview by other school’s staff, I just wanted to finish the interview and I just focused on my interview protocol, not on what the participant was telling me.</p>	<p>Events</p>

*(table continues)*

Table 3.7. *Sample of Researcher’s Memos (continued)*

Memos	Purpose
<p>While reading transcripts several times to figure out codes, I felt that I asked some questions not related to my research questions. For example, we talked with one of the participants about teacher turnover. Although it is not directly related to my research questions, it is still helpful to understand how we should support probationary teachers to retain them in the profession.</p>	<p>Interview Protocols</p>
<p>I have some prior codes in my mind based on my research questions, and some codes have emerged from the data. First, I have tried to read transcripts on my computer, but it did not work for me so that I printed out the three transcripts. I have started coding using different colored highlighters and colored pencils, and I made several notes in the margins of the transcripts by thinking the general ideas. For the first transcript, I coded nearly everything. For the second one and third one, I was more focused on my research question and purpose, and, I have tried to make connections between interviews.</p>	<p>Coding</p>
<p>There are several ways I can organize my data, and I am not sure the way I organize my data is the best way. I have been trying to remember my purpose, research questions, and related literature because I feel that at the end, I must support themes I develop with current research.</p>	<p>Categorization</p>

**Data Management**

The researcher was the only person who accesses to the data. Data were stored on the researcher’s password-protected computer. All hard copies of data were stored in a locked filing cabinet. Back-up copies were stored on a USB key, which remained locked in a secure file cabinet. A key consideration is the confidentiality of participants. Therefore, pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of participants. All data will be destroyed within three years after the completion of the study.

**Data Analysis**

This qualitative study used a phenomenological approach to examine tenured teachers and school principals lived experiences related to teacher evaluation and teacher tenure. The

researcher attempted to describe the participant experiences with the phenomenon by reviewing the data, which consisted primarily of interview transcripts and the researcher's notes. According to Merriam (2009, pp. 175-176):

Data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data and making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read – it is the process of making meaning.

Data analysis was completed throughout the study, including during and after data collection. Merriam (2009) agreed that data analysis is a continuous process of examining, categorizing, and interpreting a collection of data. The main processes included organizing and preparing the data, coding the data, generating themes, offering interpretations through memos, and presenting the results. The researcher began analysis by exploring the data of each teacher, and the data of each school principal, and concluded with an analysis that collectively examined across teachers and school principals.

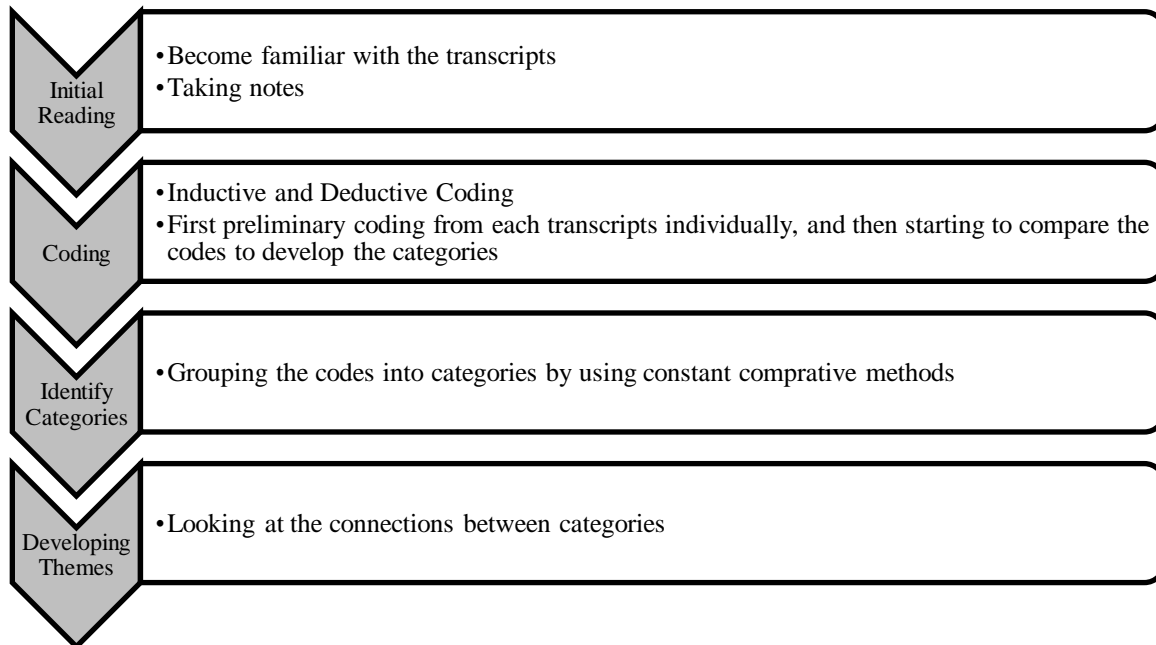
### *Thematic Analysis*

The researcher approached the data analysis by using a thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is defined as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns [themes] within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis allows the researcher to illustrate which themes are important in the description of the phenomenon under study. There was a focus in this study to seek out the patterns that emerged from the data. Overall, after the interviews were transcribed and transcripts read, codes were created. Then, codes and quotes supporting them were grouped into the categories of repeated ideas, and then themes were developed based on these categories. Thematic analysis was appropriate for this study since

“thematic analysis is not wedded to any pre-existing theoretical framework, and therefore it can be used within different theoretical frameworks” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81).

### *Constant Comparative Method*

The researcher also used constant comparative method to analyze the data. Schwandt (2010) describes constant comparative as a method in which “each segment of the data is taken in turn and (a) compared to one or more categories to determine its relevance and (b) compared with other segments of data similarly categorized” (p. 37). Thus, it is frequently used in both grounded theory approaches and other qualitative research studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher used this approach during the comparison of data sets across the three school principals’ transcripts, first round of teachers’ transcripts, second round of teachers’ transcripts, and third round of teachers’ transcripts.



*Figure 3.2. Data Analysis Process*

*Data Analysis Process*

Data analysis was completed throughout the study, including during and after data collection. After the interviews were completed, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher and to maintain confidentiality, all identifying information from the transcripts was removed. Overall, the analysis of the data was completed in four phases: (1) Initial Reading; (2) Coding; (3) Identifying Categories; and (4) Developing Themes. Interviews were categorized into four groups (as illustrated in Figure 3.1-data collection methods-interviews), and for each group, the four steps of data analysis were completed separately.

Step 1-Initial Reading: To begin the analysis, the researcher became familiar with the interview by reading the individual transcripts. While reading individual transcripts, the researcher started taking notes that might be connected to the research questions and the purpose of the study.

Maxwell (2013) supported this approach by encouraging note-taking during the initial reading.

Table 3.8 presents a sample of the initial data analysis and note-taking.

Table 3.8. *Sample of Initial Data Analysis: Note-Taking on SP 01's Transcript*

Transcript Excerpt	Researcher's Notes
"I think there's benefit if the instrument, the evaluation instrument is used appropriately, but it could also be very harmful if it's used, um, in a way to not improve a teacher, but just to simply, um, highlight things that maybe they're not good at or were never taught."	School principal thinks that the effectiveness of the evaluation process is depends on how you use it.
"I think for newer teacher, TKES is as not as big a deal it is for more veteran teachers"	School principal acknowledges that there is a different attitude against the evaluation process based on teachers' years of experience.

*(table continues)*

Table 3.8. *Sample of Initial Data Analysis: Note-Taking on SP 01's Transcript (continued)*

Transcript Excerpt	Researcher's Notes
<p>“We tried to balance out knowing that, you know, we’re dealing with somebody’s career and livelihood. We have multiple administrators go in and we kind of do like an inter-rater reliability, approach to it. So, if you and I were administrators in the building and we were going to see a teacher, you would do some of the evaluations. I would do some of the evaluations. And then sometimes there may even be a third or fourth administrator who does an evaluation. So, you get different feedback, which should lend itself to growth, and then relative to, you know, either helping a teacher or unfortunately having to dismiss them. It’s not one person determining the overall evaluation and fate of a teacher. I think it’s better balanced.”</p>	<p>School principal has mentioned the importance of having more administrators to evaluate teacher performance to reduce the administrator’s bias. It looks like that the school principal is aware of the possibility to be bias towards a teacher. And also, he values to provide different feedback to teacher.</p>

Step 2-Coding: After reading each transcripts several times and taking general notes, the researcher created a list of thoughts related to the meaning of the participant experience, which then identified as codes. According to Saldaña (2016), a code is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 4). Moreover, coding “leads you from the data to the idea and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea” (Richards & Morse, 2013, p. 154). Thus, coding is an important step to move from the raw data to the findings and to maintain coherence between the objective and the results.

The data were coded manually using different colored highlighters, colored pencils, and sticky notes. At this step, the transcripts were reviewed individually, and one was not weighted over another. Interviews were categorized into four groups: (1) Principals’ interview; (2) Teachers’ first-round interview, (3) Teachers’ second-round interview, and (4) Teachers’ third-

round interview. First, data from school principals' interviews was coded; second first round of teachers' interviews was coded; third second round of teachers' interviews was coded; and finally, third round of teachers' interviews was coded. Table 3.9 illustrates sample codes from school principals' interviews.

Table 3.9. *Sample Codes from School Principals' Transcripts*

<i>Sample Codes from Interview: School Principal 1's Interview Transcript</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Instrument</li> <li>• Evaluation by multiple administrators for inter-rater reliability</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Planning time to complete a teacher's evaluation process</li> <li>• Teacher resistance</li> <li>• Building trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation for new and experienced teacher</li> <li>• Formal preparation</li> <li>• Professional training for principals</li> <li>• Performance-based evaluation</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• The link between the evaluation process and hiring process</li> </ul>
<i>Sample Codes from Interview: School Principal 2's Interview Transcript</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve instructional strategies</li> <li>• Maintain quality teachers</li> <li>• Constructive criticism</li> <li>• Certification to perform evaluation process</li> <li>• Setting professional goals for teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of the instrument</li> <li>• Teachers' excuses</li> <li>• Informal conversation</li> <li>• Flexibility to use evaluation tools</li> <li>• Dealing with unsatisfactory teachers</li> </ul>
<i>Sample Codes from Interview: School Principal 3's Interview Transcript</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing training for principals</li> <li>• Providing ongoing feedback</li> <li>• Improve teachers' practice</li> <li>• Doable for school administrator</li> <li>• Improve student achievement</li> <li>• School Culture</li> <li>• Characteristics of effective evaluator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being a role model</li> <li>• Legally defensible</li> <li>• Collaboration with Assistants principal</li> <li>• Building self-efficacy</li> <li>• Teacher retention</li> <li>• Evaluator's ability</li> </ul>

Codes can also be developed inductively and deductively, or both simultaneously (Bendassolli, 2013). As stated by Merriam (2009) data analysis “is a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning...” (p. 176). When the researcher employs deductive

reasoning, the researcher has to develop codes before starting the analyzing data. Consequently, inductive reasoning allows a researcher to develop codes from the frequent or significant themes that emerged in raw data, without limitations of structured methodologies. In other words, inductive reasoning starts with the specific and moves to the general, while deductive reasoning moves from the specific to the general (Constantinou et al., 2017; Earl Rinehart, 2021). The researcher took the deductive coding approach based on the research questions and inductive coding to allow for additional codes generated from the data. Table 3.10 is an excerpt of coded data from a teacher’s first round of interview that reflects inductive and deductive coding.

Table 3.10. *Teacher’s Transcript Excerpts and Coding*

Excerpts	Coding
It is hard because you have to hold teacher accountable somehow somehow. And I kind of think of teacher accountability and evaluating teachers similar to grading writing, which is why I do not teach writing anymore. Writing is so subjective. Well, I might think well written, somebody else might pick up and not like. You know I mean that’s why we all picked different books, but we all read different styles and things like that. And so, what works for one teacher and what is successful, you know, their principal or their administration might not agree with because it’s not their style and so it’s hard to find line. I’ve been lucky I’ve always worked for administration teams who were fair who were honest on the evaluations.	Accountability  Subjectivity  Different needs  Subjective judgment Positive experience with evaluation process Importance of administration for fair evaluation
I think [the administration team] are incredibly knowledgeable. My assistant principal is a former math coach. So, her coming in to evaluate me on math is huge and I respect her opinion. I respect her thoughts. I go to her for questions. So, I absolutely love her, her evaluating me and my principal have so much respect for, she’s so knowledgeable and her teaching experience is extensive. So, I value both of their opinions greatly. I liked their feedback	Administration background Subject familiarity Appreciation of being evaluated Feeling supported  Administrator’s years of teaching experiences Valuable feedback

Once the researcher completed preliminary coding from each transcript, the researcher started to compare the codes to develop the categories.

Step 3-Identify Categories: The next stage of analysis was to compare each transcript to the others to identify categories. According to Maxwell (2013), categorizing analysis is a helpful tool in assessing patterns of difference and similarity in the data; and it involves “fragmenting the initial text into discrete segments and re-sorting it into categories” (p. 112). Moreover, Merriam (1998) stated that categories should reflect the purpose of the research, be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitizing and conceptually congruent.

During this phase, data were analyzed using the constant comparative method. After generating the codes from each participant, codes and quotes supporting them were grouped into the categories by considering the purpose of the study, and research questions.

The purpose of the teachers’ interviews was to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers’ perspectives of the teacher evaluation process, and to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. Therefore, the researcher developed 5 categories for teachers’ data:

1. *Purpose of the teacher evaluation:* This category includes what teachers think about the purpose of the evaluation process in general, during their first three year, and after they granted with tenure; how their perspectives about the evaluation process have changed over their career. Moreover, this category also includes what they think about using teacher evaluation to make decision about promotion, retention and dismissal.
2. *Feeling about being evaluated:* This category includes how teachers feel about being evaluated in general, during their first three year, and after they granted with tenure; how their feeling about being evaluated process have changed over their career. Moreover,

this category also includes how their feelings about security of their job have changed over their career.

3. *The role of teacher evaluation to support teacher*: This category includes what teachers think about the role of teacher evaluation to support them; what kind of support they need over their career; what types of support they need over their career. Moreover, this category also includes what kind of feedback is most helpful for them over their career; their expectation from feedback they receive.
4. *The role of administrators*: This category includes what teacher think about the qualification of evaluators; what makes evaluators qualified for them; their expectations form evaluators.
5. *Overview the current teacher evaluation process*: This category includes what teachers think about effectiveness current evaluation process, the frequency of observation for tenured and non-tenured teachers; how they define the effective evaluation process; how might they improve the evaluation process.

The purpose of the principals' interviews was to understand how their approaches change to evaluate teacher performance once tenure is granted. Therefore, the researcher developed three categories for school principals' data:

1. *School Principals' perspectives about the current evaluation process*: This category includes what school principals think about the purpose of the evaluation process; effectiveness of the evaluation process; how they have been trained to perform this task, what they believe they need to be an effective evaluator; what challenges they have been experienced with the evaluation process; how might they improve the evaluation process.

2. *School Principals' approach to evaluate non-tenured teachers' performance:* This category includes how school principals evaluate non-tenured teachers' performance such as the frequency of formal and informal observation; what kind of support they provide for non-tenured teachers; what kind of feedback is most helpful for non-tenured teachers; the legislator for non-tenured teachers' evaluation process.
3. *School Principals' approach to evaluate tenured teachers' performance:* This category includes how school principals evaluate tenured teachers' performance such as the frequency of formal and informal observation; what kind of support they provide for tenured teachers; what kind of feedback is most helpful for non-tenured teachers; the legislator for tenured teachers' evaluation process.

The main reason for categorizing the data in this way was to align data with the research question and study's purpose. The next step for data analysis was to develop themes based on these categories.

Step 4-Developing Themes: The final step of the analysis was to develop themes by looking at the connections between categories identified at previous step. A theme "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). During this process, the researcher needs to identify a "clear core idea or concept that underpins a theme" (Braun et al., 2015, p. 102) that is shared across the range of codes. Therefore, researcher has to think carefully to identify features of similarity and relationship across codes to cluster them into possible theme. The school principals' data analysis yielded 2 themes.

Table 3.10 presents coding map to show the organization of the school principals' data (Anfara et al., 2002). The First Iteration on Table 3.11 presents the some of the selective codes

during the initial coding steps where researcher coded each transcript individually. And then researcher started to compare the transcripts to identify patterns (see Table 3.11, Second Iteration). The Third Iteration shows the themes that were chosen based on categorization of codes and research question.

Table 3.11. *Code Mapping of Transcript Data for School Principal Participants (to be read from bottom up)*

Research Question:	
How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change? once a teacher is granted tenure?	
Third Iteration: Themes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School principals follow the state's legislation when evaluating teacher's performance.</li> <li>• School principals acknowledge teacher's years of experience when providing feedback and support.</li> </ul>	
Second Iteration Codes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of Evaluation</li> <li>• Instrument</li> <li>• Evaluator</li> <li>• Feedback</li> <li>• Formal Professional Training</li> <li>• Impact of school culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation related to teacher evaluation process</li> <li>• Role of school principals</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>
First Iteration: Sample of Initial Selective Codes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Being a role model</li> <li>• Quality feedback</li> <li>• Collaboration with assistant principals</li> <li>• Dealing with unsatisfactory teachers</li> <li>• Professional latitude</li> <li>• Constructive criticism</li> <li>• Improve instructional strategies</li> <li>• Maintain quality teachers</li> <li>• Improve student achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• The link between the evaluation process and hiring process</li> <li>• Formal preparation</li> <li>• Building trust</li> <li>• Teacher resistance</li> <li>• Characteristics of effective evaluator</li> <li>• Teacher agency</li> <li>• Evaluator's ability</li> <li>• Performance-based evaluation</li> </ul>
Units of Relevant Meaning from 3 Transcripts	

Teachers' data analysis yielded 5 themes. Table 3.12 shows the selected sample of theme and codes from teachers' interviews.

*THEME 1:* Granted with tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the teacher evaluation process.

*THEME 2:* Teachers have become more comfortable being evaluated over the years not because of tenure but because of their self-efficacy.

*THEME 3:* Although teachers might not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, professional development affected their evaluation process throughout their career.

*THEME 4:* Teachers preferred to be evaluated by school principals with teaching experiences, content knowledge, and enough training to perform the evaluation process regardless of their tenure status.

*THEME 5:* Although teachers found the current evaluation system to be an effective tool to assess their strengths and weaknesses, the evaluation process alone was not enough to support probationary teachers and to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for improvement if evaluation mainly focused on accountability.

Table 3.12. *Selected Sample of Theme from Teachers' Data*

Coding	Interview Excerpts	Themes
Detailed feedback	It's like my principal is leaving me really detailed feedback and lots of suggestions than it would be helpful for me because I can look at what she wrote and take it, try and apply it. But if you have a principal that just goes in there and says, yep, good. You did! Great job. There's nothing I'm getting out of that.	A key component to the overall success of the teacher evaluation process regardless of teacher's tenure status is a trustful school principal.
Principal's approach to give feedback		
Subject familiarity	It's great if you're an AP or you're a principal, but I want to know that you have great teacher background and great teacher skills, because, you know, it's hard to evaluate someone when you don't have any experience or knowledge in that field.	
Administrator's years of teaching experiences		
Support	The administrators were very approachable in that regard and they were able to say, you know, here's what I would do. it was good to have them say, all right, well, let's work through this together.	
Collaboration		

*(table continues)*

Table 3.12. *Selected Sample of Theme from Teachers' Data (continued)*

Coding	Interview Excerpts	Themes
Fear to ask help	I was hesitant to ask for help from my administration. They weren't helpful. They weren't supportive. You know, the one time I did go ask for help, but they were very negative.	
Relationship Clear expectation	I guess also getting to know your administrator a little bit better and, getting a better sense of what they expect. I think that made it more successful	A key component to the overall success of the teacher evaluation process regardless of teacher's tenure status is a trustful school principal.
Building trust	I feel that that trust is built by [administrator] coming in to evaluate me and to see what I'm doing and to see what I'm doing outside of my classroom.	
Frequent visitation	[Administrators] are seen my room several times in a week even sometimes because it is small schools, they are consistently walking through the classroom seeing what is going on here. So, when they come in to evaluate me it doesn't really, they don't bother me.	
Relationship		
Feeling being evaluated		

These themes later led to development of the key findings.

Overall, data analysis was an ongoing process –constantly moving back and forth– that started at the data collection stage when the researcher was taking notes and memos. Semi-structured interviews were the main source of data and were supplemented by memoing and a review of the districts' evaluation protocols and the state teacher tenure legislation. Inductive and deductive reasoning was employed to analyze the data, searching for relationships and themes to describe the participants' perspectives, beliefs, and practices about teacher evaluation and teacher tenure.

## **Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is often questioned, and Patton (2015) stated that “for better or worse, the trustworthiness of the data is tied directly to - the trustworthiness of the person who collects and analyzes the data- and his or her demonstrated competence” (p. 706). Guba (1981) mentioned the four criteria that should be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study: 1) credibility; 2) transferability; 3) dependability; 4) confirmability.

To address these areas, efforts were made to establish trust with the participants by engaging conversationally with each participant to collect relevant background information, and by allowing participants to select the day and time of the interviews. The researcher asked for clarification during the interviews to make sure that the information was accurately captured. Within the process of data analysis, to ensure the accuracy of the information and improve the trustworthiness of the research data, the process of “member checking” (Creswell, 2012, p. 259) was employed. Therefore, participants were given the opportunity to review and comment on the researcher’s interpretations and analysis to ensure the interpretations accurately reflected the beliefs and intentions of the participants.

## **Ethics**

Ethical consideration of this study included confidentiality of data, anonymity of participants and sites, and informed consent. In order to protect the identity of participants, district schools and participants were given pseudonym in the findings. All data collected were stored on the researcher’s password-protected computer, and the hard copy of the data were stored in a locked filing cabinet. The participants were assured that they were participating in a study with a high level of confidentiality and anonymity.

This study was submitted to and approved by both the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (Appendix E), and the central office research committee of the district in which the study was conducted. Participants signed an informed consent form that explained the research protocol. The participants were assured that their participation in the study was completely voluntary, and they understood that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

### **Assessment of Benefits and Risks**

Potential benefits of this research include informing the field about teacher evaluation process for tenured teachers. Although there are no direct benefits to participants, participating in this study would afford participants the opportunity to reflect and to provide their opinions on the teacher evaluation system. Moreover, this study intends to provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers, as the aim of the study was to understand perspectives of teachers regarding teacher evaluation processes and what makes sense to their professional practices.

There were no identified potential risks or discomforts caused by participation in the study. There is the possibility that participant may become uncomfortable answering the questions; thus, they were told that they may skip any questions that they prefer not to answer. Moreover, they may discontinue participation at any time. To minimize psychological and social discomfort, participants will be given pseudonyms and any identifying school information removed. Furthermore, the data collected from participants will remain confidential for anyone other than the researcher.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The results and findings from this study were limited by the geography, number and types of participants, and scope of the research methods that were employed. The school district

from which the teachers and school principals were chosen may be a limitation because of the politics, culture, and customs established in this district. As the researcher followed reputational sampling for school selection, and purposeful sampling for participant selection, the findings of the study may not be generalized to the population of K-12 tenured teachers and school principals in Georgia or beyond. The sample size may also be another limitation to this study, because sampled teachers and school principals may not reflect diversity of viewpoints on tenured teachers' evaluation processes.

### **Subjectivity Statement**

As my proposed research involves the understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, it is important I address my own subjectivity within this study. My core belief on education is that every student is capable of learning. Maybe they cannot learn through the same time or in the same way; however, they learn with the right method which is chosen based on their needs. That is why it has become an important expectation that teachers must have the required professional qualifications and update their knowledge and skills for effective teaching to meet students' needs. For this reason, the evaluation of the teacher's performance has a significant role in determining teacher's mastery and adequacy.

During my graduate studies, I have learned more and more about the teacher evaluation practices in the United States, first as a graduate student in courses at the University of Florida. While at the University of Florida, I completed a master's degree in Educational Leadership and the focus of my thesis was on teacher evaluation. Now at the University of Georgia as a Ph.D. student, I am focusing on teacher evaluation as it relates to teacher tenure.

Although, the main purpose of the evaluation process should be to ensure teacher quality, to promote growth and development, and to support problem-solving, the process is also used to make decisions about teacher employment such as promotions, dismissals, and salary increases. Moreover, from my personal communication with my classmates who work as teachers, I understood that lack of focus on professional development within the evaluation processes makes the process seemingly meaningless for teachers. However, according to my experience in teaching in my country, I am also aware that it is hard to encourage teachers to improve themselves if there are not consequences of insufficient performance. Therefore, I always wondered what happened after teachers are granted tenure, as tenure status increases a teacher's job security.

I have not experienced teacher evaluation and the steps involved in being granted tenure in the United States or in Turkey. I only know about these processes through readings, discussion with classmates, and visits to schools as part of my research assistantship at UGA. I have never taught in the K-12 setting in the United States or in Turkey; therefore, my experiences with teacher evaluation and tenure are non-existent.

In addition to my personal curiosity, the motivation for this research came from the anticipated obligations of my future position as a policy analyst in the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey. In Turkey, every teacher is granted tenure when they are hired by MoNE. Although my country has not had an effective teacher evaluation system, from my prior research and examination of the related literature on teacher performance evaluation practices in Turkey, I think that one of the reasons evaluation practices fail is because tenure is granted immediately upon being hired to teach. Thus, for me, it is important to understand teacher perspectives related to teacher evaluation processes after teachers are granted tenure.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented, in detail, the methodological procedures used in this study. The theoretical framework, research design, sample selection criteria, data collection, and data analysis of the research process were reviewed. A discussion of the methods of enhancing the trustworthiness, validity, and reliability of this research, which are key issues in qualitative research, was presented. Lastly, underlying assumptions, ethics, limitations of the study, and the researcher's subjectivity concluded this chapter. The following chapter, Chapter 4, presents the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **STUDY CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examining tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

This chapter presents overview descriptions of the participating school district, schools, and profiles of the participants.

## **Profile of the School District**

At the time of the study, the Sunset School District enrolled approximately 8,500 students and employed about 650 teachers and 64 administrators. The total number of schools in the county was 12: out of these, 8 were elementary schools, 1 was a sixth-grade academy, 1 was a middle school, 1 was a high school, and 1 was an early learning center. The student demographic at the school county was comprised 38% Hispanic, 37% Black, 20% White, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% Multiracial. Approximately 60% of students at school county received free or reduced-price meals, while 45% of the student body received special education services, and 14.6% gifted services. Its four-year graduation rate was 75.7% which was higher than the state average, and 57.2 of graduates who were classified as college and career ready.

## **Profile of the Schools**

This study was conducted at one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school in the Sunset School District.

At *Alphabets Elementary School*, the student enrollment was approximately 320; 45% White, 23% Black, 17% Hispanic, 8% Asian, 6% Multiracial, and 1% Native American/Alaskan Native. Approximately, 29% of students received free or reduced-price meals, while 59% of the student body received gifted services. The school employs 2 administrators, 18 teachers, and 3 support personnel. All teachers were gifted certified. The personnel had an average of about 20 years of experience for administrators, about 13 years for support personnel, and about 12 years for teachers.

At *Waterfalls Middle School*, the student enrollment was approximately 1,385; 39% Hispanic, 38% Black, 17% White, 2% Asian, and 4% Multiracial. Approximately, 62% of students received free or reduced-price meals, while 11.6% of the student body received special

education services and 16.5% gifted services. The school employs 5 administrators, 94 teachers, and 8 support personnel. The personnel had an average of about 21 years of experience for administrators, about 18 years for support personnel, and about 14 years for teachers.

At *Seacoast High School*, the student enrollment was approximately 2,518; 39% Hispanic, 37% Black, 19% White, 2% Asian, and 3% Multiracial. Approximately, 53% of students received free or reduced-price meals, while 10% of the student body received special education services, and 14.9% of the students received gifted services. The school employs 10 administrators, 150 teachers, and 20 support personnel. The school had an average of about 21 years of experience for administrators, about 17 years for support personnel, and about 15 years for teachers.

### **Research Participants**

In this study, the school county was represented by 11 participants (3 school principals and 8 teachers). The school principals were selected by using reputational sampling, and teachers were selected by using purposeful sampling. There were one female and two male school principals, and while two of them had doctorate degrees, one of them had a Specialist in Education Degrees. Six female and two male teachers participated in the study. While seven teachers had master's degrees, one teacher had a doctorate degree. Moreover, two teachers entered through alternative certification preparation programs. Teacher participants taught language arts, social studies, math, science, chemistry, history, and physical education.

#### *School Principals*

**School Principal 1, Seacoast High School.** School Principal 1 has worked in education for 22 years in 3 different states and 7 different schools. This educational path started with a traditional preparation, serving as a social studies teacher, an assistant principal, and a principal.

He has a bachelor's degree in social studies, a master's degree in secondary social studies, and a specialist's degree in educational leadership with a specialization in administration and supervision. He was the Seacoast High School's fourth principal in five years. After a year, he was appointed as a principal. The school's graduation rate earned a 'B' on the state report card for the first time. At the time of the study, he was in his second year in the principal position at this high school.

**School Principal 2, Alphabets Elementary School.** School Principal 2 has worked in education for 21 years. She has served seven years as a teacher, three years as an instructional coach, four years as an assistant principal, and seven years as a principal. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism and in early childhood education, a master's degree in administration, a specialist's degree in leadership, and a doctorate degree in policy and leadership. At the time of this study, she was in her second year in the principal position at this elementary school.

**School Principal 3, Waterfalls Middle School.** School Principal 3 has worked as a school principal for nine-years. He has served in different educational positions as an elementary teacher, assistant principal, principal, and assistant superintendent for operations and technology assessment, and as an associate superintendent. Although he has been in different roles, he mentioned that "I am back to pride and joy and love, that's being a school principal." He has a bachelor's degree in elementary education, a master's degree in educational technology and educational leadership, and a doctorate degree in educational leadership and policy.

### *Teachers*

**Teacher 1, Alphabets Elementary School.** Teacher 1 has been working as a teacher for eight years. While she was pursuing a major in animal science, she started giving a horseback riding lesson. During these lessons, she realized that she really liked teaching kids and decided to

change her career. She held numerous positions; supply teacher for second and third grade, kindergarten paraprofessional position, and then she taught third and fifth grade in all subjects. At the time of this study, she taught 5th-grade math and science at Alphabets Elementary School for three years. She had a master's degree in early childhood education, and she was working on her specialist degree in educational leadership at the time of this study. She wants to move into some position outside the classroom such as an instructional coach or an assistant principal, in the future.

She thought that the most challenging part about teaching is constant change; therefore, according to her, an effective teacher is someone willing to think outside of the box and to make the necessary changes. She believes that every child is different, every class is different, and the teacher has to recognize that. To improve her instructional practices, she used various professional learning opportunities and relied on people in her building. She also thinks that the longer year teaching, the stronger and more effective you become as a teacher since you can connect the prior years of knowledge and experience and use that to help you.

**Teacher 2, Alphabets Elementary School.** Teacher 2 has been working as a teacher for five years. Her desire to be a teacher started when she was a little girl. She loved her teachers growing up, she admired them, and she wanted to impact children's lives as her teachers impacted hers. Even if she considered other professions, none of them seemed appealing and rewarding to her as a teacher. She taught fourth grade all subjects for a year, and then she moved to Alphabets Elementary School to teach 4th-grade reading, writing, and social studies. She has a master's degree in teaching and learning with an emphasis on experiential learning.

She thinks that being a teacher is an important profession since this job is not for her; it is for others. However, she argued that there are many demands placed on teachers, and there are

often unrealistic expectations. According to her, an effective teacher should be patient, flexible, compassionate, and care about the kids. She thinks that attending professional development and seeing new ideas cause teachers to want to change what they are doing and try something that might be better or more effective.

**Teacher 3, Seacoast High School.** Teacher 3 has taught at Seacoast High School for four years. He had a lot of positive influences from his teachers during her education. However, he never taught about being a teacher until his first year at college. One of his professors made him realize his feelings about teaching, and then he decided to become a teacher. Currently, he teaches world history, government, and economics. He has a master's degree in education with a focus on online teaching and learning.

He thinks that the best part of being a teacher is to have interactions with students and help them to succeed. At the same time, the most challenging part is dealing with some students who have behavioral problems and the paperwork that needs to be done. According to him, effective teachers should care about students, put them first and foremost. Moreover, he thinks that a teacher should recognize what a student may be going through and act accordingly.

**Teacher 4, Alphabets Elementary School.** Teacher 4 has been working as a physical education teacher for four years. She decided to become a teacher when she was in high school. Since she also loves sports and activities, she chooses physical education. Although she wanted to teach high school level, she fell in love with elementary grade after doing her practicum in college. Kindergarten is her favorite grade level to teach. During her first two years, she worked at two schools at the same time, she taught K-2 at one school in the mornings, and then she taught 3 through 5 at another school in the afternoons. Currently, she teaches grade 3 through 5

physical education only at Alphabets Elementary School. She has a master's degree in physical education.

She thinks the best part of being a teacher is engaging with students and doing physical activity with students. Consequently, the worst part is dealing with the stereotype about physical education, such as there is no curriculum for physical education, students are just playing games during the class. According to her, an effective teacher should meet all the needs of each student. Moreover, an effective teacher should also challenge and push students to work harder by engaging each student and by providing them different tasks based on their abilities. She thinks that teachers should be flexible and should try different instructional approaches.

**Teacher 5, Waterfalls Middle School.** Teacher 5 has been working as a teacher at Waterfalls Middle School for four years. She decided to become a teacher when she was 36 years old. She wanted to become a teacher to help kids as her daughter's teachers helped her daughter when she was at middle school. She teaches eighth-grade language arts. She is a team leader for her academic team, and she is a social-emotional learning coordinator at the school. She has a master's in curriculum and instruction.

The favorite part of being a teacher, according to her, is building relationships with the students and other teachers. On the contrary, the difficult part is legislation and the stuff that teachers do not have control over it. She argued that decisions are made by people who are not in the classroom and do not think about the kids first. According to her, an effective teacher should be willing to learn even from students and should be able to change instruction based on students' needs.

**Teacher 6, Waterfalls Middle School.** Teacher 6 has been working as a teacher for 13 years. Before moving to Waterfalls Middle School, she worked at different private schools for

over nine years. Before launching her education career, she worked in different company as a human resource. She did not go through a traditional bachelor's program to become a teacher. She had a master's degree leading the state teaching certification. She teaches mathematics at Waterfalls Middle School for four years.

She decided to become a teacher because her teacher changed her life when she was a middle school. She had a difficult childhood when she was growing up, and she did not even start reading until she was in fourth grade. She had a stable home when she started middle school, and one of her teachers supported her a lot. She loves having interactions with students, while she hates the paperwork that needs to be done. According to her, effective teachers should know their students and should be able to show them that they have cared. She also added that effective teachers should be flexible, multitask, and differentiate the instruction.

**Teacher 7, Seacoast High School.** Teacher 7 is in the fifth year of his teaching career at Seacoast High School. He has a bachelor's and doctorate degrees in chemistry. Although he loves doing research, he wanted to have an impact on students. That is why he earned his teaching certificate through an alternative certification program.

He thinks that the favorite part of being a teacher is interacting with students and making an impact on their lives. On the contrary, he thinks that dealing with the extra paperwork makes teaching is less enjoyable. According to him, an effective teacher should be patient and willing to connect with students.

**Teacher 8, Waterfalls Middle School.** Teacher 8 has been working as a language arts teacher at Waterfalls Middle School for five years. She was pursuing her master's degree in language arts at the time of this study. She wanted to become a teacher because she wanted to believe in students.

According to her, one of the most significant things that make an effective teacher is just love teaching. Her favorite part of being a teacher is having relationships with students, and she hates to see students fail, which makes her feel unsuccessful. Moreover, she thinks that an effective teacher should adjust instruction based on students' needs and should be passionate about his/her content area.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the context of the study, including key demographics of the school district and schools, and relevant background information about the school principals and teachers who participated in this study. Chapter 5 presents findings from the teachers' interviews.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS: TENURED TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVES ABOUT EVALUATION**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examine tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

This chapter presents the findings from the tenured teachers' interviews about their perspectives on teacher evaluation process. All eight teacher participants (see Table 5.1 for overview of teachers) were interviewed three times using protocols that addressed evaluation and supervision focusing on their experiences as a precursor to being granted tenure. Therefore, the

findings from teachers’ interviews are presented in three categories: (1) findings from first round of teachers’ interview; (2) findings from second round of teachers’ interview; and (3) findings from third round of teachers’ interview.

Table 5.1. *Overview of Teachers*

Teacher Participant	Years of Experience as a Teacher	Years of experience at current school	School Level	Subject
Teacher 1	8	3	Elementary School	Math/Science
Teacher 2	5	4	Elementary School	ELA/Social Studies
Teacher 3	4	4	High School	History/ Government and Economics
Teacher 4	4	4	Elementary School	Physical Education
Teacher 5	4	4	Middle School	Language Arts
Teacher 6	13	4	Middle School	Math
Teacher 7	5	5	High School	Chemistry
Teacher 8	4	4	Middle School	Language Arts

**Findings from the First Round of Teacher Interviews**

The first round of semi-structured interviews focused on gaining teachers’ perspectives regarding teacher evaluation practices (see Table 3.6 for sample questions). The findings from the first round of teachers’ interviews are reported in the following parts that reflect the essence of the purpose of this study: the purpose of the teacher evaluation, feeling about being evaluated,

the role of teacher evaluation to support teacher, the role of administrators, and overview of the current teacher evaluation process.

### *Purpose of Teacher Evaluation*

The participant responses suggested that teacher accountability and fostering professional growth were the two major purposes for what teachers perceived as the purpose of teacher evaluation. Teacher 1 included both purposes in her response; “you have to hold teacher accountable somehow; but I think that evaluation is also a good way to figure out how you can help a teacher.” Teacher 4 agreed and said:

I think it’s to keep teachers accountable. I think it’s also to improve teachers. So, you got to keep them accountable, making sure that they’re doing what they’re supposed to be doing, but also you should be improving constantly. So, I think it’s to make sure that teachers are improving their instruction, they’re meeting their students’ needs, they’re adjusting when they need to.

In her response, Teacher 4 also emphasized the student achievement. Teacher 5 stressed only teacher accountability by saying “I feel like it’s necessary. It gives us accountability and, without accountability, some of us are going to get lazy and relax and a little bit mediocre and our kids deserve better than that.”

Moreover, Teacher 2 highlighted the issue of student achievement and its connection to the purpose of teacher evaluation, and she made a connection between the notion of accountability and teacher quality: “The purpose is to hold teachers accountable. I mean, their job matters so much and effective teachers are going to lead to student success, which is obviously the most important goal.”

While the teachers interviewed understood the need for accountability and sometimes endorsed it as the primary purpose for teacher evaluation, some of them indicated that they felt a primary purpose of evaluation was to support teachers in developing their professional growth. Teacher 6 indicated, “I think just like when we do evaluations of our students, it’s to see how, if we need support and, and how to support us better.”

All teachers believe that the evaluation process should be used to make employment decisions along with other factors. Teacher 1 stated:

I don’t know if a teacher should be dismissed solely based on their evaluation and I feel it before you dismiss the teacher you need to give them the opportunity to learn, to grow and to change and give them that chance before you just get rid of them. But if teacher is not willing to change and they’re not willing to make those adjustments then, you know, not everyone fit to be a teacher just like not everyone fit to be a fireman or policeman.

By agreeing with Teacher 1, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 also thought that the evaluation process could certainly be a factor in making an employment decision, especially if the teacher is scoring consistently low on many things.

Teacher 5 included the professional development piece in her response: “If they’ve had evaluation after evaluation, that’s low, they’ve been given the professional development they’ve been given the opportunity to get better. There’s no improvement that they should be held to be held accountable.”

The next category examines teachers’ feeling about being evaluated.

### *Feelings about Being Evaluated*

The participants’ responses suggested that nervousness, fear of being judged, and excited about being watched were their feelings when they heard the word ‘evaluation.’ Teacher 1

expressed, “I feel like I am being judged. I feel like evaluation is just someone trying to rank or judge you based on your skills or abilities which you do, what you don’t do. Almost like scrutinizing every move.” Teacher 6 agreed and said:

Nervousness. I don’t know why I still get nervous with that. You know, every year I’ve been evaluated. I’ve had multiple teachers and administrators and people in central office, all in my room at once, many times. And yet when they walk in, it distracts me each time. So, I get distracted, I get the nervous and then I just have to tell myself just keep doing what you’re doing.

Teacher 6 also mentioned that she was distracted when someone came for evaluation.

Consequently, Teacher 2, Teacher 3 and Teacher 7 mentioned that their feelings have changed over the time. Teacher 2 stated:

I feel super nervous like as a student teacher and as a first-year teacher, like the word evaluation or observation would like to make my stomach drop. But now it’s kind of makes me want to roll my eyes a little bit. Because I think it’s the same as like we give a kid a standardized test and we know that their performance on one test doesn’t indicate how much they know or doesn’t indicate who they are as a student. And so, I feel like one classroom observation, doesn’t show who I am as a teacher. It’s kind of the same issue, the same thing.

Although Teacher 2 thought that the one observation could not provide enough information about her teaching, she still felt nervous about being evaluated.

Teacher 3 shared although he felt “a lot of fear, a lot of nervousness, and a lot of pressure” during his first years, with the years of experience, he started to think that “evaluation is part of the process.” Teacher 7 also echoed this though and said “I don’t mind evaluations, I

guess when I started teaching, I would say anxiety, fear even. I would say that as time has gone on and I've become more confident." Teacher 5 and Teacher 8 also agreed that evaluation was a part of the job.

Teacher 4 highlighted the importance of administrators and shared how the relationship with administrators affects her feeling:

It depends on what kind of evaluation. If I'm getting evaluated by my administration, I have mixed emotions. I have a little bit of stress, but also a little bit of excitement because I love being evaluated. I love getting feedback.... So, but also, it's intimidating. Because if somebody comes in and doesn't understand what I'm doing, then it can be a little stressful.

Teacher 4 thought the process was more stressful if the administrators did not have enough information about her as a teacher and her subject. The next category examines how the teacher evaluation process could be used to support teachers from teachers' perspectives.

#### *Role of Teacher Evaluation to Support Teachers*

Several teachers mentioned administrators choose professional development without considering their evaluation. Although they had a positive experience with most of the professional development they have attended, they would like to receive professional development that would fit their goals. Teacher 1 stated "A lot of the time the professional learning is, picked for us by our school. I've never had someone in an evaluation recommend professional learning in an area." Teacher 5 agreed that "I think that the schools just choose from what they can get, but it should be the areas that the teachers need". Teacher 6 also indicated "It's not been recommended to me individually. They have plans for professional development

activities they saw across the board. We needed like as a PLC or something they noticed in multiple classrooms.”

Teacher 2 expressed her feelings and experiences:

The evaluation process can point out where teachers need to change or where they need to grow, but it doesn't give strategies for how to fix any deficits they have. It might point out, Hey, classroom management is an issue for you, but then it doesn't tell you how to fix that. There's no, this was an issue. Here's some solutions or this was your issue. Here's a resource to try and learn more about it. So, it highlights an issue without providing any assistance or support.

Teacher 2 wanted to learn both the problem and the solution. She elaborated further:

Any professional development I do isn't specifically based on me and my performance. It's like as a school, this is what we need for social studies. But it's never like a, “hey [Teacher 2], you got this on your TKES. I want you to go to this training.” It's more just based on student data or based on as a school, the direction that we're headed.

Moreover, Teacher 3 stressed his expectations from administrators; “I think more opportunities could be given. Evaluating administrators who could go, “Hey we see this is your goal.” These are some development opportunities that you could do with that.”

All teachers appreciated receiving constructive feedback; however, most of them feel that they did not receive adequate feedback from their evaluations. Teacher 1 stated “I appreciate when I only get positive feedback. Because it makes me feel like I did a good job, but the suggestions are what helped me to grow and change.” She continued:

If you have a principal that just goes in there and says good, good, good. You did this, great job. There's nothing I'm getting out of that. She just said that what I'm doing

already is fine, so I can keep doing that, but it's not helping me to improve and learn and grow. So, I think it depends on how much effort administration is putting on using that as the platform for helping teachers grow.

Teacher 1 believed that administrators were important component of the effective evaluation process, and they should be willing to invest their time to support teachers. Teacher 8 also agreed that she would prefer more detailed feedback that she could use to improve her instruction. She stated:

I don't personally think I received adequate feedback from the evaluation. So normally it's just, you know, good job doing this. It's very vague comments that are usually typed out. And I think personally it would be helpful to have a little bit more detail in the feedback and positive feedback is great. But I also think, honestly that constructive criticism is also helpful. Hey, try this. It doesn't have to be any sort of negative comment about the teacher themselves, but just suggestions to improve in the classroom.

Although Teacher 8 appreciated positive feedback, she believed that constructive feedback was more useful to improve her practices.

Teacher 5 wants to learn why she received that number from her evaluation and how she can improve it; "you need to tell me why if you give me a 2.5 from instructional practices, what can I do to get better? What can I do to differentiate?" Teacher 6 also expressed her desire to receive constructive feedback, "I think feedback just like miss units, you get a grade and that's it. You should give information that can help them grow, ideas, books, suggestions, questions, can all be helpful."

Teacher 8 also expressed the importance of immediate feedback:

I think if somebody observed my class on a certain day and then at the end of that day, sat down with me and said, here's what went well, here's what didn't, try this tomorrow. I think if it was more tangible and immediate feedback, that would be really helpful versus like a conference in the middle of the year and at the end of the year, about the whole year, because that's such broad information that it's hard to make any like tangible changes.

Teacher 8 argued that receiving late feedback was not helpful, and she wanted to learn what she could do to improve her instruction shortly after the observation. The next category examines the role of administrators in the evaluation process.

#### *The Role of Administrators*

All teachers believed that school administrators' training to evaluate their performance is very important. Teacher 4 stated that "school administrators should be trained on how to evaluate somebody effectively and appropriately." Teacher 5 agreed and said:

They need to know like, how can you evaluate me on something when you don't really know what element is asking for? If you don't know how to differentiate instruction, how can you tell if I'm doing it or not? If you don't know what it means to have a positive learning environment and what it takes to have a positive learning environment, how can you tell me if I have one or not? So, it is very important. That's like a must, that's number one on the list that the evaluators be trained extensively.

Teacher 2 also insisted appropriate training for administrator to perform this task and stated, "if my career is going to be severely affected by their review of me, then I think they need to be doing it fairly and with the training to do it accurately." Teacher 7 echoed this though and said,

“I would say it’s very important. I would like to think that the person evaluating me knows what they’re doing. If they didn’t, I wouldn’t value it. I wouldn’t value the feedback at all.”

Teacher 1 had a similar thought but brought up a new factor that the importance of being a great teacher before entering an administration position to evaluate teacher’s performance fairly by sharing:

It’s great if you’re an AP or you’re a principal, but I want to know that you have great teacher background and great teacher skills, because it’s hard to evaluate someone when you don’t have any experience or knowledge in that field.

Teacher 1 believed that to evaluate teachers’ performance, administrators should have experience in the evaluation process and knowledge about teachers’ subjects.

Teacher 6 mentioned that she would not take feedback seriously when the evaluation was done by an administrator who does not have the content knowledge and the experience of working students with the same age level. Teacher 8 agreed and expressed her preference to being evaluated by someone who has the same background as her since she believes that even though they are qualified to evaluate her performance, she thinks that “they would probably have less understanding of what is going on” in classrooms.

The next category examines what teachers thought about the current evaluation process.

#### *Overview of the Current Teacher Evaluation Process*

When asked what they think about the current teacher evaluation process, most teachers liked the consistency of the standards and believed that they measured valuable competencies.

Teacher 1 stated “I do like the 10-TKES standards. I think those cover a variety of topics”.

Teacher 7 suggested to revisit the standards elaborating, “I think revisiting some of the standards and kind of evaluating like, are all of these of equal importance or not. Some of the standards I

feel like are more of an integral part of teaching that than others.” Moreover, Teacher 5 expressed her idea for modification as such, “Something needs to be included about social, emotional learning. There needs to be a standard because especially now we need to make sure that we’re teaching students to handle their emotion.”

Some teachers believed scores on the observations could be based on personal judgment rather than evidence. Teacher 1 stated that “the ranking system is tough because it brings in that subjective piece. You know what one principle might think is three another principle might think it’s a four or two.” Teacher 3 shared his experience:

I think that when done with fidelity, yes, absolutely. When an administrator is actively coming in and they’re doing this in order to really assess the teacher, as opposed to checking off a box quote, unquote, I think absolutely. I’ve had moments where I self-reflect, and then my scores matched the same. The administrator gets the exact same things because they’re, I believe they’re doing it with fidelity, and it’s very much appreciated.

Several teachers argued that observing a fraction of a class period did not provide an adequate sample for an administrator to get an idea of a teacher’s ability. Teacher 4 stated, “I would like that to be evaluated more and then having it more, have a more specific for specials areas.”

Teacher 8 also agreed that more frequent evaluation would be better to make it more accurate.

Some teachers mentioned their concern for the time demands placed on their administrators and how their busy schedules affect the feedback given to them. Teacher 1 articulated it clearly when she said:

I think it’s a lot of work on administration. It’s a lot of typing. It’s a lot of feedback. You have not just the observations, but you have the pre-conference, you have the mid-year

conference, you have the end of year conference. You have all these things on top of their day-to-day work. So, I think sometimes what happens is that administrators are busy and they're trying to get all this done and they have deadlines.

Teacher 1 continued to explain her thoughts how administrators' busy schedule affects the evaluation process:

Sometimes their feedback is not as thorough as it could be. It's probably lacking because they're like 'I got to get five of these done today, so I can be finished.' And they're just typing, typing and in observing. And I completely understand that, but when they're rushing, they might not be thinking clearly, and rating teachers were as quickly or providing the feedback that they could be.

Teacher 8 agreed and said "sometimes your evaluators leave comments, but usually they're not very thorough comments because the evaluators have so many things to do. They can't spend very long with each teacher."

All teachers except one expressed their concern using student growth data as a component of the evaluation process. Teacher 2 elaborated:

The rationality behind it, like I get why people want to use that as a measure. I just think that it's so unpredictable. I mean, looking at my own students. Sometimes in the middle of the year, their scores will just plummet for no reason. And then by the end of the year, their way back up again, kids just have bad testing days, or they don't try, they click through the test or they fall asleep in the middle of the test. Like I've seen it happen all the time. And that doesn't mean that I'm a bad teacher. I can't control if they came to school so tired that they can't keep their eyes open. And so, I shouldn't affect me in my position because those are things that are completely out of my control.

Teacher 6 agreed and shared that “I don’t think a one-time test is good to use. Like, I don’t think the milestones are good to use for a teacher evaluation. Because you don’t know what’s going on in a kid’s life that week.” Teacher 5 also expressed her concerns:

Sometimes we’re using the data from the year, like other kids who were being taught by other teachers and based on how they were that year, instead of their growth, like with us ... I think that it should be, I get the student in August and we look at their growth from August to May because that’s when I had them. That’s when I taught them.

Although teacher 8 had a similar thought about using student growth data to evaluate teacher performance, she shared “I think it is definitely an element of teacher performance because if teachers are doing their job, then students are going to have to demonstrate what they’re learning in some way or another. And normally that’s through grades.”

Conversely, Teacher 3 believed it was fair to use student growth data as a component of the evaluation process. He said, “I understand that every student is different. Every teacher is different and overall, there needs to be some kind of growth within, within a course. ... I think it’s completely fair.”

Teacher 8 expressed her beliefs about the effectiveness of the current teacher evaluation system:

I would consider it to be a mediocre in the sense of it works. and I know what it is, everyone is aware of it. But I would not consider it to necessarily be effective, meaning I don’t think that it really encourages teachers to make any changes. I don’t think it really gives them a fair read of what they’re actually doing well in their classroom and what they are not, I think because they’re just really numbers that you get back on a piece of paper.

Teacher 8 further suggested that adding some type of person-to-person conversation after evaluation would make the process more helpful for teachers.

Teacher 6 emphasized the importance of showing teachers that they are cared for by making the process more helpful. She stated:

I think it's important for the evaluator or administrators to get to know their teachers.

Your teachers have to feel that you have their back, you're there to support them and to help them not to judge them or not just to give them a score.

Teacher 6 further explained the importance of the first evaluation is to build trust with teachers by saying:

I guess it goes to building relationships and really seeing in that first evaluation, seeing the type of feedback that they give you. If they're giving you things to help you and support you, then, your evaluations are going to be to help you and support you. But then also following up with teachers.

The next part examines the findings from the second round of teacher interviews that focused on teachers' perspectives about the evaluation process during the probationary period.

### **Findings from Second Round of Teacher Interviews**

The second round of semi-structured interviews was focused on gaining teachers' perspectives regarding teacher evaluation practices during their probationary year (see Table 3.6 for sample questions). The findings from the second round of teachers' interviews are reported in the following parts that reflect the purpose of this study: the perceived purpose of the evaluation, feelings about being evaluated, support needed, the role of the administrator, feelings about job security, and suggestions to improve teacher evaluation for probationary teachers.

### *Purpose of Teacher Evaluation*

All teachers believed that the purpose of the evaluation process during their probationary period was to provide feedback to help them grow. Teacher 2 stated:

I think it's important, especially early in your career to get that feedback to know if you're on the right track and to look for the areas where you need to improve because everyone's going to start with strengths and weaknesses. You might be aware of your strengths and weaknesses, or you might not be. So TKES is one way to learn an area of improvement that you can work on, which is really important.

Teacher 6 also believed that the purpose of the evaluation for probationary teachers "is to help you grow, to help you meet your goals and to help you understand areas where you can improve." Teacher 3 agreed that the evaluation process helped him learn "what my strengths were as a teacher and what my areas of improvement need."

Teacher 1 echoed this belief and said:

As a first-year teacher, you might think you're really getting something great. And then you realize maybe not so much. And so, you need to know that. So, you're not pouring time, energy, and effort into something that's not as successful as it could be or that could be improved.

Teacher 4 and Teacher 8 stressed how the evaluation process helped them grow and improve their teaching strategies during their probationary period. Moreover, Teacher 5 believed that the purpose of the evaluation process is "to help me be a better teacher to my students and help my students get the best learning experience that they possibly can have" during her first three years. The next category examines teachers' feeling about being evaluated during the probationary period.

### *Feelings about Being Evaluated*

The participants' responses suggested that nervousness, anxiety, fear, excitement, and support were their feelings when they heard the word 'evaluation.' Teacher 7 explained his feeling by saying, "anxiety. It wasn't like I was afraid that I was going to get fired necessarily, but your first couple of years, it is whether or not they invite you back the next year is dependent on that." Teacher 4 also felt nervous because she wanted to make sure she was doing what she was supposed to be doing even she loved being observed. Teacher 8 agreed that "I was definitely nervous in my first three years, but I also understood the purpose of it, especially being a new teacher."

The majority of teachers also felt that they were supported during their probationary period. Teacher 1 shared her experience during her probationary year:

I always felt pretty supported by my administration and academic coaches in the building so that if I needed something, I could depend on them to help me. And I guess because I asked questions and I like to seek to improve myself, I didn't worry so much about the evaluation process.

Teacher 3 stressed how his emotions were different for announced and unannounced observations during his probationary time:

With the informal observations, there was way more nervousness because suddenly, your door opens, and there they are. The formal observation I was able to plan. So, there still was this aspect of nervousness, but it wasn't as much because I was able to combat that with preparation.

Teacher 3 felt more comfortable when the observation was scheduled.

When teachers were asked whether they thought quitting their jobs during their first three years, several teachers said they thought about quitting their job because of the lack of support. Teacher 1 was one of those teachers who thought about quitting her job, but then she realized that it was not the job; it was the school where she was working. She said, "I was getting burnt out at that school, so I needed a change in environment." She further explained:

The behavior burned me out, the lack of support I received from parents in general. The lack of support I received from our AP in terms of behavior, it was just a constant uphill battle. And then I felt like kids were never making progress because I was putting out fires and addressing behaviors more than I could actually teach. And I didn't like that feeling. I know I made a difference in lots of kids' lives, but I don't feel like I actually improved education for very many students because it was just a tough atmosphere to work in. The staff morale was also low at the school, and staff turnover was high, and I never worked with the same team.

Although there were several factors why Teacher 1 wanted to quit her job during her probationary years, the lack of support was the main reason.

Teacher 2 also wanted to quit her job because of a lack of support from the administration. She said, "my first year, I did a lot, like every day. It was awful. It was so bad." She was frustrated during her first year because the administration put all the challenging students in her classroom. She believed that the reason behind this type of placement was because "they knew it was a new hire who wouldn't know the kids ahead of time because no one else wanted to have those kids in their class because they're sort of challenging."

Teacher 7 considered changing his school because of the "odd environment," but then the administration team changed, and the working environment had improved. So, he decided to stay

in his current school. He explained how it was difficult for him as a first-year teacher working in a negative school environment and shared, “I’m as a first-year teacher kind of struggling, figuring out my job and this negative atmosphere. It really can make you feel different about your job.”

When teachers were asked whether they were worried about their contract during their probationary period, only two teachers shared that they were worried. Teacher 2 was one of those teachers who said:

I was worried because we had so much turnover and that school. We had so many teachers quit in the middle of the year because it was so awful. Part of me was like; they need teachers; they can’t keep any teachers here. Like they’re not going to let go of me when they’re already hiring so many people in the middle of the year. But then, the other part of me was worried that because I was having so much trouble with these behaviors and not getting the support that I needed. So, they would choose not to have me back the next year.

Although she had some concerns about her contract, it would not matter because she had already decided to move to another school. Teacher 3 was the other teacher who worried about her contract because there was a new principal once she moved into her second year.

On the contrary, Teacher 5 and Teacher 8 shared that they did not worry about their contract because they thought they would have talked with their administration and that they would offer some plan or strategies for improvement.

The next category examines how the teacher evaluation process could be used to support probationary teachers.

### *Role of Teacher Evaluation to Support Teachers*

Several teachers shared that they did not attend any professional development informed by their evaluation. Teacher 2 stated, “I’ve done a lot of professional development, but not because of my teacher evaluation results.” However, she further continued:

It’s influenced me one way or another, but I don’t think I’ve ever looked at my TKES scores and decided to make a change or something. But I think knowing my scores and knowing what I’m doing really well on this lets me keep doing it. Like, it’s a subtle influence.

Teacher 7 agreed that he attended several professional developments, but they were not due to the evaluation process.

Teacher 3 also shared that he never received any suggestion for professional development after his evaluation process; however, he preferred to receive targeted professional development for two reasons “one, it helps me with something I need improvement on. Two, it shows me that the administrators are willing to support me in this. We’re not just left alone.” Teacher 1 believed that even though the evaluation process did not drive her professional goals, she was pleased to see that her evaluation improved because of her professional goals.

When teachers were asked what types of support they needed during their probationary period, they identified: classroom management, parent communication, instructional planning, instructional strategies. Teacher 1 stated, “Those early years I taught at a really tough school, and behavior was a huge part of it. You know, no matter how good of a teacher you are, if you can’t control your class, it doesn’t matter.” She also added parent communication by saying, “how to like approach parents on really tough topics... And that is actually a TKES standard is parent communication as a whole with parents. And I felt like that was something I could not do well.”

Teacher 2 wished she had more support with instructional planning. Teacher 3 also struggled with classroom management, and he asked for support from administrators. He felt lucky that “the administrators were very approachable in that regard, and they were able to say let’s work through this together.” Teacher 4 also received additional support for classroom management. Teacher 5 needed more support for instructional strategies. Teacher 6 also found classroom management was the area she needed to improve during her probationary period. Improving her instructional strategies was the biggest thing for Teacher 7. Finally, Teacher 8 also wanted more support with classroom management.

Once the researcher asked which types of support were most helpful for them during their probationary period, six teachers said mentoring was the most beneficial. Teacher 2 said, “one-on-one mentoring is really specific, and they can give you like the exact feedback about how to implement it in your own room. So, I appreciated like the mentoring.” Teacher 1 also answered the question by sharing, “I would definitely say mentoring, having somebody that you can just rely on to ask questions who’s in that neutral position, you know, is not your boss, but can help you.” Moreover, Teacher 3 shared that he trusted his mentor more than the administrator during his first year. On the contrary, Teacher 6 found coaching most helpful. She further explained:

For me, the mentoring wasn’t so much because I was on a team with a new teacher, she also had a mentor, and we would often all meet together, and it was very helpful for me.

We bounce ideas and thoughts with each other. The three of us would often meet without my mentor because we were all three on the same academic team.

Because Teacher 6 met with other teachers in her academic team more often than she met with her mentor, she thought that coaching was more helpful for her during her probationary period.

Teacher 4 found professional development, such as going to a conference, as most supportive and helpful. She mentioned that all physical education teachers in all elementary schools in the district have a very close relationship, and they were shared their resources with each other. She appreciated having this community summarizing, “It’s nice having that support from them. I wouldn’t say they’re my mentors, but I feel that they are very helpful, and it’s great.”

The next category examines the role of administrators to evaluate probationary teachers.

### *The Role of Administrators*

All teachers in this study expressed that the value of the evaluation process depends on the evaluators (administrators). Several teachers preferred to be observed by administrators who have a great deal of experience in teaching, content knowledge, and experience with the same grade level. Teacher 6 administrators have to have “some experience with the subject matter and with the students’ group that [they’re] evaluating a teacher for.” She further shared her experience with an assistant principal “[assistant principal] had come from an elementary school, had never taught middle school, had never taught my subject, and a lot of her feedback was not relevant or helpful.” Teacher 8 thought it might also be difficult for administrators to observe the different subjects and grade levels by saying, “[administrator] just didn’t know the specifics of the lessons that we were teaching. So, I think it made it a little bit confusing when [administrator] came in, because [administrator] didn’t know what was supposed to be happening.”

Teacher 7 found the feedback was not helpful when the previous administration observed him. He further continued, “I would say it’s certainly been better since we’ve had another

administrator in the last couple of years. It's been more specific feedback". When the researcher asked the difference between those administrations, he said "communication and better rapport."

Teacher 5 went one step further and suggested that evaluations should be done by also a neutral party since the relationship between teacher and administration can affect the process "Maybe the teacher and the administrator don't have a good relationship, and that could affect their evaluation. And sometimes, if they do have a great relationship, it affects their evaluation process."

The next category examines what teachers thought about the evaluation process during their probationary period.

#### *Overview of the Current Teacher Evaluation Process*

When asked what they think about the current teacher evaluation process, Teacher 1 thought that "the evaluation process alone is not enough to support [new teachers] and keep them in the field. They need more than that." Teacher 5 believed that better use of time would make the process more helpful for new teachers. She further continued that administrators should spend more time talking with teachers about the weakness and strengths of teachers and how teachers can be better.

All teachers except one believed that the frequency of observation was enough for them as a new teacher; for example, Teacher 4 shared that "I liked getting evaluated more frequently. It helps me, especially being as a first, second-year teacher, and it helped me to really grow and improve my teaching strategies and what I'm doing." However, Teacher 6 felt that it was a lot. She stated, "the first year, it probably was needed to have that many. But then, by the time you get to know the school better and the expectations better, I feel like you don't need as many your second, third year if your first year went well."

Several teachers wished they would have talked clearly when they disagreed with the evaluation score. Teacher 1 shared her experience:

I remember my second year; my AP came in, and I was doing a lesson on looking at words in a dictionary. She felt like the lesson was too hard, and I should have gone through and put sticky notes on every page of the dictionary for the words that kids were supposed to look up. But the whole idea was for them to learn how to look up words. So, I was so confused. She marked me down for instructional strategies because I didn't do that. And I just remember being so frustrated because I thought it was a great lesson. Like everything went well, the kids actually behaved that was a tough year.

She further continued:

When I tried to talk to her about it, it was even more clear that she didn't understand that putting sticky notes on the pages was not helpful that wasn't teaching the kids anything.

So, I just had to, you know, take a deep breath, walk away and just accept it.

Teacher 1 further elaborated that she was not firm enough because she was young and wanted to keep her job; she did not say exactly what she was thinking. Teacher 3 also had a similar experience. He disagreed with the result of one of his evaluations during his probationary period. Even though he asked for more clarification, he did not feel confident enough to say, "I think it's wrong," because he did not believe he had the confidence to convey that successfully.

Teacher 8 had a unique experience with observation since the administrators conducted the observation on the last day of school. She shared her experience:

I didn't ever expect to have to get an observation on the last day of school, but I guess the administrator was looking through all of the teachers that she evaluated and realized that she still needed one for me. And so, she just came in and observed... I felt like what we

were doing that day did not reflect what we had done all year. It was much more relaxed of day... So, I definitely felt nervous that it would reflect poorly on like the rigor of the things I was teaching. But it ended up going well... Honestly, she probably knew that it was somewhat her mistake that she didn't do the evaluation during the given timeframe. This experience made Teacher 8 think that the evaluation process was "just checking a box." The administration observed her performance to add one more observation to her file to ensure they met all the requirements of the teacher evaluation system.

Teacher 1 suggested probationary teachers learn the process and learn what the standards are, but "what's most important is to focus on just improving yourself and your instructional practices." Teacher 2 suggested them focus on improvement by asking for help from administrators, finding opportunities to observe another classroom instead of focusing on the evaluation process. Like Teacher 1, Teacher 3 also suggested new teachers look at the professional standards used for the evaluation process. He also advised them to trust themselves and ask colleagues for help. Differently, Teacher 4 suggested new teachers to be prepared and have lesson plans ready.

Teacher 5 pointed out a different idea, "if you build a relationship with the kids, all of the other things are going to fall in line and just do what you need." Teacher 6 told the new teacher, "it is okay not to know everything; you are the first year and ask for help." Teacher 7 also agreed with several teachers in the study that new teachers should learn standards and not be afraid to admit that they need help. Teacher 7 further said, "people aren't going to know you need help unless you reach out and let somebody know you need help." Teacher 8 also gave similar advice-asking more questions. She said, "...I figured out how important it was to interact with the evaluator when they came in the room. And then to ask questions, ask for their feedback."

The next part examines the findings from the third round of teacher interviews that focused on teachers' perspectives about the evaluation process after they were granted tenure.

### **Findings from Third Round of Teacher Interviews**

The third round of semi-structured interviews was focused on gaining teachers' perspectives regarding teacher evaluation practices after they were granted tenure (see Table 3.6 for sample questions). The findings from the third round of teachers' interviews are reported in the following parts that reflect the essence of the purpose of this study: the perceived purpose of the evaluation, feeling about being evaluated, support needed, the role of administrator, feeling about job security and suggestion to improve teacher evaluation for probationary teachers.

#### *Purpose of Teacher Evaluation*

The teachers' responses showed that accountability and feedback for improvements were two major purposes for evaluating tenured teachers' performance. Teacher 4 explained the purpose of the evaluation as "to keep teachers accountable and to make sure that they're still doing what they're supposed to be doing, and they're meeting their students' needs." Teacher 3 had a similar thought but brought up a different perspective by saying:

The purpose of it, okay, we trust you enough to do this, to do your job over here. And every so often, we'll come in, and if we see issues when we come in, we'll bring you back into the full plan and do what needs to be done from there.

Teacher 2 thought teachers might feel more comfortable when no one is coming to observe them and knowing someone is conducting observation makes them accountable for the school's expectations. Teacher 6 agreed and stated:

So, we got comfortable, you know, the longer you've been doing it, you can get comfortable, your teaching can become staple and kind of cans. And so, one thing is

probably to make sure that they're still engaging the students that they're still using best practices.

Teacher 6 also thought teachers felt more comfortable about what they were doing when they were in the classroom for a long enough time.

On the contrary, Teacher 7 thought that the purpose of the evaluation was to keep teachers on the path of improvement. He said, "it keeps continues to encourage teachers to work and improve on their craft." Teacher 8 agreed:

I think the purpose of it would just be to check in with teachers who are a little bit more experienced and make sure that they have everything that they need, and if they need support, somebody is aware of it through evaluations.

Teacher 5 appreciated that they are still evaluating tenured teachers' performance since she would like to know what she could do to grow.

The next category examines tenured teachers' feeling about being evaluated.

#### *Feelings about being Evaluated*

The participants' responses suggested that all teachers felt more comfortable being evaluated after being granted tenure. Teacher 1 said she was "relieved and happy;" Teacher 2 said she was "pretty calm" and the evaluation process did not now make her nervous anymore; Teacher 3 said he was "more comfortable, and no nervousness at all;" Teacher 4 stated she felt "slightly nervous, but also confident;" Teacher 5 felt "still excited" about it; Teacher 6 felt "a little bit more at ease;" Teacher 7 felt "a little anxiety," but he also felt comfortable about his teaching and; Teacher 8 also still felt "a little nervous" because she wanted to do well.

When teachers were asked why they felt more comfortable about the evaluation process, Teacher 3 shared:

Because I've been in this field for long enough. I know what I'm doing. I've been able to reflect my myself and hear reflections from others, and they say I'm doing what I need to do. So, I have no reason to be nervous, no reason to be concerned during the evaluation process right now.

Teacher 3 felt more comfortable because he built his self-confidence over the years.

When teachers were asked whether they felt more secure about their job once they were granted tenure, Teacher 1 shared that she felt more secure about her job but not because of tenure. She started to feel more secure "just after I had built a rapport with my new building administrators and had that chance to kind of prove myself." Teacher 2 agreed and said:

I do feel more secure about my job, but I don't think it's because I'm on a flexible plan. I think it's because I have grown as a teacher and have built a relationship with my administration so that they know that I'm an effective teacher. And so that has given me kind of the security to know that I'm doing well in my job. But moving from a full plan to a flexible plan didn't really shift my mindset about my job security.

Teacher 2 also felt more secure about her job because of her growth over the years.

Teacher 3 felt more secure once he had confidence about what he was doing. Teacher 4 shared that "I've always felt confident with my evaluations and my growth. So, being going into the flexible plan doesn't make me feel, I guess, any different in terms of feeling confident about my job security." Teacher 8 also felt more secure about her job because of her experience, not necessarily because of tenure. She further explained why she felt more comfortable:

I think I just feel more confident that I know what I'm doing overall, I know what's expected of me, I know how to best help my students. I feel more secure in the

relationships that I have with the people that I work with. I'm more familiar with how the school works and how to interact with my colleagues. And so, it's just more comfortable.

Teacher 8 also pointed out the importance of building a relationship in school to feel more comfortable about her job.

The next category examines how the teacher evaluation process could be used to support tenured teachers.

#### *Role of Teacher Evaluation to Support Teachers*

Several teachers shared that they did not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, but they had several professional developments, which in turn affected their evaluation process. For example, Teacher 6 attended professional development related to technology use in the classroom, and she received fours in areas. Similarly, Teacher 1 believed that the evaluation process somehow helped her to set professional goals. She said: "sometimes I do use like, I'll look at my evaluation and think about like, Oh, they said this, it just happened to be great that day, or I need more training on it." Teacher 3 shared that he decided his professional goals based on what he thought he needed to grow with; however, he wanted the administration team to support him by providing some professional development opportunities.

After being granted tenure, Teacher 5 wanted more needs-based professional development. She said, "the professional development area of TKES needs to be readdressed. I feel like I should only have to go to professional development that I need that applies to me."

Teacher 2 agreed that once teachers are granted tenure:

Most teachers don't need that mentoring anymore. At that point, most teachers have kind of fallen into a groove, and they know what they're doing. So, then the support is like keeping them up to date with new strategies and things to add to their existing

knowledge, not giving them that base-level knowledge that teachers need. And I think it becomes more individualized at that point where teachers can find support in just the area where they want to focus.

According to Teacher 2, she needed more focused support after she was granted tenure.

When teachers were asked what types of support they needed when they were granted tenure, several teachers shared that they wanted to move into a leadership position or be an instructional coach eventually, they needed support, which prepared them for these kinds of positions. Teacher 4 shared that she wanted to take more leadership responsibilities after she was granted tenure and her administration helped her in that aspect by providing extra resources.

Teacher 1 believed that her evaluation led the administrator to pay little more attention to her abilities. After being granted tenure, she recognized that her administrator communicated a lot more with her and asked her to take some leadership responsibilities. She also started to lead professional development for other teachers in the building, and she thought that “that will play into my evaluation.” Teacher 6 also started taking a leadership role in her school as requested by her administration. Teacher 2 wanted to be an instructional coach, and she was working with her principal to move from threes to fours in the categories that would be helpful for her to become an instructional coach.

When the researcher asked which types of support were most helpful for them after they were granted tenure, several teachers mentioned that coaching was most helpful for them. For example, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 shared that coaching was more beneficial for them since they can receive the information they need and then implement it in their classroom. Teacher 6 mentioned that she was meeting her coach regularly to plan their lesson. Teacher 7 also found

the instructional coach very helpful. Lastly, Teacher 8 also said coaching was most helpful by explaining the reason:

Because it's helpful when someone kind of gives me feedback and I'm able to observe them, do it and then try to implement it myself and then receive feedback so I can make changes and note what went well.

Teacher 8 mentioned three important components of effective coaching—feedback, observation, and implementation.

All teachers still wanted to receive feedback that could help them improve their practices even after they were granted tenure. Teacher 2 said, “I’m always looking for new strategies and new things that I can do to improve.” Teacher 6 also shared that although she appreciated the positive feedback, she wanted to know areas where she could grow and the ways she could accomplish it. However, Teacher 3 argued that since he was granted tenure, the feedback he received was “reassuring everything” he was doing, and based on feedback, he thought there was no need to change anything.

The next category examines the role of administrators evaluate tenured teachers’ performance.

### *The Role of Administrators*

The teachers interviewed believed that their administrators were qualified to evaluate their performance once they were granted tenure because of their experience in teaching, their background, and the training they received to become an administrator. Teacher 3 expressed the importance of the relationship with the administrator this way:

If it was another administrator, I frankly don't know. I don't know how I would judge another administrator evaluating me on a flex plan. I would see it as, I guess, just

checking a box and saying, okay, I have to do this, you have to do this. Let's just get it over with.

Teacher 2 expressed the importance of the investment of administrators in the evaluation process. She stated:

If the administrators take it seriously and give time to it and give a lot of feedback, then that's going to trickle down to the teachers, taking it seriously as well. But if your administration just kind of rushes through it and only does it because they know they have to and don't spend time on it, then the teachers are going to respond that way as well. I think administration's really set the tone for it.

Teacher 4 also expressed the importance of school culture where teachers feel valued and supported, and administrators build this kind of positive working environment. She said:

I feel that, you know, you feel valued and supported, then it makes you want to be a better teacher, continue to be a better teacher, which in term is going to affect your teaching strategies and your evaluation because you're a happier teacher... I feel it's kind of a full circle. you [administrator] make people feel valued and appreciated. They do a good job teaching, which in term does better evaluations and helps the students and helps the school.

Teacher 1 believed that her evaluation score let her administration pay a little bit more attention to her abilities. She really appreciated her administrator, who provided her opportunities that helped her to achieve her goals. She explained:

I said something to [administrator] her about my long-term goal was me out of the classroom. So since then, she's worked sort of as a mentor towards me. We've met off campus actually several times to talk about next steps and what that looks like. And she's

really poured a lot of time and energy into me and helping me and letting me participate in different things. Like I got to sit in on her pre-conference for evaluation with the superintendent and the deputy superintendent, which was really neat. So, she's giving me all those opportunities and chances. It just kind of speaks volumes of the person that she is, that she kind of heard that and then acknowledged it and saw it and acted on it.

The next category examines what teachers thought about the current evaluation process.

### *Overview of Current Teacher Evaluation*

When asked how teacher evaluation can keep teachers' enthusiasm for improvement once a teacher is granted tenure, several teachers mentioned although the professional growth component of the evaluation process could serve this purpose, tenured teachers have to have internal motivation to improve. Teacher 3 stated:

I can definitely see how the flexible plan turns into complacency. I think the most important factor with PD is teachers' intrinsic motivation. But there clearly has to be some kind of extra external motivation through this process. I don't know what that would be because all of the motivation I've had to get better, all the motivation I've had to set my own learning goals and do what I can to achieve them; that's been intrinsic.

Teacher 5 agreed that it is primarily internal.

Teacher 2 suggested that moving tenured teachers to different positions or grade levels could force them to do things differently and push them for improvement. She further continued administrators require training for them to learn and implement new strategies. Teacher 6 also believed that continued professional development requirements would keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for professional growth. Teacher 7 brought up the importance of school culture, the culture of improvement, and the culture of collaboration to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm.

Several teachers agreed that it is still important to evaluate tenured teachers' performance. Teacher 5 found the evaluation process helpful that showed them areas they needed to improve even after being granted tenure. Teacher 4 said:

I feel that people, especially veteran teachers or teachers who have been teaching for a long time, are very experienced and seasoned. And I feel like it's so important for them to be evaluated... If a teacher has been teaching for a while, then you kind of get stuck in your way of doing things.

Teacher 4 believed that the evaluation process keeps tenured teachers accountable and makes them continue seeking professional developments. Teacher 2 also thought that "it's a habit for teachers to just recycle the same lesson plans every year and just kind of get stuck in a rut with what they're doing"; however, she thought that they should always be looking for ways to improve their practices. Teacher 8 shared her experience with tenured teachers:

Many of the teachers that I know that are really nervous about being evaluated are veteran teachers. And I think because they feel like it's an act of mistrust to be evaluated. They feel like, you know, the administrators trying to come and get them through the observation.

Teacher 5 would hope that tenured teachers would always want to be their best for their students and not stay the same over the years.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the findings from the tenured teachers' interviews about their perspectives on teacher evaluation process. The findings from teachers' interviews are presented in three categories: (1) findings from first round of teachers' interview; (2) findings from second round of teachers' interview; and (3) findings from third round of teachers' interview; and

findings from each rounds of teachers' interviews were reported in the following parts: the purpose of the teacher evaluation, feeling about being evaluated, the role of teacher evaluation to support teacher, the role of administrators, and overview of the current teacher evaluation process. The next chapter presents the findings from the school principals' interviews.

## CHAPTER 6

### FINDINGS: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS APPROACH TO EVALUATING TENURED TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examine tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

This chapter presents the findings from school principals' (see Table 6.1 for overview of school principals) interviews about their approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The school principals' interview guide specifically focused on their approaches to evaluate

teacher performance during the teacher’s probationary period and after completion of the probationary period. Therefore, the findings from school principals’ interviews are presented in three categories: (1) school principals’ perspectives about the current evaluation process; (2) school principals’ approach to evaluate non-tenured teachers’ performance; and (3) school principals’ approach to evaluate tenured teachers’ performance.

Table 6.1. *Overview of School Principals*

School Principal	Years of Experience as a Principals	School Level
School Principal 1	13 years	High School
School Principal 2	7 years	Elementary School
School Principal 3	9 years	Middle School

**School Principals’ Perspectives about the Current Evaluation Process**

Before attempting to examine school principals’ approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted, it was important to ask the school principals what they thought about the purpose of the evaluation process; effectiveness of the evaluation process; what challenges they have been experienced with the evaluation process; and how might they improve the evaluation process.

*Purpose of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

When the researcher asked the purpose of the teacher evaluation, School Principal 3 stated,

I think, it’s pretty clear that providing teachers with ongoing feedback about their practice is going to improve their practice. I don’t even think that’s even a question anymore. I mean, just like students need feedback, our teachers need feedback, and they need very specific feedback based upon what you’re observing.

School Principal 2 agreed with School Principal 3 about the purpose of the teacher evaluation by saying, “improve instructional strategies and develop skills that teachers have.” School Principal 1 also thought that the evaluation process was beneficial if used to improve teachers’ practices.

However, once principals were asked the intended purpose of teacher evaluation at the school county, they thought it was more about accountability. School Principal 2 stated that “to maintain quality educators and to retain educators that are making a difference based on student data and classroom observations”; School Principal 1 said that “... ultimately determining if a teacher keeps their certificate”; and School Principal 3 “the purpose is to improve student achievement ... if I improve teacher quality, then I’m then going to increase student achievement.”

When principals were asked what they thought about using the evaluation process to decide about promotion, retention, or dismissal, all three principals agreed that the evaluation process should be part of this kind of decision. School Principal 3 shared how they can use the evaluation process as part of the decision:

You’re going to have to have data to support that decision, and an effective evaluation system should help you provide that information that would support your decision as a school administrator to say that this individual is ineffective. We’ve given them an opportunity to improve. We’ve supported them. They are still ineffective. You know, kind of taking that next step to not renew that teacher.

Moreover, School Principal 1 mentioned the importance of having multiple administrators to reduce bias and to provide different feedback before making tenure decisions.

Next category examines the perspectives of school principals about the effectiveness of the teacher evaluation process.

### *Effectiveness of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

All school principals found the current teacher evaluation process in their districts as an effective evaluation instrument. However, they had some concerns about its implementation. For example, School Principal 1 shared:

I think the standards are well-written. I think the 10 standards identify best practices for all teachers. I think there's a benefit if the instrument, the evaluation instrument is used appropriately, but it could also be very harmful if it's used in a way not to improve a teacher.

School Principal 2 expressed that "I like TKES because of the way that it's structured, because it really does put you face to face with the teacher several times throughout the year, whether it's individual or in groups." However, she thought that some standards could be combined. School Principal 3 agreed with School Principal 2 about combining some standards by saying, "I would take the 10 standards and probably break them down to five, just to make sure it's a bit more efficient and actually less confusing." He also has some concerns about how it is doable for the evaluator especially for the large scale.

The next category examines the potential challenges of teacher evaluation process according to school principals' perspectives.

### *Potential Challenges of Teacher Evaluation Process*

In considering the potential challenges of teacher evaluation, all principals agreed that completing the evaluation process took too much time even they divided teachers among their administrative team. According to School Principal 1 "two to three hours a day on a five-day workweek is probably committed to something that is TKES related." School Principal 2 explained the timeline of the evaluation process:

... Pre-evaluation conferences at the beginning of the year said typically by the end of August that can be done individually or as a group. Then the goal setting is done within that time frame as well. So, the teachers complete that and have to sign off. And then the first observations usually do a walkthrough or two walkthroughs before you do an observation, just if you are seeing an issue so that you can address that before the actual formal observation. And those walkthroughs need to address three standards, but not all standards.

She further continued to explain the evaluation process:

And then you do observation is either announced or announced, depending on really administrator and what they want to do. And that's scheduled usually by Thanksgiving. You would have a mid-year conference to review all the data. So not just the observation, but the walkthrough and the observation and anything informal that you've seen. You can also bring in test data that you might have and that kind of thing. And then you do the same thing the second semester and then there's a final conference at the end of the year.

School Principal 3 also stressed that "doing the observations, providing quality feedback, being timely, all that kind of stuff, making sure you're navigating the platform. That's where the investment of time takes place."

School Principal 1 agreed with School Principal 3 about providing really good feedback instead of just the numerical grade and that feedback was very time-consuming. Although School Principal 2 agreed with other principals about being a time-consuming process, she said "it's just being in the classrooms and you're in the classrooms anyway, so it's just actually writing up what you're seeing."

According to School Principal 1, the other potential challenge was the evaluator's bias toward the teacher. He suggested that "I think you could reduce bias by having multiple people go in and watch lessons and then decide ultimately, you know, where the best ratings are based on the standard."

Moreover, School Principal 3 shared implementing the evaluation process at scale as another potential challenge:

So, if I just have five teachers I'm evaluating, I can implement the evaluation system with fidelity, that's great. And you're going to see improvement in teacher performance as a result of it. But once you get to issues of scale, say for example, if an administrator has 30 teachers, they're evaluating, being able to do that effectively and successfully is very, very difficult.

He suggested that it has to be designed in a manner that is doable for the evaluator.

The next category provides some suggestion to improve teacher evaluation process according to school principals' perspectives.

### *Suggestions for Improvement*

When school principals were asked their suggestions regarding the revision of the evaluation process, School Principal 2 suggested including somebody who is currently an evaluator in the designing process, and she continued:

It's a lot of times you have scholars and people in higher education and people at the State Department that are making those instruments. And they've been either never in a position where they've been the evaluator, or they have but it's been a long time.

School Principal 2 argued that people were designing the evaluation process have never evaluated teacher's performance or they did very long time ago.

According to School Principal 1, student survey should be one of the components of the teacher evaluation process. He believed that students have much better insight into what needs to be done in the classroom to help them be a successful student and he shared his previous experience by saying:

I had some of the best conversations and learn the most on how to help a teacher through what the students were saying .... because the students are the ones, we should be listening to figure out what we can do better.

He also thought that including parent survey would give them another lens, and he explained that “I think when you have those three things, you are much better poised, not only in the accountability realm, but also in the growth realm, student data performance is also key.”

School Principal 3 suggested collapsing the 10 standards into 5 since “there are certain standards that really go hand in hand and it’s hard to evaluate them in isolation.” He also thought that it is almost impossible to evaluate all 10 standards the way that you are supposed. The next part examines school principals’ approach to evaluate non-tenured teachers’ performance.

### **School Principals’ Approaches to Evaluate Non-Tenured Teachers’ Performance**

After understanding school principals’ perspectives about the current evaluation process, the researcher asked several questions to understand better their approaches to evaluating non-tenured teachers’ performance. All school principals in this study followed the legislation to evaluate teacher’s performance. Non-tenure teachers (or teachers in full plan) have two observations and two walkthroughs for each semester.

School Principal 1 and School Principal 2 shared the same thinking that newer teachers need more support. School Principal 1 said that “being a brand-new teacher is tough. ... that is a

big deal for new teacher to have additional support”, and School Principal 2 stated that “you should be in newer teachers’ classrooms more because they’re probably would like more feedback.” However, they also agreed that this support does not have to be through the evaluation process; that could be through mentoring or coaching. School Principal 2 reported “they are giving feedback and being evaluated are two different things. So, I think you need to be in the room more, but maybe not the official process.” Moreover, School Principal 1 wished to provide mentors all day for newer teachers by saying, “in my dream world, we would have teacher that all they do is mentor all day.”

Consequently, School Principal 3 thought that it depends on teacher training programs, teacher’s background, personality. He stated “I’ve had new teachers come in that they were just built to do this. They have great preparation; they have the personality that is just well suited for the profession.” He thought that preparation is extremely important, whether it is undergraduate level or graduate level. He also believed that the evaluation system can be used to build new teacher’s self-efficacy. He stated that “new teacher needs to be affirmed... The evaluation system can also be a reward... It’s very important that you’re not doing it to be punitive; you’re doing it to make sure the teacher is building that self-efficacy.”

When it comes to announced and unannounced observation, School Principal 2 thought that “newer teachers really are more comfortable with announced or unannounced that they know exactly when someone’s coming.” Although School Principal 1 agreed that teachers would rather be unannounced versus announced observation, based on his experience, “after looking at and comparing and contrasting the different performance ratings for an announced evaluation versus an unannounced, the unannounced teachers, most of the time do a better job than the announced teachers.”

School Principal 2 shared, based on her experiences, that newer teachers need more support in terms of materials and resources and where to find things and teaching strategies.

School Principal 1 suggested being careful while providing feedback to probationary teachers:

you have to be careful about new teachers, you can't use vocabulary and talk about strategies if they don't know what they are. And all you're doing is making the newer teacher confused and worried and feeling more inadequate if you're throwing things at them that they have no idea what you're talking about.

School Principal 3 highlighted the importance of the first couple years for teacher retention. He thought that:

We lose teachers, some would say it's about money and I really don't think it's that. I think people want to know they're making a difference that they can be effective in what they do. And I think we lose people because they don't believe they are affected.

He continued that the evaluation process can be in a way to show teachers that they can become great teachers, and through the evaluation process, "you can really uplift a teacher in affirm that they're doing a wonderful job."

The next section examines school principals' approaches to evaluate tenured teachers' performance.

### **School Principals' Approaches to Evaluate Tenured Teachers' Performance**

Lastly, the researcher focused on school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. All the school principals in this study followed the legislation to evaluate teacher's performance and the legislation related to teacher tenure. Tenured teachers have one observation and one walkthrough for each semester. However, School Principal 2 stated that

regardless of teacher's tenure status, all teachers in her school have two observations and two walkthroughs since her school is really small.

School Principal 1 also believed that the frequency of observation should be based on performance "not just how long somebody has been doing something, especially if they've been doing it long, but they've been doing it wrong or they're doing it the same way and not getting very good results." Moreover, School Principal 3 agreed with School Principal 1:

If you have an experienced teacher that's struggling, you can always put them back to the standard process. You know, just because they're experienced doesn't mean that you can't say, Hey, we've got to do more observations here because we have a concern.

School Principal 3 acknowledged that tenured teachers could also need support and when administrators recognized that they could do more observations.

According to School Principal 1, feedback for tenured teachers should still be purposeful and meaningful. He stated, "I think the feedback, instruction, and training need to be appropriate for the experienced level, the master level of the teacher, and again that's not always related to years." He continued:

I've been around teachers who are doing it for a long time, but they haven't growth. So even sometimes when you're using vocabulary and talking about instruction or pedagogical things, if they haven't learned anything over the last 10, 15 or 20 years, there just is confused.

School Principal 2 shared that she mostly received negative attitude against her feedback from tenured teachers, and she continued that "Typically the veteran teachers have more excuses. Well, I think mostly because they probably do have an excuse, there probably is a reason that I didn't see it when I was in there."

School Principal 1 shared his experience when the evaluation system was changed in 2011. He mentioned that the veteran teachers who had gone through the old evaluation system for a long time showed resistance. He said that “I don’t have a better, more professional, scientific word, but they really thought it was an I gotcha.”

School Principal 1 believed that the same instrument could be used to evaluate both probationary and tenured teachers; however, the evaluator should be properly trained. School Principal 2 also thought that the same tool could be used for every teacher regardless of their tenured status, but the informal conversations should be differentiated. Moreover, according to School Principal 3, the current system could be used for both non-tenured and tenured teachers, but it depends on the evaluator’s ability to do it.

The three principals shared the same information about how teachers earn tenure status and changes in their legal rights once they are granted tenure. For example, School Principal 1 explained the process:

Once a teacher in the state of Georgia signs the fourth contract, so they’ve completed three successful years once they sign the fourth contract, they have the full protection of due process by Georgia law. It doesn’t make it impossible to determine or recommend a teacher for termination. As a building level administrator, our job is to document and make a recommendation... You may not be able to fire them in one year. Again, they have to have at least another year to remediate and within Georgia law.

School Principal 1 mentioned that sometimes tenured teachers thought everything was fine and that no one gets fired even if administrators expressed their concerns and there was a problem.

Although School Principal 2 thought that teachers should be given a little bit of professional latitude with tenure, she argued that “by the third year if a teacher is still having

development goals and not performing how they should, they probably shouldn't be in the classroom." She also shared her experiences with tenured teachers who were in the performance plan. She said, "it takes an awful lot of work to put them onto a performance plan and work through areas that they might have weaknesses in."

School Principal 3 also shared his experience with tenured teachers with unsatisfactory ratings by saying:

I don't want to say I feel good because I don't think that's a respectful word, but I feel very comfortable at that time because I know I did everything I could. I feel like I am being fair, and I feel like I'm being professional.

He mentioned the importance of following the process stated in the law. Moreover, School Principal 3 mentioned that the process takes care of itself "if you are doing it right as an administrator."

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the findings from school interviews about their approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The findings were presented in three categories: (1) school principals' perspectives about the current evaluation process; (2) school principals' approach to using the evaluation process to evaluate non-tenured teachers' performance; and (3) school principals' approach to using the evaluation process to evaluate tenured teachers' performance. The following chapter, Chapter 7, compare the themes derived from the findings presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **BUILDING THEMES**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. In addition to examine tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches change to evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted. Three research questions that guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

A qualitative, interpretivist study supported by phenomenological methods provided a mechanism for gathering and analyzing data that represents the lived experience of the study participants. This qualitative study consisted of interviews of eight teachers and three school principals which the teachers were assigned.

In the previous two chapters, findings were presented across data sets and based on categories that emerged during the data analysis from teachers' interviews and school principals' interviews. These data presentations led to the emergence of themes as to how being granted tenure influenced teachers' perspectives about the teacher evaluation process and how school principals' approaches changed to evaluate teacher performance once a teacher was granted tenure.

This chapter presents the themes that emerged from the findings presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. This chapter includes three sections. Sections one and two include the themes from teachers' interviews and school principals' interviews, respectively. Section three examines the similarities and differences of the themes across the school levels.

### **Themes: Teachers**

This section presents the themes that emerged from the findings from teachers' interviews presented in Chapter 5. The purpose of the teachers' interviews was to discover if being granted tenure influences teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process, and to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to being granted tenure. After data from each three round of interviews were coded manually using different colored highlighters, colored pencils, and sticky notes by using the deductive coding and inductive coding approaches individually, data were analyzed using the constant comparative methods to generate codes from each participant and them codes and quotes supporting them were grouped into the categories by considering the purpose of the study, and research questions.

Next, the researcher developed 5 categories from teachers' data: (1) Purpose of the teacher evaluation; (2) Feeling about being evaluated; (3) The role of teacher evaluation to

support teacher; (4) The role of administrators; and (5) Overview of current teacher evaluation processes. Finally, five major themes were drawn from data by looking at the connections between categories to understand the tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes.

**THEME 1: *Granted with tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the teacher evaluation process.***

The first round of the interview focused on gaining teachers' perspectives regarding the teacher evaluation process. During this interview, the participants stated that teacher *accountability* and *fostering growth* were two major purposes of the evaluation process. Once the teachers were asked a second time about their perspectives about the purpose of the evaluation process during their probationary period, all teachers reported the purpose was to *provide feedback to help them grow*. However, during the third interview, which focused on teachers' perspectives on the evaluation process once they were granted tenure, teachers stated that *accountability* and *feedback for improvements* were two major purposes for evaluating tenured teachers' performance.

For example, during the first interview, Teacher 4 stated, "I think it's to keep teachers accountable; it is also to improve teachers." Moreover, in her second interview, Teacher 4 shared, "...especially being a first, second-year teacher [evaluation process] helped me to really grow and improve my teaching strategies and what I'm doing;" and in her third interview, she stated "[the purpose] is to keep teachers accountable and making sure that they're still doing what they're supposed to be doing that they're meeting students' needs." Similarly, Teacher 2 mentioned "[the purpose is] to hold teacher accountable" in her first interview; during her probationary period, she believed that "it is important, especially early in your career, to get

feedback to know if you're on the right track and to look for the areas where you need to improve"; and once she was granted with tenure, according to her the evaluation process was a "accountability tool."

The data shows that although all teachers in this study believed the purpose of evaluation was to support teachers during their probationary period, most teachers thought it was more about accountability than teacher support once the teacher was granted tenure. Therefore, being granted tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the evaluation.

***THEME 2: Teachers have become more comfortable being evaluated over the years not because of tenure but because of their self-efficacy.***

Teachers were asked what types of emotions they had when they were being evaluated during all three interviews. Table 7.1 shows teachers' feelings about being evaluated across the three interviews. The teachers' responses suggested that all teachers felt more comfortable being evaluated after being granted tenure. However, according to teachers, the reason for being more comfortable was building their self-efficacy over the years, not being granted tenure.

Several teachers also stated that because they knew their administrators long enough and knew their expectations, they felt more comfortable being evaluated. Teacher 2 said, "I think that relationship and that rapport [with administrators] is established; it is not something I need to feel nervous about [being evaluated]."

Table 7.1. *Teachers Feelings about Being Evaluated across Three Interviews*

	First Round	Second Round	Third Round
Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nervousness,</li> <li>• Fear of being judged,</li> <li>• Excited,</li> <li>• Being watched,</li> <li>• Anxiety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nervousness,</li> <li>• Anxiety,</li> <li>• Fear,</li> <li>• Excitement,</li> <li>• Support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More comfortable,</li> <li>• No nervousness at all,</li> <li>• Relived and happy,</li> <li>• Slightly nervous but also confident,</li> <li>• Little anxiety,</li> <li>• Still excited.</li> </ul>

Teachers also felt more secure about their job once they thought that they were doing well in their job, not after they were granted tenure. Teacher 3 explained why he felt more comfortable by saying, “I know myself; I know what I’m doing; and I know what I’m doing is right for my students. And I know anybody coming into my room is going to say the exact same thing.” Teacher 2 also stated that being granted tenure did not change her feeling about her job security; she felt more secure because of her growth over the years.

Several teachers mentioned that once they were granted tenure, they felt more confident to talk with school administrators about their evaluation scores when they disagreed with the result. Teacher 2 explained she was not firm enough during her probationary period to talk with school administrator about her evaluation result and she said that “it still bothers me”. Teacher 3 also had similar experiences during his probationary period. He shared that “ I did not feel confident enough to flat out say, I think it’s wrong” when he disagreed with the evaluation result, because he did not feel confident enough to convey his school principal.

The data shows that teachers felt more comfortable about being evaluated and felt more secure about their job because they built self-efficacy over the years. Moreover, because of their confidence in themselves, they had started to have agency about their evaluation results when they disagreed with administrators.

***THEME 3: Although teachers might not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, professional development affected their evaluation process throughout their career.***

All teachers expressed their desire to attend professional development that addresses the areas they need to improve, informed by their evaluation. However, most teachers stated they never received specific professional development recommendations as a result of their

evaluation. Still, the professional development they attended helped them grow as a teacher, which affected their evaluation. All teachers in this study appreciated constructive feedback even after they were granted tenure. Moreover, constructive feedback was more valuable if it offered some kind of strategies, resources to help teachers grow.

Teachers need more support to improve their skills and knowledge for their day-to-day work, such as classroom management, lesson planning, and developing instructional strategies during their probationary period. According to the teachers in this study, the biggest issue was classroom management during their first three years. Moreover, teachers found mentoring as the most beneficial support during their probationary period, and some teachers trusted their mentors more than their administrators.

Once teachers were granted tenure, they wanted support to help them to move to the next level in their career since they wanted to move into a leadership position or be an instructional coach, eventually. Several teachers mentioned that as a result of their evaluation, school principals started to pay more attention to their skills and let them take on some leadership responsibilities. Moreover, after being granted tenure, teachers thought that coaching was most helpful for them.

The data shows that teachers wanted professional development opportunities informed by their evaluation process regardless of their tenure status. Data illustrated that their needs have changed over time, and they wanted school principals to acknowledge their needs based on their years of experience and the to provide support aligned to their needs. Moreover, teachers believed mentoring was most beneficial during their probationary period, while coaching was most helpful once they were granted tenure.

**THEME 4: *Teachers preferred to be evaluated by school principals with teaching experiences, content knowledge, and enough training to perform the evaluation process regardless of their tenure status.***

During all three interviews, teachers were asked what makes school principals qualified to evaluate their performance; all teachers stated that teaching experiences, content knowledge, and training were important criteria to qualify school principals to perform this task. Moreover, they took the feedback received by school principals more seriously when school principals met these criteria. Several teachers shared the feedback they received from school administrators who had a different subject and grade level background was not relevant or helpful.

Some teachers thought quitting their job during their probationary period because of the lack of support they received from their school principals, and these teachers ended up moving to other schools where they felt more supported. Several teachers also expressed the importance of school culture to encourage them to improve their practices and the role of administrators to build positive school culture. Even after being granted tenure, teachers wanted school principals to take their evaluation process seriously and provide constructive feedback, which will trickle down to teachers taking the evaluation seriously.

Teachers' preferences to be evaluated by administrators who met these criteria — teaching experiences, content knowledge, and training—have not been changed due to granted tenure. Regardless of their tenure status, teachers wanted to feel valued and appreciated, which made them want to be better teachers, which in turn, had better performance and better evaluations.

**THEME 5: *Although teachers found the current evaluation system to be an effective tool to assess their strengths and weaknesses, the evaluation process alone was not enough to support probationary teachers and to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for improvement if evaluation mainly focused on accountability.***

The teachers in this study believed that the current teacher evaluation process covers valuable competencies, and they liked the consistency of the standards. However, some thought that some standards were more important than others; therefore, it was necessary to revisit the standards. Moreover, although teachers acknowledged the time demands placed on their administrators, they would like to receive more observation to make the process more accurate.

Teachers believed that the evaluation process could be used more effectively to support probationary teachers by focusing more on improving their practices. However, to achieve this, school principals should spend more time building a positive relationship with teachers. Sometimes, probationary teachers did not feel confident about asking for help from their school principals or more clarification when they disagreed with the evaluation results.

The professional growth component of the evaluation process could serve the purpose to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm; however, teachers must be able to find intrinsic motivation from their work and the value they perceive this work to have with students, fellow teachers, and their administrators. If teachers lose their enthusiasm after they are granted tenure, external motivation such as continuing professional development requirements, moving teachers to different positions or grade levels could serve to motivate them to continue growing.

Teachers acknowledged that it took time to get better in their profession, and several teachers agreed that they started to feel like an expert in their third-year teaching. During those years, they believed that the evaluation process helped them see their strengths and weaknesses

and figure out how they could be more effective. Although they felt that they were experts once they were granted tenure, they still thought that there was always room for growth. Moreover, they believed that the evaluation process should be used to keep teachers' enthusiasm for improvement instead of being used to hold them accountable.

The next section examines the themes that emerged from school principals' interviews.

### **Themes: School Principals**

This section presents the themes that emerged from the findings from school principals' interviews presented in Chapter 6. The purpose of the principals' interviews was to understand how their approaches change to evaluate teacher performance once tenure is granted. The researcher took the deductive coding approach based on the research questions and inductive coding to allow for additional codes generated from the data from school principals' interview. Once the researcher completed preliminary coding from each school principals' transcript, data were analyzed using the constant comparative methods to group codes into the categories to align data with the research question and study's purpose.

Next, the researcher developed 3 categories for school principals' data: (1) School Principals' perspectives about the current evaluation process; (2) School Principals' approach to evaluate non-tenured teachers' performance; (3) School Principals' approach to evaluate tenured teachers' performance. Finally, two major themes were drawn from data by identifying features of similarity and relationship across codes to understand school principals' approaches to evaluate teacher's performance based on teacher tenure status.

**THEME 1: *School principals follow the state’s legislation when evaluating teacher’s performance.***

All school principals shared the same information stated in the law related to tenured teacher’s evaluation process, and they mentioned that they followed the law. For example, School Principal 1 said that “we follow exactly the letter of the law.” All three school principals think that the current system is “great” and “effective” for both probationary and tenured teachers, and they follow the same evaluation tool when evaluating teachers. School Principal 2 mentioned that “It’s fine to use the same tool. It’s the informal conversations that probably are more differentiated.” As stated in the law, tenured teachers received less formal and informal observations than their probationary teachers. However, School Principal 1 argued that the frequency of the observations should be based on “performance-based not just how long somebody has been doing something.”

When asked questions about their approaches working with an underperforming tenured teacher, all school principals mentioned that they follow the law and put that teacher on a performance plan. School Principal 3 shared that “just because they’re experienced doesn’t mean that you can’t say: we’ve got to do more observation because we have a concern.” However, they argued that the workload gets in the way of focusing their efforts on teacher evaluation for teachers who are underperforming. For example, School Principal 2 mentioned that “it takes an awful lot of work to put them onto a performance plan and work through areas that they might have weaknesses in.”

***THEME 2: School principals acknowledge teacher's years of experience when providing feedback and support.***

Confoundingly, the data illustrated that school principals are aware of teacher's needs based on their years of experience, and they differentiated their feedback and support based on it. However, they also believed that support depends on the teacher regardless of teacher's years of experience, and School Principal 3 elaborated:

I think sometimes you have folks who come into the profession, and they're just very well prepared. They don't need as much support. But sometimes you have folks come into the profession and they need all the support you can possibly provide them.

In general, School Principal 2 mentioned that probationary teacher mostly needs more help with teaching strategies while tenured teachers might forget to complete a lesson plan.

The principals acknowledged that new teachers need more feedback and support, but as School Principal 1 shared, "feedback for veteran teacher and new teacher should still have deep, it should be purposeful and meaningful." The principals also believed that there were other ways to support teachers that go beyond the formal evaluation process. For example, School Principal 2 mentioned that "it's important to have teammates or coaches go in and give constructive feedback that isn't being evaluated."

All three school principals shared the same beliefs about the importance of the first-three years. Teacher must generally complete a certain number of years on the job which is typically three years to gain tenure. Although the principals agreed that teachers should be given a little bit of professional latitude with tenure, the principals should be able to eliminate teachers who are not doing their job during the first three years. Moreover, School Principal 3 stressed the

importance of teacher evaluation process for probationary teachers given that the teacher retention during the first through third year is typically high.

The next section presents the findings across the school levels.

### **Data Analysis Across School Levels**

This section presents the findings from teachers’ interviews and school principals’ interviews by school level.

#### *Elementary School Level*

In this elementary school, School Principal 2 evaluates the performance of Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 4. The participants profiles for the school principal and the teachers in this elementary school are detailed in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2. *Overview of Participants from Elementary School*

School Level	Participants	Highest Degree Level Completed / Subject	Years of experience at current school
Elementary School	School Principal 2	Doctorate in Policy and Leadership	2
	Teacher 1	Master’s Degree/ Math/Science	3
	Teacher 2	Master’s Degree/ ELA/Social Studies	4
	Teacher 4	Master’s Degree/ Physical Education	4

The purpose of the evaluation process, according to School Principal 2, was to improve instructional strategies and develop teachers’ skills. However, School Principal 2 believed that in her district, the purpose of the evaluation process was to maintain quality teachers and to retain teachers who were making a difference based on student data. Consequently, the teachers who

worked in this elementary school—Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 4—shared similar thoughts about the purpose of the evaluation.

These teachers mostly agreed that accountability and helping teachers should be the purpose of teacher evaluation. Moreover, Teacher 2 also included the connection between effective teachers and student success in her response. School Principal 2 and the three elementary school teachers believed that the evaluation process could be used as a part of future employment decisions.

The teachers had similar feelings about being evaluated; they were nervous. They stated their relationships with administrators affected their emotions. School Principal 2 agreed that although teachers were nervous since they wanted to show their best, they felt more comfortable once they became familiar with administrators. The teachers also stated that they felt more comfortable being evaluated after being granted tenure because they had more self-confidence. School Principal 2 also acknowledged that the longer teachers taught, the more they felt more comfortable because of their experiences.

According to School Principal 2, although it depends on the teachers, probationary teachers need more support—especially in terms of materials and resources and where to find things or teaching strategies. Moreover, she believed that probationary teachers could be supported by instructional coaches, not necessarily throughout the evaluation process. All the teachers in this elementary school agreed that they needed more support during their first three years, and mentoring was the most helpful way to support them.

School Principal 2 stated that her approach was the same as evaluating non-tenured and tenured teachers. According to her, it was appropriate to use the same evaluation tool for those teachers. Still, the informal conversation with the teacher would be more differentiated based on

the teacher’s tenure status. School Principal 2 acknowledged that teachers needed time to develop their skills and giving them three years was appropriate. However, if the teacher was not still performing well even after the support provided to the teacher, then this teacher should not be in the classroom anymore. Consequently, School Principal 2 believed that teachers should be given professional latitude with the tenure. Although teachers feel confident after the probationary period, they still wanted to receive support to prepare them for other positions.

*Middle School Level*

In this middle school, School Principal 3 evaluates the performance of Teacher 5, Teacher 6, and Teacher 8. The participants profiles for school principal and the teachers in middle school are detailed in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3. *Overview of Participants from Middle School*

School Level	Participants	Highest Degree Level Completed / Subject	Years of experience at current school
	School Principal 3	Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy	
Middle School	Teacher 5	Master’s Degree/ Language Arts	4
	Teacher 6	Master’s Degree/ Math	4
	Teacher 8	Master’s Degree/ Language Arts	4

School Principal 3 stated the purpose of evaluation was to provide teachers with ongoing feedback about their practices and to help them improve their practices; however, in his district, the purpose was to improve student achievement by improving teacher quality. Although Teacher 6 and Teacher 8 said the purpose was mostly to provide support to teachers, Teacher 5 thought the purpose was to hold teachers accountable. School Principal 3 believed that the

evaluation system could provide the information that would support employment decisions. All three teachers in this middle school also thought that the evaluation process should be a deciding factor.

School Principal 3 acknowledged the importance of school principals' approach to implementing the evaluation process and its relationship to teachers' feelings about being evaluated. Teachers agreed that school principals played a huge role, especially to what extent teachers took the feedback seriously. According to School Principal 3, the evaluation process should be implemented with a great deal of support, and it should be very fair so that teachers could feel like they have every opportunity to improve their practices. Although Teacher 5 and Teacher 8 thought that the evaluation process was part of the job, Teacher 6 felt nervous when someone came to evaluate her performance.

School Principal 3 shared that if every teacher had their own individualized goal, it might be hard for school administrators to support all teachers when you have a big school. Therefore, the professional goals of every teacher in his school aligned with the school improvement plan, which was also aligned by financial resources for professional development linked to their professional goals. However, he acknowledged the individual needs of teachers and provided professional development according to their needs also. Teachers in this school thought that professional development was mainly chosen for them based on the school's needs. Moreover, Teacher 6 argued that she had not received professional development recommendations individually.

School Principal 3 mentioned that feedback should be timely, and he preferred to give feedback the same day. Teacher 8 agreed that it was important to provide feedback immediately. Consequently, Teacher 5 and Teacher 6 thought that the feedback should be more detailed and

there should be some recommendations for improvement. Teacher 8 acknowledged how busy school principals were and its effect on feedback.

School Principal 3 shared that sometimes new teachers came into the profession with very well prepared and did not need as much support, but sometimes you have to provide all support to new teachers. Regardless of teachers' preparation, according to him, new teachers needed to be affirmed, and teacher evaluation could be used as a reward, and it could help teachers to build their self-efficacy. Teacher 5 would like to talk more about her weakness and strength with administrators during her probationary period. Teachers 6 and 8 also needed more support during their first three years.

According to School Principal 3, it was fair to evaluate non-tenured and tenured teachers by using the same evaluation tool, but it depended on the evaluator and the evaluator's ability to do it. Teachers in this school also agreed about using the same evaluation tool, but the support should be differentiated. Teachers believed that the process could still be helpful to support tenured teachers and keep their enthusiasm for improvement.

### *High School Level*

In this high school, School Principal 1 evaluates the performance of Teacher 3 and Teacher 7. The participants profiles for school principal and the teachers in the high school are detailed in Table 7.4.

The purpose of the evaluation process, according to School Principal 1, was mainly about accountability, and in his district, it was used to determine if teachers kept their certificates. He thought that the evaluation process was a part of the hiring process. Teachers 3 and 7 believed that the purpose of the evaluation process was to support teachers, and they thought it should be a part of the employment decision.

Table 7.4. *Overview of Participants from High School*

School Level	Participants	Highest Degree Level Completed / Subject	Years of experience at current school
	School Principal 1	Specialist degree in Administration and Policy	2
High School	Teacher 3	Master's Degree/ History/Government and Economics	4
	Teacher 7	Ph.D./ Chemistry	5

School Principal 1 shared that although teachers would prefer an announced evaluation, they were performing better when it was unannounced. Moreover, he believed they felt so nervous during the announced one; they were more natural during the unannounced one. Teacher 3 shared that he preferred an announced evaluation to reflect his teaching a little bit better. Teacher 7 shared that he felt very nervous during the evaluation, especially the unannounced one during his probationary period. However, both teachers shared that with their years of experience, they have become more comfortable with the evaluation process.

School Principal 1 thought that the evaluation process was helpful if it was used appropriately, and it was valid to use for both tenured and non-tenured teachers. However, according to him, the evaluator should be trained and execute the process appropriately. Moreover, he acknowledged the evaluator's bias and suggested having multiple evaluators to reduce the bias. Teacher 3 shared the similar thought that administrators should evaluate teachers' performance with fidelity.

School Principal 1 argued he and his administrative team spent two to three hours daily on something related to evaluation. He also started providing well-written feedback was very time-consuming. He believed that feedback should be deep, purposeful, and meaningful

regardless of the teacher's tenured status; however, the feedback should be appropriate for the experienced level, which was not always related to years. Teacher 7 had not had positive experiences with the previous administrative teams regarding the quality of the feedback, and he mentioned that it has been better since the new administrator provided more specific feedback. Teacher 3 thought that he generally received supportive feedback.

School Principal 1 believed that the evaluation process should be different based on teachers' performance, not how long they have been teaching. However, he thought being a brand-new teacher was tough, and they needed more support. Mentoring was one way to provide additional support for them in his school. Teachers 3 and 7 agreed that they needed more support during their probationary period, and mentoring was the most helpful way to provide support. After they were granted tenure, they were still seeking support from their administrators, and they would like to receive constructive feedback.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the themes that emerged from tenured teachers' and school principals' perspectives about teacher evaluation. The five themes that emerged from the findings from the teachers' interviews:

1. Granted with tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the teacher evaluation process.
2. Teachers have become more comfortable being evaluated over the years not because of tenure but because of their self-efficacy.
3. Although teachers might not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, professional development affected their evaluation process throughout their career.

4. Teachers preferred to be evaluated by school principals with teaching experiences, content knowledge, and enough training to perform the evaluation process regardless of their tenure status.
5. Although teachers found the current evaluation system to be an effective tool to assess their strengths and weaknesses, the evaluation process alone was not enough to support probationary teachers and to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for improvement if evaluation mainly focused on accountability.

Moreover, two themes emerged from the findings from the principals' interviews:

1. School principals follow the state's legislation when evaluating teacher's performance.
2. School principals acknowledge teacher's years of experience when providing feedback and support.

The findings that led to these themes were discussed, and the findings that supported these themes were also presented across the school levels.

The final chapter further expands the discussion of this analysis and situates the findings of this study with respect to the literature based on teacher evaluation and teacher tenure examined in Chapter 2. In addition, the next chapter examines the implications of the findings of this study for research, policy, and practice.

## CHAPTER 8

### DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The process of teacher evaluation has been the main topic of discussion in the educational sector for many years since teachers play a vital role in the achievement of educational objectives (Chetty et al., 2014a; Hanushek, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). Therefore, teacher evaluation in the era of accountability has held an important but unprecedented place in the school reform efforts that aim to ensure highly-effective teachers are in every classroom. However, this situation has led to a debate about the benefits and drawbacks of granting tenure to teachers (Fertig et al., 2014; Hommeyer, 2015; Thomsen, 2014). Much of the debates about teacher tenure have focused on whether it makes it impossible for systems to fire ineffective teachers once they have gained tenure (Loeb et al., 2015; McGuinn, 2010).

Critics, however, argue that because of the costs and time associated with ensuring due process, school districts retain ineffective teachers in the classroom, and that this situation reduces the incentives for teachers to improve their instruction (Hannaway & Rotherham, 2010; Loeb et al., 2015; McGuinn, 2010). However, others also argue that because teaching is not an extremely desirable profession, but it offers job security, that weakening tenure systems may cause a lower-quality teacher workforce (Goldstein, 2014).

A study which investigated the effects of tenure on teacher behavior found that there is typically a decrease in the time that teachers spend on professional development after receiving tenure (Jones, 2015). Moreover, non-tenured teachers have been found to be more willing to be observed by principals than tenured teachers, and they agreed more than tenured teachers that observations improved their instruction (Range et al., 2014). As tenure status increases a

teacher's job security, it is important to understand teachers' perspectives related to evaluation systems prior to and perhaps more importantly, after a teacher is granted tenure.

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes, and to examine school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. The researcher sought to discover if being granted tenure influenced teachers' perspectives of the teacher evaluation process. Moreover, the study aimed to understand the influence of teacher evaluation processes on teacher development from the probationary period to shortly after being granted tenure. In addition to examining tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, this study sought to understand whether school principals' approaches changed while evaluating teacher performance once tenure is granted.

Three research questions guided the study:

1. How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?
2. How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?
3. How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

Although the evaluation of teacher performance has been the main topic of discussion in the education system, there is a limited amount of literature that examines tenured teachers views regarding the evaluation process, and principals' approach to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. For this reason, this study was timely to establish a deeper understanding of tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation, and how school principals evaluate their performance which, in turn perhaps, can assist in developing new practices and policies.

This chapter begins with a summary of the background, a restatement of the purpose of the study and the research questions, followed by a summary of the research design, as well as a discussion of the findings relative to the literature on teacher evaluation and teacher tenure, and suggests possible implications for future research, policy, and practice. The chapter concludes with the researcher's final thoughts about this study.

### **Summary of Research Design**

This research, a qualitative interpretivist interview study, sought to examine tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes and school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. This study was situated within the interpretative framework which rests on the notion that knowledge is not determined objectively but constructed through people's ability to assign meanings to objects, events, and interactions (Prasad, 2005). This study used an interpretive theoretical approach with phenomenological research methods to examine the phenomenon of teacher evaluation and tenure from the perspectives of teachers and principals.

Qualitative research methods were the appropriate choice for this research since this study sought to understand tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation processes as well as to understand whether school principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance changed once tenure was granted. Qualitative research methods are best suited in uncovering the understandings and meanings that people assign to their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

This qualitative research was mainly framed within the research design rendering a phenomenological study that attempted to understand people's perceptions, perspectives, and

understandings of a particular situation. This type of research tries to answer the question, “what is it like to experience such-and-such?” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 141).

The data for the study were collected predominantly by semi-structured interviews and supplemented by the documents as legislated in the school district related to teacher evaluation and teacher tenure where the research participants were assigned. Interviews were held with eight-teachers and three-principals of the schools in which the teachers were assigned. All eight-teacher participants were interviewed three-times using protocols that addressed tenure, evaluation, and supervision. The three school principals were interviewed only one time by focusing their approaches to evaluating teachers’ performance before and after teachers were granted tenure.

Data analysis was completed throughout the study, including during and after data collection. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis and the constant comparative method. Thematic analysis is defined as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns [themes] within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The researcher began analysis by exploring the data of each teacher, and the data of each school principal, and concluded with an analysis that collectively examined across teachers and school principals. Overall, after the interviews were transcribed and transcripts read, codes were created. Then, codes and quotes supporting them were grouped into the categories of repeated ideas, and then themes were developed based on these categories.

### **Discussion of Findings**

As the purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of tenured teachers about teacher evaluation process and school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance, this section explores the study’s themes and how they are related to the literature

review on the topic of teacher evaluation and teacher tenure. This discussion is presented in two major sections: first, the themes from tenured teachers are examined in relation to previous research; second, the themes from school principals are examined in relation to previous research.

### *Themes: Teachers*

This study identified five major themes to understand tenured teachers' perspective about teacher evaluation processes.

#### **Theme 1: Granted with tenure might affect teachers' perspectives about the purpose of the teacher evaluation process.**

The study participants believed that the purpose of teacher evaluation was to hold teachers accountable and foster professional growth. The two most cited purposes of teacher evaluation in the literature are accountability and professional development (Danielson, 2011; Hazi, 2019; Marzano, 2012; McGreal, 1983). Evaluation for accountability—to judge teacher performance for personnel decisions such as awarding merit pay, termination, tenure—may be called summative; on the contrary, formative evaluation is used to provide feedback to the teacher and to encourage improvement (Marzano, 2012; Popham, 2013; Zepeda, 2017).

A major problem with the current teacher evaluation process is that many evaluation systems serve the accountability purpose based on student test scores instead of teachers' growth and development as a result of Race to the Top initiatives (Close et al., 2019; Elliot, 2015). However, with the Every Student Success Act of 2015, many schools have combined scoring rubrics and student achievement data to improve teaching practices while still holding teachers accountable (Lunenburg, 2019). Although teachers interviewed often expressed a deep understanding of the need for accountability for several reasons, such as students' academic

achievement and social/emotional development, they believed that the primary purpose should be to support teachers' professional growth. If the teacher evaluation process overemphasizes accountability, teacher development decreases (Ford et al., 2018) since it fails to show teachers the areas needed for growth (Elliot, 2015). Therefore, less emphasis should be placed on a rating to improve teaching (Elliott, 2015).

The observation of teachers is a common practice to evaluate teachers' effectiveness (Kane et al., 2011). The required observations are generally differentiated based on the teacher's experience and former evaluation scores. Once teachers are granted tenure, they typically receive fewer observations. However, "one high-stakes observation a year has a high probability of getting an inaccurate picture of daily reality and raising the teacher's anxiety level to stratospheric heights" (Marshall, 2013, p. 58). Researchers suggest multiple observations to increase accuracy (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Glickman et al., 2014; Marshall, 2013; Marzano & Toth, 2013). Moreover, more frequent observations may also increase teacher acceptance of the process (Oliva & Pawlas, 2004). According to a study by Lacireno-Paquet et al. (2016), teachers want to have frequent visits from their administrators, along with follow-up conversations on how to improve. Range et al. (2014) found that probationary teachers agreed significantly more than tenured teachers that classroom observation improved their instruction.

Teachers' beliefs about evaluation were strongly influenced by their experiences. Although all teachers believed that the purpose of the evaluation process during their probationary period was to provide feedback to help them grow, most teachers believed that it was more about accountability than teacher support once the teacher was granted tenure. The change in their beliefs about the purpose of teacher evaluation was surprising. One possible explanation includes that probationary teachers are observed much more frequently, and due to

lack of job security, their job is more closely tied to the evaluation process. Therefore, more exposure to the evaluation process may increase awareness of changing practices for professional growth. Another possible explanation includes that once teachers are granted tenure because they receive less observation, they also receive less meaningful feedback that helps them to improve classroom practices. Although most tenured teachers in this study were pleased to be observed less frequently, they wished to receive constructive feedback about their teaching instead of a rubric score.

As a result of political and public pressure, using teacher evaluation as an accountability tool is receiving significant attention (Darling-Hammond, 2014); however, educational researchers point to the necessity of using teacher evaluation to support teacher development and teacher growth (Darling-Hammond, 2013, 2014; Griffin, 2013; Marzano, 2012). Given these circumstances, it is likely that the debate will continue until an evaluation system can serve both purposes—to encourage teachers' growth and ensure teacher accountability.

**Theme 2: Teachers have become more comfortable being evaluated over the years not because of tenure but because of their self-efficacy.**

This study found that all teachers felt more comfortable about being evaluated and felt more secure about their jobs not because of tenure but because of building self-efficacy over the years. According to Bandura (2001), “efficacy beliefs are the foundation of human agency” and that “unless people believe they can produce desired results and forestall detrimental ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties” (p. 10). Bandura (1997) stated the four main sources of efficacy expectations for teachers: mastery experiences (actual performance); vicarious experiences (the success or failure of others around them); social persuasion (verbal encouragement from supervisors and colleagues); and emotional

arousal (emotional and physiological response to behaviors). Many of Bandura's (1997) insights have been linked to the formative evaluation to build a teacher's self-efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) defined teacher efficacy as a teacher's judgment on their ability to affect the outcome of student engagement and learning outcomes. Teacher self-efficacy changes over time, and a teacher's years of experience are a significant predictor of teacher self-efficacy (Minghui et al., 2018). Teachers' beliefs about their self-efficacy play an important role in teacher effectiveness, attitudes, instructional practices, and thus student achievement (Goddard et al., 2000; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012).

Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy believe that they can overcome obstacles with time and effort (Swan et al., 2011) and experience greater satisfaction in teaching (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Moreover, teacher self-efficacy is a significant predictor of job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Toropova et al., 2021); consequently, teachers' job satisfaction increases with the years of teaching experiences because gaining more years of experience is attributed to their confidence and self-efficacy (Njiru, 2014). Teacher self-efficacy levels are low for inexperienced teachers, peak for mid-career teachers, and slowly decline for veteran teachers (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

School leaders should enhance teacher self-efficacy, and the teacher evaluation process has a role in enhancing or diminishing teacher self-efficacy by celebrating and highlighting the successes of teachers through constructive and growth-oriented feedback. One important aspect of teacher evaluations is providing teachers feedback about the quality of their work. This feedback leads to enhanced professional development, which is one of the best ways to improve teacher capacity, which leads to increased self-efficacy (Donohoo, 2018; Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017; Yoo, 2016).

The findings of this study illustrated the importance of building self-efficacy for teachers' feelings about being evaluated. Creating greater levels of teachers' self-efficacy early in their careers will pay dividends down the road through greater engagement in teaching and learning (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). Teacher evaluation directly deals with teachers' practices in the classroom and fuels motivation to improvement; thus, teachers' self-efficacy plays an important role within the processes. Consequently, the teacher evaluation process also has a significant role in building teachers' self-efficacy. For this reason, school principals should be aware of the four self-efficacy expectations and provide a place in the evaluation processes to influence teacher motivation and behaviors to yield the expected outcome; therefore, teacher self-efficacy may be established and sustained throughout the career of the teacher.

**Theme 3: Although teachers might not attend professional development informed by their evaluation, professional development affected their evaluation process throughout their career.**

This study found that teachers wanted professional development opportunities informed by their evaluation process regardless of their tenure status. Although “evaluation can be used to stimulate meaningful professional learnings as teachers set goal and pursue them with the assistance of administrators and colleagues” (Darling-Hammond, 2013, p. 99), the evaluation process is not sufficiently paired with professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Weisberg et al., 2009). However, the data collected via teacher evaluation are important resources for school leaders to understand the individual needs of teachers (Derrington & Kirk, 2017).

Teachers commonly stated that the most critical problems with professional development programs do not meet teachers' needs (Guskey, 2009). For this reason, professional development

opportunities should fit each teacher's needs, not take a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Tenured and non-tenured teachers have different professional development needs, and school principals should recognize the developmental stage of their teachers (Zepeda, 2017). The teachers in this study also stated that their needs have changed over time, and they wanted school principals to acknowledge their needs based on their years of experience and provide support aligned with their needs.

Zepeda (2017) highlighted the different career needs of beginning teachers and experienced teachers. Beginning teachers are mostly concerned with survival but show a strong sense of enthusiasm and seek confirmation from their principals, while experienced teachers are past the survival stage and are focused on improving student learning and improving their self-growth. According to the teachers in this study, they need more support to improve their skills and knowledge for their day-to-day work, such as classroom management, lesson planning, and instructional strategies during their probationary period. Range et al. (2013) also found that non-tenured teachers typically need more support for lesson planning, classroom management, and time management.

A key finding in this study was that once teachers were granted tenure, they wanted support to help them to move to the next level in their career since they wanted to move into a leadership position or to be an instructional coach, eventually. Several studies show that providing leadership roles to tenured teachers with schools was important to sustain tenured teachers interest and motivation as well as retention (Day, 2008; Day & Gu, 2009; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Hargreaves, 2000; Thorburn, 2011).

Whether teachers are new or experienced, both tenured and non-tenured teachers need continuing professional development to improve teaching effectiveness and support professional

growth. Ongoing teacher development is required directly and immediately connected to teacher evaluation through constructive feedback. Moreover, special attention should be given to providing differentiated professional development for teachers based on their specific needs.

**Theme 4: Teachers preferred to be evaluated by school principals with teaching experiences, content knowledge, and enough training to perform the evaluation process regardless of their tenure status.**

This study found that teachers believed teaching experiences, content knowledge, and training were important criteria to qualify school principals to perform the evaluation process. Moreover, they took the feedback received by school principals more seriously when school principals met these criteria. Several teachers shared the feedback they received from school administrators who had a different subject and grade level background was not relevant or helpful. Their thoughts remained the same over their career.

School principals impact the success of the teacher evaluation process. They have many roles in the evaluation process, such as providing actionable feedback, tangible support, focus on improved instruction and professional learning (Donaldson & Donaldson, 2012; Hallinger et al., 2014). The ability of school principals to facilitate effective teacher evaluation that supports teachers' development will work to achieve the goal of improving teacher quality (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson & Peterson, 2006; Tucker & Stronge, 2005). However, a school principal's skill levels, knowledge and experience as an evaluator, and lack of subject familiarity may affect the validity of teacher evaluation.

Goff et al. (2014) stated that ongoing, specific feedback had been the most valuable resource for an administrator when evaluating a teacher. The study findings showed the necessity of constructive feedback as a part of effective teacher evaluation practices. There has been a

desire by teachers to want to do well, and the majority have been looking to improve their practices. Even after being granted tenure, teachers wanted school principals to take their evaluation process seriously and provide constructive feedback, which will trickle down to teachers taking the evaluation seriously.

Donaldson (2009) found that teachers accepted criticism from evaluators and perceived the feedback as more useful when they believed they were skilled in evaluating teachers' performance. Many teachers have commonly believed that administrators have limited expertise to utilize during teacher evaluation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Tripamer et al., 2014). A lack of knowledge in the subject area may result in narrowed feedback that may not be enough for teachers to improve their instructional practices (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). Studies have also suggested that the quality of feedback depends on principals' training and the time and resources they dedicate to provide individualized, actionable feedback (Kraft & Gilmore, 2016; Reinhorn et al., 2017).

Some teachers thought about quitting during their probationary period because of the lack of support they received from their school principals, and these teachers ended up moving to other schools where they felt more supported. Several teachers also expressed the importance of school culture to encourage them to improve their practices and the role of administrators to build positive school culture. Bradley (2014) stated that "principals serve a key role in shifting the punitive 'gotcha' school climate to a culture of growth and excitement for teacher learning by creating supportive conditions, so teachers develop confidence and competence as effective educators" (p. 14). Several studies have indicated that administrative support and the school's culture contribute to teacher attrition (Boyd et al., 2005; Ladd, 2011). According to Darling-

Hammond et al. (2013), probationary teachers can be positively impacted when the teacher evaluation system focuses on improving teacher practices.

There is emerging evidence that school principals have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the teacher evaluation process both in terms of implementation and in providing quality feedback to teachers. They can evaluate the effectiveness of teachers at various stages in their careers to identify effective teachers and offer specific supports to improve teaching. However, they should be knowledgeable, invest time to make teachers feel supported, and provide timely and valuable feedback. Because in the end, it is school principals' responsibility to ensure the allocation the time, resources, and professional development, mentoring, coaching, and the general support teachers need to be successful.

**Theme 5: Although teachers found the current evaluation system to be an effective tool to assess their strengths and weaknesses, the evaluation process alone was not enough to support probationary teachers and to keep tenured teachers' enthusiasm for improvement if evaluation mainly focused on accountability.**

This study found that teachers believed that the evaluation process could be used more effectively to support probationary teachers by focusing more on improving their practices. However, school principals should spend more time building positive relationships with teachers to achieve this. School principals play a vital role in setting the tone in their schools by developing positive relationships with teachers (Ross & Cozzenss, 2016). Principals who are knowledgeable, take time to provide valuable and timely feedback, and develop a trusting relationship with teachers can yield more positive perceptions of the evaluation system. Teachers have appreciated having school principals who have taken time to meet with them to improve

their practices and provide resources to increase student achievement (Donaldson & Donaldson, 2012).

Teachers generally expressed that they understand the need for accountability; however, they feel that working under high-stakes conditions takes the “joy” out of teaching (Rooney, 2015). Sass et al. (2012) stated that many teachers are leaving the profession because of the stress and accountability pressure. In high-achieving public schools, there is pressure to maintain a high score, whereas, in low-achieving public schools, there is pressure to increase the score to avoid loss of state and federal findings (Sass et al., 2012). Standardized testing has put more stress on teachers, and increasing pressure caused lower job satisfaction leading to attrition (Thibodeaux et al., 2015) and decreasing teacher development (Ford et al., 2018); therefore, the evaluation system fails to provide information to the teacher which area they need to grow or offer the suggestion to improve those areas (Elliot, 2015).

Public schools across the United States face the challenge of retaining high-quality, effective teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2018). Research has reported that 44% of novice teachers leave their profession within the first 5 years (Ingersoll et al., 2018). Although there are several reasons why teachers leave their profession, lack of support is one of the primary reasons novice teachers indicate why they leave the profession (Ladd, 2011; Sweigart & Collins, 2017; Watson, 2018). Several studies found that teachers supported by school administrators, mentors, and professional development activities are more likely to stay in the profession (Warsame & Valles, 2018; Wyatt, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Teachers feel supported when they have a high level of trust in school principals. This type of trust supports school culture, increases teacher retention (Robertson-Kraft et al., 2018), and improves teacher practices based on the results of evaluation (Ford et al., 2018).

Although teachers in this study felt that they were experts once they were granted tenure, they still thought there was always room for growth. Moreover, they believed that the evaluation process should be used to keep teachers' enthusiasm for improvement instead of holding them accountable. These teachers thought that improving professional practice was a lifelong journey, and they wanted to invest their learning by using the evaluations process as a roadmap toward improvement. However, the effectiveness of the evaluation system depends on the feedback provided by teachers to develop their expertise. Darling-Hammond (2013) stated:

Evaluation alone will not improve practice. Productive feedback must be accompanied by opportunities to learn. Evaluations should trigger continuous goal-setting for areas teachers want to work on, specific professional development supports and coaching, and opportunities to share expertise, as part of recognizing teachers' strengths and needs... evaluation can be used to stimulate meaningful professional learning as teachers set goals and pursue them with the assistance of administrators and colleagues. In addition, it can be used to flag areas for further support that are made available through a cycle of ongoing professional development. (p. 99)

When teachers receive meaningful feedback and support from their school principals throughout the evaluation process, the level of trust develops, and it encourages greater collaboration between teachers and school principals to work toward a common goal.

The goal of teacher evaluation is to support teachers in improving their practices and student achievement; however, in recent years, due to political pressure, there has been an increased emphasis on teacher evaluation for accountability. Although we need to measure teacher effectiveness and support teachers toward improvement since research confirms that teachers are the essential school-related factor in determining student achievement, there should

be less emphasis on ratings and rankings so that the focus could be on developing and improving teaching.

*Themes: School Principals*

This study identified two major themes to understand school principals approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance.

**Theme 1: School principals follow the state's legislation when evaluating teacher's performance.**

This study found that school principals follow the law related to tenured teachers' evaluation process. In the context of the state of Georgia, teachers are evaluated throughout the year based on 10 performance standards that must be observed during formal classroom observations and walkthroughs. A teacher with three or less years of teaching experience, teachers on a non-renewable certificate, teachers who recently changed their field of certification or who have been out of the profession for longer than a year, or teachers who have received inadequate evaluation results previously will be on the full formative assessment process which includes four classroom walkthrough observations and two formative observations (GaDOE, 2018).

School principals collect data regarding teacher performance outlined by observation rubrics and the district evaluation policy (Halverson et al., 2004; Goldring et al., 2015). Although several types of evaluation have been proposed in the literature, classroom observation remains one of the primary methods to evaluate teachers' performance (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016; Donaldson, 2016; Zepeda, 2017). School principals evaluate teacher performance by conducting classroom observations accompanied by evidence-based and meaningful conversations (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2014; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016).

School principals use both formal and informal classroom observations to collect data on a wide variety of classroom variables through a wide lens (Zepeda, 2013). To conduct formal classroom observations, school principals primarily use a clinical supervision cycle including pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference (McGreal, 1983; Range et al., 2013; Taylor & Tyler, 2012; Zepeda, 2017). The feedback in the post-observation conference requires significant of time, and several researchers found that school principals could not implement feedback protocols with fidelity (Brown et al., 2011; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). “Without quality feedback after an extended classroom observation, it is not likely that growth and development will occur or that teachers will make changes in their classroom practices” (Zepeda & Mayers, 2013, p. 29).

Moreover, if a principal does not provide feedback in a timely manner, it conveys to the teachers that the feedback process is not worthy, which is critical to the teacher’s development (Drago-Severson, & Blum-DeStefano, 2014). Several researchers also suggested using brief, informal classroom observations or walkthroughs to collect teacher performance data holistically (Garrett, 2011; Marshall, 2009). Moreover, walkthroughs prevent the “dog and pony shows” by allowing leaders to observe a teacher’s performance more authentically (Goldhorn et al., 2013).

School districts have implemented teacher evaluations progress utilizing more frequent observations (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016; Donaldson, 2016). However, it remains unclear how many observations are appropriate. Although some researchers suggested a minimum of three to six classroom observations conducted by at least three evaluators to provide reliable formative feedback (Polikoff, 2015; Van der Lans et al., 2016); the frequency of observations changes school to school, state to state and generally depending on the tenure status of the teacher. According to the National Center for Education Statistics Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

for 2011-2012, the average number of annual observations for non-tenured teachers was 3.4 while 2.3 for tenured teachers (cited in Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016). However, school principals in this study argued that the frequency of observations should be performance-based, and not based on the number of years of experience.

One of the ways school principals can positively impact student achievement is by hiring and retaining high-quality teachers (Boyd et al., 2011; Ladd, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2008). Hanushek (2009) stated that “the bottom end of the teaching force is harming students. Allowing ineffective teachers to remain in the classroom is dragging down the nation” (p.165). Some studies argued that the teacher evaluation systems have failed to adequately distinguish teachers who are high-performing in their practice from those who are struggling (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Toch & Rothman, 2008; Weisberg et al., 2009). On the contrary, other studies suggested that school principals can accurately differentiate teacher performance (Grissom & Loeb, 2017; Harris & Sass, 2014; Jacob & Lefgren, 2008; Rockoff et al., 2012).

Weisberg et al. (2009) demonstrated that the teaching ratings did not reflect the school principal’s ability to recognize teachers’ effectiveness. Although a high percentage of school principals acknowledged poor teaching, the most district gave less than 1% of teachers an unsatisfactory rating, and “at least half of the districts studied have not dismissed a single non-probationary teacher for poor performance in the past five years” (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 6). In the end, such skewed ratings do not discriminate teachers by effectiveness and do not provide high-quality feedback to improve teachers’ performance (Marzano & Toth, 2013).

The teacher evaluation is “one of the most challenging” accountability issues principals face in the United States (Flores & Derrington, 2017, p. 416). Increasing the frequency of observation and feedback supports teachers’ professional development. It is crucial to remember

that the role of school principals in the evaluation process is to promote teacher growth and development (Zepeda, 2017). However, several studies suggested that school principals need the training to provide more effective feedback to teachers (Brown et al., 2011; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016; Reid, 2017). Therefore, district leaders need to invest in providing professional development opportunities and ongoing support for school principals to perform their role in the evaluation process effectively.

**Theme 2: School principals acknowledge teacher’s years of experience when providing feedback and support.**

This study found that school principals were aware of teachers’ needs based on their years of experience, and they differentiated their feedback and support based on it. Although differentiated supervision practices can allow school principals to allocate more time to the evaluation and supervision of probationary or struggling teachers by spending less time on teachers who have been proven themselves as highly effective (May & Supovitz, 2011), teacher evaluation, supervision, and professional development have been criticized for lacking differentiation among teachers’ needs (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Glickman et al., 2014).

Under the differentiated supervision and evaluation system, it has been argued that probationary teachers have different levels of skills and different needs of support (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Glickman et al., 2014; Zepeda, 2019a); therefore, their observation and supervision should be different from that of tenured teachers (Elliott et al., 2010; Glickman et al., 2014). The observation, evaluation, and supervision of tenured teachers have rarely been documented (Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009), which causes teacher evaluation laws to include all teachers regardless of tenure status (Ingle et al., 2015). However, Range et al. (2014) highlighted the importance of supervision for tenured teachers stating, “high-performing tenured

teachers who lack supervision that challenges them and causes them to reflect deeply about their teaching [and social justice] might begin to disengage from the profession” (p. 4). Therefore, differentiating professional development, evaluation and supervision can be a powerful tool to enhance the school’s instructional capacity.

Teachers are adult learners, and adult learners have varied educational experiences and a desire to transfer learning to their practice quickly. Effective professional learning “incorporated active learning utilizing adult learning theory” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 4). Teachers as adult learners need professional learning that:

- allows them to solve “real” problems of practice (Brookfield, 2013);
- motivates them to interact and collaborate with peers (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Parise & Spillane, 2010);
- encourages them to apply what they are learning in their classrooms (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011);
- engages them in hands-on activities (Zepeda, 2015);
- supports reflection (Croft et al., 2010); and,
- lets them make decisions about what types of learning will support their needs—teachers have agency to make decisions (Calvert, 2016; Zepeda, 2018) (cited in Zepeda, 2019a, pp. 22-23).

Adult learners take more risks, and they are more likely to try new skills when they feel supported by their school principals (Zepeda, 2019a). Therefore, school principals should utilize an effective feedback process that aligns with the principles of adults learning. The effective feedback for adult learners should be specific, useful, and clear (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2016). When teachers and school principals collaboratively discuss the evidence

from the evaluations and teachers engage in reflective dialogue, the feedback leads to professional learning (Danielson, 2011; Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2016; Merriam, 2008).

Zepeda (2012) stated that “schools that succeed are schools in which every participant is a learner” (p. xxi). Thus, school principals should focus on the ways in which adults learn. Moreover, school leaders should emphasize the idea of differentiated supervision practices and differentiated professional development since the “one-size-fits-all” model of supervision and professional development does not recognize the differences in teacher skills, stage of career, or sources of motivation. Just as teachers have to consider students’ needs and differentiate their instruction to meet them, school principals have to consider teachers’ diverse needs and differentiate professional learning opportunities to strengthen their instructional practices.

### **Implications**

The process of teacher evaluation has been the main topic of discussion in the educational sector for many years; however, there is a limited amount of literature on tenured teachers’ views regarding the evaluation process and school principals’ approaches to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance. Therefore, the findings of this study have implications for further research, policy, and practice as it relates to teacher tenure and teacher evaluation. The major implications are discussed in this section.

#### *Implications for Further Research*

The findings of this study suggest that more research is needed on teacher tenure and teacher evaluation. Although this study presented the perspectives of tenured teachers about the teacher evaluation process and school principals’ approaches to evaluating tenured teachers’ performance that has been lacking in previous studies, the findings were specific in nature, and

there is certainly an opportunity for further research in this area. Based on the findings and limitations of this study, the following recommendations for further research should be considered.

1. The findings of this study are limited to the context of the eight participating tenured teachers and three school principals. This finding may be different in other schools and districts with different demographics and resources.
2. The findings of this study are limited to the context of the state of Georgia. Since teachers attain tenure and perceive tenure differently in different states, this study should be expanded to a larger population of teachers from other states. Including different states with different teacher tenure policies will give a more in-depth look at the tenured teachers' perspectives about teacher evaluation.
3. Future research might also consider designing a longitudinal study in which teachers will share their perspectives about the teacher evaluation process right before they are granted tenure, and then during the year they will be granted tenure, finally right after they are granted tenure. Although the teachers who participated in this study had no more than five years of experience, it would be noteworthy to have participants who have a fresher frame of reference.
4. Since assistant principals are also responsible for evaluating teachers' performance, future research might also consider including assistant principals as participants.

### *Implications for Policy*

Federal legislation has pushed teacher evaluation into the spotlight as a way for improving student achievement (Marzano & Toth, 2013). If policymakers are considering making changes to tenured teachers' evaluation policies, strong consideration must be given to

perspectives of tenured teachers about the teacher evaluation process and school principals' approaches to evaluating tenured teachers' performance. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations for policy should be considered.

1. There is a need for a well-designed evaluation policy. Although teacher evaluation is often cited as a source of feedback and motivation for teachers to improve their practices, it may not be accurate in some circumstances and contexts, according to participants of this study. The use of teacher evaluation to promote teacher enthusiasm for improvement is key to improving teacher effectiveness; therefore, it is necessary to develop an effective evaluation system for teachers that will foster continuous improvement regardless of their tenure status.
2. The success of the teacher evaluation process ultimately depends on those who implement it. Therefore, school principals should receive more training to help them understand and assist them in implementing the teacher evaluation process for each teacher in their building by focusing on their individual needs. It is important to allocate professional development funds for training school principals on how to evaluate tenured and non-tenured teachers' performance and support them throughout the evaluation process.
3. To accomplish many of these recommendations, policymakers should work alongside teachers and school principals when designing and improving teacher evaluation practices. School principals and teachers should discuss what options work best for them. Moreover, this discussion will encourage administrators and teachers to have open, direct conversations with one another, supporting growth and efficacy.

4. Policymakers should establish monitoring systems and feedback mechanisms for school districts so that school principals and teachers can share their perspectives about the strengths and weaknesses of evaluation processes and to make recommendations to improve the process for tenured and non-tenured teachers.

### *Implications for Practice*

School principals play a critical role in the teacher evaluation process, and the success of the teacher evaluation process is directly correlated to the skills of school principals in facilitating this process. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations for practice should be considered.

1. There might be a myth about tenured teachers wishing to be left alone in their classroom; according to participants of this study, it is not true. Teachers in this study had developed positive relationships with their current school principals. They are aware that constructive criticism is not to be utilized as a “gotcha” but to support them for growth. There is a need to shift how school principals approach tenured teacher evaluation. School principals should put more value in a process focused on the continuous improvement of tenured teachers. Therefore, school principals should provide specific and constructive feedback to support tenured teachers’ practices.
2. Many school principals have gotten caught up in the day-to-day managerial tasks and may lose the focus of teacher evaluation. However, there is a need for ongoing observations, especially for the probationary teachers. These observations help school principals obtain a sense of what is happening in the classroom and how they can support probationary teachers better. Because of fear, almost all teachers in this study could not share their concerns with their school principals during their probationary

- period. Therefore, informal classroom visits also help to build trust and respect between teachers and school principals.
3. School principals should understand their role within the teacher evaluation process and the teacher evaluation process's role in building teacher self-efficacy, which is critical for both teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Therefore, school principals need to refine their approaches to evaluating teacher performance regardless of their tenure status in such a way as to improve teacher self-efficacy as a result of the evaluation process. According to the findings of this study, one way to do that is to place a high value on the evaluation process by providing accurate and constructive feedback.
  4. Professional development is an essential aspect of effective teacher evaluation. Teacher evaluation should be connected with individualized, focused professional development. However, according to the findings of this study, many times, teachers have not been considered to be part of this process. Therefore, school principals should focus on providing high-quality professional development at the school level and seek opportunities for continued development tailored to teachers' individual needs and interests to influence teacher motivation positively.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The quality of the teacher is the most significant factor for student achievement, and teacher evaluation has a key role in ensuring effective teaching and learning occurs in schools. Teacher evaluation has two purposes: to hold the teacher accountable by measuring their performance to make an employment decision and to promote professional development and teacher growth. Policymakers and school principals have to leave behind the idea that only

probationary teachers or teachers who are struggling need support. Teacher evaluation has to be used to promote teacher improvement during every stage of a teacher's career. School districts need to design their teacher evaluation policies in such ways that enhance teacher learning and continuous improvement by ensuring that tenured teachers also can grow and be effectively supported throughout their entire teaching careers.

Effective teacher evaluation alone is not enough to transform the quality of teaching. The skill of school principals in facilitating effective teacher evaluation is directly linked to the success of the process. School principals must have well-developed skills to effectively implement the teacher evaluation process in their schools. Teachers must feel supported by a school principal who creates a positive school culture to promote teacher cooperation and trust to motivate each teacher to improve their professional growth. School principals have to provide specific, timely, and ongoing feedback to every teacher in their building to support teachers' growth. Moreover, they should provide professional development that fits the needs of each teacher aligned with their evaluation and not take a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Although effective teacher evaluation is important for determining teacher's mastery and adequacy, it also has the greatest importance for improving our society. Effective evaluation systems will produce effective teachers who will produce effective students. Those students will become our future and design our communities. Therefore, we have to be persistent in searching and developing the most effective teacher evaluation process to benefit all teachers. However, designing and implementing teacher evaluation policies without understanding teachers' needs, expectations, and thoughts may not be beneficial. Teachers must be included in the process when decisions are made that affect teachers. Teacher evaluation is a collaborative process, and it is crucial to fully integrate teachers into the process. Their voices must be heard and considered by

policymakers and school principals. Because, in the end, teachers are in charge of improving their practices, and they have to take responsibility for their own growth—but they need support from their leaders.

## REFERENCES

A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000 (2000). Georgia House Bill 1187 effective 4/25/00.

<http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/Archives/19992000/leg/fulltext/hb1187.htm>

Addonizio, M. (2014). Nation at risk, a. In D. Brewer & L. Picus (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Education Economics & Finance* (pp. 463-467). Sage Publications.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483346595.n173>

American Statistical Association (ASA). (2014). ASA statement on using value-added models for educational assessment. <http://www.amstat.org/asa/files/pdfs/POL-ASAVAM-Statement.pdf>

Anfara Jr, V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher*, 31(7), 28-38.

<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X031007028>

Archibald, M. M., Ambagtsheer, R. C., Casey, M. G., & Lawless, M. (2019). Using zoom videoconferencing for qualitative data collection: perceptions and experiences of researchers and participants. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1-18.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1609406919874596>

Au, W. (2009). *Unequal by design: High-stakes testing and the standardization of inequality*. Routledge.

Baker, E. L., Barton, P. E., Darling-Hammond, L., Haertel, E., Ladd, H. F., Linn, R. L., Ravitch, D., Rothstein, R., Shavelson, R. J., & Shepard, L. A. (2010). *Problems with the use of student test scores to evaluate teachers*. Economic Policy Institute.

<https://www.epi.org/files/page/-/pdf/bp278.pdf>

- Ballou, D., & Springer, M. G. (2015). Using student test scores to measure teacher performance: Some problems in the design and implementation of evaluation systems. *Educational Researcher*, 44(2), 77-86. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X15574904>
- Bandura, A. (1997). The anatomy of stages of change. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 12(1), 8-10. <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/ahp>
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1>
- Bangs, J., & Frost, D. (2012). *Teacher self-efficacy, voice and leadership: Towards a policy framework for education international*. Education International Research Institute. [https://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/teacher\\_self-efficacy\\_voice\\_leadership.pdf](https://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/teacher_self-efficacy_voice_leadership.pdf)
- Baratz-Snowden, J. (2009). *Fixing tenure: A proposal for assuring teacher effectiveness and due process*. Center for American Progress. [https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/06/pdf/teacher\\_tenure.pdf](https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/06/pdf/teacher_tenure.pdf)
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Bendassolli, P.F. (2013). Theory building in qualitative research: Reconsidering the problem of induction. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-14.1.1851>
- Berliner, D. C. (2013). Effects of inequality and poverty vs. teachers and schooling on America's youth. *Teachers College Record*, 115(12). <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=16889>
- Bevan, M. T. (2014). A method of phenomenological interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(1), 136-144. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1049732313519710>

- Binder, M. (2012). Teacher as researcher: Teaching as lived research. *Childhood Education*, 88(2), 118–120. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2012.662132>
- Birks, M., Chapman, Y., & Francis, K. (2008). Memoing in qualitative research: Probing data and processes. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 13(1), 68-75.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1744987107081254>
- Blankenship, A. E. (2013). *Rethinking tenure: An overview and analysis of changes to teacher tenure legislation from January 2008-June 2012* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia]. [https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/blankenship\\_ann\\_e\\_201305\\_phd.pdf](https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/blankenship_ann_e_201305_phd.pdf)
- Blankenship, A.E. (2014). Teacher tenure: The times they are a changin.’ *Education Law and Policy Review*, 1, 193-227.
- Blankenship, A. E. (2016). Keeping classroom issues out of the courtroom. In S. J. Zepeda, *The leader’s guide to working with underperforming teachers: Overcoming marginal teaching and getting results* (pp. 118-143). Routledge.
- Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(2), 303-333. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0002831210380788>
- Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2005). Explaining the short careers of high-achieving teachers in schools with low-performing students. *American Economic Review*, 95(2), 166-171. doi:10.1257/000282805774669628
- Bradley, J. (2014). From “gotcha” to growth: How principals promote learning in the context of teacher evaluation. *Journal of Staff Development*, 35(6), 10-14. <http://learningforward.org>

- Brandt, C., Mathers, C., Oliva, M., Brown-Sims, M., & Hess, J. (2007). *Examining district guidance to schools on teacher evaluation policies in the Midwest Region*. (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 030). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>
- Braun, H., Chudowsky, N., & Koenig, J. (2010). *Getting value out of value-added report of a workshop*. The National Academies Press. <https://www.nap.edu>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <http://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brenner, M. E. (2006). Interviewing in educational research. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 357-370). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Brewer, D., & Duque, M. (2014). No child left behind act. In D. Brewer & L. Picus (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Education Economics & Finance* (pp. 488-491). Sage Publications. <http://doi.org/10.4135/9781483346595.n181>
- Brookfield, S. D. (2013). *Powerful techniques for teaching adults*. Jossey-Bass.
- Brown, K. M., Benkovitz, J., Muttillio, A. J., & Urban, T. (2011). Leading schools of excellence and equity: Documenting effective strategies in closing achievement gaps. *Teachers College Record*, 113(1), 57–96. <https://www.tcrecord.org>
- Calahan, L. S. (2013). Trust me! I'm your principal. *Principal Leadership*, 14(4), 22-26. <https://www.nassp.org/news-and-resources/publications/principal-leadership/>

- Callahan, K., & Sadeghi, L. (2014). TEACHNJ: An evaluation of two years of implementation. *US-China Education Review A*, 4(10), 72S-736. <http://doi.org/10.17265/2161-623X/2014.10A.005>
- Calvert, L. (2016). Moving from compliance to agency: What teachers need to make professional learning work. Learning Forward and NCTAF. <https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/moving-from-compliance-to-agency.pdf>
- Cater, J. K. (2011). Skype a cost-effective method for qualitative research. *Rehabilitation Counselors & Educators Journal*, 4(2), 3. <https://rcej.scholasticahq.com>
- Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2011). *The long-term impacts of teachers: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood* (No. w17699). National Bureau of Economic Research. Working Papers. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w17699>
- Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2014a). Measuring the impacts of teachers, I, Evaluating bias in teacher value-added estimates. *The American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2593-2632. <http://doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.9.2593>
- Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2014b). Measuring the impacts of teachers II: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood. *American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2633–2679. <http://doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.9.2633>
- Christie, K., & Zinth, D. (2011). *Teacher tenure or continuing contract laws*. Education Commission of the States. <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/94/93/9493.pdf>
- Close, K., Amrein-Beardsley, A., & Collins, C. (2018). *State-level assessments and teacher evaluation systems after the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act: Some steps in the tight direction*. National Education Policy Center. <https://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/state-assessment>

- Cohen, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2016). Observations on evaluating teacher performance. In J.A. Grissom & P. Youngs (Eds) *Improving teacher evaluation systems: Making the most of multiple measures* (pp. 8-21). Teachers College Press.
- Cohen, E., & Varghese, P. (2011). *Teacher quality roadmap: Improving policies and practices in LAUSD*. National Council on Teacher Quality. <https://www.nctq.org>
- Coleman, J. S. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity*. U.S. Government Printing Office. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED012275.pdf>
- Collins, C. (2014). Houston, we have a problem: Teachers find no value in the SAS education value-added assessment system (EVAAS<sup>®</sup>). *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(98). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v22.1594>
- Cosner, S. (2009). Building organizational capacity through trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 45(2), 248-291. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0013161X08330502>
- Constantinou, C. S., Georgiou, M., & Perdikogianni, M. (2017). A comparative method for themes saturation (CoMeTS) in qualitative interviews. *Qualitative Research*, 17(5), 571-588. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1468794116686650>
- Croft, A., Cogshall, J. G., Dolan, M., Powers, E., & Killion, J. (2010). Job-embedded professional development: What it is, who is responsible, and how to get it done well. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. <https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/job-embedded-professional-development.pdf>
- Crotty, M. (2003). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J., & Plano Clark, V. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.

- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among the five traditions* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Crotty, M. (1998) *The Foundations of Social Research: meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage Publications.
- Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Danielson, C. (2011). Evaluations that help teachers learn. *The Effective Educator*, 68(4), 35-39.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>
- Danielson, C. (2012). It's your evaluation - collaborating to improve teacher practice. *The Education Digest*, 77(8), 22–27. <https://educationdigest.com>
- Danielson, C., & McGreal, T.L. (2000). *Teacher evaluation to enhance professional practice*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Darden, E. C. (2012). Firing a teacher is getting easier. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(4), 68-69.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003172171209400418>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2013). *Getting teacher evaluation right: What really matters for effectiveness and improvement*. Teachers College Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2014). Teacher evaluation: What really matters for effectiveness and improvement. Dean's Lecture Series at the University of Melbourne.  
<http://youtu.be/W2Mg92j87ig>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). Can value added add value to teacher evaluation? *Educational Researcher*, 44(2), 132-137. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X15575346>

- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute.  
<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/effective-teacher-professional-development-report>
- Darling-Hammond, L., Jaquith, A., & Hamilton, M. (2012). *Creating a comprehensive system for evaluating and supporting effective teaching*. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education. <https://edpolicy.stanford.edu>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (2011). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(6), 81-92.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003172171109200622>
- Darling-Hammond, L., Wei, R. C., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. National Staff Development Council.  
<https://learningforward.org/docs/default-source/pdf/nsdcstudytechnicalreport2009.pdf>
- Day, C. (2008). Committed for life? Variations in teachers' work, lives and effectiveness. *Journal of Educational Change*, 9(3), 243-260.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-007-9054-6>
- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2009). Veteran teachers: Commitment, resilience and quality retention. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(4), 441-457.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600903057211>
- Dayton, J. (2018). *School law for everyone: The essential guide*. Wisdom Builders Press.

- Deakin, H., & Wakefield, K. (2014). Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research, 14*(5), 603-616.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1468794113488126>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Derrington, M. L. (2019). The principal: Building the future based on the past. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds) *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 459-482). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.
- Derrington, M. L., & Campbell, J. (2013). The changing conditions of instructional leadership: Principal perceptions of teacher evaluation accountability mandates. In B. G. Barnett, A. R. Shoho, & A. J. Bowers (Eds.), *International research on school leadership: School and district leadership in an era of accountability* (Vol. 4, pp. 231-251). Information Age Publishing Inc.
- Derrington, M. L., Campbell, J. W., Schools, A. C., & Alcoa, T. N. (2015). Principal concerns and superintendent support during teacher evaluation changes. *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice, 12*(3), 11-22. <https://www.aasa.org/jsp.aspx>
- Derrington, M. L., & Kirk, J. (2017). Linking job-embedded professional development and mandated teacher evaluation: Teacher as learner. *Professional Development in Education, 43*(4), 630-644. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2016.1231707>
- Derrington, M. L., & Martinez, J. A. (2019). Exploring teachers' evaluation perceptions: A snapshot. *NASSP Bulletin, 103*(1), 32-50. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0192636519830770>

Desimone, L. M., & Garet, M. S. (2015). Best practices in teachers' professional development in the United States. *Psychology, Society and Education*, 7(3), 252-263.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.25115/psye.v7i3.515>

Donaldson, M. L. (2009). *So long, Lake Wobegon? Using teacher evaluation to raise teacher quality*. Center for American Progress.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/reports/2009/06/25/6243/so-long-lake-wobegon>

Donaldson, M. L. (2016). Teacher evaluation reform: Focus, feedback, and fear. *Educational Leadership*, 73(8), 72-76. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>

Donaldson, M.L., & Donaldson Jr, G.A. (2012). Strengthening teacher evaluation: What district leaders can do. *Educational Leadership*, 69(8), 78-82. <https://www.ascd.org/el>

Donohoo, J. (2018). Collective teacher efficacy research: Productive patterns of behaviour and other positive consequences. *Journal of Educational Change*, 19(3), 323-345.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-018-9319-2>

Drago-Severson, E., & Blum-DeStefano, J. (2014). Leadership for transformational learning: a developmental approach to supporting leaders' thinking and practice. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 9(2), 113-141.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1942775114527082>

Drago-Severson, E., & Blum-DeStefano, J. (2016). *Tell me so I can hear you: A developmental approach to feedback for educators*. Harvard Education Press.

Duffett, A., Farkas, S., Rotherham, A. J., & Silva, E. (2008). *Waiting to be won over: Teachers speak on the profession, unions, and reform*. Education Sector. <https://all4ed.org>

- DuFour, R., & Marzano, R. J. (2011). *Leaders of learning: How district, school, and classroom leaders improve student achievement*. Solution Tree Press.
- DuFour, R., & Mattos, M. (2013). How do principals really improve schools? *Educational Leadership*, 70(7), 34–40. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educationalleadership.aspx>
- Dulgerian, D. (2016). The impact of the Every Student Succeeds Act on rural schools. *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy*, 111-138.  
<https://www.law.georgetown.edu>
- Earl Rinehart, K. (2021). Abductive analysis in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 27(2), 303-311. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077800420935912>
- Ellett, C. D., & Teddlie, C. (2003). Teacher evaluation, teacher effectiveness and school effectiveness: Perspectives from the USA. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 17(1), 101-128. [https://doi.org/10.1023/A:10\\_25083214622](https://doi.org/10.1023/A:10_25083214622)
- Elliott, E.M., Isaacs, M.L., & Chugani, C. D. (2010). Promoting self-efficacy in early career teachers: A principal's guide for differentiated mentoring and supervision. *Florida Journal of Educational Administration & Policy*, 4(1), 131-146.  
<https://www.learntechlib.org/j/ISSN-1942-3497/>
- Elliott, K. (2015). Teacher performance appraisal: More about performance or development? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online)*, 40(9), 102-116.  
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/>
- Every Student Succeeds Act: Conference report (to accompany S. 1177) (2015). U.S. Government Publishing Office. <https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/hrpt354/CRPT-114hrpt354.pdf>

- Feng, L., Figlio, D. N., & Sass, T. (2010). *School accountability and teacher mobility* (No. w16070). National Bureau of Economic Research.  
<https://www.nber.org/papers/w16070.pdf>
- Fertig, B., Kamenetz, A., & Sanchez, C. (2014, July 28). Teacher tenure lawsuits spread from California to New York. *nprED How Learning Happens, NPR*  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/07/28/336050469/teacher-tenure-challenge-spreads-from-california-to-new-york>
- Finnigan, K. S., & Gross, B. (2007). Do accountability policy sanctions influence teacher motivation? Lessons from Chicago's low-performing schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(3), 594-630. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0002831207306767>
- Flick, U. (2002). *An introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Flores, M. A. (2012). The implementation of a new policy on teacher appraisal in Portugal: How do teachers experience it at school? *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 24(4), 351-368. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-012-9153-7>
- Flores, M.A., & Derrington, M.L. (2017). School principals' views of teacher evaluation policy: Lessons learned from two empirical studies. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 20(4), 416-431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2015.1094144>
- Ford, T.G., Urick, A., & Wilson, A.S.P. (2018). Exploring the effect of supportive teacher evaluation experiences on U.S. teachers' job satisfaction. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 26(59). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.26.3559>
- Fusarelli, L. D., & Fusarelli, B. C. (2019). Instructional supervision in an era of high-stakes accountability. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds) *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 131-156). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.

- Gabriel, R., & Allington, R. (2011, April). *Teacher effectiveness research and the spectacle of effectiveness policy*. Paper Presented at Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), New Orleans, LA.
- Gallagher, H. A. (2004). Vaughn Elementary's innovative teacher evaluation system: Are teacher evaluation scores related to growth in student achievement? *Peabody Journal of Education*, 79(4), 79-107. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327930pje7904\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327930pje7904_5)
- Garrett, K. (2011). Value added: Do new teacher evaluation methods make the grade? *The Education Digest*, 77(2), 40. <https://educationdigest.com>
- Georgia Association of Educators (2004). 2004-2005 educator rights handbook. Georgia Association of Educators.
- Georgia Department of Education. (2012). *Teacher keys effectiveness system handbook*. Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org>
- Georgia Department of Education. (2014a). Teacher keys effectiveness system: Fact sheets. <https://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Documents/TKES%20Fact%20%20Sheets%207-11-2012.pdf>
- Georgia Department of Education. (2014b). *Teacher keys effectiveness system: Implementation handbook*. Georgia Department of Education. <https://www.gadoe.org>
- Georgia Department of Education. (2018). *Georgia's Teacher keys effectiveness system*. State of Georgia. <https://www.gadoe.org>
- Georgia Department of Education. (2020). *Georgia's path to recovery for K-12 Schools*. Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Department of Health. <https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html>
- Georgia laws, 1947 session. (1947). Atlanta: State of Georgia

- Georgia laws, 1975 session. (1975). Atlanta: State of Georgia
- Gibbs, S., & Miller, A. (2014). Teachers' resilience and well-being: A role for educational psychology. *Teachers and Teaching*, 20(5), 609-621.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2013.844408>
- Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice, and evaluation of the phenomenological method as a qualitative research procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 28(2), 235-260. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156916297X00103>
- Glanz, J., & Heimann, R. (2019). Encouraging reflective practice in educational supervision through action research and appreciative inquiry. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds) *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 353-377). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.
- Glanz, J., & Zepeda, S.J., (2016). *Supervision: New perspectives for theory and practice*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Glickman, C.D., Gordon, S.P., & Ross-Gordon, J.M. (2014). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach* (9th ed.). Pearson.
- Goddard, R.D., Hoy, W.K., & Hoy, A.W. (2000). Collective teacher efficacy: Its meaning, measure, and impact on student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(2), 479-507. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F00028312037002479>
- Goe, L., Biggers, K., & Croft, A. (2012). Linking teacher evaluation to professional development: Focusing on improving teaching and learning. Research & Policy Brief. *National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality*.

- Goff, P., Edward Guthrie, J., Goldring, E., & Bickman, L. (2014). Changing principals' leadership through feedback and coaching. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 52(5), 682-704. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-10-2013-0113>
- Goldhaber, D. (2007). *Principal compensation: More research needed on a promising reform*. Center for American Progress. [https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2007/12/pdf/principal\\_pay.pdf](https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2007/12/pdf/principal_pay.pdf)
- Goldhaber, D. (2010). *When the stakes are high, can we rely on value-added? Exploring the use of value-added models to inform teacher workforce decisions*. Center for American Progress. <https://americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/12/pdf/vam.pdf>
- Goldhaber, D., & Anthony, E. (2004). *Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? National Board certification as a signal of effective teaching*. Center on Reinventing Public Education.
- Goldring, E., Grissom, J. A., Rubin, M., Neumerski, C. M., Cannata, M., Drake, T., & Schuermann, P. (2015). Make room value added: Principals' human capital decisions and the emergence of teacher observation data. *Educational Researcher*, 44(2), 96-104. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X15575031>
- Golding, C., & Adam, L. (2016). Evaluate to improve: Useful approaches to student evaluation. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2014.976810>
- Goldhorn, J., Kearney, W.S., & Webb, M. (2013, May). Classroom walkthrough practices: Lessons learned from 10,000 observations. *National Forum of Educational Administration & Supervision Journal*, 30(3), 21–28. <http://www.nationalforum.com/Journals/NFEASJ/NFEASJ.htm>

Goldstein, D. (2014). *The teacher wars: A history of America's most embattled profession*.  
Doubleday.

Gordon, R. J., Kane, T. J., & Staiger, D. O. (2006). Identifying effective teachers using  
performance on the job. Brookings Institution

Griffin, L. (2013). Charlotte Danielson on teacher evaluation and quality. *School  
Administrator*, 70(1), 27-31. <https://www.aasa.org/schooladministrator.aspx>

Grissom, J.A., & Loeb, S. (2017). Assessing principals' assessments: Subjective evaluations of  
teacher effectiveness in low-and high-stakes environments. *Education Finance and  
Policy*, 12(3), 369-395. [https://doi.org/10.1162/EDFP\\_a\\_00210](https://doi.org/10.1162/EDFP_a_00210)

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic  
inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 29(2), 75-92.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02766777>

Guskey, T. R. (2009). Closing the knowledge gap on effective professional development.  
*Educational Horizons*, 87(4), 224-233. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42923773>

Guskey, T. R. (2014). Planning professional learning. *Educational Leadership*, 71(8), 10.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>

Guskey, T. R., & Yoon, K. S. (2009). What works in professional development? *Phi Delta  
Kappan*, 90(7), 495-500. doi:10.2307/20446159

Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and  
transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329-351.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000122005>

- Hallinger, P., Heck, R. H., & Murphy, J. (2014). Teacher evaluation and school improvement: An analysis of the evidence. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 26(1), 5-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-013-9179-5>
- Halverson, R., Kelley, C., & Kimball, S. (2004). Implementing teacher evaluation systems: How principals make sense of complex artifacts to shape local instructional practice. *Educational Administration, Policy, and Reform: Research and Measurement*, 153-188.
- Hancock, D. R., & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers*. Teachers College Press
- Haney, W. (2000). The myth of the Texas miracle in education. *Education Analysis Policy Archives*, 8(41). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v8n41.2000>
- Hannaway, J., & Rotherham, A.J., (2010). *Collective bargaining in education: Negotiating change in today's school*. Harvard Education Press.
- Hanushek, E. A. (1979). Conceptual and Empirical Issues in the Estimation of Educational Production Functions. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 14(3), 351-388. <http://doi.org/10.2307/145575>
- Hanushek, E. A. (2009). Teacher deselection. In D. Goldhaber & J. Hannaway (Eds.), *Creating a New Teaching Profession* (pp. 165-180). Urban Institute Press.
- Hanushek, E. A. (2011). The economic value of higher teacher quality. *Economics of Education Review*, 30(3), 466-479. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2010.12.006>
- Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2012). The distribution of teacher quality and implications for policy. *Annual Review of Economics*, 4, 131-157. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080511-111001>

- Hargreaves, A. (2000). Four ages of professionalism and professional learning. *Teachers and Teaching: History and Practice*, 6(2), 151-182. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/713698714>
- Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2011). *The far side of educational reform*. Canadian Teachers' Federation. [https://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/Report\\_EducationReform2012\\_EN\\_web.pdf](https://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/Report_EducationReform2012_EN_web.pdf)
- Harris, D. N. (2011). *Value-added measures in education: What every educator needs to know*. Harvard Education Press.
- Harris, D. N., & Sass, T. R. (2014). Skills, productivity and the evaluation of teacher performance. *Economics of Education Review*, 40, 183-204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2014.03.002>
- Hazi, H. M., & Arredondo Rucinski, D. (2009). Teacher evaluation as a policy target for improved student learning: A fifty-state review of statute and regulatory action since NCLB. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 17(5), 1-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v17n5.2009>
- Hazi, H., & Arredondo Rucinski, D. (2016). Teacher evaluation and professional development: How legal mandates encroach on core principles of supervision. In J. Glanz & S. J. Zepeda (Eds.), *Supervision: New perspectives for theory and practice* (pp. 187-200). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hazi, H. M. (2017). VAM under scrutiny: Teacher evaluation litigation in the states. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 90(5-6), 184–190. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2017.1366803>

- Hazi, H. M. (2019). Coming to understand the wicked problem of teacher evaluation. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds) *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 183-208). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons
- Hess, F. M., & West, M. R. (2006). A better bargain: Overhauling teacher collective bargaining for the 21st century. *Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University*.  
<https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/BetterBargain.pdf>
- Hess, F. M., McShane, M. Q., & Eden, M. (2014). Race to the Top. In D. J. Brewer & L. O. Picus (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Education Economics and Finance* (pp. 608-611). Sage Publications.
- Hochberg, E. D., & Desimone, L. M. (2010). Professional development in the accountability context: Building capacity to achieve standards. *Educational Psychologist, 45*(2), 89-106.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/0046152100370305>
- Hommeyer, C. (2015, January 26). The benefits of lengthening the tenure process for California public school teachers. *Teacher Leadership Organization, Huffpost*.  
[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/teach-plus/the-benefits-of-lengtheni\\_b\\_6546750.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/teach-plus/the-benefits-of-lengtheni_b_6546750.html)
- Hopkins, P. (2016). Teacher voice: How teachers perceive evaluations and how leaders can use this knowledge to help teachers grow professionally. *NASSP Bulletin, 100*(1), 5–25.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/0192636516670771>
- Howard, B., & Gullickson, A. (2010). Setting standards for teacher evaluation. In M. Kennedy, *Teacher assessment and the quest for teacher quality: A handbook* (pp. 337-353). John Wiley & Sons.
- Hudson, L. A., & Ozanne, J. L. (1988). Alternative ways of seeking knowledge in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 14*(4), 508-521. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209132>

Hull, J. (2011, March 31). Building a better evaluation system: At a glance.

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/Building-A-Better-Evaluation-System/default.aspx>

Ingle, W.K., Willis, C., & Fritz, J. (2015). Collective bargaining agreement provisions in the wake of Ohio teacher evaluation system legislation. *Educational Policy*, 29(1), 18-50.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0895904814559249>

Ingersoll, R. M. (2007). Short on power, long on responsibility. *Educational Leadership*, 65(1), 20–25. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & May, H. (2016). Do accountability policies push teachers out? *Educational Leadership*, 73(8), 44-49. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/archived-issues.aspx>

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, E., Stuckey, D., & Collins, G. (2018). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force. Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Ingersoll R. M., & Collins, G. J. (2019). Accountability, control, and teachers' work in American schools. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds.), *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 159-182). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.

Ingle, W. K., & Lindle, J. C. (2019). A policy and political history of educational supervision. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds.), *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 17-44). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.

Jackson, D. S. (2000). School improvement journey: Perspectives on leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 20(1), 61-78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430068888>

- Jackson, C. K., Rockoff, J. E., & Staiger, D. O. (2014). Teacher effects and teacher-related policies. *Annual Review of Economics*, 6(1), 801-825. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-080213-040845>
- Jacob, B. A., & Lefgren, L. (2008). Can principals identify effective teachers? Evidence on subjective performance evaluation in education. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 26(1), 106-136. <https://doi.org/10.1086/522974>
- Jimenez, A. M., & Zepeda, S. J. (2016). Building the plane in flight: Establishing post hoc interrater reliability coefficients in an educational context. *SAGE Research Methods Cases*. <http://doi.org/10.4135/9781473958050>
- Jones, M. D. (2015). How do teachers respond to tenure? *IZA J Labor Econ*, 4(8). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40172-015-0024-6>
- Joseph, N. (2014, July). Teacher tenure. *NCTQ*. <https://www.nctq.org/blog/July-2014:-Teacher-Tenure>
- Kahlenberg, R. D. (2016). Teacher tenure has a long history and, hopefully, a future. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 97(6), 16-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0031721716636866>
- Kane, T. J., McCaffrey, D. F., Miller, T., & Staiger, D. O. (2013). Have we identified effective teachers? Validating measures of effective teaching using random assignment. *Research Paper, MET Project. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*. <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org>
- Kane, T. J., & Staiger, D. O. (2012). *Gathering feedback for teaching: Combining high-quality observations with student surveys and achievement gains*. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. <http://k12education.gatesfoundation.org>

- Kane, T.J., Taylor, E.S., Tyler, J.H., & Wooten, A.L. (2011). Evaluating teacher effectiveness: Can classroom observations identify practices that raise achievement? *Education Next*, 11(3), 54-61. <https://www.educationnext.org/the-journal/>
- Kennedy, M. M. (2010). Attribution error and the quest for teacher quality. *Educational Researcher*, 39(8), 591-598. <http://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X10390804>
- Khachatryan, E. (2015). Feedback on teaching from observations of teaching: What do administrators say and what do teachers think about it? *NASSP Bulletin*, 99(2), 164-188. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0192636515583716>
- Kim, J., & Youngs, P. (2015). Promoting instructional improvement or resistance? A comparative study of teachers' perceptions of teacher evaluation policy in Korea and the USA. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 46(5), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2015.1057478>
- Kimball, S. M., Arrigoni, J., Clifford, M., Yoder, M., & Milanowski, A. (2015). *District leadership for effective principal evaluation and support*. U.S. Department of Education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED566525.pdf>
- Kirkpatrick, C.L., & Johnson, S.M. (2014). Ensuring the ongoing engagement of second-stage teachers. *Journal of Educational Change*, 15(3), 231-252. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-014-9231-3>
- Klassen, R.M., & Chiu, M.M. (2010). Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(3), 741-756. doi: 10.1037/a0019237

Klein, S. P., Hamilton, L. S., McCaffrey, D. F., & Stecher, B. M. (2000). What do test scores in Texas tell us? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(49), 1-22.

<https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v8n49.2000>

Klein, A. (2015, April). No Child Left Behind: An overview. *Education Week*.

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/no-child-left-behind-overview-definition-summary.html>

Klein, J. (2011, June). The failure of American schools. *Atlantic Monthly*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/06/the-failure-of-american-schools/308497/>

Klein, H. K., & Myers, M. D. (1999). A set of principles for conducting and evaluating interpretive field studies in information systems. *MIS Quarterly*, 23(1), 67-94.

<http://doi.org/10.2307/249410>

Kowalski, T. J., & Dolph, D. A. (2015). Principal dispositions regarding the Ohio teacher evaluation system. *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice*, 11(4).

<https://www.aasa.org/jsp.aspx>

Kraft, M. A., & Gilmour, A. F. (2017). Revisiting the widget effect: Teacher evaluation reforms and the distribution of teacher effectiveness. *Educational Researcher*, 46(5), 234-249.

<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X17718797>

Kraft, M. A., & Gilmour, A. F. (2016). Can principals promote teacher development as evaluators? A case study of principals' views and experiences. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 52(5), 711-753.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X16653445>

- Kupermintz, H. (2003). Teacher effects and teacher effectiveness: A validity investigation of the Tennessee value added assessment system. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(3), 287-298. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F01623737025003287>
- Lacireno-Paquet, N., Bocala, C., & Bailey, J. (2016). *Relationship between school professional climate and teachers' satisfaction with the evaluation process* (REL 2016–133). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory North east & Islands. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.
- Ladd, H.F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 33(2), 235-261. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0162373711398128>
- Lambert, L., Zimmerman, D.P., & Gardner, M. E. (2016). *Liberating leadership capacity: Pathways to Educational Wisdom*. Teacher College Press
- Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(1), 35-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390500450144>
- Lavigne, A. L. (2014). Exploring the intended and unintended consequences of high-stakes teacher evaluation on schools, teachers, and students. *Teachers College Record*, 116(1). <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=17294>
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2010). *Practical research: Planning and design* (9th ed.). Prentice Hall.

- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), 27-42.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701800060>
- Lester, S. (1999). *An introduction to phenomenological research*. Stan Lester Developments.  
<http://devmts.org.uk/resmethy.pdf>
- Lincoln Y. S., Guba E. G. (2012). *The constructivist credo*. Left Coast Press
- Loeb, S., Miller, L. C., & Wyckoff, J. (2015). Performance screens for school improvement: The case of teacher tenure reform in New York City. *Educational Researcher*, 44(4), 199-212. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X15584773>
- Lohman, J. (2010, June 4). *Comparing the No Child Left Behind Act and the Race to the Top*. OLR Research Report. <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-R-0235.htm>
- Lunenburg, F. C. (2019). National policy/standards: Changes in instructional supervision since the implementation of recent federal legislation. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds.), *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 381-406). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.
- Marshall, K. (2009). *Rethinking teacher supervision and evaluation: How to work smart, build collaboration, and close the achievement gap*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Marshall, K. (2013). *Rethinking teacher supervision and evaluation: How to work smart, build collaboration, and close the achievement gap* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons
- Marzano, R. (2012). The two purposes of teacher evaluation. *Educational Leadership*, 70(3), 14-19. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership.aspx>
- Marzano, R. J., Frontier, T., & Livingston, D. (2011). *Effective supervision: Supporting the art and science of teaching*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- Marzano, R. J., & Toth, M. D. (2013). *Teacher evaluation that makes a difference: A new model for teacher growth and student achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Maslow, V. J., & Kelley, C. J. (2012). Does evaluation advance teaching practice? The effects of performance evaluation on teaching quality and system change in large diverse high schools. *Journal of School Leadership*, 22(3), 600-632.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F105268461202200307>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- May, H., & Supovitz, J. A. (2011). The scope of principal efforts to improve instruction. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(2), 332-352.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0013161X10383411>
- Mayer, M., & Phillips, V. L. (2012). *Primary Sources 2012: America's teachers on the teaching profession*. Scholastic & Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.  
[http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Gates2012\\_full.pdf](http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Gates2012_full.pdf)
- McGreal, T. L. (1983). *Successful teacher evaluation*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McGreal, T. L., & Wood, F. H. (1988). Clarifying relationships and connections: Supervision, teacher evaluation and staff development. *Wingspan*, 4(2), 13-15.
- McGuinn, P. (2010). *Ring the bell for K-12 teacher tenure reform*. Center for American Progress. [https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/02/pdf/teacher\\_tenure.pdf](https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/02/pdf/teacher_tenure.pdf)
- McGuinn, P. (2010, May 3). The time is right for teacher-tenure reform. *Education Week*.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/05/03/31mcguinn.h29.html?qs=tenure>

- McGuinn, P. (2016). From No Child Left behind to the Every Student Succeed Act: Federalism and the education legacy of the Obama administration. *The Journal of Federalism*, 46(3), 392-415. <http://doi.org/10.1093/publius/pjw014>
- McNeil, M., & Klein, A. (2011, September). Obama offers waivers from key provisions of NCLB. *Education Week*.  
[https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/09/28/05waiver\\_ep.h31.html](https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/09/28/05waiver_ep.h31.html)
- Mendels, P., & Mitgang, L. D. (2013). Creating strong principals. *Educational Leadership*, 70(7), 22-29. <http://www.ascd.org/Default.aspx>
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S.B. (2008). Adult learning theory for the twenty-first century. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2008(119), 93-98. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.309>
- Merriam S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Mette, I. M., Anderson, J., Nieuwenhuizen, L., Range, B. G., Hvidston, D. J., & Doty, J. (2017). The wicked problem of the intersection between supervision and evaluation. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 9(3), 709-724.  
<https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE>
- Mette, I. M., & Riegel, L. (2018). Supervision, systems thinking, and the impact of American school reform efforts on instructional leadership. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 21(4), 34-51. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1555458918759696>

- Milanowski, A. T., Kimball, S. M., & White, B. (2004). The relationship between standards-based teacher evaluation scores and student achievement: Replication and extension at three sites. Wisconsin Center for Education Research.
- Minghui, L., Lei, H., Xiaomeng, C., & Potmėšilc, M. (2018). Teacher efficacy, work engagement, and social support among Chinese special education school teachers. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 648. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00648>
- Mojavezi, A., & Tamiz, M.P. (2012). The impact of teacher self-efficacy on the students' motivation and achievement. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, 2(3). doi:10.4304/tpis.2.3.483-491
- Morgan, G.B., Hodge, K.J., Trepinski, T.M., & Anderson, L.W. (2014). The stability of teacher performance and effectiveness: Implications for policies concerning teacher evaluation. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(95). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v22n95.2014>
- Morse, J. M., & Niehaus, L. (2009). *Mixed method design: Principles and procedures*. Left Coast Press, Inc. <https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE/article/view/185>
- Nandi, J. K., (2011). Perception and performance: Administrators vs. teachers. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 8(3), 19-30. <https://www.scms.edu.in/journal/>
- Nappi, J. S. (2014). The teacher leader: Improving schools by building social capital through shared leadership. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 80(4), 29-34. <https://www.dkg.org>
- National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). (2011). *State of the states: Trends and early lessons on teacher evaluation and effectiveness policies*. [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/State\\_of\\_the\\_States\\_Teacher\\_Evaluation\\_and\\_Effectiveness\\_Policies\\_NCTQ\\_Report](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/State_of_the_States_Teacher_Evaluation_and_Effectiveness_Policies_NCTQ_Report)

- National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). (2015). *State of the states: Evaluating teaching, leading, and learning*. <https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/StateofStates2015>
- National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). (2017a). Running in place: How new teacher evaluations fail to live up to promises. [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Final\\_Evaluation\\_Paper](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Final_Evaluation_Paper)
- National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). (2017b). 2017 State teacher policy yearbook: National summary. [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ\\_2017\\_State\\_Teacher\\_Policy\\_Yearbook](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ_2017_State_Teacher_Policy_Yearbook)
- National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). (2018). *Walking the tightrope: Teacher effectiveness and personnel policies*. [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ\\_Walking\\_the\\_Tightrope\\_2018](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ_Walking_the_Tightrope_2018)
- Newton, X. A., Darling-Hammond, L., Haertel, E., & Thomas, E. (2010). Value-added modeling of teacher effectiveness: An exploration of stability across models and contexts. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 18 (23). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v18n23.2010>
- Njiru, L.M. (2014). Job satisfaction and motivation among teachers of Kiharu District in Kenya. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(5), 135-135. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n5p135>
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107–110, § 115, Stat. 1425.
- Nolan, J. F., & Hoover, L. A. (2008). *Teacher supervision and evaluation: Theory into practice* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Oliva, P. F., & Pawlas, G. E. (2004). *Supervision for today's schools*. Jossey-Bass,

- Orfield, G., & Kornhaber, M. L. (Eds.). (2001). *Raising standards or raising barriers? Inequality and high-stakes testing in public education*. The Century Foundation Press.
- Papay, J. P. (2012). Refocusing the debate: Assessing the purposes and tools of teacher evaluation. *Harvard Educational Review*, 82(1), 123–141.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.82.1.v40p0833345w6384>
- Parise, L.M., & Spillane, J.P. (2010). Teacher learning and instructional change: How formal and on-the-job learning opportunities predict change in elementary school teachers' practice. *The Elementary School Journal*, 110(3), 323-346.  
<https://doi.org/10.1086/648981>
- Patton, M.Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Paufler, N. A., & Amrein-Beardsley, A. (2014). The random assignment of students into elementary classrooms: Implications for value-added analyses and interpretations. *American Educational Research Journal*, 51(2), 328-362.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0002831213508299>
- Pennington, K. (2014). ESEA waivers and teacher-evaluation plans: State oversight of district-designed teacher-evaluation systems. Center for American Progress.  
<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/TeacherEvalWaivers-FINAL.pdf>
- Peterson, K.D., & Peterson, C.A. (2006). *Effective teacher evaluation: A guide for principals*. Corwin Press.
- Pierce, D. (2016). ESSA redefines professional development for teacher. Are you ready for this shift? *Frontline Education*. <http://www.schoolimprovement.com/essa-professional-development-for-teachers/>

Pivovarova, M., Amrein-Beardsley, A., & Broatch, J. (2016). Value-Added Models (VAMs): Caveat Emptor. *Statistics and Public Policy*, 3(1), 1-9.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2330443X.2016.1164641>

Polikoff, M.S. (2015). The stability of observational and student survey measures of teaching effectiveness. *American Journal of Education*, 121(2), 183-212.

<https://doi.org/10.1086/679390>

Ponticell, J.A., & Zepeda, S.J. (2004). Confronting well-learned lessons in supervision and evaluation. *The NASSP Bulletin*, 88(639), 43-59.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/019263650408863905>

Ponticell, J., Zepeda, S.J., Lanoue, P.D., Haines, J.G., Jimenez, A.M., & Ata, A. (2019). Observation, feedback, and reflection. In S.J., Zepeda & J.A., Ponticell (Eds.) (pp. 251-279). *The Wiley handbook of educational supervision*. Blackwell/John Wiley & Sons.

Popham, W. J. (1988). The dysfunctional marriage of formative and summative teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 1(3), 269-273.

<http://doi.org/10.1007/BF00123822>

Popham, W. J. (2013). On serving two masters: Formative and summative teacher evaluation. *Principal Leadership*, 13(7), 18-22. <https://www.nassp.org/news-and-resources/publications/principal-leadership>

Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the postpositivist traditions*. Routledge.

Pressley, T., Roehrig, A. D., & Turner, J. E. (2018). Elementary teachers' perceptions of a reformed teacher-evaluation system. *The Teacher Educator*, 53(1), 21-43.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2017.1391362>

- Pullin, D. (2013). Legal issues in the use of student test scores and value-added models (VAM) to determine educational quality. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 21(6).  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v21n6.2013>
- Range, B. G., Finch, K., Young, S., & Hvidston, D. J. (2014). Teachers' perceptions based on tenure status and gender about principals' supervision. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 9(1), 153-170. <https://www.icpel.org/ijelp.html>
- Range, B.G., Young, S., & Hvidston, D. (2013). Teacher perceptions about observation conferences: what do teachers think about their formative supervision in one US school district? *School Leadership & Management*, 33(1), 61-77.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2012.724670>
- Reeder, S. (2005). The hidden costs of tenure: Why are failing teachers getting a passing grade? An investigative report by Small Newspaper Group.  
<https://www.nctq.org/nctq/research/1135269736359.pdf>
- Reid, D. B. (2017). US principals' interpretation and implementation of teacher evaluation policies. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(5), 1457. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/>
- Reinhorn, S. K., Johnson, S. M., & Simon, N. S. (2017). Investing in development: Six high-performing, high-poverty schools implement the Massachusetts teacher evaluation policy. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 39(3), 383-406.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0162373717690605>
- Rentner, D. S., Kober, N., Frizzell, M., & Ferguson, M. (2016). *Listen to us: Teacher views and voices*. Center on Education Policy. <https://www.cep-dc.org>

- Resnick, B. (2001, December). The mess of No Child Left Behind. *The Atlantic*.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2011/12/the-mess-of-no-child-left-behind/250076/>
- Rice, J. K., & Hoyer, K. M. (2014). Professional development. In D. Brewer & L. Picus (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Education Economics and Finance* (pp. 559-562). Sage Publications.
- Richards, L., & Morse, J. M. (2013). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Rigby, J. G. (2015). Principals' sensemaking and enactment of teacher evaluation. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 53(3), 374-392. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-04-2014-0051>
- Robertson-Kraft, C., & Zhang, R. S. (2018). Keeping great teachers: A case study on the impact and implementation of a pilot teacher evaluation system. *Educational Policy*, 32(3), 363-394. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0895904816637685>
- Robinson, H. R. (2003). Tenure: What are the benefits for children? Georgia Public Policy Foundation.
- Rockoff, J. E., & Speroni, C. (2010). *Subjective and objective evaluations of teacher effectiveness*. Columbia University.
- Rockoff, J.E., Staiger, D.O., Kane, T.J., & Taylor, E.S. (2012). Information and employee evaluation: Evidence from a randomized intervention in public schools. *American Economic Review*, 102(7), 3184-3213. doi:10.1257/aer.102.7.3184
- Rooney, E. (2015). "I'm just going through the motions": High-stakes accountability and teachers' access to intrinsic rewards. *American Journal of Education*, 121(4), 475-500.  
<https://doi.org/10.1086/681923>

- Ross, D.J., & Cozzens, J.A. (2016). The principalship: Essential core competencies for instructional leadership and its impact on school climate. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 4(9), 162-176. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11114/jets.v4i9.1562>
- Rothstein, J. (2009). Student sorting and bias in Value-Added estimation: Selection on observables and unobservables. *Education Finance and Policy*, 4(4), 537-571. <https://doi.org/10.1162/edfp.2009.4.4.537>
- Rothstein, J. (2010). Teacher quality in educational production: Tracking, decay, and student achievement. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 125(1), 175-214. <https://doi.org/10.1162/qjec.2010.125.1.175>
- Rothstein, J. (2015). Teacher quality policy when supply matters. *American Economic Review*, 105(1), 100-130. <http://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20121242>
- Ruffini, S., Makkonen, R., Tejwani, J., & Diaz, M. (2014). *Principal and teacher perceptions of implementation of multiple-measure teacher evaluation systems in Arizona* (REL 2015–062). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory West. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Sass, D.A., Flores, B.B., Claeys, L., & Pérez, B. (2012). Identifying personal and contextual factors that contribute to attrition rates for Texas Public School Teachers. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 20(15), 1-26. <http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/967>
- Sawchuk, S. (2016). ESSA loosens reins on teacher evaluations, qualifications. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/01/06/essa-loosens-reins-on-teacher-evaluations-qualifications.html>

- Scherrer, J. (2012). What's the value of VAM (value-added modeling)? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(8), 58-60. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003172171209300814>
- Schwandt, T. A. (2007). *The SAGE dictionary of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Schwartz, R., Robinson, M., Kirst, M., & Kirp, D. (2000). Goals 2000 and the standards movement. *Brookings Papers on Education Policy*, 3(2000), 173-214.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20067222>
- Scriven, M. (1991). Beyond formative and summative evaluation. In J.S. Wholey, H.P. Hatry, & K.E. Newcomer (Eds.), *Evaluation and education: A quarter century* (pp. 40-48). University of Chicago Press.
- Seidman, I. E. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide to researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Sipe, L. & Constable, S. (1996). A chart of four paradigms: Metaphors for the modes of inquiry. *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, 1, 153-163.
- Skaalvik, E.M., & Skaalvik, S. (2015). Job satisfaction, stress and coping strategies in the teaching profession-what do teachers say? *International Education Studies*, 8(3), 181-192. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v8n3p181>
- Snowden, J. (2009). Fixing tenure: A proposal for assuring teacher effectiveness and due process. Center for American Progress.  
[http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/06/teacher\\_tenure.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/06/teacher_tenure.html).
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretive phenomenological analysis: Theory, method, and research*. Sage Publications.

- Spillane, J. P., & Kenney, A. W. (2012). School administration in a changing education sector: The US experience. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 50(5), 541-561.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231211249817>
- Staiger, D. O., & Rockoff, J. E. (2010). Searching for effective teachers with imperfect information. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 24(3), 97-118.  
<http://doi.org/10.1257/jep.24.3.97>
- Stout, J., Kachur, D., & Edwards, C. (2013). *Classroom walkthroughs to improve teaching and learning*. Routledge.
- Stringer, E. T. (2014). *Action research*. Sage publications.
- Stronge, J.H. (2010). *Evaluating what good teachers do: Eight research-based standards for assessing teacher excellence*. Eye on Education.
- Stronge, J. H. (2013). *Principal evaluation: A framework for principal evaluation*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Stryer, M., Teoh, M., Blackwell, L., & Hommeyer, C. (2015). *Raising the bar: The views of California teachers on tenure, layoffs, and dismissal*. Teacher Plus. <https://teachplus.org>
- Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques* (4th edition). Corwin Press.
- Superfine, B. (2011). Stimulating school reform: The American recovery and reinvestment act and the shifting federal role in education. *Missouri Law Review*, 76(1), 81.  
<https://scholarship.law.missouri.edu/mlr/vol76/iss1/4>
- Swan, B.G., Wolf, K.J., & Cano, J. (2011). Changes in teacher self-efficacy from the student teaching experience through the third year of teaching. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 52(2), 128-139. <http://aaaeonline.org/Journal-of-Ag-Education>

Sweigart, C.A., & Collins, L.W. (2017). Supporting the needs of beginning special education teachers and their students. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49(4), 209-212.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0040059917695264>

Taylor, E.S., & Tyler, J.H. (2012). The effect of evaluation on teacher performance. *American Economic Review*, 102(7), 3628-51. doi: 10.1257/aer.102.7.3628

The Aspen Institute. (2014). *Leading from the front of the classroom: A roadmap to teacher leadership that works*. The Aspen Institute.

<http://www.aspendri.org/portal/browse/DocumentDetail?documentId=2402&download>

The National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. U.S. Department of Education.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED226006.pdf>

Thibodeaux, A.K., Labat, M.B., Lee, D.E., & Labat, C.A. (2015). The effects of leadership and high-stakes testing on teacher retention. *Academy of Educational Leadership*

*Journal*, 19(1), 227. <https://www.abacademies.org/journals/academy-of-educational-leadership-journal-home.html>

Thomsen, J. (2014). *Teacher performance plays growing role in employment decisions. Teacher tenure: Trends in state laws*. Education Commission of the States.

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/12/44/11244.pdf>

Thorburn, M. (2011). "Still game": An analysis of the life history and career disappointments of one veteran male teacher of physical education in Scotland. *Educational Review*, 63(3),

329-343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2011.571762>

Toch, T., & Rothman, R. (2008). *Rush to judgment: Teacher evaluation in public education*. Education Sector.

- Torff, B., & Byrnes, K. (2011). Differences across academic subjects in teachers' attitudes about professional development. *The Educational Forum*, 75(1), 26-36.  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2010.528553>
- Toropova, A., Myrberg, E., & Johansson, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction: the importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics. *Educational Review*, 73(1), 71-97.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1705247>
- Tripamer, A. J., Reeves, A. G., & Meinz, E. J. (2014). Teacher perceptions of teacher evaluations in the Fort Zumwalt school district. *NCPEA Education Leadership Review of Doctoral Research*, 1(1), 58–74. <https://www.icpel.org/elrdr.html>
- Tschannen, M., & Gareis, C.H. (2019). Discretion and trust in professional supervisory practices. In S.J., Zepeda & J.A., Ponticell (Eds.) (pp. 209-228). *The Wiley handbook of educational supervision*. Blackwell/John Wiley & Sons.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and teacher education*, 17(7), 783-805.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(01\)00036-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(01)00036-1)
- Tucker, P. D., & Stronger, J. (2005). *Linking teacher evaluation and student learning*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tuttas, C. A. (2015). Lessons learned using web conference technology for online focus group interviews. *Qualitative Health Research*, 25(1), 122-133.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1049732314549602>
- Tuytens, M., & Devos, G. (2009). Teachers' perception of the new teacher evaluation policy: A validity study of the policy characteristics scale. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(6), 924-930. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.02.014>

- Tuytens, M., & Devos, G. (2014). How to activate teachers through teacher evaluation? *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 25(4), 509-530.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2013.842601>
- Tyler, J. H., Taylor, E. S., Kane, T. J., & Wooten, A. L. (2010). Using student performance data to identify effective classroom practices. *American Economic Review*, 100(2), 256-260.  
<http://doi.org/10.1257/aer.100.2.256>
- U.S. Congress (2009). *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*. H.R. 1. 111th Cong., 1st sess. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-111hr1enr/pdf/BILLS-111hr1enr.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *New No Child Left Behind flexibility: Highly qualified teachers*. U.S. Department of Education.  
<http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/hqtflexibility.html>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2009). *Race to the Top Program executive summary*. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/executive-summary.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Education (2011a). *Duncan says 82 percent of America's schools could "fail" under NCLB this year* [Press release]. <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/duncan-says-82-percent-americas-schools-could-fail-under-nclb-year>
- U.S. Department of Education (2011b). *Department of Education awards \$200 million to seven states to advance K-12 reform* [Press release]. <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/department-education-awards-200-million-seven-states-advance-k-12-reform>

- U.S. Department of Education (2012). *ESEA flexibility: Review guidance*. Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility/documents/review-guidance.doc>.
- Warsame, K., & Valles, J. (2018). An analysis of effective support structures for novice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education and Educators*, 7(1), 17-42.  
<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/jtee>
- Watkins, P. (2015). Mediating teachers as learners: Conversations from shared experience. *Administrative Issues Journal: Education, Practice, and Research*, 5(2), 82-93.  
<http://doi.org/10.5929/2015.5.2.3>
- Watson, J.M. (2018). Job embeddedness may hold the key to the retention of novice talent in schools. *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development*, 29(1), 26-43. <http://www.capea.org/publications>
- Wei, R.C., Darling-Hammond, L., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. National Staff Development Council and Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy and Education.
- Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009). *The widget effect: Our national failure to acknowledge and act on differences in teacher effectiveness*. The New Teacher Project. [https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TheWidgetEffect\\_2nd\\_ed.pdf](https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TheWidgetEffect_2nd_ed.pdf)
- Weiss, S. (2003). *Highlights from the 2003 national forum on education policy: Nation at Risk continues to affect education system*. Education Commission of the States.  
<https://www.ecs.org>

- Wiseman, D. L. (2012). The intersection of policy, reform, and teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63(2), 87-91. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0022487111429128>
- Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2000). Educational psychology in teacher education. *Educational Psychologist*, 35(4), 257-270. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15326985EP3504\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15326985EP3504_04)
- Wyatt, M. (2014). Towards a re-conceptualization of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: Tackling enduring problems with the quantitative research and moving on. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 37(2), 166-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2012.742050>
- van der Lans, R. M., van de Grift, W. J., van Veen, K., & Fokkens-Bruinsma, M. (2016). Once is not enough: Establishing reliability criteria for feedback and evaluation decisions based on classroom observations. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 50, 88-95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2016.08.001>
- Vandewater, C. (2012, February). The history of teacher tenure [Blog Post]. <http://certificationmap.com/teacher-tenure-debate/>
- Vergara v. California*, No. BC484642 (LA Sup. Ct. 06/10/2014).
- Voelkel Jr, R.H., & Chrispeels, J.H. (2017). Understanding the link between professional learning communities and teacher collective efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 28(4), 505-526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2017.1299015>
- Yoo, J. H. (2016). The effect of professional development on teacher efficacy and teachers' self-analysis of their efficacy change. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 18(1), 84-94. doi: 10.1515/jtes-2016-0007

- Zee, M., & Koomen, H. M. (2016). Teacher self-efficacy and its effects on classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being: A synthesis of 40 years of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 981-1015.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0034654315626801>
- Zepeda, S. J. (2012). *Professional development: What works* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Zepeda, S. J. (2013). *The principal as instructional leader: A practical handbook* (3rd ed.). Eye on Education.
- Zepeda, S.J. (2015). Job-embedded professional development: Support, collaboration, and learning in schools. Routledge.
- Zepeda, S.J. (2016a). Principals' perspectives: Professional learning and marginal teachers on formal plans of improvement. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 1(1), 25-59. <http://doi.org/10.30828/real/2016.1.2>
- Zepeda, S.J. (2016b). *The leaders guide to working with underperforming teachers: Overcoming marginal teaching and getting results*. Routledge.
- Zepeda, S. J. (2017). *Instructional supervision: Applying tools and concepts* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Zepeda, S.J. (Ed.). (2018). *Making learning job-embedded: Cases from the field of instructional leadership*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Zepeda, S.J. (2019a). *Professional Development: What Works* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Zepeda, S.J. (2019b). Job-embedded professional learning: Federal legislation and national reports as levers. In M.L. Derrington & J. Brandon & (Eds.), *Differentiated teacher evaluation and professional learning: Policies and practices for promoting teacher career growth* (pp. 173-195). Palgrave Publishing.
- Zepeda, S.J., & Mayers, R.S. (2013). *Supervision across the content areas*. Routledge.

Zepeda, S.J., & Ponticell, J.A. (1998). At cross-purposes: What do teachers need, want, and get from supervision? *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 14(1), 68-87.

Zepeda, S.J., & Ponticell, J.A. (Eds.). (2019). Introduction. In S. J. Zepeda & J. A. Ponticell (Eds) *The Wiley Handbook of Educational Supervision* (pp. 1-14). Blackwell/Jon Wiley & Sons.

Zirkel, P. (2010). Teacher tenure is not the real problem. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(1), 76-77.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003172171009200116>

## APPENDIX A

### TEACHER CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant,

My name is Sevda Yildirim and I am a Ph.D. student in the Department Educational Administration and Policy Department at University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled “Understanding tenured teacher perspectives about the teacher evaluation processes.” The purpose of this study is to gain better understanding of tenured teachers’ perspectives about teacher evaluation processes.

Your participation will involve participating in three interviews that address teacher evaluation and supervision focusing on your experiences. Each interview will be approximately 60 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you have the right to not respond any questions that make you uncomfortable during the interviews. Moreover, you are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or prejudice.

To protect your privacy, no individually identifiable information about you will be shared with others. In fact, all identifiers will be converted to pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Interviews will be digitally audio recorded. Only the researcher will have access to identifying information and all digitally recorded interviews will be erased at the conclusion of the research. Transcriptions of interviews will be archived for future reference but will contain no identifying information.

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study except to add to your understandings about teacher evaluation. However, this study intends to provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers. There are no anticipated risks to participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Sevda Yildirim at (713) 449-9955 or send an e-mail to [syildirim@uga.edu](mailto:syildirim@uga.edu). Sally J. Zepeda, the study’s principal investigator, may also be contacted at [szepeda@uga.edu](mailto:szepeda@uga.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at (706) 542-5969 or [irb@uga.edu](mailto:irb@uga.edu)

You should retain a copy of this letter and your written consent for future reference. Please return this letter to [syildirim@uga.edu](mailto:syildirim@uga.edu)

Thank you very much for your time, and I greatly appreciate your help with this research study.

## APPENDIX B

### SCHOOL PRINCIPAL CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant,

My name is Sevda Yildirim and I am a Ph.D. student in the Department Educational Administration and Policy Department at University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled “Understanding tenured teacher perspectives about the teacher evaluation processes.” The purpose of this study is to gain better understanding of tenured teachers’ perspectives about teacher evaluation processes. Moreover, this study also aims to understand whether school principals’ approaches change to evaluate teacher performance once a teacher is granted tenure.

I will be conducting a one-hour, semi-structured interview to understand your approaches to evaluate teachers’ performance before a teacher is granted tenure, and after a teacher is granted tenure. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you have the right to not respond any questions that make you uncomfortable during the interview. Moreover, you are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or prejudice.

To protect your privacy, no individually identifiable information about you will be shared with others. In fact, all identifiers will be converted to pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Interviews will be digitally audio recorded. Only the researcher will have access to identifying information and all digitally recorded interviews will be erased at the conclusion of the research. Transcriptions of interview will be archived for future reference but will contain no identifying information.

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study except to add to your approach to evaluate teacher’s performance. However, this study intends to provide information that could be used to assist policymakers in revising teacher evaluation practices for tenured teachers. There are no anticipated risks to participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact Sevda Yildirim at (713) 449-9955 or send an e-mail to [syildirim@uga.edu](mailto:syildirim@uga.edu). Sally J. Zepeda, the study’s principal investigator, may also be contacted at [szepeda@uga.edu](mailto:szepeda@uga.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at (706) 542-5969 or [irb@uga.edu](mailto:irb@uga.edu)

You should retain a copy of this letter and your written consent for future reference. Please return this letter to [syildirim@uga.edu](mailto:syildirim@uga.edu)

Thank you very much for your time, and I greatly appreciate your help with this research study.

## APPENDIX C

### PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. I would like to begin our conversation by talking a little bit about yourself.

- Describe your background in education
- How long have you been a school principal?
- Your professional training as a school principal

Transition: I will now ask you some questions about your school's specific evaluation process and your role as an evaluator

**Research Question (3):** How do principals' approaches to evaluating teacher performance change once a teacher is granted tenure?

2. What do you think the purpose of evaluation is? Why?
3. Describe your school's evaluation process.
4. What is your approach to teacher evaluations as a principal?
5. How many people do you evaluate, and how frequently?

	Less Experience Teacher	Tenured Teacher
Formative Evaluation		
Summative Evaluation		

6. What do you think that teachers with less experience should be observed and evaluated more frequently, or that tenured teachers should be observed and evaluated less frequently, or not at all?
7. What do you think that it is fair to evaluate less experience teachers and tenured' teachers by using the same evaluation process?
8. How does evaluation fit into other professional development opportunities offered by your school?
9. What do you think that teachers with less experience should be supported more than tenured teachers?
10. What do you believe is your districts intended purpose of the teacher evaluation process?
11. Do you think teacher performance evaluation should be used to make decision about promotion, retention and dismissal? Why?
12. What types of professional development have you been involved in as it relates to teacher evaluation?
13. What do you feel you need in order to be an effective evaluator?
14. Would you have any suggestions regarding revisions to improve the evaluation process?

## APPENDIX D

### TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. I would like to begin our conversation by talking a little bit about yourself.
  - Tell me about your work as a teacher
  - How long have you been teaching?
  - How long have you been teaching at this school?

**Research Question (1):** How does being granted tenure influence the perspectives of tenured teachers in relation to the teacher evaluation process?

**Research Question (2):** How does going through the teacher evaluation process support teacher development?

**First Interview:** Now, I will ask you some questions about your perspectives about evaluation process.

2. What do you think is the purpose of teacher evaluation?
3. What would you describe as the ideal evaluation process?
4. What are your feelings about being evaluated?
5. What do you think about the role of evaluation system to improve teacher effectiveness? Do you believe that evaluation system can improve teacher effectiveness? Why or Why not?
6. How is professional learning connected to teacher evaluation process?
7. What do you think about the fairness of the evaluation? Do you feel evaluations are done fairly? Why or why not?
8. Do you feel that the teacher evaluation process is able to reflect your teaching ability accurately? Why or why not?
9. Do you feel that you have received adequate feedback from your evaluations? Why or why not?
10. Would you share other problems, issues or concerns you have with the present evaluation process in general?

**Second Interview:** This is our second interview. Now, I want to focus on your perspectives and your experiences about evaluation process during your probationary period. Please answer the following question by thinking about your first three years in teaching.

11. Please describe the nature of any evaluation process that you went through during your probationary years.
12. Describe your most successful teacher evaluation experience. What made it successful?

13. What types of emotions did you have when you were being evaluated?
14. How often were you observed? Were these observations announced?
15. How did you feel about the frequency of observations and the [announced/unannounced] status?
16. What types of professional development have you been involved in as it relates to teacher evaluation?
17. What kind of feedback did you receive? If you found this feedback effectively, tell me why or why not?
18. Did you make any decision about your own personal growth and professional development that was influenced by the feedback? What were they?
19. What other information or ideas about teacher evaluation for probationary teacher, would you like to share in this interview?

**Third Interview:** This is our third and final interview. Now, I want to focus on your perspectives and your experiences about evaluation process after you are granted with tenure.

20. Please describe the nature of any evaluation process that you went through once you are granted tenure.
21. Describe your most successful teacher evaluation experience. What made it successful?
22. What types of emotions did you have when you were being evaluated?
23. How often were you observed? Were these observations announced?
24. How did you feel about the frequency of observations and the [announced/unannounced] status?
25. What types of professional development have you been involved in as it relates to teacher evaluation?
26. What kind of feedback did you receive? If you found this feedback effectively, tell me why or why not?
27. Did you make any decision about your own personal growth and professional development that was influenced by the feedback? What were they?
28. How might your beliefs about teacher evaluation have changed over time? What are the reasons of these changes?
29. What other information or ideas about teacher evaluation for tenure teacher, would you like to share in this interview?

## APPENDIX E

### UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD



Tucker Hall, Room 212  
310 E. Campus Rd.  
Athens, Georgia 30602  
TEL 706-542-3199 | FAX 706-542-5638  
IRB@uga.edu  
<http://research.uga.edu/hso/irb/>

Human Research Protection Program

#### EXEMPT DETERMINATION

August 31, 2020

Dear [Sally Zepeda](#):

On 8/31/2020, the Human Subjects Office reviewed the following submission:

Title of Study:	Version VERSION00000586 - Understanding Early-Career Teachers' Perspectives about Teacher Evaluation Processes
Investigator:	<a href="#">Sally Zepeda</a>
Co-Investigator:	Sevda Yildirim
IRB ID:	VERSION00000586
Review Category:	Exempt 2ii

Modifications: add external site, adjust research protocol and documents to allow for remote procedures.  
Modifications approved.

Please note: research activities at an External Site may only begin once written authorization from an authorized representative of that External Site has been received and uploaded to the IRB Portal. Please submit the authorization/permission (via "Add Public Comment") when this becomes available.

We have determined that the proposed research is Exempt. The research activities may begin 8/31/2020.

Since this study was determined to be exempt, please be aware that not all future modifications will require review by the IRB. For more information please see Appendix C of the Exempt Research Policy (<https://research.uga.edu/docs/policies/compliance/hso/IRB/Exempt-Review.pdf>). As noted in Section C.2., you can simply notify us of modifications that will not require review via the "Add Public Comment" activity.