

# Coping with increased demands for teacher evaluation: School leaders' perceptions of problems and possibility<sup>1</sup>

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# STUDY RATIONALE

- School leaders:
  - are vital to the success of schools (James & McCormick, 2009; Louis, Dretzk, & Wahlstrom, 2010; Runhaar, Sanders, & Yang, 2010; Supovitz, Sirindies, & May, 2009)
  - take on a number of roles and tasks from mentor to evaluator and supervisor (Trail, 2000)
  
- A growing trend towards accountability has resulted in more rigorous evaluation of teachers
  
- School Leaders: The Principal
  - In the U.S., there are nearly 116,000 K-12 principals
    - 89, 810 are public school principals
    - Long hours on the job (Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013)

# BACKGROUND

- The principalship is evolving, complex, and challenging
  - The roles and expectations illustrate an increased emphasis on:
    - accountability, use of technology, fiscal changes, and changing student demographics (Matthews & Crow, 2003)
  - 69% of principals indicate that their tasks are *not* similar to five years ago
  - 75% of principals report that their job has become too complex
  - Principals' job satisfaction has decreased (MetLife Survey, 2013)
- Given the important role that school leaders play in schools, it is crucial to understand how revamped teacher evaluation is shaping the lives of those doing the evaluations (Herlihy et al., 2014)
- We examine school leaders' perceptions of teacher evaluation in particular, perceptions of:
  - teacher evaluator training
  - their ability to conduct evaluations well
  - various measures of teacher effectiveness
  - the effect of new teacher evaluation models on time
  - new teacher evaluation models and Race to the Top

# CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

- 2010, January
  - Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA)(Senate Bill 315; Public Act 96-0861)
  - Phase I, RTTT application
- 2010, June
  - Phase II, RTTT application
  - Common Core State Standards
- 2011, June
  - Illinois Senate Bill 7
- 2011, December
  - RTTT, Phase 3 winner
- 2012, September
  - PERA teacher evaluator training
  - A majority of school districts adopt principal and teacher evaluation plans that incorporate student growth
    - 4-category rating system



# METHOD

## ■ Procedures




- Illinois Principals Association & Midwest Principals' Center
  - Recruitment pool of approximately 6,000 school leaders
- 15-minute SurveyMonkey survey

## ■ Participants

- 606 K-12 principals (72%), assistant principals (25%), and others in evaluation roles (2%)
  - 51% male
  - 88% Caucasian
  - 73% held a Master's degree
  - Years of Experience (Position): 7 years ( $SD = 5.20$ )
  - Years of Experience (Evaluation): 58% indicated 7+ years
  - Level: 45% (Elementary), 29% (High School), 25% (Middle School)

# RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE

- Self Assessment of Knowledge and Ability to Conduct Teacher Evaluations

Survey Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
How would you judge your knowledge of those teaching behaviors most associated with student progress on standardized tests?	2.77 	0.63
How would you judge your knowledge of how to conduct formal classroom observations?	3.11 	0.53
How would you judge your ability to provide helpful feedback to a low-performing teacher?	2.96 	0.60

# RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE

## ■ Value Placed on Measures of Teacher Effectiveness

Survey Items: How much importance would you place on _____ as a measure of teacher effectiveness?	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Student evaluations of teachers	2.45	.81
Peer observations of teachers	2.56	.82
Student achievement data	2.23	.78
Observation data	3.23	.67
Additional artifacts (e.g., student work, classroom assessments)?	3.15	.71

# RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE

## ■ Raters

Survey Items: In comparison to your own rating on average,...

	how would students rate teachers?	how would teachers rate other teachers?
Considerably higher	5.1%	11.9%
A bit higher	58.9%	69.5%
A bit lower	30.7%	15.8%
Considerably lower	1.8%	.7%

**= 64%**

**= 81.4%**



# RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE

## ■ Assessment of Illinois Teacher Evaluator Training Program

Survey items: Teacher evaluator training improved my...	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
understanding of the Illinois Growth through Learning Performance Evaluation requirements and standards of practice.	3.03	.66
understanding of reliability.	2.83	.72
understanding of validity.	2.81	.73
ability to accurately rate teachers during an observation.	2.76	.78
ability to utilize student growth data as a measure of teacher effectiveness.	2.37	.72
overall ability to evaluate teachers.	2.88	.72

# RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE

- **Time Allocation for Teacher Evaluation**
  - Time spent evaluating a single teacher
    - 2012-2013
      - $M = 7.78$  hours,  $SD = 21.61$
    - 2013-2014
      - $M = 9.53$  hours,  $SD = 18.06$
  - Teacher evaluation vs. other tasks
    - 85% indicated that the new teacher evaluation model limits or somewhat limits time dedicated to other duties

# RESULTS: QUALITATIVE

## ■ Time Allocation for Teacher Evaluation

### ■ Costs

- New time requirements are very challenging for some principals

*“The tool takes much longer to complete and ensuring you have quality feedback and evidence is important. In small, rural schools where the principal is the evaluator, curriculum director, bus facilitator, disciplinarian, parent liaison, etc., it is difficult to get it all in.”*

- Longer hours on the job
- Other duties receive less attention

*“...[The new evaluation model] leaves little time to spend in classrooms of teachers you are not evaluating for the current year. It leaves little time to spend with students at lunch and recess. It leaves little time to improving instruction by planning valuable workshops, inservices and professional reading.”*

### ■ Benefits

- Improvement in instruction, more time spent in classrooms, more careful attention to the evaluation process

*“I am more focused on being accurate in my evaluation of teachers. I want to make sure they understand how they are being evaluated so I take longer in the pre and post conference and then conduct a post, post conference. During the general post conference, I share the evidence. I give them a copy of it and ask them to rate themselves. During the post, post conference, we sit down to compare.”*

# RESULTS: QUALITATIVE

## ■ Professional Development

- If you were to attend a one-day training session designed FOR YOU, what are the things that would be most helpful in your role for observing and providing teachers with feedback?
  - Observation and Observation Techniques
    - Walkthroughs, scripting, key elements to look for, specific tools (e.g., student engagement), tool design
  - Feedback
    - Model feedback (e.g., difficult conversations, performance levels), improvement (“actionable”)
  - Danielson Framework
    - Use in walkthroughs, nuanced understandings
  - Resources
    - Individual growth plans, teacher reflection, professional development for struggling teachers
  - Technology
    - Recording observations, iPad applications

# PROBLEMS & POSSIBILITY

- School leaders in our study:
  - Spend significant time evaluating teachers
    - What are the costs and benefits of spending more time on teacher evaluations and less time on other duties (e.g., student discipline)?
    - Revamped teacher evaluation places a “squeeze” on some school leaders more than others
  - Place high value on additional artifacts
    - What additional artifacts do school leaders believe to be the best measures of teacher effectiveness?
    - In what ways can research strengthen what is known about the use of additional artifacts in teacher evaluation?
  - Could benefit from professional development in a number of areas

QUESTIONS?

# THANK YOU

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