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## Understanding the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation and its effect on their professional practice: A mixed method phenomenological study

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UNDERSTANDING THE BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF MID-CAREER  
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARD TEACHER EVALUATION AND  
ITS EFFECT ON THEIR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: A MIXED-METHOD  
PHENOMONOLOGICAL STUDY

by

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A dissertation in practice submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Education  
in the College of Education and Human Performance  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

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2015

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed-method phenomenological study is to understand the beliefs and attitudes that mid-career secondary school teachers have regarding the teacher evaluation process and its effect on their professional practice. Mid-career secondary school teachers (defined as having between 14-21 years of classroom experience) from Bayview Public Schools were selected to participate. A total of 152 mid-career secondary school teachers completed an electronic survey. Additionally, a total of 9 participants took part in one-on-one semi-structured interviews.

The theoretical framework used to guide the study was the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1988; 1991) and Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977). The quantitative results from the electronic survey were used to augment qualitative data collected from interviews with willing participants.

The interviews with study participants were analyzed for emerging themes. In all, a total of nine emerging themes came to light through the analysis of interview data. The data revealed areas of concern regarding the current method of evaluating teachers in Bayview Public Schools. A presentation of the findings with regard to the theoretical framework, literature, and practice were presented. Furthermore, a list of recommendations was provided addressing the specific concerns of participating teachers. In conclusion, recommendations were also made concerning future research that might continue to add to the body of knowledge concerning teacher evaluation.

This work is dedicated to my family

I do not believe that there is such a thing as an individual achievement. When an individual is fortunate enough to achieve some modicum of success or achievement, it is the result of the support he or she has from their family. I am blessed beyond measure to have a family who never wavers in their support of me. I hope that I have made you proud.

In the immortal words of Brian Wilson, “God only knows what I’d be without you.”

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I consider the expertise, support, and compassion of Dr. Michelle Gill to be paramount to the success of this endeavor. The opportunity to work with her will always remain one of the most fulfilling experiences I have had during my academic journey.

I am forever indebted to my committee: Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, Dr. Cynthia Hutchinson, and Dr. Mark Mullins. Your expertise and guidance were critical in the successful completion of my work.

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I would like to thank the teachers of Bayview Public Schools who participated in this study. I would especially like to thank those teachers who agreed to be interviewed by me. Thank you for allowing me to hear your stories and share your voices.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family. Without your support and love, nothing I have done would be possible. To my wife Sarah, since the day you became my wife, I have tried to be a man worthy of you. I hope that with this accomplishment, I have taken one more step toward that goal. To my daughter Kendall, I hope that I make you proud. I am sure that when all of my accomplishments are judged, you will be deemed to have been my greatest accomplishment.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose and Scope of the Study.....	3
Importance of the Study for Practice .....	4
Study Setting.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	7
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Theory of Planned Behavior .....	8
Teacher Self-Efficacy .....	10
Research Questions.....	11
Limitations and Delimitations.....	11
Acknowledgement of the Researcher’s Role .....	12
Organization of the Study .....	12
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	14
Introduction.....	14
What has been the Evolution of Teacher Evaluation? .....	14
Teacher Evaluation: 1900-1939 .....	15
Teacher Evaluation: 1940-1959 .....	17
Teacher Evaluation: 1960-1989 .....	18
Teacher Evaluation 1990-Present .....	20
What is the Purpose of Teacher Evaluation? .....	21
The Professional Growth Model of Evaluation .....	23
Accountability Models of Evaluation .....	28
What Factors Contribute to Shaping Teacher Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Teacher Evaluation?.....	31
How are the Theories of Planned Behavior and Self-Efficacy Applicable to Teacher Evaluation?.....	37
Theory of Planned Behavior .....	37
Theory of Self-Efficacy .....	40
Summary .....	44
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND PROCEDURES .....	46
Introduction.....	46
Purpose.....	46
Research Questions.....	46
Selection of Participants .....	47
Instrumentation .....	48
Quantitative.....	48

Qualitative.....	53
Data Collection .....	54
Quantitative Data Collection.....	55
Qualitative Data Collection.....	55
Data Analysis .....	56
Quantitative.....	56
Qualitative.....	57
Summary.....	57
 CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS .....	 59
Introduction.....	59
Survey Results .....	59
Demographic Data of Survey Respondents .....	60
Descriptive Statistics for Survey Data .....	61
Summary of Survey Data.....	73
Interview Results .....	74
Interview Participant Demographics.....	74
Emerging Themes .....	75
Summary of Interview Data.....	82
Analysis of the Results in Relation to the Research Questions .....	82
Research Question One.....	84
Research Question Two .....	85
Research Question Three .....	86
Research Question Four.....	87
Summary.....	88
 CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	 90
Introduction.....	90
Findings in Relation to the Review of Literature.....	91
Findings in Relation to Theory .....	95
An Application of Self-Determination Theory .....	98
Summary.....	100
Discussion.....	101
Limitations of the Study.....	104
Recommendations for Further Research.....	105
Implications for the Organization and Practice .....	106
Conclusion .....	107
 APPENDIX A: UCF IRB APPROVAL .....	 108
 APPENDIX B: SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL.....	 110
 APPENDIX C: SURVEY.....	 113
 APPENDIX D: PERMISSION TO USE THE TEACHER EVALUATION PROFILE	120



APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	122
APPENDIX F: EXPLANATION OF RESEARACH (SURVEY).....	127
APPENDIX G: EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH (INTERVIEW).....	129
REFERENCES .....	131

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Years of Service.....	60
Table 2: Frequency of Responses for Question Seven .....	62
Table 3: Frequency of Responses for Question Eight .....	62
Table 4: Participant Reflection on Most Recent Evaluation.....	63
Table 5: Frequency of Responses for Question Nine .....	63
Table 6: Frequency of Responses for Question 10 .....	64
Table 7: Frequency of Responses for Question 11 .....	65
Table 8: Participant Assessment on Orientation Toward Change, Criticism, and Experimentation.....	65
Table 9: Frequency of Responses for Questions 12-13 .....	66
Table 10: Participant Perception of their Evaluator.....	67
Table 11: Frequency of Responses for Questions 14-17 .....	67
Table 12: Participant Understanding of the Evaluation Process.....	69
Table 13: Frequency of Responses for Questions 18-24 .....	70
Table 14: Participant Perception of the Evaluation Context.....	73
Table 15: Interview Participant Demographics .....	75
Table 16: Frequency of Themes Mentioned During Participant Interviews.....	75
Table 17: Summary of Participant Responses to Interview Questions.....	83

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

### Introduction

Education in the United States is undergoing rapid changes in many areas. Perhaps the most glaring example of the occurring changes deals with the accountability of classroom teachers to improve student learning. Because of federal mandates, such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and grant programs, such as the Race to the Top (RTTT), teacher evaluation policies are changing. As states begin to focus on implementing educational reforms, assessing the performance of classroom teachers and its link to student performance is a driving force in education policy (Pianta & Kerr, 2014).

There is a significant push to ensure that highly qualified teachers are placed in every classroom (Hazi & Rucinski, 2009). Additionally, schools face mounting pressure to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is defined by the Department of Education as a diagnostic tool that helps to determine where schools need improvement and to aid in allocating funds. However, states are given a considerable degree of leeway with regard to the measures used to assess AYP (Porter, Linn, & Trimble, 2005). This shift toward greater accountability and data driven decision-making has affected the way in which teachers are evaluated. The ways in which teachers are held accountable in this new era generally focus on results from students' assessments coupled with observations and evaluations (Stronge, Ward, & Tucker, 2007).

According to Marzano and Toth (2013), the evaluation of teachers represents an important component in addressing student learning. However, the processes by which

teachers are observed and evaluated is often a process that does not judge the teacher in a holistic manner or impact a change in behavior (Acheson & Gall, 2011). Teacher evaluation has the potential to provide teachers with meaningful professional development (Gordon, 2006). However, an overreliance on such a scientific approach to evaluating teachers runs the risk of becoming reductionist. When teachers believe they have become a secondary element in the evaluation process, the importance of the evaluation is reduced (Danielson, 2011). Teachers often discuss the “dog and pony show” aspect of evaluation (Goldstein, 2007). This refers to teachers doing what they think is expected of them during an evaluation or observation, then reverting to prior instructional behavior (Gitlin & Smyth, 1990). While, such standardized approaches to evaluation may be easier and more time efficient, the inability to navigate the more ambiguous aspects of teaching is problematic (Larsen, 2005).

The available literature paints a picture of current observation and evaluation practices as often insufficient for teacher growth (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Hill, Kapitula, & Umland, 2011; Murphy, Hallinger, & Heck, 2013). This is especially true with regard to mid-career teachers, defined as having between 14 to 21 years of classroom experience (Gu & Day, 2013). While there is literature focusing on pre-service educators, little has been done in exploring the beliefs and attitudes toward evaluation of mid-career educators. Rarely do observations and evaluations of mid-career teachers result in a substantive opportunity for professional growth (Weisberg, et al., 2009). Bolman and Deal (2003) provide an explanation of how evaluation is interpreted as an organizational process. Depending on the lens through which it is viewed, evaluation serves both as a means of helping individuals grow and improve as well as a

means of controlling performance. The dual lenses through which evaluation can be viewed present a possibility that individuals will remain confused as to its intended purpose (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Going forward, clearly defining the purpose of teacher evaluation will be important for all stakeholders involved in the process (Danielson, 2007).

Maskit (2011) indicates that there are significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward pedagogical change depending on what stage of their career they were in. The author notes a steady decline in enthusiasm for change as teachers move from the beginning of their careers to a period of stability in the profession. Addressing the attitudes and beliefs of teachers concerning the evaluation process in different stages of their career might prove useful in terms of combating the tendency for teachers to become complacent (Day & Gu, 2007; Maskit, 2011). A willingness to remain open to changes in their practices or remain innovative in the classroom is important for teacher effectiveness and student learning.

#### Purpose and Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have regarding the teacher evaluation process and its effect on their professional practice. The goal was to understand how mid-career secondary school teachers view teacher evaluation. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that the results of the study might aid decision makers in implementing the current evaluation system in a more mutually beneficial manner.

### Importance of the Study for Practice

Stiggins and Duke (1988) claimed that teacher evaluation has the potential to help teachers improve their practice, yet this very rarely happens. Since the implementation of President Obama's RTTT grant, a reframing of evaluation has occurred requiring teachers and education leaders to reassess the purpose of evaluation (Harris, Ingle, & Rutledge, 2014). This study is important to all teachers, administrators, and policy makers involved with teacher evaluation. There exists research that examines teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding pedagogical practices (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Hoy & Woolfok, 1993; Kagan, 1992; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). However, very little is known regarding how the attitudes and beliefs of teachers toward evaluation affect their self-efficacy and classroom practices. Through an examination of teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding teacher evaluation, this study will provide a more holistic view of the teaching profession.

The study will be important for teachers and educational leaders. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) discussed the importance of effective educational leadership as being focused on professional capital. In focusing on the professional development of teachers, education leaders can nurture and develop teachers. In turn, teachers can be more focused on nurturing students and their improvement. Currently, there exists a propensity for teachers to view the evaluation process as a form of control (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). However, when the paradigm is changed through effective leadership and collaboration, teacher evaluation becomes an activity that promotes professional growth (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

An important aspect of this study with regard to practice is that it sheds light on how teachers view evaluation. Furthermore, it provides educational leaders an opportunity to possibly reframe how teacher evaluation is viewed. This is especially important for mid-career teachers who are still navigating new evaluation processes. Finally, it is hoped that the study will have importance for the evaluation practices of Bayview Public Schools (a pseudonym). By providing district personnel a glimpse into how the teacher evaluation system is perceived by its mid-career secondary school teachers, a potentially valuable service will be provided to the organization.

#### Study Setting

Bayview Public Schools (BPS) is in the top 50 largest school districts in the United States according to the National Center for Education Statistics. The district has 86 public schools that service over 70,000 students. Before 2011, schools had more flexibility in constructing their evaluation systems. However, in 2011, the school district revamped both their observation and evaluation procedures as a part of the federal governments RTTT initiative. During the 2010-2011 school year, Bayview Public Schools began to conceptualize how their evaluation process would proceed.

There are two widely used evaluation models in the State of Florida. The evaluation model of Robert Marzano consists of four domains. The identified domains are classroom strategies and behaviors, preparing and planning, reflecting on teaching, and collegiality and professionalism. Within the four domains are 60 identified elements of teacher practice (Marzano, 2011). This model of evaluation is the state adopted model and according to the Florida Department of Education used in 29 of the 67 counties in

Florida. The second most widely used model of evaluation is Charlotte Danielson's model. This evaluation model is the model used in 18 school districts in Florida.

The Danielson model also consists of four domains. The domains include planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Within the 4 domains, there are 22 elements of teacher behavior. Teacher ratings consist of unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, or distinguished with regard to how they are achieving the elements (Danielson, 2009). Bayview Public Schools along with 11 other school districts adopted a model that is essentially a hybrid of the Marzano and Danielson models (Danielson, 2007; Marzano, 2007).

In the past, Bayview Public Schools' teacher evaluation involved an observation by a supervisor who evaluated the quality of teaching based on observational data. The observed data was essentially the key component in the summative evaluation of the teacher. Under the revised evaluation system referred to as the Bayview Instructional Personnel Performance Appraisal System (IPPAS), there has been an emphasis on evaluation being a process instead of simply an event. Furthermore, the new evaluation system emphasizes the role of reflection, communication, and cooperation. According to the district's stated philosophy regarding evaluation, an evaluation is "an on-going productive and collaborative dialogue, which is critical to the development of year-long, planned activities designed to promote individual professional growth" (IPPAS Handbook, 2014 p.7). According to the IPPAS Handbook, the purposes of the Bayview Instructional Performance Appraisal System include the following:

- To influence and enhance student achievement through improved instruction.
- To promote professional growth through a developmental, collaborative process.



- To provide information for use in annually making contract renewal decisions.
- To influence decisions regarding changes in assignment, transfers, and/or promotions.
- To encourage career growth and development through goal development.
- To promote collegiality in collaborative discussions regarding effective professional development (IPPAS Handbook).

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined as stated below:

*Accountability:* A belief that teachers and learning organizations are held responsible for the improvement of student performance and should be punished for failure and rewarded for success (Alderman, 2013).

*Evaluation:* A judgment regarding a teacher's classroom practices, as well as the appropriate actions taken based on said judgment of teacher performance (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005).

*Professional practice:* The pedagogical or classroom practices of teachers. How teachers interact with students, administrators, and parents as a member of a learning organization (Senge, 2011).

*Mid-career secondary school teacher:* A middle or high school teacher who has between 14 to 21 years of classroom experience (Gu & Day, 2013).

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that will underpin this study derives from Ajzen's (1988, 1991) theory of planned behavior (TPB) and Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy. The TPB offers a practical theoretical model for understanding the relationship between teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward teacher evaluation and their resulting classroom practices. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy helps to clarify an important aspect of the TPB, specifically dealing with perceptions of control. The present study concerns itself with attempting to understand the beliefs teachers have regarding the evaluation process. In attempting to understand the correlation between beliefs and behavior, the theories of planned behavior and self-efficacy provide an appropriate theoretical lens. The relationship between TPB and teacher self-efficacy with regard to teacher evaluation will be further explored in chapter two.

### Theory of Planned Behavior

The TPB is based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA); (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). As with the original theory, the TPB helps to explain how an individual's intentions are transformed into behavior. The TPB represents an extension of the TRA and accounts for the limitations of the TRA in accounting for behaviors in which individuals have no volitional control (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB is supported with several empirical studies within the domains of social and cognitive psychology, healthcare, environmental studies, and marketing (Ajzen, Joyce, Sheikh, & Cote, 2011; Bamberg, 2013; Cheng & Huang, 2013; McEachen, Conner, Taylor, and Lawton, 2011; Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010). Within the field of education the TPB has

been studied in the context of teacher beliefs and intentions (Haney & Czerniak, 1996; Lee, Cerreto, & Lee, 2010) and professional development (Patterson, 2001).

The three components of TPB include (1) attitude toward the behavior; (2) subjective norms; and (3) perceived behavior control (Ajzen, 1988). The attitude toward the behavior is best described as either the favorable or the unfavorable appraisal an individual has toward a behavior. The subjective norms represent the perceived social pressure an individual feels to perform a given behavior. Finally, the perceived behavioral control refers to the perception an individual has regarding the ease or difficulty in performing a given behavior. It is assumed that if an individual has a positive attitude toward the behavior and the associated subjective norms, the greater the perceived control and ultimately engagement with the behavior will be (Ajzen, 1991).

In applying the TPB to teacher evaluation, there is evidence that teachers do hold specific beliefs and attitudes toward evaluation (Acheson & Gall, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2009), the associated pressures of evaluation (Taylor & Tyler, 2012), and the degree of control teachers have over the evaluation process (Baker, Barton, & Darling-Hammond, 2010). The TPB has not been directly studied with regard to teacher beliefs and attitudes regarding teacher evaluation. However, as Conley, Smith, and Collison (2014) note, there is beginning to be a movement toward utilizing teacher evaluation as a form of meaningful professional development. For instance, Patterson (2001) examined the intentions of science teachers to incorporate material acquired from a professional development workshop into their classrooms.

While there has not been a direct application of the TPB to teacher evaluation, there is sufficient evidence for its use in the present study. To reiterate, teachers do hold

particular beliefs and attitudes toward the process of teacher evaluation. There are sufficient pressures, both situational and dispositional involved in teacher evaluation. There is a belief among teachers that components of the evaluation system are beyond their control.

### Teacher Self-Efficacy

Bandura's research (1986) helps to highlight that teachers must have knowledge regarding the tasks they are presented with to maintain self-efficacy. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, individuals are generally self-regulating and self-reflective (Bandura, 2001). However, in order for individuals to become self-efficacious, their perception of the environmental factors must be positive. Furthermore, the individual must perceive that any potential impediments to success are conquerable (Bandura, 2006). Utilizing the lens of social cognitive theory, teacher self-efficacy with regard to teacher evaluation should be related to the teachers' perception of control and possibility for success (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

Teacher evaluation models are increasingly utilizing new measures of accountability such as student achievement and standardized test scores. By incorporating these new measures into teacher evaluation, a teachers' sense of self-efficacy could be dependent on variables outside of their control (Finnegan, 2013). Teacher evaluation has the potential to be an affirming undertaking that could benefit a teacher's sense of self-efficacy (Finnegan, 2013). Teachers, in theory, should be motivated to achieve positive evaluations. A positive evaluation could result in contract renewal, opportunities for leadership positions, and overall growth within the profession (Baker et al., 2010).

However, in order for the experience to be positive, it is important for teachers to understand what measures will be used in the process. In order for teachers to feel self-efficacious regarding the evaluation process, communication and collaboration with administrators is essential (Stronge & Tucker, 2003).

### Research Questions

The research questions are based upon the review of literature and the theoretical framework used in the study. The research questions guiding the study are:

1. To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation relate to their professional practice?
2. To what extent do teachers' believe that the evaluation system promotes or inhibits teacher growth in mid-career secondary school teachers?
3. To what extent do mid-career secondary teachers understand the evaluation process?
4. How does the evaluation process relate to mid-career secondary school teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

### Limitations and Delimitations

The purpose of this study is to better understand the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary teachers have regarding the evaluation process and its impact on their professional practice. The study relies upon a self-reporting survey and semi-structured interviews with mid-career secondary teachers in one school district in Central Florida. Due to the small sample size of the study, the findings can only be generalized to the specific population that will be used. Furthermore, the findings from the study will only

apply to the specific evaluation system used within the study site. This dissertation in practice seeks to better understand the teacher evaluation system from a select number of mid-career teachers who have experience with it. As such, this dissertation in practice does not purport to render a complete evaluation and all of its components on the teacher evaluation model as a whole.

### Acknowledgement of the Researcher's Role

Reflexivity is an important aspect of conducting mixed-methods research (Walker, Read, & Priest, 2013). Reflexivity provides a level of transparency regarding the values, beliefs, and assumptions of the researcher and his role within the research (Creswell, 2013). In accordance with practicing reflexivity, it should be made aware that the principal investigator undertaking the study is an employee of the school district in which the study took place. The principal investigator has direct experience with the evaluation process in question. The principal investigator believed that this was an important point to disclose to the reader.

### Organization of the Study

This dissertation in practice is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction and overview of the problem of practice. Chapter 2 reviews pertinent literature concerning the evaluation process. The literature review explores specific questions concerning the evolution of teacher evaluation, the theories underpinning the study, professional characteristics of mid-career secondary school teachers, beliefs and attitudes of secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation, beliefs and attitudes of principals and administrators toward teacher evaluation, and the relationship between

teacher self-efficacy and teacher evaluation. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used to carry out the study. Specifically, the chapter provides insight into procedures, instruments, and population of the study. Chapter 4 analyzes and reports the findings from the study. Chapter 5 focuses on comparing the results from the study to the literature review. This chapter concludes by addressing limitations and implications for future research. Additionally, the chapter provides specific recommendations for how the teacher evaluation model in Bayview County might be strengthened.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Introduction

This review of the literature will begin by highlighting the recent history of teacher evaluation. The literature review will then explore the intended purpose of teacher evaluation. Additionally, professional growth and accountability models of evaluation will be examined. The literature review will also examine the beliefs and attitudes of teachers regarding teacher evaluation. Finally, the literature review will examine the theories of planned behavior and self-efficacy, which provide the conceptual framework for the study.

### What has been the Evolution of Teacher Evaluation?

The evaluation of teachers is by no means a recent phenomenon. Teacher evaluation and methods of evaluation have undergone several iterations based on a changing conceptualization of the profession. Cuban (1990) noted that the focus of teacher evaluation has been dependent upon what is considered to be effective pedagogy at that particular time. Thus, as technological advancements and national priorities have changed, so has the evaluation of teacher effectiveness (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003). Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) discussed the rationale for a formal system of evaluation as follows:

Whether it was the inherent difficulties of teacher assessment or the assumption that teachers were infallible, whereas students were responsible for their own learning, formal evaluation was virtually unknown until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>



century. Even thereafter, for the next half-century or more, very few schools and school districts attempted formal process to gauge the work of teachers. (p. 9)

Teacher evaluation has undergone dramatic changes in the last few decades. The most dramatic of these changes has occurred in the last three decades. While the focus of teacher evaluation has undergone several changes, the overall improvement of evaluation systems remains debatable due to a lack of evidence (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). As evaluation systems have become more reliant on standardized approaches and data driven metrics, the overall impact on pedagogical practices has been limited (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Despite conclusive evidence, policymakers continue to advocate for an evaluation systems linking teaching evaluation to student performance and overall teacher accountability (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Hartel, & Rothstein, 2012; Taylor & Tyler, 2012).

#### Teacher Evaluation: 1900-1939

At the turn of the twentieth century, teacher evaluation was mostly predicated on strictly moral or ethical standards (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003). Classroom teachers were often evaluated on items such as appearance and disposition as opposed to specific instructional practices. Ellett and Teddlie discussed superintendents in rural Kentucky at the turn of the century traveling by horse to conduct evaluations of teachers. Good teachers were deemed to be individuals of high moral character and pillars of their respective communities. The vast majority of these individuals were single women who lacked both higher education and formal training. At the turn of the century, John Dewey advocated for schools to adapt to the needs of an increasingly more industrialized society

(Dewey, 1900). Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) commented on the relationship between industry and education as follows:

With the application of industrial techniques, particularly those of management, schools should produce predictable and improved results. These results should be linked specifically to society's requirements. Students were to be taught in such a way that society's expectations would be met. In other words, the students were the raw material of education production. (p. 12)

During the first half of the twentieth century a more scientific approach to evaluation began to take hold. As a result of the convergence between developing theories of scientific management and the dominance of behaviorism in the field of psychology, observable-teaching behaviors became a focus. At this time, a body of knowledge specifically concerning the evaluation of teachers began to appear in the literature. These initial studies into teacher behavior spurred a wider movement to add to the body of knowledge in the field and began to be used for training pre-service teachers as well (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003; Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011). A formal method of describing the desired attributes of teachers emerged in the 1920s with the publication of *The Commonwealth Teacher-Training Study*, Charters and Waples (1929). The authors provided lists of both teacher traits and appropriate teacher activities. Furthermore, Charters and Waples (1929) provided suggestions to how much emphasis should be placed on each with regard to the training of teachers.

Cuban (1993) highlighted changes made to the teacher evaluation system in New York City in the 1920s. A new rating system was introduced in the cities schools in 1921. The push for a new evaluation system came from both teachers and principals who had

complained over the lack of clarity with regard to evaluation and supervision. William O'Shea, an associate superintendent chaired a task force to revise the city's teacher evaluation and supervision policies. The evaluation system consisted of a two-scale rating system of "Satisfactory" and "Unsatisfactory" as it pertained to the teachers' personality, self-control, discipline, scholarship, and overall control of the classroom (Cuban, 1993, p. 59). The role of teacher evaluation then evolved from checking off requisite boxes to being centered on improving instruction in the next decades.

#### Teacher Evaluation: 1940-1959

According to Robinson (1998), the period following World War II saw a shift toward a clinical supervision model of teacher training and evaluation. The clinical supervision model moved teacher evaluation toward a focus on developing the professional attributes of teachers and their personal growth. The clinical supervision model was predicated on a one-to-one relationship between the teacher and the supervisor in order to promote a more collaborative approach to evaluation (Acheson & Gall, 2011).

During the 1950s a growing fear in the United States caused by technological advancements by the Soviet Union led to an overhaul of the nation's education system. This re-examining of America's education system included a focus on identifying effective teacher practices. This period of time also saw the creation of federally funded models of Competency-Based Teacher Education (CBTE) in teacher training programs. These competencies were centered on a core set of behaviors and skills that were considered essential to effective teaching and learning (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003).

## Teacher Evaluation: 1960-1989

A renewed interest in teacher evaluation began in the 1960s. This revival of interest was due to an increased interest in linking teacher evaluation and accountability.

Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) noted:

During the 1960s and increasingly into the 1970s teacher evaluation attained growing importance. This was partly attributable to public demand for accountability in education, which, by now, had shifted from a teacher's curriculum and program management to the quality of classroom teaching and student learning. (p. 14)

McNeil and Popham (1973) advocated for a shift toward evaluating teachers based on student performance as opposed to a simple criteria of teacher classroom behaviors.

Madeline Hunter's model gained recognition in the 1970s as a research-based methodology for providing instruction and teacher evaluation (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

A poll conducted by Gallup in 1979 showed that the public believed that improving education began with improving the quality of teachers (Elam, 1989). The 1980s saw the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on the Excellence in Education, 1983). This provided a renewed call for improved educational practices and standards in the United States and is generally regarded as a catalyst event for the movement toward greater accountability in teaching practices (Danielson, 2001).

Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Pease (1983) commented on the fallacy of relying solely

on observations. The authors argue that a reliance on observation alone can be wrought with bias and a poor use of measurement instruments.

The 1980s saw a shift toward a more standardized approach to teacher evaluation. The shift was primarily caused by a renewed interest in linking teacher performance to student outcomes. Additionally, there was a feeling that teacher evaluation at the local level had become simply a matter of checking a box (Ellet & Garland, 1987). Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) characterized the evaluation systems of the 1970s and 1980s as overly formative and cold. Furthermore, the authors noted that a focus on teacher growth was lacking. Additionally, teacher evaluation systems at that time did a poor job of measuring overall teacher effectiveness. Stiggins and Duke (1988) conducted research in four school districts in the Pacific Northwest. The purpose of the research was to specifically examine the nature of teacher evaluation and to examine the perceptions held by teachers toward evaluation. The authors concluded that teacher evaluators lacked training, and they often failed to engage teachers in meaningful conversations regarding the evaluation process. Specifically, the authors concluded that teachers should be more involved in the overall process and that more sources of data should be considered in the evaluation.

The state of Georgia became the first state to adopt a statewide approach to teacher evaluation through the Teacher Performance Assessment Instruments (TPAI). The TPAI relied upon several classroom observation instruments that had been developed during the previous two decades. As previously stated, the TPAI was the first statewide approach to establishing standards related to in-service teacher evaluation and pre-service

teacher training. Following the implementation of the TPAI several states began to adopt similar approaches (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003).

#### Teacher Evaluation 1990-Present

Beginning in the 1990's and into the present day teacher evaluation models have been at the forefront of educational reform (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003). Contemporary models of teacher evaluation have often been focused on establishing a link between teacher performance and student learning. In 1997 the publication of *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future advocated for a renewed focus applying knowledge gleaned from research to teacher evaluation. The idea that teacher quality was directly related to student performance became inculcated in the thinking of policy makers (Danielson, 2001).

During the past two decades teacher evaluation has been primarily focused on standards and value-added models. This recent trend in teacher evaluation has produced research-based evaluation models that attempt to show what good teaching is and what it looks like in the classroom. However, critics of the new evaluation models based on specific standards and value-added measures have described the complex nature and burdensome expectations associated with these measures (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002). Furthermore, the use of value-added models has come under scrutiny due to the difficulty in assigning student-learning gains directly to the classroom teacher. It has been difficult to isolate the variables associated with student success (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012). The Race To The Top initiative enticed school districts to compete for federal funds by incorporating student data into the evaluations of teachers (Fusarelli & Fusarelli,

2015). This has led to several school districts creating pay-for-performance or merit pay systems for teacher salary. The initial results of tying teacher evaluation to salary have been mixed. Furthermore, understanding how to use student data in the evaluation process continues to be a point of contention and debate with regard to teacher evaluation (Marshall, 2013).

In examining the evolution of teacher evaluation, two distinct rationales emerge. On one hand, teacher evaluation systems serve to promote professional growth within an individual teacher. On the other hand, teacher evaluation seeks to ensure that teachers are accountable for student growth. How teachers view the intended purpose of teacher evaluation could potentially determine its overall effectiveness. Therefore, it is important to question the purpose that teacher evaluation serves.

### What is the Purpose of Teacher Evaluation?

As a matter of professional practice it is important to clearly articulate a purpose that teacher evaluation serves (Duke & Stiggins, 1990). The intended purpose of teacher evaluation often differs depending upon who is being asked. Lawmakers and those involved in public policy regarding education view teacher evaluation as a means of ensuring quality control. Teachers, on the other hand, view evaluation as providing a template for what good teaching should look like in practice (Danielson, 2001). Thus, teacher evaluation models often tend to serve one of two purposes, accountability and professional growth. When discussing the purpose behind teacher evaluation, Archer et al., (2014) stated the following:

We need feedback on our efforts and guidance about what we are doing well and what to do differently. But the number is on the scale is a necessary starting place. The same goes for efforts to improve teaching. Teaching and learning will not improve if we fail to give teachers high-quality feedback based on accurate assessments of their instruction as measured against clear standards for what is known as effective teaching, school administrators are left blind when making critical personnel and assignment decisions in an effort to achieve the goal of college readiness for all students. Lacking good data on teaching effectiveness, system leaders are at a loss when assessing the return on professional development dollars. (p. 1)

The teacher evaluation model used in Bayview Public Schools is a hybrid model. This means that the model combines elements of professional growth alongside measures of accountability. Specifically, teachers are evaluated according to 7 dimensions. The dimensions represent a collection of standards as defined by both the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPS) and Bayview Public Schools. The 7 dimensions are as follows:

- Instructional design and lesson planning
- Learning environment
- Instructional delivery and facilitation
- Assessment
- Professional responsibilities and ethical conduct
- Relationship with students
- Relationships with parents and community



As previously stated in the opening chapter, the Bayview Public Schools teacher evaluation system titled Bayview Instructional Personnel Performance Appraisal System (IPPAS) has been in effect since the 2011 school year. The IPPAS handbook states the purpose of evaluation as follows:

- To influence and enhance student achievement through improved instruction.
- To promote professional growth through a developmental, collaborative process.
- To provide information for use in annually making contract renewal decisions.
- To influence decisions regarding changes in assignment, transfers, and/or promotions.
- To encourage career growth and development through goal development.
- To promote collegiality in collaborative discussions regarding effective professional development. (IPPAS Handbook, 2014, p. 8)

Those involved in crafting education policy see a benefit in combining the dual purposes of teacher evaluation. The benefit of combining accountability with professional growth has the potential to improve teaching quality and the overall performance of schools (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Therefore, it is important to examine models of teacher evaluation that focus on growth and accountability.

### The Professional Growth Model of Evaluation

Professional growth or formative evaluation is designed to support continuous growth of teachers in the profession. The professional growth model of evaluation encourages growth by seeking to empower teachers through goal setting, self-evaluation, and critical reflection (Fenwick, 2004). This type of evaluation model has the potential to

support the teacher beyond the evaluation period and through the different stages of the teachers' career (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Bradshaw (2002) noted that experienced teachers find a value in the professional growth model of evaluation. The reason for this is that it empowers teachers as professionals and goes beyond measuring the basic competencies that other models of education tend to focus on. Danielson and McGreal (2000) stated that an important outcome with regard to professional growth models of evaluation is that it encourages teachers to engage in more meaningful forms of practice. The authors note that professional growth models of evaluation encourage teachers to try new things in the classroom, collaborate with peers, and better adapt to change.

Bayview Public Schools' teacher evaluation system promotes the idea that evaluation is a continuous process and not merely an event. Specifically, Bayview Public Schools approach to teacher evaluation is stated as a collegial process intended to promote the development of the teacher.

A prominent element of Bayview Public School's teacher evaluation system with regard to professional growth is reflection. The relationship between critical reflection and improvements in teacher performance has been well documented (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Kreber, 2012; Moon, 2013). Moon (2013) described reflection as "a form of mental processing with a purpose and or an anticipated outcome." (p. 4). Bayview Public Schools describes the role of reflection with regard to the evaluation process as one that promotes critical reflection. Furthermore, it is expected that the role of the evaluating supervisor will be to instruct and encourage the teacher's reflective practice to improve instructional practices. The emphasis on reflective practice and its

relationship to professional growth is supported through the individual teacher's Professional Growth Plan (PGP).

The PGP represents a variation of teacher directed action research and represents a component of Marzano's framework for reflective teaching (Marzano, Boogren, & Heflebower, 2012). The PGP is designed for teachers to identify a measurable goal to work toward. The teacher identifies the student performance objectives based on both quantitative and qualitative data. A portion of the teacher's overall evaluation score stems from the development of the individual PGP. The three components that comprise the plan development include the development of the PGP goal, work plan strategies, and outcome measures and reflection (IPPAS Handbook, 2013). Additionally, the overall PGP score includes the implementation of the plan. This aspect specifically measures teacher fidelity to the stated goal, as well as reflection and in-process monitoring. The PGP represents a self-assessment tool of sorts, which enables individual classroom teachers to measure their growth toward an identified goal. Ross and Bruce (2007) studied the effectiveness of self-assessment tools as a mechanism to promote professional growth. The authors concluded, self-assessment tools could be valuable tools to help teachers identify and define excellent teaching, identify gaps, increase communication, and identify factors that could promote changes in practice.

The importance of growth over the course of the career cannot be underestimated. As Duke (1990) explained:

Veteran teachers, like many other adults, tend to be creatures of routine. The early years of teaching typically are spent detecting recurring situations and developing routines for handling them. These routines are often very useful, as they minimize

wasted time and energy. Over the years, however, routines become so rigid that growth is inhibited. (p. 133)

The importance of teacher growth is important for the individual and the learning organization. The professional growth evaluation is often tied to specific areas the teacher has identified as wanting to improve. However, the professional growth evaluation is often tied to school improvement plans and district goals and initiatives (Fenwick, 2004; Milanowski, 2005). Therefore, as the individual teacher grows, so does the learning organization (Senge, 2014). Gordon (2006) discussed the relationship between professional growth models of evaluation and teacher professional development. Gordon (2006) noted the following characteristics as important for meaningful professional development: trust and support, active engagement in professional development opportunities, and an acknowledgment that professional development and continuous learning are critical across the lifespan of the career.

While professional growth models of evaluation have the potential to be supportive in encouraging teachers to grow professionally there are some factors that must be addressed. Professional growth models of teacher evaluation often assume that veteran teachers have a sufficient awareness of their skills and an eagerness to engage in meaningful development. Without an awareness of skills and a sufficient motivation for development, development of meaningful professional goals might be difficult (Duke, 1990). Duke (1990) expanded upon this further, stating that life circumstances might preclude teachers from seeking out opportunities for professional growth. Therefore, it is important that teacher evaluation systems designed to promote growth, maintain a level of flexibility to accommodate teachers professionally and personally.

Duke (1990) addressed the issue of motivation being a critical factor in the overall success of professional growth models. Joyce and McKibben (1982) identified specific personality traits in teachers in terms of their willingness to grow professionally. The specific personality types identified were: omnivores, active consumers, passive consumers, resistant, and withdrawn. Omnivores and active consumers are generally classified as actively seeking out opportunities for professional development and collaboration. Passive consumers are classified as teachers as who are willing participants in growth opportunities but rarely seek out those opportunities on their own. Resistant types will often only seek opportunities where they feel a sense of success and will resist most opportunities where success is deemed unlikely. Finally, withdrawn types actively work to avoid opportunities that would promote professional growth. The specific personality types identified by Joyce and McKibben (1982) articulate a challenge with regard to implementing professional growth models of evaluation. Specifically, the challenges associated with individual attitudes and beliefs toward engaging in teacher evaluation as a form of professional development. However, Stiggins and Duke (1988) identified organizational factors that are equally as critical in the overall success of professional growth models of evaluation. The authors cite the following factors: (1) time to observe colleagues; (2) support from school and district personnel; (3) regular feedback; (4) proper resources to aid in the evaluation process (i.e. video recording devices); (5) meaningful professional development opportunities; (6) access to professional development materials; and (7) feedback from peers and mentors.

In order for professional growth models of evaluation to be successful both organizational and individual factors must work jointly. Professional growth

opportunities must be designed and implemented for the specific needs of the individual teacher. Additionally, individuals must be willing participants who actively seek out growth opportunities, learn from their experiences, and incorporate the lessons learned into their classroom practices.

### Accountability Models of Evaluation

Increasingly, the focus of teacher evaluation has centered on holding teachers accountable. School districts across the country are attempting to link student achievement to teacher evaluation in order to measure teacher quality (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Bayview Public Schools uses student data as part of teacher evaluation. As a condition of the Race To The Top Grant, it was stipulated that evaluation be tied to student growth. Bayview Public Schools assigns 50% of the overall teacher evaluation score to both statewide and district assessments. However, it is important to reiterate that the use of student achievement data is a requirement of the state as a condition of Race To The Top.

While the idea of utilizing teacher evaluation for the purpose of accountability may seem like a relatively new phenomenon, Duke (1995) discussed the genesis of the accountability movement as a justification for teacher evaluation. Accountability was seen as a means of achieving a level of accountability in public schools. Previously, accountability had been seen as being reserved for private schools where parents could withdraw their children upon becoming dissatisfied (Duke, 1995).

Advocates for incorporating measures of accountability into teacher evaluation systems stress the shortcomings of traditional supervision and evaluation. Marshall

(2005) highlighted specific issues with simply relying on traditional supervision and observation. A few of the issues highlighted by Marshall (2005) include the following: principals often only evaluate a small sample of teaching, the observed lessons are often atypical in nature, the observed lessons provide an incomplete picture of classroom practice, supervision and evaluation can have an isolating effect on teachers, and poorly constructed instruments.

Questions regarding the effectiveness and fairness of linking teacher evaluation and pay to student achievement data remains controversial (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). However, the notion that teacher quality and student achievement are inextricably linked has been established, at least tangentially through research.

Hanushek, Kain, O'Brian, and Rivkin (2005) concluded that quality teachers do have an impact on student learning gains. The authors noted in their findings that factors such as advanced degrees do not correlate to student achievement. Therefore, the authors argue the logical conclusion is that teachers should be evaluated and compensated based on their ability to raise student achievement. While increased accountability and the evaluation of teachers based on student achievement has been criticized, research exists extolling the use of rigorous systems of accountability (Rockoff, 2004). Skrla, McKenzie, and Scheurich (2007) noted that accountability pressure have increased support for more rigorous professional development. As previously stated, accountability models of evaluation represent an attempt to quantify exemplary teaching. Increasingly, the use of value-added measures (VAM) is being used to measure student-learning gains from one school year to the next.

Sanders, Wright, and Horn (1997) examined the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). The TVAAS examines longitudinally student achievement data by specifically focusing variables such as class size, teacher, and other effects. The purpose of the study was to specifically measure teacher effects against other salient classroom effects. The researchers found that even when considering other factors such as class size and heterogeneity of the student population, teacher effects were the most dominate variable. While evidence has shown a correlation between teacher quality and student learning gains there are other factors that must be considered.

One of the most salient questions regarding the role of teacher accountability as part of the evaluation system concerns the specific focus. In addressing the appropriate focus of accountability, should the focus be on the individual or the collective? Duke (1990) asked whether or not it is appropriate to hang accountability solely on classroom teachers or on the school as whole. Furthermore, as it pertains to measuring individual teacher effects and student learning gains, differences between elementary and secondary teachers should be addressed. Jackson (2012) found that traditional measurements gauging teacher effects were often biased. Furthermore, the author found that at the secondary level, teacher value-added measurements were a weak predictor of overall teacher quality. Thus, Jackson (2012) stated the following conclusions: “Results indicate that either (a) teachers in high school are less influential in high school than in elementary school, or (b) test scores are a poor metric to measure teacher quality at the high school level” (Jackson, 2012, p. 1). Wildman (2006) pointed out that there are several flaws with basing teacher evaluation based solely on student performance. The specific points are as follows, (1) variables that exist outside the teachers influence, (2)



students do not learn the same way, (3) the rigor associated with the course, (4) teaching is usually not the only duty a teacher performs, and (5) teaching to the test reduces creativity and motivation.

Models of teacher evaluation that strongly incorporate an element of accountability present both opportunities and challenges to judging teacher quality. On one hand, without some quantitative measure, overall teacher quality can become too subjective (Goldring et al., 2014). However, deciding the specific measures that will be used and how much weight they will be given is important to ensure that the human element is retained in the process (Danielson, 2011).

The debate regarding the specific purpose that teacher evaluation serves will continue. However, the reality is that teachers do have specific beliefs and attitudes regarding teacher evaluation. The beliefs and attitudes that teachers hold toward evaluation are related to their perception of several factors tangential to the process. Therefore, it is critical to understand what factors affect teacher perception, which ultimately form the basis for more concrete attitudes and beliefs toward the process.

#### What Factors Contribute to Shaping Teacher Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Teacher Evaluation?

The ways in which teachers perceive a new initiative, policy, or innovation are important factors to consider in the development stage of educational policies (Fullan, 2007; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). Teachers actively construct their beliefs and attitudes toward initiatives based on a perception of how it will affect their job (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003). Furthermore, teachers will construct an interpretation of an educational policy or initiative in a way that deviates from its original

intent. This difference between a policies intended purpose and its interpreted meaning, may be a critical factor in determining overall success or failure (Smit, 2005; Spillane, 2009; Spillane et al., 2002). In addition to understanding the ways in which teachers' interpretations affect implementation, the individual teacher's orientation toward change is important as well.

Heneman and Milanowski (2003) investigated the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system in the Cincinnati Public Schools. The authors found that in the two years following the implementation teachers had become more receptive overall; however, they were still struggling to adapt based on years of ill-defined evaluation systems. A teacher's struggle with adapting to changes in policy can be a result of their level of experience. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2007) observed that it is often veteran teachers who exhibit the greatest difficulty in adapting to change. This observation speaks to the paradoxical nature of improving educational policy and initiatives, while maintaining a level of continuity that enables veteran staff to effectively internalize the change.

Youngcourt, Leiva, and Jones (2007) addressed the difficulty of evaluating veteran personnel within an organization. The authors noted that as technology changes, so do job requirements. Furthermore, the employee does not always change along with the demands of the job. It is not uncommon for employees to hold the same positions even as the requirements and the demands placed on them have changed several times (Youngcourt et al., 2007). Furthermore, when the employee feels that there is an external pressure compelling them to change, negative feelings can arise. This accounts for why

employees in a learning organization, particularly are resistant to change (Fullan, 2007; Hargreaves, 2004).

Teachers are individuals who take several different approaches toward the profession (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Factors such as gender (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), content knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), and a willingness to engage in professional growth (Opfer & Pedder, 2011), can be useful in addressing individual teacher traits and beliefs. For experienced teachers there tends to be a strong correlation between individual beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions with regard to practices (Van Driel, Bulte, & Verloop, 2007). A critical factor involved in teacher beliefs and attitudes concerns the specific stage of the teaching career.

Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke, and Baumert (2011) found that teacher attitudes toward collaboration and professional development diminished as they reached the later stages of their career. Additionally, Maskit (2011) collected data indicating that there were significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward pedagogical change depending on the career stage. The author notes a steady decline in enthusiasm for change as teachers move from the beginning of their careers to a period of time marked by stability in their career. Day and Gu (2007) observed that more seasoned teachers seemed to fall into two polar groups. One group seemed to be more willing to engage in continuous improvement and growth while the second group reported more feelings of associated with disillusion and burnout. However, the notion that the middle to late stages of the teaching career is marked by disillusion is not universally accepted.

Studies have shown that teachers tend to demonstrate rapid growth in their first few years in the profession. However, professional growth tends to flatten out after they

become established classroom teachers (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2004). However, studies have shown that growth is possible throughout the career span (Harris & Sass, 2011; Papay & Kraft, 2011). While teachers do experience rapid growth in the beginning of their careers, they are just as capable of growing in the later stages as well (Papay & Kraft, 2011). Hargreaves (2005) examined the personal changes teachers go through during the career lifespan. The author analyzed data stemming from interviews with 50 Canadian elementary, middle, and high school teachers. The specific focus was on the teachers' emotional responses to educational change. Hargreaves (2005) found that mid-career teachers typically exhibited a greater degree of satisfaction and comfort during this stage of his/her career. The teachers reported a willingness and flexibility to respond toward educational change.

Understanding the needs of teachers at various points in their careers might prove useful at better understanding their beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of changes in education such as teacher evaluation. (Day & Gu, 2007). The mid-career point of teachers offers an interesting perspective to draw upon. By understanding the needs that teachers have at different stages of their careers, teacher evaluation systems can be more tailored to the individual.

Weems and Rogers (2010) advocated for a differentiated approach toward teacher evaluation based on the experience of the teacher. A failure to take into account the individual differences that exist between beginning teachers and more experienced teachers has the potential to render teacher evaluation systems less effective at promoting professional growth (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Weems & Rogers, 2010). Danielson and McGreal (2000) discussed the need to allow experienced teachers to demonstrate

their teaching effectiveness in a manner more suited to their level of experience, In approaching mid-career experienced teachers in a manner that differentiates them from their novice counterparts, the experienced teacher may be able to experience greater professional growth (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Taylor and Tyler (2012) found that a high quality evaluation has the potential to improve mid-career teacher performance. Additionally, the authors describe how the observed improvements lasted beyond the evaluation process.

In addition to dispositional factors influencing teacher beliefs and attitudes, situational factors should be considered as well, specifically, the ways in which school leadership can foster an environment that promotes professional growth. Ferguson and Hirsch (2014) examined the role that working conditions can predict teacher, and ultimately influence student success. The authors were able to identify four specific types of teachers based on the expectations teachers had toward their students and their professional community behaviors. The four types identified were: isolated agnostic, active agnostic, isolated believer, and active believer. The active believer is characterized as setting high expectations for themselves and their students, and placing a high value on professional community. The authors found the opposite for isolated agnostics, and found that active agnostics and isolated believers behaviors often were context dependent.

Ferguson and Hirsch (2014) posit that several factors predict why some schools are more successful at creating a sense of professional community. The authors noted factors used in the evaluation process such as, consistent procedures, useful feedback, objective assessments, and encouragement to try new things. While the specific types identified by Ferguson and Hirsch (2014) are related to specific teacher beliefs, they may

prove to be useful in explaining teacher beliefs regarding evaluation. Several teacher evaluation systems incorporate elements of professional collaboration as promoting professional growth, and student performance as a measure of accountability. Therefore, the identified teacher orientations toward willing participation and active learning from the evaluation experience may be applicable. Furthermore, understanding the belief orientation of individual teachers might prove useful in differentiating approaches toward the individual teacher.

Just as educators are expected to differentiate instruction to individual students, tailoring evaluation system to meet the needs of mid-career teachers might be beneficial to the process. Kirkpatrick and Johnson (2014) found that the independence that went along with being an experienced teacher was not always beneficial. The authors note that there is a tendency for administrators to stop providing constructive feedback and advice to experienced teachers. This tendency to leave experienced teachers alone to interpret and learn from their evaluations might explain how teachers approach the evaluation system. Additionally, the results from teacher evaluation might shape the individual teachers perception of the process, which also impacts the potential to promote growth.

An investigation into the beliefs and attitudes that teachers hold toward teacher evaluation is critical in a teacher evaluation system's success. In examining beliefs and attitudes, it is important to evaluate how beliefs toward the process are initially formed, as this will help to explain the teacher's willingness to engage in the process in a meaningful way. Secondly, it is worth examining how the results stemming from the teacher evaluation process ultimately affect the self-efficacy beliefs of the teacher.

## How are the Theories of Planned Behavior and Self-Efficacy Applicable to Teacher Evaluation?

The theory of planned behavior (TPB); (Ajzen, 1988, 1991) provides a practical theoretical model for understanding how teacher perceptions, coupled with beliefs and attitudes shape intentions. Specifically, with regard to teacher evaluation, the beliefs and attitudes teachers have might shape their willingness or effort to engage in the process in a meaningful way. An important factor involved with the TPB concerns the degree to which the individual perceives their level of control over a process. Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy provides a useful lens for addressing individual perceptions of control, and ultimately success with regard to a given action. Therefore, both the TPB and self-efficacy theory provide a useful framework for addressing teacher perceptions of teacher evaluation.

### Theory of Planned Behavior

The TPB (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) was developed as an extension of the theory of reasoned action (TRA); (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The TRA, like TPB concerns the behavioral intention of individuals. However, the TRA as originally constructed was most applicable to behaviors where individuals had a greater degree of control over an individual's choice with regard to the behavior. The TPB helps to clarify the perceived control one has with regard to overall success with an intended behavior. This addition of individual perception of behavioral control accounts for both the situational and dispositional factors an individual perceives in terms of success or failure (Ajzen, 1985). Ajzen (1988) commented on the how the TPB helps to clarify TRA. The TPB specifically address the motivational factors that influence behavior. "As

a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in the behavior, the more likely should be its performance” (p. 181). According to Ajzen (2011), “the TPB has proven to be useful framework for understanding, predicting, and changing human social behavior” (p. 454).

The TPB is comprised of three interrelated components. These include: (1) attitude toward the behavior, (2) subjective norms, and (3) perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1988). An individual’s attitude toward the behavior is often predicated on the individual’s appraisal of the overall positive or negative attributes surrounding the intended actions associated with the behavior. Additionally, attitude is comprised of two separate components, affective and instrumental. Affective attitude refers to the emotions involved with performing a certain behavior. Instrumental attitude refers to the individual’s appraisal of the potential benefits stemming from engaging in the behavior (Kraft, Rise, Sutton, & Røysamb, 2005). Subjective norms concern the sociocultural pressure associated with performing a given behavior. However, Armitage and Conner (2001) found the component of subjective norms to be a weak indicator of intentions. Finally, the perceived behavioral control relate to the individual perception of personal and contextual factors that promote or negate success. All three components represent critical elopements in explaining the depth and degree an individual’s intentions are toward a given behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

In the case of teacher evaluation, teachers do have associated beliefs and attitudes toward evaluation (O’Pry & Schumacher, 2012; Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013; Taut & Brauns, 2003; Taut & Sun, 2014; Tornero & Taut, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2009). There are certain pressures associated with teacher evaluation systems. When teachers



adopt an attitude of nonconformity toward a given task the teacher may be labeled negatively (Jiang, Spote, & Lupescu, 2015). Lastly, teachers do have concerns regarding the amount of control they have within the evaluation process (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Therefore, the use of the TPB as a theoretical lens to study how teachers engage in the process of teacher evaluation seems applicable.

While the TPB has not been used previously in relation to teacher evaluation, the theory has been used to investigate behaviors concerning teaching and learning (Janssen, Kreijns, Bastiaens, Stijnen & Vermeulen, 2013; Underwood, 2012; Wang & Ha, 2013; Yan, 2014). With regard to the applicability of the TPB to teacher evaluation, conceptualizing teacher evaluation as a form of professional development aids application. As previously stated, literature exists for considering teacher evaluation as form of professional development (Borko, 2004; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Fishman, Max, Best, & Tal, 2003. Patterson (2001) used the TPB in order to examine the intentions of science teacher to incorporate their learning from a professional development workshop into their classroom. The author reported that the TPB was a useful framework for investigating teacher intention. Janssen et al. (2013) used the TPB in order to predict the willingness of teachers to use professional development plans. The authors conducted semi-structured with 41 teachers who were working in schools with mandatory professional development. The results indicated that while teachers saw value in using professional development plans, they failed to adhere to the process with a high degree of fidelity. This study helps to demonstrate the applicability of the TPB toward behaviors designed to promote professional growth. An important observation made by Janseen et al., concerns the

degree of control the teachers felt they had in the process. The perception that teachers have concerning the context of the behavior is critical for understanding outcomes.

Individual behavioral outcomes are usually perceived as having either positive or negative outcomes. In theory, when individuals perceive an experience to be positive the outlook toward the behavior should correlate (Ajzen, 1991). However, the degree of control perceived by the individual plays a substantial role with regard to intentions. An individual may have a positive orientation toward the behavior yet lack the intention to engage in said behavior absent a perception that they have control over the process (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). Therefore, a teacher may have an overall positive attitude toward teacher evaluation yet perceive factors such as time, knowledge, and resources to be deficient. Thus, the teacher's intention to engage in the evaluation process to the extent that it would promote professional growth might be absent.

While the TPB has been widely used to investigate teacher intentions, it is beneficial to further expand on concepts tangentially related to the theory. Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy is useful in helping to clarify and expand on how an individual's perception of control over a process affects intention and outcome. The relationship between self-efficacy and teacher evaluation will be explored next.

### Theory of Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, individuals engage in both self-reflective and self-regulating behaviors (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy is often the result of an individual perceiving the likelihood for success in a given endeavor or behavior will be successful. Furthermore, the individual must feel that impediments to success can be

overcome (Bandura, 2006a). Self-efficacy beliefs are important for assessing the motivations demonstrated by individuals engaged in a particular task. Self-efficacy beliefs help to facilitate the metamorphosis of individual knowledge into reasoned action (Pajares, 1996). Pajares (1996) observed the relationship between efficacy beliefs and behavior as influencing human behavior in three ways. First, they influence how a person chooses his or her behavior. Secondly, they help to predict the amount of effort that an individual will expend. Lastly, they influence thinking and emotional reactions. According to Pajares (1996), lower self-efficacy beliefs may narrow an individual's ability to effectively solve problems. On the other hand, higher self-efficacy beliefs can create the proper emotional state to effectively undertake difficult tasks.

The term evaluation implies that a judgment or verdict is being rendered on some entity. Therefore, it is not difficult to deduce that the process of evaluating teachers may impact the self-perception or personal beliefs they have regarding their practice. If the result of a teacher's evaluation makes them feel incompetent the effort they exert engaging in practices that will increase competency may be low. Teacher self-efficacy provides a lens through which teachers form a perception regarding their effectiveness (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). When teachers lose the motivation to improve further threats to self-efficacy arise which may further impact perceived competency, or develop into patterns of resistance (Bandura, 2014).

As previously stated, teacher evaluation models are increasingly utilizing value added measures to evaluate teachers (Kupermitz, 2003; Papay, 2011). As teacher evaluation is increasingly tied to student performance, teachers may perceive that elements of the evaluation are beyond their control (Finnegan, 2013). The result of a

positive evaluation goes beyond increasing a teacher's self-efficacy. A positive evaluation may have implications for continued employment, promotion, or professional development (Baker et al., 2010). In theory, teachers should be sufficiently motivated to attain a positive evaluation. Furthermore, the potential for teachers to feel more efficacious could have benefits that extend beyond the individual.

Dembo and Gibson (1985) reported that teacher self-efficacy was an important factor in the overall improvement of schools. Teachers who have self-efficacy set higher goals for both themselves and their students. Additionally, self-efficacy has been shown to correlate with a willingness to experiment in the classroom, and openness toward teaching in new and innovative ways (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Ross & Bruce, 2007). However, it should be noted that while high individual self-efficacy might promote individual and school wide growth, low self-efficacy has the potential to promote growth as well.

Pope (2014) examined the effect that value-added measurements would have on teacher self-efficacy. The author conducted a study in the Los Angeles Unified School District centered on the effect that teacher knowledge of their value-added measure would have on their practice. The author found that when teachers were told they had a low value-added rating, subsequent student scores increased. Conversely, when teachers were told they had a high value added rating, subsequent scores went down. The author posits that the result is likely due to the reality that the effort teachers gave was linked to their perception of the rating. A useful model of motivation for understanding this result is the Commitment and Necessary Effort (CANE) model of motivation (Clark, 1998). The CANE model of motivation is comprised of three factors. The first factor concerns

the extent that an individual perceives himself or herself to be capable. The second factor concerns affective factors and mood. The third factor is the value the individual places on the task. Therefore, it is possible that an individual can have high self-efficacy and low performance. This is primarily due to the individual's self-efficacy beliefs exceeding his or her effort or motivation toward a given task. In light of the findings from Pope (2014), this model of motivation might explain why teachers who derived their high self-efficacy from higher value-added ratings failed to maintain high student scores. It is important to understand that the sources for teacher self-efficacy can stem from multiple sources.

The relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher evaluation is correlational at best (Finnegan, 2013). A teacher who improves their classroom practice after a negative evaluation may have a mastery orientation. Bandura (1997) described mastery experiences for teachers as deriving from accomplishments with students. Teachers who possess a mastery orientation as opposed to a performance orientation have a greater orientation toward professional growth, which results in both higher self-efficacy and student achievement (Finnegan, 2013). Additionally, Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) studied the effects of how teachers working with effective colleagues improved their own teaching performance. This speaks to notion that a vicarious experience with a high-efficacy colleague can promote greater self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

While there are several factors that might impact teacher self-efficacy beyond the evaluation process, the effect should be further investigated. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) stated that self-efficacy with regard to the evaluation process should focus on the teacher's perception of control and the possibility of a positive result. Furthermore,

Wheatley (2005) observed that a significant amount of research on teacher self-efficacy has focused on teacher beliefs about their practice in the present and immediate future as opposed to how efficacious they feel about their ability to learn how to be better teachers.

### Summary

Teacher evaluation has been constantly evolving in the United States over the past century. The most observable changes to teacher evaluation have been a movement toward better understanding the science of teaching while still appreciating the art of teaching. This section of the literature review focused on documenting the changes from the turn of the twentieth-century to the present. A movement away from evaluating teachers based strictly on observable behaviors and toward the use of refined instruments and student test scores marks the most noticeable of changes.

The next topic addressed in the literature review concerned the intended purpose of teacher evaluation. The available literature coalesces around two specific purposes regarding most evaluation models. The two purposes of teacher evaluation concern professional growth and accountability. Models of evaluation promoting professional growth and accountability were further examined. The available literature provides insight into the overall usefulness and challenges associated with viewing teacher evaluation as a growth tool, or a means of accountability.

The third topic examined factors that shape teacher beliefs and attitudes toward teacher evaluation. The available literature postulates that teachers do have attitudes and beliefs concerning the evaluation process. Furthermore, the attitudes and beliefs held by teachers shape their approach, and, ultimately, what they glean from the experience.

Additionally, approaches toward evaluation were examined that could promote more positive approaches toward teacher evaluation.

The concluding question addressed concerned the theoretical framework of the present study. Specifically, the theories of planned behavior (TPB) and self-efficacy were investigated. The review of associated literature found that while the TPB has not been widely used in connection with teacher evaluation, it has been applied to professional development. In postulating teacher evaluation as a form of professional development, an application of the theory for teacher evaluation was argued. The theory of self-efficacy was investigated in order to better understand the affective factors surrounding teacher evaluation. Additionally, teacher self-efficacy was shown to be a complementary element of the TPB, and is crucial for understanding the individual motivations of teachers to learn from an evaluation.

The next chapter will present an overview of the methodology. This chapter will provide insight into how the participants were selected. Additionally, the procedures and means for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data will be discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

### Introduction

The primary goal of this study was to investigate research questions related to how mid-career secondary school teachers perceive the teacher evaluation system and its impact on their professional practices. This study employed a mixed-method phenomenological approach in order to guide the investigation. The chapter is organized as follows: (a) purpose; (b) research questions; (c) selection of participants; (d) instrumentation; (e) data collection; and (f) data analysis.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have regarding the teacher evaluation process in Bayview Public Schools. Additionally, the present study examined how the teacher evaluation system affected the professional practices of Bayview Public Schools' teachers.

### Research Questions

In order to examine the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers held toward the evaluation system and its impact on their professional practices, four research questions were developed. The research questions that guided the study were:

1. To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation relate to their professional practice?
2. To what extent do teachers' believe that the evaluation system promotes or inhibits teacher growth in mid-career secondary school teachers?



3. To what extent do mid-career secondary teachers understand the evaluation process?
4. How does the evaluation process relate to mid-career secondary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

#### Selection of Participants

The use of a purposive sample is justified when the researcher is attempting to study a population that meets specific criteria within the case (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In the current study, the purposive sample provided the principal investigator the means to investigate mid-career secondary school teachers from Bayview Public Schools. A request to approve and conduct the study was submitted to the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB) and the Office of Testing and Accountability for Bayview Public Schools. The principal investigator received approval from UCFIRB and the target school district to proceed. A copy of the artifacts related to approval can be found in Appendix A for UCFIRB and Appendix B for Bayview Public Schools.

"Mid-career" was defined as having between 14-21 years of classroom experience for the purposes of this study. The researcher was provided a list of all secondary school teachers from the district having between 14-21 years of experience. The total number of potential participants identified was 472. The principal investigator took appropriate measures to maintain the confidentiality of the individuals who appeared on the provided list. Specifically, the list was viewed only by the principal investigator

and was stored within a password-protected file. Additionally, individuals excluded from public records were not included in the list.

### Instrumentation

The researcher, for the purpose of conducting a mixed-method data collection, used the instruments described in the sections that follow. A mixed-method approach enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data were used to support the qualitative data.

#### Quantitative

The quantitative instrument used in the study was the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) (see Appendix C). The TEP, originally designed by Stiggins and Duke (1988), consists of 55 items separated into 5 subscales. The subscales are as follows: characteristics of the evaluation model, attributes of the teacher, the teacher's perception of the evaluator, the quality of perceived feedback, and context of the evaluation. According to the authors, the TEP was found to have an internal consistency reliability of .93 (Stiggins & Duke, 1988). In subsequent studies, using a revised 44-item instrument the instrument's internal reliability was shown to remain consistent (Machell, 1995).

For the purposes of the present study, a modified version of the TEP was used. The specific modifications include a reduction in the number of items from 44 to 24. The purpose for reducing the number of items was twofold. First, items that did not pertain to the specific research question were discarded. Second, the subscales were shortened to reduce the survey length and require less time for participants to increase survey response rates. Reliability was still very strong for the reduced measure (.91) and closely matched

the internal reliability of the survey instrument in previous deployments. Permission to use the survey was sought from the author and permission was granted. An email granting permission can be found in Appendix D. The specific information that was sought through the survey is described in the following section. Part A is addressed first, followed by the subsequent sections of the survey.

#### Part A: Demographic Information

Part A of the survey sought to obtain demographic data from survey respondents. Specifically, this section asked respondents to provide the number of years they have been teaching, gender, current subject area, and the year of their most recent completed evaluation. Additionally, respondents were asked if they would be willing to further participate in the qualitative portion of the study through a one-on-one interview. The specific questions asked were as follows:

1. Including the current year, how many years have you been teaching?
2. What is your gender?
3. Which academic area(s) are you currently teaching?
4. When was your most recent evaluation?
5. Would you consider being interviewed as part of this study?

#### Part B: Overall Rating

This section required respondents to reflect on their most recent experience with teacher evaluation. There were two questions contained in this section. The questions sought to gain knowledge concerning the respondents' overall assessment of their most recent evaluation and the impact that the results of the evaluation had on their

professional practice. The responses were scored using a 5-point Likert scale. The specific questions asked in this portion are as follows:

1. Rate the overall quality of the evaluation. (1= very poor; 2= poor; 3= fair; 4= good; 5= very good)
2. Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practices. (1= no impact; 2= very little impact; 3=mild impact; 4= moderate impact; 5= strong impact)

#### Part C: Personal Attributes

Part C of the survey asked participants to assess to their orientation toward change and their level of experimentation in the classroom. The third question in this section asked respondents to rate their orientation toward receiving criticism. The specific purpose of this section was to better understand the respondents' overall orientation toward engaging in professional growth. The specific questions asked in this portion are as follows:

1. What is your orientation to change? (1= I am strongly averse to change; 2= I am generally averse to change; 3= neither averse or open to change; 4= I am moderately open to change; 5= I am very open to change)
2. What is your orientation toward experimentation in your classroom? (1= I never experiment in my classroom; 2= I rarely experiment in my classroom; 3= I sometimes experiment in my classroom; 4= I often experiment in my classroom; 5= I am continually experimenting in the classroom)

3. What is your orientation toward criticism? (1= I am relatively closed; 2= I am moderately closed; 3= I am moderately open; 4= I am relatively open; 5= I am very open)

#### Part D: Perceptions of Evaluator

This section of the survey sought to address the perceptions respondents had toward the individual who conducted their last evaluation. This section included two questions. The first question sought to gauge the familiarity the evaluator had with the respondent's current teaching assignment. The second question sought to inquire as to whether or not the evaluator provided the respondent with constructive feedback. The specific questions for this portion were scored as: 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. The specific questions asked in this portion are as follows:

1. My evaluator was familiar with the specifics of my teaching assignment.
2. My evaluator provided useful, credible, and constructive feedback.

#### Part E: Attributes of the Procedures

Part E of the survey addressed how well the respondents understood the procedures used in their most recent evaluation. This section contained four questions. The questions centered on the overall clarity of the evaluation in terms of expectations and standards, as well as the appropriateness of the standards for the respondent's current teaching assignment. An additional question inquired as to how productive the respondent felt meetings with the evaluator were. The specific questions for this portion were scored as: 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. The specific questions asked in this portion were as follows:

1. Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were communicated to you.
2. Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were clear to you.
3. Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were appropriate for my current teaching assignment.
4. My meetings with my evaluator were productive.

#### Part F: Attributes of the Evaluation Context

The last section of the survey sought to better understand how the respondents perceived the overall context of the evaluation. This section consisted of seven questions concerning the level and usefulness of feedback, the amount of time the respondents spent on the evaluation and the training they received, and whether the districts' stated purposes and policies were clear to them. Finally, this section sought to understand the respondents' personal view on the purpose of teacher evaluation. The respondents were asked whether they believed the purpose of teacher evaluation was about accountability or professional growth. The specific questions for this portion were scored as: 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. The specific questions asked in this portion were as follows:

1. The amount of feedback I received was appropriate.
2. The amount of feedback I received was specific and useful.
3. The amount of time spent on my evaluation was appropriate.
4. The amount of training I received regarding the evaluation was appropriate.
5. My districts stated policies and purposes regarding evaluation are clear.

6. The role of evaluation is teacher accountability.
7. The role of evaluation is to promote teacher growth.

### Qualitative

The qualitative component of this mixed-method study used one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews offers a flexible technique for conducting small-scale research. Additionally, the use of semi-structured interviews provides a reliable and comparable method of data collection (Drever, 1995; Wengraf, 2001). The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the principal investigator the ability to provide depth to the quantitative component of the study. An interview protocol was used to guide the process. A copy of the interview protocol used in the present study can be found in Appendix E. Six open-ended questions were asked of the participants.

The interview questions used in the present study were as follows:

- 1) How many years have you been in the field of education?
- 2) What is your current teaching assignment? What other positions have you held within the field of education?
- 3) Tell me about your experiences with the current method of evaluating teachers in this district?
- 4) How does the evaluation system affect or guide what you do in the classroom?
- 5) Does the evaluation system make you feel as though you are an effective or ineffective teacher?

- 6) Do you think the purpose of evaluation should be about holding teachers accountable or promoting professional growth?

### Data Collection

The study used a mixed-method phenomenological approach (MMPR) (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Mayoh and Onwuegbuzie (2013) acknowledged that the use of MMPR is a relatively new approach in mixed-method research. However, the authors have articulated a rationale for combining phenomenology with a mixed-methods approach. Fisher and Stenner (2011) articulated a justification for utilizing a mixed-method phenomenological approach as follows:

To be meaningful and valid, quantitative methods have to be more than data gathering and statistics, and more than instrument calibration and fit analysis. To be generalizable and reliable, qualitative methods and results have to do more than document respect for individuals and marginalized group perspectives.

(Fisher & Stenner, 2011, p. 98)

A justification for the use of the MMPR was due to the specific nature of the study and the research questions guiding the study.

The quantitative aspect of the study examined the teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding the evaluation process. The qualitative aspect of the study provided a greater degree of depth and insight into how the evaluation process affects teacher practices. Creswell (2013) stated that the problems addressed in the social sciences are complex and that quantitative and qualitative measures alone are rarely sufficient. Creswell (2013) described phenomenological research as an approach of inquiry. This approach helps the



researcher to identify and understand the experiences about a phenomenon as experienced by the participants (Creswell, 2013). The use of phenomenology as the guiding approach for the qualitative aspect of the study will help to explain the wholeness of the experience teachers feel from an evaluation (Moustakas, 1994). The two methodologies used in the study will be described separately.

#### Quantitative Data Collection

An invitation to participate in the study, along with a link to the survey was sent to 472 perspective participants from Bayview Public Schools' 28 secondary schools on 10 February 2015. Follow-up emails were sent on 11 February 2015 and 17 February 2015. The survey was administered through Qualtrics® Survey Software. The principal investigator kept the survey active for 14 days. A total of 152 individuals completed the survey. The response rate for the survey was 32% with 152 of 472 surveys completed.

#### Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative method of data collection used in the study, involved the use of semi-structured one-on-one interviews. Qualitative approaches to the study of teachers' beliefs and perceptions have the potential to provide an understanding of how teachers act upon their beliefs. Qualitative approaches enable researchers to better understand the experiences of teachers (Olafson, Salinas, & Owens, 2015). The use of semi-structured one-on-one interviews was appropriate as it allowed for a collection of rich data concerning teacher perceptions and beliefs regarding the evaluation system.

A question that was included on the survey asked participants if they would be willing to take part in a one-on-one interview. A total of 68 survey participants indicated

that they would be willing to participate in one-on-one interviews with the principal investigator. In addition to affirming their willingness to participate in the interviews, respondents provided an email address in order to be contacted. On 2 March 2015, the principal investigator contacted each of the willing interview participants. A total of 16 participants responded with a willingness to participate. While initially 68 participants responded to the survey with a willingness to be interviewed, upon being contacted, only 16 responded that they would, in fact, participate. From the list of 16 potential participants, a final list of eight participants was purposively chosen in order to obtain as close to a representative sample as possible regarding school type, gender, and teaching assignment. The one-on-one semi-structured interviews took place at the convenience of the participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. All participants consented to being recorded and were provided a copy of the study protocols. The recordings were stored on a password-protected file that was deleted upon completion of the study. The interview transcripts did not include any identifiable elements pertaining to the participants' identity.

### Data Analysis

#### Quantitative

Quantitative analysis of the data included demographic data and numerical ratings from items 7-24 on the TEP. The responses to the electronic survey were entered into SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics for items 7-24 were calculated. The findings stemming from the analysis of the collected descriptive statistics were used to provide depth to the qualitative portion of the study. One of the benefits of using a mixed-method approach is that it allows for the results of quantitative data to elaborate on and enhance

qualitative data (Creswell, 2013). An analysis of the descriptive statistics will be discussed in the subsequent chapter of the study.

### Qualitative

Qualitative data collected from semi-structured one-on-one interviews were recorded and transcribed by the principal investigator. The interview transcriptions were analyzed and coded for emerging themes. A theme was identified when it reached double-digit occurrences during the coding of interview data. The thematic analysis of interview data is a useful method for identification, analysis, and the reporting of patterns within the collected data (Braun & Clark, 2006). Furthermore, the use of thematic analysis is a critical element that enables the researcher to piece together a single narrative stemming from the collected experiences of interview participants (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). The principal investigator relied upon an independent reviewer of the transcribed interviews to aid in the analysis of emerging themes. It should be noted that the identity of the interview participants remained confidential throughout the process. The principal investigator was the only individual to whom the participants' identities were known. The principal investigator assigned each participant an alpha letter for the purposes of identification and reporting.

### Summary

This chapter restated the intended purpose of the current research study as well as the research questions. The participants were chosen purposively from a sample of secondary school teachers who met the principal investigator's criteria for being mid-career. The instrumentation used in carrying out the study was described, as well as the

questions for the one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Additionally, data collection methods for both the quantitative and qualitative aspect of the study were discussed. Finally, the methods of data analysis were discussed. The results of the data analysis are presented in the subsequent chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have toward teacher evaluation and its effect on their classroom practices. The study was limited to mid-career secondary school teachers having between 14-21 years of experience. An online survey was sent to 472 perspective participants. A total of 152 participants (32%) completed the survey. Additionally, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants who also took part in the survey. In this chapter, the author will review the quantitative results from the electronic survey first, and then will discuss the qualitative data obtained from the interviews with selected participants. The quantitative data gathered for the purposes of this study was used primarily to supplement the qualitative data garnered from the interviews. Data retrieved from the one-on-one interviews were examined for emerging themes and will be reported. This chapter will conclude with the data analysis for the four research questions guiding the present study.

### Survey Results

An electronic survey was sent to 472 potential participants matching the parameters of being mid-career secondary school teachers. A total of 152 out of the possible 472 potential participants completed the online survey over a two-week period during February 2015. The demographic data of the participants who took part in the survey will be reported first, followed by a presentation of the descriptive results stemming from the online survey.

## Demographic Data of Survey Respondents

The specific demographic information collected in the survey included the number of years each participant had taught, gender, teaching assignment, and the date of his or her most recent evaluation.

Table 1: Years of Service

Years of Service	Response	Percentage
14	3	2
15	21	14
16	17	11
17	21	14
18	19	13
19	15	10
20	27	18
21	28	19

The greatest number of survey respondents (N=19%) reported having 21 years of service as a classroom teacher. Mid-career was defined as having between 14-21 years of experience as a classroom teacher (Gu & Day, 2013). The number of female survey respondents (77%) outnumbered the male participants (23%). Each participant was asked to identify his or her current teaching assignment, which was then categorized as mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, career and technical education, physical education, and other. Participants were asked to identify their teaching assignment as being the subject in which they taught the majority of their classes. The choice of “other” was designated for a teacher whose primary teaching assignment did not easily fit into one of the designated subject areas. The number of teachers indicating “other” represented the highest number of survey participants (34%). It should be noted

that the primary investigator intended the “other” category as a means of accounting for participants whose primary teaching assignment included such subject areas as ESE, fine arts, and teachers in multiple subject areas. The percentages for the remaining subject areas were, mathematics (13%), science (11%), social science (10%), language arts (17%), career and technical education (9%), and physical education (5%). The majority of respondents (N=76) indicated that his or her most recent evaluation had taken place during the 2014-2015 school year.

### Descriptive Statistics for Survey Data

The survey instrument used in the present study was a modified version of the Teacher Evaluation profile (Stiggins & Duke, 1988). The survey collected specific data concerning the perceptions mid-career secondary school teachers’ hold toward their annual teacher evaluation process. The first section of the survey collected demographic data pertaining to the sample. The following sections addressed specific areas concerning the context of the annual teacher evaluation and personal attributes of the teacher.

The first section following the section gathering demographic information asked participants to provide an overall rating of their annual teacher evaluation. The first question in this section asked participants to rate the overall quality of their most recent teacher evaluation. The question was scored on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= very poor; 2= poor; 3= fair; 4= good; 5= very good. Table 2 provides the frequency of responses for question seven on the survey

Table 2: Frequency of Responses for Question Seven

Question 7: Rate the overall quality of the evaluation.	
Rating	Number of Responses
Very Poor	13
Poor	35
Fair	54
Good	33
Very Good	15

The mean for this item ( $M=3.14$ ) indicated participants rated the overall quality of their most recent teacher evaluation as being fair.

The second question in this section asked participants to rate the overall impact the teacher evaluation had on their professional practice. This question was scored on a 5-point Likert scale with 1= no impact; 2= very little impact; 3=mild impact; 4= moderate impact; 5= strong impact. Table 3 provides the frequency of responses for question eight on the survey.

Table 3: Frequency of Responses for Question Eight

Question 8: Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practices.	
Rating	Number of Responses
No Impact	19
Very Little Impact	53
Mild Impact	33
Moderate Impact	36
Strong Impact	9

The mean for this item ( $M=2.75$ ) indicated participants believed the teacher evaluation had little to mild impact on their professional practice. It should be noted that for the purposes of this study professional practices are defined as behaviors concordant with being a classroom teacher. The descriptive statistics for questions seven and eight are reported below.



Table 4: Participant Reflection on Most Recent Evaluation

Question	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
Rate the overall quality of the evaluation.	150	3.41	3	2.06	1-5
Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practice.	150	2.75	3	1.13	1-5

Note: Question seven was scored as follows: 5-point Likert scale with 1= very poor; 2= poor; 3= fair; 4= good; 5= very good. Question eight was scored as follows: 5-point Likert scale with 1= no impact; 2= very little impact; 3=mild impact; 4= moderate impact; 5= strong impact.

The next section of the survey examined the personal attributes of the individual teacher. Specifically, this section sought to elicit teacher insight into his or her orientation to change, experimentation, and criticism. The first question in this section sought to gauge participants' orientation toward change. The 5-point Likert scale was coded as, 1= I am strongly averse to change; 2= I am generally averse to change; 3= neither averse or open to change; 4= I am moderately open to change; 5= I am very open to change. Table 5 provides the frequency of responses for question nine on the survey.

Table 5: Frequency of Responses for Question Nine

Question 9: What is your orientation to change?	
Rating	Number of Responses
I am Strongly Averse to Change	0
I am Generally Averse to Change	2
Neither Averse or Open to Change	15
I am Moderately Open to Change	73
I am Very Open to Change	59

The mean (M=4.27) indicated participants consider themselves at least moderately open to change. The next question sought to understand how open participants were toward experimentation in the classroom. The question used a 5-point Likert scale where 1= I never experiment in my classroom; 2= I rarely experiment in my classroom; 3= I sometimes experiment in my classroom; 4= I often experiment in my classroom; 5= I am continually experimenting in the classroom. Table 6 provides the frequency of responses for survey question 10.

Table 6: Frequency of Responses for Question 10

Question 10: What is your orientation toward experimentation in your classroom?	
Rating	Number of Responses
I Never Experiment in my Classroom	1
I Rarely Experiment in my Classroom	1
I Sometimes Experiment in my Classroom	43
I Often Experiment in my Classroom	59
I am Continually Experimenting in the Classroom	40

The mean score (M=3.94) indicated participants consider themselves open toward experimentation in the classroom. The final question concerned the participants' orientation toward criticism. Again, this item was scored using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= I am relatively closed; 2= I am moderately closed; 3= I am moderately open; 4= I am relatively open; 5= I am very open. Table 7 provides the frequency of responses for survey question 11.

Table 7: Frequency of Responses for Question 11

Question 11: What is your orientation toward criticism?	
Rating	Number of Responses
I am Relatively Closed	1
I am Moderately Closed	1
I am Moderately Open	50
I am Relatively Open	61
I am Very Open	37

The mean score (M= 3.88) indicated that participants considered themselves to be open toward criticism regarding their professional practices. Table 8 provides the descriptive statistics for survey questions 9-11.

Table 8: Participant Assessment on Orientation Toward Change, Criticism, and Experimentation

Question	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
What is your orientation to change?	149	4.27	4	0.69	2-5
What is your orientation toward experimentation in your classroom?	144	3.94	4	0.82	1-5
What is your orientation toward criticism?	150	3.88	4	0.81	1-5

Note: Question nine was scored as follows: 5-point Likert scale was coded as, 1= I am strongly averse to change; 2= I am generally averse to change; 3= neither averse or open to change; 4= I am moderately open to change; 5= I am very open to change. Question 10 was scored as follows: 5-point Likert scale where 1= I never experiment in my classroom; 2= I rarely experiment in my classroom; 3= I sometimes experiment in my classroom; 4= I often experiment in my classroom; 5= I am continually experimenting in the classroom. Question 11 was scored as follows: a 5-point Likert scale where 1= I am relatively closed; 2= I am moderately closed; 3= I am moderately open; 4= I am relatively open; 5= I am very open.

The next section of the survey sought to collect data on the perception participants had regarding his or her evaluator. The two questions in this section were scored using a

5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. Table 9 provides the frequency of responses for questions 12-13

Table 9: Frequency of Responses for Questions 12-13

Item Number	Question	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
12	My Evaluator was familiar with the specifics of my teaching assignment.	13	20	25	34	58
13	My evaluator provided useful, credible, and constructive feedback.	17	24	36	37	35

The first question addressed the participants' perception regarding how familiar their evaluator was with their specific teaching assignment. The mean ( $M=3.69$ ) indicated participants were somewhat ambivalent with regard to how familiar the individual conducting the evaluation was with their teaching assignment. The second question concerned to what degree participants felt they received constructive feedback from the teacher evaluation process. The mean ( $M=3.33$ ) indicated, again, participants did not have a strong feeling as to the nature of the feedback they received. Table 10 provides the descriptive statistics for survey questions 12-13.

Table 10: Participant Perception of their Evaluator

Question	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
My evaluator was familiar with the specifics of my teaching assignment.	150	3.69	4	1.34	1-5
My evaluator provided useful and constructive feedback.	149	3.33	3	1.31	1-5

Note: The questions addressed in this section were scored using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree.

The next section concerned the participants' understanding of the procedures used during the teacher evaluation process. The four questions in this section were scored using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. Table 11 provides the frequency of responses for questions 14-17

Table 11: Frequency of Responses for Questions 14-17

Item Number	Question	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
14	Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were communicated to you.	4	14	18	50	64

Item Number	Question	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
15	Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were clear to you.	6	17	19	60	47
16	Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were appropriate for my current teaching assignment.	26	30	22	49	23
17	My meetings with my evaluator were productive.	16	18	39	40	36

The first question on this section asked participants to consider how well the expectations and standards concerning the teacher evaluation process were communicated. The mean (M=4.04) indicated most participants somewhat agreed that the expectations and standards were sufficiently communicated. The next question in this section addressed participant clarity regarding the standards and expectations of the teacher evaluation process. The mean (M=3.84) indicated participants were ambivalent

regarding the clarity of procedures and standards. The next question addressed whether participants thought the standards and expectations were appropriate for his or her current teaching assignment. The mean (M=3.09) indicated participants were ambivalent regarding the alignment of standards and expectations to his or her current teaching assignment. Finally, participants were asked to comment on how productive their meetings were with the evaluator. The mean (M=3.42) indicated participants did not have strong feelings regarding the productiveness of meetings with their evaluator. Table 12 presents the descriptive statistics for survey questions 14-17

Table 12: Participant Understanding of the Evaluation Process

Question	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were communicated to you.	150	4.04	4	1.08	1-5
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were clear to you.	149	3.84	4	1.12	1-5
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were appropriate for my current teaching assignment.	150	3.09	3	1.36	1-5
My meetings with my evaluator were productive.	149	3.42	4	1.27	1-5

Note: The questions addressed in this section were scored using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree.

The final section of the survey concerned participants' perception of the overall evaluation context. The seven questions in this section were scored using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree. Table 13 provides the frequency of responses for questions 18-24.

Table 13: Frequency of Responses for Questions 18-24

Item Number	Question	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
18	The amount of feedback I received was appropriate.	15	17	41	31	45
19	The amount of feedback I received was specific and useful.	26	28	30	34	29
20	The amount of time spent on my evaluation was appropriate.	39	32	20	35	23
21	The amount of training I received regarding the evaluation was appropriate.	18	30	35	37	30



Item Number	Question	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
22	My districts stated policies and purposes regarding evaluation are clear.	29	33	31	34	22
23	The role of evaluation is teacher accountability.	32	22	14	47	33
24	The role of evaluation is to promote teacher growth.	38	22	15	44	31

The first question asked participants to consider the appropriateness of the feedback they received from their teacher evaluation. The mean (M=3.50) indicated participants did not have strong feelings regarding the amount of feedback they received stemming from their annual teacher evaluation. The second question addressed whether participants felt the feedback they received from the evaluation was useful and specific. The mean (M=3.08) indicated ambivalence with regard to the nature of the feedback received. The third question sought to ascertain whether participants felt the amount of time spent on the evaluation was appropriate. The mean (M=2.81) indicated participants somewhat disagreed regarding the amount of time spent on the evaluation process. It is important to note the phrasing of this question may have been ambiguous. The result might indicate participants believing the amount of time spent on the evaluation process

was either too much or too little. However, subsequent interviews with participants shed light on an emerging theme that the evaluation process was too time-consuming. The next question concerned the participants' perception regarding the amount of training they received regarding evaluation procedures. The mean ( $M= 3.21$ ) indicated participants did not have strong feelings regarding the amount of training they received leading up to the evaluation. The next question sought to ascertain whether participants believed the stated policies and procedures regarding the evaluation were clear. The mean ( $M= 2.91$ ) indicted participants had some disagreement as to the stated purpose and policies surrounding the teacher evaluation context. The final two questions from the survey asked participants to state their belief concerning the purpose behind teacher evaluation. Specifically, participants were asked if they believed the role of teacher evaluation should be more focused on accountability or professional growth. Participants were first asked whether the role of teacher evaluation should focus more on accountability. The mean ( $M=3.18$ ) indicated participants were mostly unsettled as to whether or not teacher accountability should be the primary focus of teacher evaluation. Participants were also uncertain as to whether or not the role of teacher evaluation should be to promote professional growth. This was indicated by the calculated mean ( $M=3.05$ ). In analyzing the data from these two survey items, participants were unsettled as to the role teacher evaluation should serve given the two options. Table 14 presents the descriptive statistics for survey questions 18-24.

Table 14: Participant Perception of the Evaluation Context

Question	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
The amount of feedback I received was appropriate.	149	3.50	4	1.30	1-5
The amount of feedback I received was specific and useful.	147	3.08	3	1.39	1-5
The amount of time spent on my evaluation was appropriate.	149	2.81	3	1.45	1-5
The amount of training I received regarding the evaluation was appropriate.	150	3.21	3	1.30	1-5
My districts stated policies and purposes regarding evaluation are clear.	149	2.91	3	1.35	1-5
The role of evaluation is teacher accountability.	148	3.18	4	1.48	1-5
The role of evaluation is to promote teacher growth.	150	3.05	3.5	1.51	1-5

Note: The questions asked in this section were scored on a 5-point Likert scale where 1= disagree; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= somewhat agree; 5= agree.

### Summary of Survey Data

In total, the survey results paint a picture of the sampled mid-career secondary school teachers not necessarily having strong opinions regarding the procedures, purpose, and context of teacher evaluation. However, there are a few important takeaways stemming from the survey results. First, teacher evaluation does not seem to have a significant impact on the professional practices of participating mid-career secondary

school teachers. Secondly, participants do not agree that the amount of time spent on the teacher evaluation process is appropriate. Lastly, there appears to be some agreement by participants regarding the clarity of both the stated policies and procedures used with the teacher evaluation system. As previously stated the purpose of conducting the survey was to support the results stemming from data collected during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The results of the interviews will be reported in the following section.

### Interview Results

A question on the survey administered to participants asked if they would be willing to partake in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. A final list of eight participants was purposively chosen in order to obtain a representative sample of teaching assignment, gender, and school type. In this section the demographics of interview participants will be presented. The emerging themes will then be presented along with direct quotes from interview participants in order to provide support.

#### Interview Participant Demographics

In order to maintain confidentiality, interview participants were assigned a letter (A-H) as an identifier. The interview sample was comprised of five females and three males. The number of years as a classroom teacher ranged from 15 to 21 years with an average of 18.75 years of experience as a classroom teacher. Table 15 provides specific demographic information for interview participants.

Table 15: Interview Participant Demographics

Participant	Subject Area	Years as a Classroom Teacher
Teacher A	Mathematics	20
Teacher B	Physical Education	21
Teacher C	Social Studies	16
Teacher D	Language Arts	18
Teacher E	Fine Arts	20
Teacher F	Social Studies/ESE	21
Teacher G	Science	15
Teacher H	Social Studies	19

### Emerging Themes

The collected data from interview participants resulted in a total of nine emerging themes. The principal investigator as well as other individuals reviewed the interview data in order to provide a check on the analysis of the identified themes. To reiterate, an emerging theme was identified when it reached double-digit mentions during the interview coding process. Table 16 provides the emerging themes along with the frequency of mentions during participant interviews.

Table 16: Frequency of Themes Mentioned During Participant Interviews

Theme	Number of Times Themes Were Mentioned in Interviews
The evaluation process is frustrating.	23
Student test scores should not be used as an evaluation component.	13
The process is too time consuming.	13

Theme	Number of Times Themes Were Mentioned in Interviews
Teachers value feedback more from their students as opposed to the evaluation.	14
The evaluation is about jumping through hoops or checking a box.	12
Evaluation should be more tailored to content and grade level.	19
Evaluation should be about promoting professional growth.	15
The evaluation system is too focused on accountability.	19
The evaluation system is too subjective and lacks consistency.	16
N=9	

The most prominent theme to emerge from participant interviews was a frustration with the evaluation process. The least prominent theme was that the evaluation represents an exercise in jumping through hoops or checking a box. It should be noted that while this was the least prominent theme, participants used these exact phrases when describing the evaluation process.

In order to keep the participants' identities confidential, names of specific schools, if mentioned by participants, were omitted in the transcripts along with any other possible identifiers. The emerging themes garnered from the one-on-one semi-structured interviews will be presented along with supporting quotes from participants.

The first emerging theme collected from interview data was that for the most part, the evaluation process is frustrating for Bayview Public Schools (BPS) mid-career secondary school teachers. When asked to describe their experiences with the teacher evaluation system, participants articulated a level of frustration with regard to the

process. Teacher A commented, “It is very frustrating, very time-consuming, I don’t see how it benefits me or benefits my students.” Teacher C stated, “I am not happy with it. I know there’s a lot of teachers that are aren’t happy with it.” Teacher F indicated “It’s enough to drive a career teacher insane.”

The next theme to emerge was that BPS mid-career secondary school teachers do not believe that students’ test scores should be a component of their evaluation. Teacher D stated the following:

“I don’t like the element of my students’ test scores weighing so heavily on what I do. Especially, because of what I teach and the types of students I have. I would much rather be focused on lifting them up and creating an excitement within them about education than worrying about whether they score high enough to make my VAM score look good.”

Teacher H stated, “I don’t feel that evaluating teachers on the basis of test scores seems very fair.”

The next theme to emerge from the interviews was that participants felt the process was far too time-consuming. When asked what the most negative aspect of the evaluation system was, Teacher E indicated the following: “It’s a huge waste of my time because I have to spend so much time with the paperwork and with the accountability.” When describing the overall experiences with the current method of evaluating BPS teachers, Teacher G stated, “When we changed to the method, it was a bit overwhelming.” When referring to the rubric used for evaluating teachers, Teacher A stated, “I just don’t think it’s attainable.”

The next theme to emerge was that BPS mid-career secondary school teachers value feedback from students more than they do from the evaluation. When asked whether the evaluation system makes them feel effective or ineffective, Teacher B stated, “I don’t think the evaluation system does. I think the results of my students’ achievement do.” Teacher G stated, “I think I am effective because the students make me feel effective.” Additionally, teachers who are teaching courses with national exams gauge their effectiveness on how well their students performed. Teacher A stated, “What means the most to me are when I get my AP scores at the end of the year.”

The next theme to emerge was the evaluation being described in terms of “jumping through hoops” or “checking boxes.” It is important to note that those specific phrases appeared in nearly every interview transcript. Teacher A indicated, “The evaluation system is just another box that we check off.” Teacher E stated, “We just end up jumping through hoops, putting on a show when the principal comes in.” When asked what would be the biggest improvement that could be made to the evaluation system, Teacher E stated, “Don’t make me spend hundreds of hours of my time that could be better directed towards my students to jump through these imaginary hoops. That it’s checking a box for you and then you move onto the next person.” When asked if his or her previous experience with other methods of teacher evaluation were more positive or negative, Teacher H stated, “positive.” When asked to elaborate, Teacher H stated, “The evaluation is very subjective; they just check a box.”

The next theme identified was: BPS mid-career secondary school teachers would prefer an evaluation more tailored to their specific content area and grade level. In explaining his or her experiences with the current method of evaluating teachers, Teacher



B stated, "I find it a little bit confusing and not really focused on my subject area of the particular subject area of the teacher." Teacher E recalled more positive experiences with prior teacher evaluation systems. Teacher E stated, "I just felt like a lot of the things pertained directly to me. The evaluation was tailored more towards my job working as an art teacher." Teacher E further commented with regard to the current method of teacher evaluation: "I've always felt that it had little to do with what I do. It doesn't accurately measure my content. It doesn't measure my instructional delivery. It just doesn't fit me as an art teacher." When asked to identify the most negative aspect of the evaluation system, Teacher G stated the following:

"I think they're using a one-size-fits-all and I don't think that should be the case. I think high school should be different than middle school and middle school should be different from elementary school, and science should be different than English. If they're asking us to differentiate with our students, then why are they not differentiating with us as teachers?"

The next theme to emerge during the analysis of the interview data was that BPS mid-career secondary school teachers believe the purpose of teacher evaluation should be about promoting professional growth. When asked whether he or she thought the purpose of teacher evaluation should focus on accountability or professional growth, Teacher A stated, "I would hope that it would be about professional growth." Teacher B made the following comment:

"I think promoting professional growth. I do think most, if not all teachers are there because they want to make a difference in the lives of children. Holding them accountable has a negative connotation. Whereas, promoting growth shows

that you want to see people succeed. For my students, I want to see them succeed. I want to promote growth with them, and I think the same thing should be done for teachers.”

Teacher D provided a more nuanced answer stating the following:

“Given the two choices, I would say promoting professional growth, but I think they’re interconnected. Again, this is my interpretation of the word accountable. There might be people with a more punitive definition. If you are truly accountable in terms of doing things that you’re supposed to be doing as professional then you grow professionally.”

The next theme identified from the interviews was: BPS mid-career secondary school teachers believe the current evaluation system is primarily focused on accountability. Teacher B stated, I think that it’s about accountability, numbers, and data.” Teacher C stated, “I think it’s about accountability, that’s what I hear it’s about; being able to wean the bad seeds out.” Teacher F stated, “I think it’s about accountability and that’s sad.” Teacher G stated, “Accountability, I think accountability, so, it’s taking a snapshot. Administrators are saying I saw this and this, and I didn’t see this or that. It’s a snapshot, not a holistic representation.

The final theme to emerge was: BPS mid-career secondary school teachers believe the evaluation system is too subjective and lacks consistency. When asked about what improvements could be made to the evaluation system, Teacher B stated the following:

“It is very inconsistent across the board. For example, I helped other people with the professional growth plan (PGP), so it was similar to mine. It wasn’t exactly

the same but it was similar. What scored a 3 at my school scored a 5.3 at another school, and it was almost identical. It was another PE teacher, and we were basically doing the same thing. I think consistency is where it's lacking right now. There are too many opinions or beliefs about how the scoring should be done as opposed to consistency across the board."

Teacher C stated, "I think with the new evaluation system and the new rules it seems like they are changing all the time." When asked how accurate they felt the evaluation system was at identifying the teacher strengths and weaknesses, Teacher F stated the following: "It depends on who is evaluating you. I left another school, and again I am an annual contract teacher. I was guaranteed a position, and left because an administrator was skewed in their grading." Teacher F recalled a frustrating episode with an administrator.

Teacher F explains:

"My stretch goal for my last evaluation was to increase the amount of argumentation in class. I got a zero for that stretch goal. I went to the administrator and I said I don't get this, why did I get a zero? They said what are you going to do? I don't get it, it makes no sense to me, this is not clear. I asked, do you know about argumentation in sciences? He did not. So, I brought up my books on how to use argumentation in biology and showed him the research and said this is what I am referencing. He said it was not clearly stated."

When asked what the most negative aspect of the of the evaluation system was, Teacher H stated, "Some people get dinged on things that you shake your head at. Some administrators evaluate differently. Some are easy; some rake you across the coals. Consistency is a problem."

To reiterate, an emerging theme was identified when it reached double-digit mentions during the interview coding process. Table 16 provides the emerging themes along with the frequency of mentions during participant interviews.

#### Summary of Interview Data

In analyzing the emerging themes stemming from the interviews, a few key points came to light. First, there seemed to be a rather palpable frustration with regard to the teacher evaluation system used by BPS. With the exception of Teacher D, all interview participants felt the prior evaluation system was superior to the current method. However, most participants articulated at least one positive attribute regarding the current method of evaluating teachers. Secondly, most participants indicated they understood the procedures used during the evaluation process. However, the frequent use of terms such as “jumping through hoops” or “checking a box” indicated that participants do not believe that teacher evaluation is a meaningful exercise. Lastly, interview participants stated a desire to have an evaluation system that specifically differentiates teachers according to grade level and subject. The current rubrics used in evaluating BPS teachers are standard across grade and subject. An analysis of the results with regard to the specific research questions guiding the study will provide further insight.

#### Analysis of the Results in Relation to the Research Questions

The principal investigator used a mixed-method phenomenological research design in order to carry out the present study. The quantitative results stemming from the online survey provided depth to the qualitative results stemming from one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The purpose of the study was to investigate how the beliefs and

attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation shape professional practice. A total of four research questions guided the study. The specific research questions that guided the study are as follows:

1. To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation relate to their professional practice?
2. To what extent do teachers' believe that the evaluation system promotes or inhibits teacher growth in mid-career secondary school teachers?
3. To what extent do mid-career secondary teachers understand the evaluation process?
4. How does the evaluation process relate to mid-career secondary school teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

A presentation of the results with regard to the specific research questions that guided the present study will now be presented. Table 17 provides a summary of participant responses to the specific research questions that guided the study.

Table 17: Summary of Participant Responses to Interview Questions

Interview Question	Summary of Participant Responses
To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation relate to their professional practice?	Participants indicated that the teacher evaluation system had little impact on their professional practices. Participants indicated a level of frustration with the process and consistency of teacher evaluation. Furthermore, participants indicated that factors such as student feedback and assessment results impacted their professional practices to a greater degree.
To what extent do teachers' believe that the evaluation system promotes or inhibits teacher growth in mid-career secondary school teachers?	Participants indicated that the purpose of teacher evaluation should be focused on promoting professional growth. However, participants indicated that the current method

Interview Question	Summary of Participant Responses
	of evaluation is too focused on accountability. Participants indicated a level of frustration concerning the autonomy over their professional growth plans.
To what extent do mid-career secondary school teachers understand the evaluation process?	Participants indicated that the expectations and standards were clearly communicated to them. However, participants indicated a level of frustration and misunderstanding concerning how the evaluator individually assessed them.
How does the evaluation process relate to mid-career secondary school teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?	Overall, participants indicated that the evaluation system had little impact on their self-efficacy beliefs. However, participants did indicate a level of frustration over being assessed on items they felt were beyond their control.

### Research Question One

*To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation relate to their professional practice?*

A survey question asked participants to rate the overall impact of the teacher evaluation on their professional practice. Participants indicated that overall, the teacher evaluation had very little impact on their professional practice. Interview participants provided a number of reasons for the frustration they feel with regard to the evaluation system. The most frequently stated causes of frustration included the consistency of ratings, time, and a feeling that the evaluation was not tailored to grade and content area. Interview participants were asked specifically how the evaluation system guided their classroom practices. Teacher C indicated that any changes to classroom practices were the result of “checking boxes for administrators.” Participants indicated that assessments or other curricular demands affected their practice more so than the evaluation.

## Research Question Two

*To what extent do teachers' believe that the evaluation system promotes or inhibits teacher growth in mid-career secondary school teachers?*

A section of the survey required participants to self-assess their orientation toward change, classroom experimentation, and criticism. The results indicated that most participants were comfortable with change. Participants also indicated that they were at least willing to sometimes experiment in the classroom. Finally, participants indicated that they were at least somewhat open to receiving criticism. Taken together, these results indicate that sample was not averse to factors that might promote professional growth. Interview participants almost unanimously stated the intended purpose of teacher evaluation should center on promoting teacher growth. However, nearly all interview participants felt that growth was secondary to accountability in the BPS teacher evaluation model. Teacher G was asked specifically if teacher evaluation could be used to promote professional growth. Teacher G indicated that it was rare for teachers to actively seek out professional development opportunities following an evaluation.

As a component of the evaluation BPS teachers are required to write a professional growth plan (PGP). Teachers indicated that there was a value and a purpose behind writing a PGP. However, several teachers lamented the PGP was far too time consuming. Additionally, teachers indicated a frustration with administrators not understanding or misinterpreting his or her stated goals and means of achieving them.

### Research Question Three

*To what extent do mid-career secondary school teachers understand the evaluation process?*

Survey participants were asked if the expectations and standards were clearly communicated to them. Participants indicated yes, the expectations and standards were clearly communicated. However, participants neither agreed nor disagreed that the standards and expectations were clearly understood to them. Furthermore, participants neither agreed nor disagreed that the amount of training they received regarding the teacher evaluation was sufficient. Finally, participants indicated some disagreement with the clarity of BPS stated policies and purposes regarding evaluation. When interview participants were asked if they understood how they were evaluated, the majority stated they did. However, Teacher C expressed a frustration over being assessed on items that were never observed during an administrator observation. Teacher F stated that the evaluation system was being constantly changed and tweaked. According to Teacher F, the constant changes in the evaluation system make it difficult to understand what the expectations are. Interview participants nearly all reported that the guidelines and expectations had been explained to them. However, Teacher H, who stated an understanding of the rubrics used in the evaluation, expressed some frustration. Teacher H indicated that parts of the rubric were used and some were not. When Teacher H specifically asked the evaluating administrator how to improve on specific items, no feedback was provided.



#### Research Question Four

*How does the evaluation process relate to mid-career secondary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?*

The online survey administered to participants did not specifically address this question. Interview participants were asked if the evaluation system made them feel as though they were an effective or ineffective teacher. For the most part, participants reported that the evaluation system, specifically the results, did not have an impact on their self-efficacy. Teacher A had an interesting response however, stating, "The evaluation system is just another box that we check off. It doesn't seem to matter what we get. Now, if I get proficient, then I will be upset, especially, with all of the time and energy that I am putting into what I am doing." Teacher A, along with others indicated that their main source of teaching efficacy stems from how well they perceive their students are benefiting from their instruction. Teacher C and Teacher E were the only interview participants to directly indicate that their evaluations made them feel ineffective. When Teacher C was asked specifically what he or she had learned from the evaluation, the given response was that he or she was not the teacher he or she thought he or she was. When asked whether the evaluation system makes you feel like an effective or ineffective teacher, Teacher C stated, ineffective. When asked to elaborate Teacher C stated:

"Mostly because of the needs improvement, and obviously this is on a more personal level, getting a needs improvement, was, well it kind of lowered my ego. It was like what happened? What went wrong? What am I doing wrong? Why is it so much different this year than last year when I was doing fine? I feel like an

ineffective teacher because I don't feel like I am doing everything I should be doing. Because of the evaluation system, if I'm not doing everything all the time, then I am not the teacher they want me to be. That is how I feel ineffective."

When Teacher E was asked the same question, the response was that the evaluation system had made the participant feel ineffective. When asked to elaborate, Teacher E stated the following:

"Well, for example, one of the things that I got dinged on was use of technology. I don't have access to technology. I teach ceramics and sculpture, and I got marked down because he (the administrator) said that my technology use was passive. I couldn't make them understand that it's not passive. We use our cell phones, we use every bit of technology that we have to the best that I can. I've got six laptops that were donated that barely work. My spouse works for GE, They gave me three laptops. Half the time my computer doesn't work, so, I can't even get on for the kids when we're trying to do presentations. So, it makes me feel that when I'm getting marked off, it makes me feel like I'm an ineffective teacher and there's nothing I can do about it. If you want me to use technology, give me technology, but don't mark me off for things that are out of my control."

### Summary

In this chapter, results from the online survey and one-on-one semi-structured interviews were reported. The demographics of both survey participants and interview participants were provide. The descriptive statistics stemming from the online survey were reported and used to support the findings from interview participants. The emerging

themes from the interviews with participating teachers were provided and elaborated upon. Finally, the results were presented in relation to the specific research questions that guided the study. The following chapter will provide a more in-depth discussion on results, including a discussion of the results in relation to the reviewed literature and theoretical framework. Additionally, the subsequent chapter will provide a general summary and conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward the teacher evaluation system and its effect on their professional practice, using a mixed-method phenomenological research design that employed an electronic survey and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed from both the electronic survey and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data obtained from the electronic survey was used to support the qualitative data obtained through thematic analysis of interviews conducted with willing selected participants. There were a total of 9 themes that emerged from the collected interview data. The emerging themes can be summarized as follows: Frustration with the process, objections to the use of student data, the amount of time the process takes, the process lacks purpose, a desire to have a more tailored evaluation to the individual teacher, teacher evaluation should promote professional growth, teacher evaluation is too focused on accountability, and the teacher evaluation process lacks consistency and is too subjective.

This chapter will discuss the specific findings in relation to the research questions that guided the study. Additionally, the findings will be discussed with regard to the review of literature and the theoretical framework. Specific recommendations will be made with regard to the research findings and toward future research. Finally, the limitations and study will be presented.

### Findings in Relation to the Review of Literature

The first research question addressed the degree to which teacher beliefs about the evaluation system shaped their professional practices. The results indicated that mid-career teachers might not perceive that the teacher evaluation system shapes their professional practices in a meaningful way. Interviews with participating teachers indicated that they believed that their professional practices were more often shaped by factors such as student reactions to instruction and assessment data. A reliance on such factors in shaping professional practices may stem from a belief that they are more valid, or at the very least, a more efficient means of providing feedback as compared to the evaluation system. Caparara et al., (2003) stated that teachers often construct their beliefs and attitudes toward programs and initiatives based on a perception of how they will directly impact their job. A number of times interviewed teachers reported that they saw the teacher evaluation system as merely a task that has to be checked off. Minnici (2014) discussed that teachers may be unwilling to put in the time and effort if they view teacher evaluation as an unimportant activity. According to the author, a further complication results when teachers feel evaluation is merely done as a means of compliance. Weisberg et al., (2009) noted in their report on the limitations of teacher evaluation, teachers do hold strong beliefs regarding teacher evaluation. The report noted that one strongly held belief regarding teacher evaluation was that it was unhelpful in providing useful feedback. In interviews with participating teachers, a few indicated that with regard to their last evaluation, they were not provided specific feedback regarding how they could improve.

Participating teachers indicated that they had often had more positive experiences with prior evaluations. Nespor (1987) stated that with regard to teacher beliefs, prior episodes or experiences have the potential to shape the perceptions of subsequent events. Therefore, a teacher's reflection on past evaluation experiences might interfere with forming positive beliefs and attitudes regarding the new system. This tendency to filter new experiences through a lens of past experiences is what Goodman (1988) referred to as an "intuitive screen." A potential factor inhibiting teachers from utilizing the teacher evaluation system as a form of professional development to improve practice could be related to past experiences. If teachers view their prior experiences with teacher evaluation as more positive than their current experiences, a barrier will need to be overcome to promote effective learning from the evaluation process. Teachers may be more willing and able to learn from their evaluations earlier in their careers. However, as teachers accrue more years of experience, their capacity and willingness to grow professionally diminishes (Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004). Minnici (2014) observed that a common mistake an administrator makes regarding the teacher evaluation process is a decoupling of evaluation from professional growth. The author noted that administrators should be explicit with regard to how the results from an evaluation should be presented alongside opportunities for professional development. The need to be intentional with regard to the relationship between evaluation and professional development may be more important with mid-career teachers. The reason for this stems from a waning willingness to seek out professional development opportunities to enhance their professional practice.

The second research question sought to address whether teachers' believe that teacher evaluation promotes or inhibits professional growth. The specific findings with regard to this research question were inconclusive. The participants who took part in the electronic survey were asked to assess if the teacher evaluation system used in Bayview Public Schools was more concerned with accountability or the promotion of growth. The results indicated that participants neither agreed nor disagreed on the intended purpose of Bayview Public Schools' teacher evaluation system. However, interview participants indicated a belief that the purpose of teacher evaluation in Bayview Public Schools was mostly concerned with accountability. Interview participants stated a belief that teacher evaluation should mostly be focused on promoting professional growth. As previously stated, Caparara et al. (2003) discussed that teachers will construct beliefs and attitudes toward programs and initiatives based on how they will impact their job. If teachers have formed a belief that teacher evaluation is about holding them accountable or rendering a judgment on their professional practices, professional growth may be inhibited. Gordon (2006) noted that evaluation models that designed to promote professional growth require a high degree of trust and support in order to be effective.

The evaluation model used in Bayview Public Schools is predicated on facilitating growth. Participants indicated a feeling that teacher evaluations were too rigid with regard to the specific nature of the teaching assignment. Furthermore, participants felt there was too much subjectivity in the scoring of the evaluation and evaluation related components such as professional growth plans. While the evaluation model used in Bayview Public Schools promotes professional growth in theory, the beliefs that teachers have stemming from its implementation may be inhibiting teacher growth.

The third research question examined concerned the degree to which teachers understand the evaluation process. The results indicated that for the most part participants understood the procedures and rubrics used during the evaluation process. However, participants did indicate that the interactions and conferences with evaluating administrators were not as productive as they had hoped for. Participants indicated a frustration with regard to the amount of time allocated to discussing observations and specific details regarding formative and summative evaluations. Danielson and McGreal (2000) noted that communication surrounding the evaluation process is often one way. The authors noted that teachers often feel that evaluation conferences are opportunities for administrators to find fault with regard to a particular practice or lack of practice on the part of the teacher. Danielson and McGreal (2000) noted that even when the atmosphere surrounding the conference is positive, teachers often remained passive. It is possible that the frustration indicated by participants is related to a belief that conferences with their evaluating administrator were unproductive.

The final research question concerned the effect that teacher evaluation has on teacher self-efficacy. The electronic survey administered to participants did not specifically address the relationship between teacher evaluation and self-efficacy. The reason for this was that self-efficacy was not addressed in the original survey administered by Stiggins and Duke (1988). The data collected for this specific research question was obtained through one-on-one interviews. Interview participants were mixed on the effect the results from the teacher evaluation impacted their self-efficacy. Participants indicated their perceptions concerning their effectiveness or ineffectiveness more often were related to other factors, such as student engagement or assessment



results. However, a few participants did indicate that their most recent evaluation had left them feeling less effective as a teacher. Teacher E expressed a frustration with being marked down for her ineffective use of technology in the classroom. Teacher E felt his (or her) use of technology was sufficient for the resources that had been provided. Bandura (2006) noted that individuals have greater self-efficacy when they feel that impediments to success can be overcome.

Interview participants indicated a frustration with student test scores being used as a component of the evaluation score. It is important to highlight the paradox of teachers utilizing student assessment data to self-evaluate, yet not wanting it to be a part of the teacher evaluation. This may be the effect of a mistrust regarding state mandated assessments as opposed to teacher-generated assessments. In conclusion, the reported low efficacy on the part of some interview participants might be related to the degree of control they feel over certain aspects of the evaluation process. If teachers do not feel that they have adequate resources in order to facilitate success, they might view themselves as less effective. When teachers feel they are being judged on factors they perceive to be out of their control threats to efficacy and competency may arise. These feelings often become compounded, eventually materializing into intentional patterns of resistance (Bandura, 2014).

#### Findings in Relation to Theory

The theoretical framework initially used to organize the present study was the theory of planned behavior (TPB); (Ajzen, 1988, 1991) and Bandura's (1977) theory of

self-efficacy. With regard to the specific findings stemming from the current study, both theories demonstrated a degree of usefulness in examining the findings.

The TPB has been demonstrated to be useful in understanding, predicting, and changing human social behavior. The TPB is comprised of three interrelated components. These include: (1) attitude toward the behavior, (2) subjective norms, and (3) perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1988). The use of the TPB concerning the process of teacher evaluation was predicated upon an understanding of the following: (1) teachers do have attitudes and beliefs regarding the evaluation process, (2) teacher evaluation is a required activity with specific governing norms, and (3) teachers do have beliefs concerning the degree of control they feel over the process. A further examination reveals the following findings with regard to the usefulness of the TPB in relation to teacher evaluation. First, participants did have specific attitudes and beliefs regarding the evaluation process. Interviews with participants indicated that overall, teachers believed the evaluation process simply served the purpose of fulfilling a mandate. Participants indicated both affective and instrumental attitudes toward teacher evaluation. Specifically, teachers indicated a level of frustration regarding the amount of time involved in the process and what they stood to gain professionally from a positive evaluation. Mid-career secondary school teachers may perceive that they have less to glean from the evaluation process in their current career stage as opposed to the beginning (Weems & Rogers, 2010).

The second finding with regard to the TPB concerns the subjective norms associated with context of teacher evaluation. The results stemming from a negative evaluation can have an impact on opportunities, promotion, or monetary reward. When teachers perceive the sociocultural context of the evaluation to be less than hospitable, an

attitude of nonconformity may arise due to the perceived high-stakes nature of teacher evaluation; thus, resulting in the individual teacher being labeled negatively (Jiang et al., 2015). This represents a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the teacher's beliefs about the evaluation process diminish opportunities for growth.

The last factor in addressing the application of the TPB and teacher evaluation concerns the degree of control teachers believe they have over the process. As previously stated, participating teachers indicated a level of frustration over being negatively assessed for things they felt were beyond their control. Specifically, participating teachers indicated a frustration over being evaluated for not using technology in the classroom. Teachers believed it was unfair to be assessed on a resource they do not have. Furthermore, teachers indicated a frustration with being evaluated on the basis of student test scores. This was especially true when the data used in the evaluation stems from state mandated assessment. The TPB did provide a useful lens for examining the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have toward the evaluation process.

An individual's feeling of self-efficacy is closely tied the perception they will be successful in a given endeavor (Bandura, 2006). It is difficult to dispel the belief that teacher evaluation represents a judgment on the professional practices of the teacher. In theory, positive self-efficacy should lead to greater motivation. However, as teachers perceive impediments to success, motivation may decrease. This is especially true when the individual forms a perception based on the belief he or she has very little control over a process or activity. Interview participants detailed a level of frustration with a failure to differentiate the evaluation system based on grade level and subject matter. Teacher G articulated frustration over the guidelines and rubrics used in the evaluation process not

being differentiated by grade or subject. A failure to differentiate can negatively impact self-efficacy based on the perception the guidelines used in evaluation are not tailored to the individual's role or job (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) discussed the relationship between a teacher's sense of control and a belief in a positive outcome regarding the evaluation process and self-efficacy. Participating teachers did indicate a desire to be more engaged in the evaluation process. By providing an opportunity to engage in meaningful collaborations, teachers may become more motivated to use teacher evaluation as a form of professional development.

The theories of self-efficacy and planned behavior provided a useful lens for examining the manner in which mid-career secondary school teachers interact with the evaluation process. However, in analyzing the results, an additional theory regarding self-determination and teacher evaluation came to light.

#### An Application of Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT); (Ryan & Deci, 2000) postulates that human beings require three innate and interrelated psychological needs in order to facilitate optimal motivation and welfare. The three psychological needs are autonomy, relatedness, and competency. Autonomy relates to an individual's desire to have exercise agency over choices. Relatedness concerns an individual's desire to feel connected. Finally, competency refers to an individual's desire for control and to work toward mastery (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In subsequent research examining SDT, Deci and Vansteenkiste (2004) posited that humans are innately proactive with regard to attaining

mastery and seeking opportunities for growth. However, these behaviors might not manifest absent a nurturing environment.

While the use of SDT has not explicitly been used with regard to teacher evaluation, it has been used in studying occupational motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). In examining the findings of the present study through the lens of SDT, an application of the theory is observable. First, participants indicated that their professional growth plans had to be tied to the school improvement plan. While this may seem intuitive, this does not foster a sense of autonomy with regard to the teachers' professional growth. In providing greater autonomy to teachers in the process of evaluation, a greater sense of self-efficacy can be achieved, thus leading to greater motivation. A greater sense of self-efficacy has been shown to lead toward a greater willingness on the part of the teacher to be more innovative in the classroom, as well as overall school improvement (Caprara et al., 2006; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Ross & Bruce, 2007). Secondly, participants indicated that they did not believe their interactions with evaluating administrators were as positive as they could have been; for many, the teacher evaluation process is merely a mandated exercise in which a judgment will be rendered on the individual teacher. A more positive and collaborative environment that is predicated on growth over accountability may foster greater relatedness toward the process of evaluation and its potential for fostering teacher growth. Lastly, interview participants indicated that while they understood how they were evaluated in theory, they were not satisfied by the subjective nature of the evaluation process. A more clearly detailed method of disseminating how and why teachers were evaluated in a particular domain may increase their level of competency and efficacy.

The potential application of SDT was a result of examining the findings in relation to theories concerning how individuals approach evaluation and the meaning they derive from the results. A further examination of the usefulness of SDT and teacher evaluation might prove to be a worthy undertaking. This could be done by utilizing the three core components of autonomy, relatedness, and competency as a framework for improving teacher evaluation.

### Summary

The results stemming from the present study suggest that mid-career secondary school teachers do have beliefs and attitudes regarding the teacher evaluation system used in Bayview Public Schools. Furthermore, data collected from participants suggests a few conclusions pertaining to teachers' professional practice. The conclusions are as follows:

1. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools want an evaluation system that is more tailored to their specific learners, grade-level, and subject area.
2. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools want more collaborative and collegial meetings with their evaluating administrators.

Furthermore, teachers would like to have more time to discuss how the evaluation process will be carried out.

3. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools want more autonomy in what they choose to focus on with regard to their professional growth plans.

4. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools want detailed and specific feedback concerning evaluation results. Furthermore, teachers would like to be provided opportunities to improve on areas of weakness.
5. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools desire to be evaluated as an individual. Additionally, teachers would like for their experience and stage of career to be valued in the evaluation process.
6. Mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools want the evaluation to be about promoting their professional growth and not merely about fulfilling a requirement.

### Discussion

Participants in this study offered several insights regarding the evaluation system used in Bayview Public Schools. Overall, teachers conveyed a sense that the evaluation system does not effectively differentiate between grade level and subject. Teachers do not see the process as anything more than a box to be checked off. The limited time afforded to observations and conferences with evaluating administrators makes them feel frustration, believing the administrator is not getting a true reflection of their practice.

While there are several recommendations that could be made to enhance the evaluation process in Bayview Public Schools, many would require changes at the state level. Therefore, the recommendations provided as a result of this study are such that they could be enacted at the district level.

Recommendation #1: Tailor the evaluation system to better reflect the specifics of the teacher's current assignment. This would require taking a differentiated approach to

evaluating elementary and secondary teachers, as well as subject and content area. District level resource-teachers and teacher-leaders could be used in adapting the requirements of teacher evaluation to grade level and content area. Weems and Rogers (2010) advocated for differentiating teacher evaluation based on the experience of the teacher. The authors stated that a failure to take into account the individual differences that exist between teachers might render the evaluation system less effective at promoting growth.

Recommendation #2: Involve department chairs in the evaluation process.

Department chairs often have more detailed knowledge regarding the specific pedagogical approaches for the subject and content area. Bayview Public Schools does encourage teachers to observe one another in practice as a part of the evaluation process. While this should still be encouraged, the exercise rarely goes beyond a colleague affirming another colleague. As participants indicated, several requirements of the evaluation system merely represent checking a box. However, department chairs may be able to take on the role of clinical supervisor. The role of a clinical supervisor in education, as envisioned by Robert Goldhammer (1969), was one in which an experienced educator would work closely with a colleague to refine their professional practice. This relationship built on a coaching model has been further refined to include the role of the critical friend. According to critical friend theory, a critical friend is an individual who bridges the gap between friend and coach. A critical friend can objectively carry out observations and data collection to enhance the teacher's professional practice (Costa & Kallick, 1993). A department chair can then compare his



or her observations to the observations of the evaluating administrator as a form of inter-rater reliability.

Recommendation #3: Provide more time for teachers to meet and discuss the evaluation with evaluating administrators. Participants indicated that discussions with administrators were both brief and lacked specific feedback. There is a need to increase the level of face-to-face communication between the evaluating administrator and teacher. Pre-observation and post-observation evaluation conferences need to be conducted one-on-one to ensure that standards and expectations are clear to both parties. This will enable teachers to address concerns before problems arise. Furthermore, these conversations will enable the evaluator to gain valuable insight into the teacher as an individual. The final meeting to discuss the results should be primarily concerned with clearing up potential discrepancies and looking collaboratively for opportunities to grow professionally. It is important that the teacher evaluation does not simply get reduced to a score, but rather serves the purpose of nurturing the individual teacher, who in turn will be sufficiently motivated to nurture students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012).

Recommendation #4: Participants indicated they often derive a sense of effectiveness or ineffectiveness from interactions with their students. Providing students an opportunity at the secondary level to evaluate faculty might yield valuable insights. Bayview Public Schools should develop a means of allowing students to evaluate their teachers. This is a common practice in higher education, and could be adapted for the secondary level. By seeking student feedback, teachers will have another form of data to draw from and reflect critically upon. Furthermore, empowering students and providing

them a voice can involve a greater number of stakeholders involved in the evaluation process.

Teacher evaluation has potential to be a valuable form of professional development. The key to an effective evaluation system is a belief by all stakeholders that the process is valuable and meant to enhance instruction within a learning organization. It is vital that teachers feel connected to the process throughout. Furthermore, it is imperative that teacher evaluation remains focused on the individual in a holistic manner. A high degree of importance needs to be placed on ensuring that teacher evaluation does not become an exercise in reductionism.

#### Limitations of the Study

The current study focused on examining the teacher evaluation system in Bayview Public Schools. The participants were mid-career secondary school teachers who participated in an online survey and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. The study used a mixed-method phenomenological research design to better understand the attitudes and beliefs mid-career secondary school teachers had toward the evaluation system in Bayview Public Schools. The results of the study should not be considered generalizable. The number of survey participants and interview participants preclude generalizability even within the entire population of mid-career secondary school teachers in Bayview Public Schools. Finally, it should be reiterated the principal investigator conducting the study is himself a teacher in Bayview Public Schools. Consequently, there was a constant attempt at all times for the principal investigator to maintain objectivity in carrying out the study. The principal investigator's personal

beliefs regarding the evaluation system used in Bayview Public Schools were the result of having been evaluated as a classroom teacher. Furthermore, the principal investigator has been involved with his school's evaluation of teacher professional growth plans and a peer evaluator for colleagues.

### Recommendations for Further Research

The current study adds to the body of literature regarding teacher evaluation.

Additionally, the study was carried out to provide recommendations to enhance the quality of teacher evaluation in Bayview Public School, and as such the results yield potential opportunities for additional research, such as:

1. Conducting a similar study with school administrators regarding their beliefs and attitudes toward teacher evaluation, and how it guides their decisions regarding instructional leadership. This would add the perspective of another individual involved in the evaluation process. Furthermore, it would provide opportunities to compare and contrast where administrator beliefs and attitudes intersect or differ with that of teachers
2. Conducting a longitudinal study on teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward teacher evaluation across the career. This would help to better understand what factors related to where teachers are in their careers that might impact their views regarding teacher evaluation. Furthermore, it may help to construct more tailored evaluations for teachers depending on their career stage.
3. Conducting a study involving second career teachers who have had previous experience with evaluations in different fields as a means of comparison. This

may be useful as a means of learning from private sector employee evaluations that might benefit teacher evaluation.

### Implications for the Organization and Practice

The results of the study are important for both Bayview Public Schools and for the practice of evaluating teachers. First, as this dissertation is regarded as a dissertation in practice, the desire to benefit my organization was paramount. As someone who has been involved with the evaluation process in Bayview Public Schools, I believe that we can take steps to make the process more meaningful and rewarding to all teachers. I believe strongly that teacher evaluation represents one of the best professional development opportunities afforded to teachers. However, this is predicated on getting the process right. This means that when Bayview Public Schools promotes its model of teacher evaluation as a growth model, we as an organization are working tirelessly to ensure that all stakeholders believe that. It is clear from the interviews and quantitative data that teachers are seeking feedback. Specifically, teachers are seeking from their evaluator meaningful feedback concerning their professional practices. An acknowledgment of this desire could be a meaningful starting point toward improving the teacher evaluation process. My hope is that through this project the shared insight and voices of the participants will aid in that endeavor.

The implications for practice involve providing an insight into the experiences teachers have with teacher evaluation. While survey data can be a useful source of feedback, hearing the voices of those involved with the evaluation process can be an asset toward constructing better methods and instruments to evaluate teachers. As the role of

classroom teacher becomes more complex and demanding, ensuring a means of reliable teacher evaluation that provides credible feedback will be essential. Furthermore, it is imperative that teachers feel that the purpose behind teacher evaluation is to aid them in honing their craft. It was the intention of the principal investigator to help add one more step toward the process of better understanding how teacher evaluation affects teachers at the mid-point of their careers.

### Conclusion

The participating teachers in this study provided insight into their beliefs and attitudes regarding the teacher evaluation process in Bayview Public Schools. Furthermore, they provided insight into how the evaluation process guides their professional practice and how the teacher evaluation process might be improved. It is hoped the results of this study will be considered in the improvement of the teacher evaluation system in Bayview Public Schools. The study highlights the importance in seeking out teacher voices with regard to the evaluation process. It is important to remember that teacher evaluation is first and foremost about increasing the human capital of teachers. While there is much to be gleaned from the data stemming from evaluation, it is important that we do not reduce the complex nature of teaching to merely a single score on an evaluation.

## APPENDIX A: UCF IRB APPROVAL



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**  
**FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **William A. Booth**

Date: **January 28, 2015**

Dear Researcher:

On 01/28/2015, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Project Title: Understanding the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary teachers towards teacher evaluation and its effect on their professional practice: A mixed-method phenomenological study  
Investigator: William A. Booth  
IRB Number: SBE-15-10927  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewska, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 01/28/2015 12:52:43 PM EST

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL

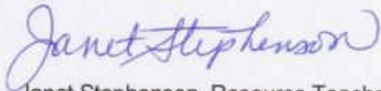


January 6, 2015

Dear William Booth,

Thank you for your application to conduct research in the [REDACTED]. This letter is official verification that your application has been accepted and approved through the Office of Accountability, Testing, & Evaluation. However, approval from this office does not obligate the principal of the schools you have selected to participate in the proposed research. Please contact the principals of the impacted schools in order to obtain their approval to email and survey teachers in their buildings. Upon the completion of your research, submit your findings to our office. If we can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,



Janet Stephenson, Resource Teacher  
Office of Accountability, Testing, and Evaluation

Office of Accountability, Testing & Evaluation  
Phone: [REDACTED]



Office of Accountability, Testing, and Evaluations  
Research Application

**Assurances Form**

I understand that I am requesting permission to engage in a research Project, and I am not requesting information pursuant to Open Records Legislation. If my research project requires participation with students, I understand that I may be subject to the appropriate School Board policy regarding background investigations, as well as any applicable costs associated. Additionally, if my request is granted, I agree to abide by all policies, rules and regulations of the District, INCLUDING THE SECURING OF WRITTEN PARENT PERMISSION PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION OF MY PROJECT.

x *MT Booth*

Researcher

6-19-14  
Date

I have read the procedures for Research Projects in the [redacted] Public School System and understand that supervision of this project and responsibility for an outcome report rests with me. I also understand that the privileges of conducting future studies in the Brevard County Public School System is conditioned upon the fulfillment of such obligations.

x *Walter Sullivan*

Sponsor/Advisor of Research Project  
(signature required for student research)

12/19/14  
Date

Approval of Office of Accountability, Testing and Evaluation\*:

*Janet Stephenson* 1-6-2015  
Signature Date

\*Approval of the study at the district level does not obligate principals to participate in the proposed research.

Approval of Principal\*:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\*The principal's signature suggests that the research project has been reviewed and that the school will participate, subject to the researcher's compliance with District policies.

## APPENDIX C: SURVEY

## Teacher Evaluation Profile

### Section 1: Demographic Information

Q1 Including the current year, how many years have you been teaching?

- 1-13
- 14-21
- 22+

Q2 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Q3 Which academic area(s) are you currently teaching?

- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Language Arts
- Career and Technical Education

Q4 When was your most recent evaluation?

- During the academic year 2013-2014
- During the academic year 2012-2013
- During the academic year 2011-2012
- Prior to 2011

Q5 Would you consider being interviewed as part of this study? There will be more information provided to you concerning the study prior to you giving your consent.

- Yes
- No

Q6 If your answer to the above stated question was yes, please provide your school e-mail address.

### Section 2: Overall Rating

Q7 Please reflect on your most recent experience with the evaluation process.

	Very poor (1)	Poor (2)	Fair (3)	Good (4)	Very good (9)
Rate the overall quality of the evaluation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8

	No impact (1)	Mild impact (2)	Moderate impact (3)	Strong impact (4)
Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Section 3: Personal Attributes

Q9

	I am strongly averse to change (1)	I am moderately averse to change (2)	I am moderately open to change (3)	I am very open to change (4)
What is your orientation to change?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10

	I never experiment in my classroom (1)	I rarely experiment in my classroom (2)	I sometimes experiment in my classroom (3)	I often experiment in my classroom (4)
What is your orientation toward experimentation in your classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11

	I am relatively closed (1)	I am moderately closed (2)	I am moderately open (3)	I am relatively open (4)
What is your orientation toward criticism?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Section 4: Perceptions of Evaluator Attributes

Q12

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
My evaluator was familiar with the specifics of my teaching assignment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
My evaluator provided useful, credible, and constructive feedback.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Section 5: Attributes of the Procedures

Q14

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were communicated to you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q15

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were clear to you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
Considering your most recent evaluation: The expectations and standards were appropriate for your current teaching assignment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
My meetings with my evaluator were productive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Section 6: Attributes of the Evaluation Context**

Q18

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The amount of feedback I received was appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The amount of feedback I received was specific and useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The amount of time spent on my evaluation was appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The amount of training I received regarding the evaluation was appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
My districts stated policies and purposes regarding evaluation are clear.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q23

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The role of evaluation is teacher accountability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Agree (4)
The role of evaluation is to promote teacher growth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION TO USE THE TEACHER EVALUATION PROFILE

## Re: Permission to use the Teacher Evaluation Profile

Daniel L. Duke <dld7g@cms.mail.virginia.edu>

Sun 11/23/2014 2:59 PM

Inbox

To: william.booth <william.booth@knights.ucf.edu>;

Dear William:

Thank you for your inquiry. You have my permission to use the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP). Best of luck on your dissertation. I look forward to hearing about the results.

Daniel L. Duke  
Professor  
University of Virginia

On Sat, 22 Nov 2014 16:56:23 +0000

william.booth <william.booth@knights.ucf.edu> wrote:

> Dr. Duke

>

> Greetings! My name is William Booth, I am a doctoral student at the  
> University of Central Florida. I am in the beginning stages of working on  
> my dissertation. I would like to use the "Teacher Evaluation Profile" (TEP)  
> instrument that you and Dr. Richard Stiggins utilized in The Case for  
> Commitment to Teacher Growth: Research on Teacher Evaluation. Specifically,  
> I would like to use the version that was published the following year. I  
> appreciate your time and wish you a happy holiday.

>

>

> Best regards,

## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## Interview Protocol

**Project:** Understanding the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary school teachers toward teacher evaluation and its effect on their professional practice: A mixed-method phenomenological study

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe that your participation in this study will yield valuable insight into how the teacher evaluation system guides professional practice.

The responses that you provide during the interview will be kept confidential. Upon completion of the project the transcripts will be deleted. You may withdraw from the study at any point and for any purpose. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact me through e-mail at [william.booth@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:william.booth@knights.ucf.edu).

Approximate length of interview: 45-60 minutes, five major questions

Purpose of research:

The purpose of this study is to understand what beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have toward the teacher evaluation system. Additionally, the study seeks to understand how those specific

beliefs and attitudes toward the evaluation system affect the professional practices of mid-career secondary school teachers. The specific research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. To what extent, if any, do the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary have toward teacher evaluation shape their professional practice?
2. To what extent does the evaluation system promote or inhibit teacher growth in mid-career secondary teachers?
3. To what extent do mid-career secondary teachers understand the evaluation process?
4. What impact does the evaluation process have on mid-career secondary teacher's self-efficacy?

**Interview Questions:**

1. How many years have you been in the field of education?
2. What is your current teaching assignment? What other positions have you held within the field of education?
3. Tell me about your experiences with the current method of evaluating teachers in this district?

Prompts if needed:

Do you view the process as positive or negative?

What has been your experience with other methods of teacher evaluation?

Would you consider your prior experience with teacher evaluations to be more positive or negative?

Do you understand how you are evaluated?

Were the guidelines and expectations clearly explained?

4. How does the evaluation system affect or guide what you do in the classroom?

Prompts if needed:

How have you learned from your evaluations?

Has feedback from your evaluation changed your classroom practice?

What do you consider to be positive about the evaluation system? What do you consider to be negative about the evaluation system? What improvements could be made to the evaluation system?

5. Does the evaluation system make you feel as though you are an effective or ineffective teacher?

Prompts if needed:

How accurate do you feel the evaluation system is at identifying teacher strengths and weaknesses?

6. Do you think the purpose of evaluation should be about holding teachers accountable or promoting professional growth?

Prompts if needed:

Do you think the current method of evaluation in this district is about accountability or promoting professional growth?

**Conclusion of Interview:**

- Thank participant
- Reassure participant about rights and confidentiality
- Ask participant for permission to follow-up



## APPENDIX F: EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH (SURVEY)



## **EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH**

**Title of Project** Understanding the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary teachers towards teacher evaluation and its effect on their professional practice: A mixed-method phenomenological study

**Principal Investigator:** William Ashton Booth

**Other Investigators:** N/A

**Faculty Supervisor:** Michele Gill Ph.D.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

- The purpose of this research is to understand the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have toward teacher evaluation. In addition the study will seek to understand how the beliefs and attitudes toward the evaluation system affect classroom practices.
- Participants will complete a brief survey measuring their attitudes and beliefs toward teacher evaluation. The survey will be emailed to the potential participants to complete at their leisure.
- It is estimated the survey will take the participants approximately 20-30 minutes to complete

**Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem:** If you have questions, concerns, or complaints: William Booth, doctoral student, College of Education and Human Performance (321) 693-6258 or by email at [william.booth@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:william.booth@knights.ucf.edu) or Dr. Michele Gill, faculty supervisor, College of Education and Human Performance at (407) 823-1771 or by email at [michele.gill@ucf.edu](mailto:michele.gill@ucf.edu).

**IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint:** Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

## APPENDIX G: EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH (INTERVIEW)



## **EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH**

**Title of Project:** Understanding the beliefs and attitudes of mid-career secondary teachers towards teacher evaluation and its effect on their professional practice: A mixed-method phenomenological study

**Principal Investigator:** William Ashton Booth

**Other Investigators:** N/A

**Faculty Supervisor:** Michele Gill Ph.D.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

- The purpose of this research is to understand the beliefs and attitudes mid-career secondary school teachers have toward teacher evaluation. In addition the study will seek to understand how the beliefs and attitudes toward the evaluation system affect classroom practices.
- Participants will voluntarily participate in a semi-structured interview. The interview will be recorded and all recordings and subsequent transcripts will remain protected throughout the remainder of the study. Upon the completion of the study, all recordings and transcripts will be deleted.
- It is estimated time commitment for participants taking part in the interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes.

**Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem:** If you have questions, concerns, or complaints: William Booth, doctoral student, College of Education and Human Performance (321) 693-6258 or by email at [william.booth@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:william.booth@knights.ucf.edu) or Dr. Michele Gill, faculty supervisor, College of Education and Human Performance at (407) 823-1771 or by email at [michele.gill@ucf.edu](mailto:michele.gill@ucf.edu).

**IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint:** Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

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