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Professional Teacher Evaluation in Alternative Schools in Tennessee: A Quantitative study of the Effect on Teacher Attitude and Professional Development

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PROFESSIONAL TEACHER EVALUATIONS IN ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS IN
TENNESSEE: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF THE EFFECT ON TEACHER
ATTITUDE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

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This study examined the perceptions of alternative school teachers in the State of Tennessee correctional schools, special GED preparation programs, and non-public school settings where the new standards-based teacher evaluation system is used. The study sought to determine the extent the implemented teacher evaluation process called Teacher Evaluation Acceleration Model (TEAM) influenced improved teacher practice and professional development and growth. To date, there is no reported research on the extent to which the use of TEAM as a standards-based model has improved teacher practice and professional growth in alternative schools in Tennessee.

This study included several teachers that have been surveyed in a pilot study in January, 2012, as well as all others identified as certified Tennessee teachers in non K-12 alternative schools. A quantitative research method design was used to gather data with the number of possible respondents being about 300. Data was collected via a teacher questionnaire and review of state documents from Tennessee Consortium on Research Evaluation and Development. The survey instrument used was adapted from the revised "Teacher Evaluation Profile Questionnaire" (TEP) (Stiggins & Duke, 1988). Despite several years of research and differing models of teacher evaluations, the overall teacher satisfaction and student achievement seem to be declining in Tennessee. Since this problem may negatively impact the job efficacy for teachers in alternative settings and also impede student growth in productive learning environments, these variables were analyzed in the research study. This dissertation addressed teacher perceptions of a

strong observation rubric for evaluation through TEAM, a performance evaluation that

focuses almost exclusively on teacher practices and student behaviors that can be

observed in the alternative classroom. Also, this dissertation studied teacher perceptions

about professional development opportunities offered by the local district and the

regional universities.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Since the Teacher Evaluation Acceleration Model (TEAM) was implemented in

2010 to provide some more creative methodologies to evaluate Tennessee teachers, there

have been numerous changes for teachers. Furthermore, the TEAM rubric is seeking to

offer some suggestions about the minimum level of effectiveness for the money invested

in education by the federal and state governments. After seeking teacher and

administrator feedback, and reviewing new personnel costs, the applicability of the new

TEAM will be considered as a "replacement for the framework model" in special school

districts and private schools. This research study evaluated the TEAM for alternative

teachers as to whether it is cost efficient and meets the needs of the stakeholders in the

state of Tennessee.

The evaluation rubrics for the new teacher evaluation offer administrators a

means to continuously assist teachers in excellent instruction. In 2010, Tennessee became

one of the first states to adopt President Obama's challenge to improve student actions

and learning through instructional excellence (Duncan, 2012).

According to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), "the Framework

for Evaluation and Professional Growth was a research-based, public description of a

teacher's performance in areas validated as critical to effective teaching" (Danielson,

1996, p. 79). The previously used Tennessee Framework for Teacher Evaluation adopted

in 1999 provides 44 criteria clustered into six domains that are documented through

empirical research as having a positive impact on student learning. Also, according to

Danielson (1996), it provides a common language for evaluating teacher performance,

research validated practices to rate teaching performance, and clear indicators for self-assessment and professional growth.

On the other hand, the TEAM rubric is based on the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) that has been implemented in more than 200 schools in 13 states around the country and is overseen by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET), an organization that provides information to the Tennessee Evaluation Advisory Committee (TEAC). The most recent expansion of TAP came via the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), which makes grants to localities implementing performance-based compensation systems in high-need schools (Glazerman & Seifullah, 2010).

Part of the reason the new TEAM plan (2010) was proposed in Tennessee for all public educators is because it focuses on evaluating teachers more often than the once every five years, as required for professional educators under the 1999 Framework for Evaluation (TCRED, 2012). Furthermore, these minimum four or more evaluations result in a Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibilities (SKR) score of 1-5, with the mean score nationwide of 3.5 out of 5 (TCRED, 2012). NIET asserted that the SKR score provides more beneficial feedback to the teachers and administrators than those with the framework that uniformly rate teachers high irrespective of the teacher's actual performance (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2010).

Teacher evaluations in alternative settings that are not identified as normal, public schools require careful planning and skilled administrators who can develop both summative and formative plans (NIET, 2010). Alternative settings in this study include those that require licensed Tennessee teachers, but the curriculum is not the traditional K-

12 program of studies. Well-designed and executed classroom observations in alternative placements can be effective at identifying the effectiveness of teachers, particularly teachers at the top and bottom ends of the distribution (TCRED, 2012). TCRED (2012) research also found that good evaluations impact teacher effectiveness; in other words, evaluations don't have to be just summative rating cards. If done well, they can indeed be formative tools that inform teacher improvement (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011).

The process of evaluating the effectiveness of teachers in alternative settings has changed over time along with the definition of what effective teaching is, due in part to increasing state and federal attention to school-level and classroom-level accountability for adult learning. Effective teaching has been defined in many ways throughout the years (Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs, & Robinson, 2003; Cheng & Tsui, 1999; Cruickshank & Haefele, 1990). For example, an excellent teacher once was measured by personality, not his/her methodologies. Later, Cruickshank & Haefele (1990) emphasized that a good teacher was one who could help students improve on standardized achievement tests. Furthermore, since the definitions of effective teaching and methods for evaluating alternative teachers have changed, definitions and beliefs about what is important to measure have evolved. Measuring teacher effectiveness has changed in Tennessee schools due in part to the ongoing debate about what an effective teacher is and does (TCRED, 2012).

Learning how to continually improve practice should be part of the ordinary operations of an alternative school. Schools need to be learning communities for teachers as well as students. The TEAM evaluation should be a means of growth for all teachers in

alternative settings (NIET, 2010). Creating a culture which focuses on professional inquiry is important to school improvement (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

The Background of the Study

There are broad definitions of teacher effectiveness given by policymakers in the state of Tennessee. Most of the evaluation that is done in Tennessee alternative schools is because there are public policies that require the Tennessee Department of Education to develop standards of accountability. These alternative teachers are concerned about the evaluations since they could affect their jobs. The public perceives evaluation as a means to improve teacher effectiveness and improve student achievement.

Early in the history of American education, educators were evaluated based on personal traits such as good grooming and proper speech (Peterson, 2000). This list of traits was developed and the educator effectiveness measured accordingly. A rating scale was based upon these desirable personal skills, as observed by a principal (Wilson & Wood, 1996).

As the teacher performance evaluation models progressed in the 1970's, more time was devoted to extensive scoring rubrics based on the teaching skills, knowledge, and the professionalism of the teacher. Teaching domains were developed and within each domain, performance indicators were listed with bulleted descriptors and a rubric specifying three performance levels for measuring actual teacher performance (Danielson, 1996).

Now, the education stakeholders perceive evaluation as a means to improve teacher effectiveness and improve student achievement (NIET, 2010). Although there is a general consensus that good teaching matters and that it may be the single most important

school-based factor in improving student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997), measuring teacher effectiveness has remained difficult in part because of ongoing debate about what an effective teacher does. In a discussion of research-based indicators of effective teaching, Cruickshank and Haefele (1990) stated, "An enormous underlying problem with teacher evaluation relates to lack of agreement about what constitutes good or effective teaching" (p. 34). In Tennessee since the program, *First to the Top* appeared in 2009, a lack of clear consensus on what an effective teacher is and what the best teacher does has been a central issue. Commonly used methods for evaluating alternative teachers include classroom observations designed to measure teacher practices against some standard of effective teaching; also, value-added models that set out to measure the contribution of individual teachers to their students' achievement gains can be used (TCRED, 2010).

The previously used Framework for Teaching is described on the Danielson Group website as "a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the INTASC standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching" (Danielson, 1996). It consists of four domains, broken down into 22 components and 76 smaller elements. Teachers are evaluated against a detailed rubric, which can be used to rate each of the 76 elements as unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, or distinguished. The framework can be used for several purposes, such as reflection and self-assessment, mentoring and induction, peer coaching, and supervision (Danielson, 1996).

This researcher's study identified a portion of the professional development possibilities for teacher evaluations in alternative settings in Tennessee. Effective teacher evaluation systems are fair and just, meet demonstrated needs of clients, answer the

questions of interested audiences, are cost-effective, and are free from unreasonable side effects (Peterson, 2000). Effective teacher evaluation systems should be technically developed enough to encompass the full range of teaching styles, duties and responsibilities. They should be sociologically and politically complex. Defensible systems should be research based and involved in ongoing studies of validity and reliability (Peterson, 2000). Effective teacher evaluation systems should be evaluated and empirical data should be gathered on levels of participant satisfaction, teacher performance norms, and system performance in terms of its claims. Peterson (2000) contends that evaluation systems should be compared with proven standards for outcomes, long-term effects, expenses, and problems. Finally, effective teacher evaluation systems are approved by outside experts and knowledgeable educators (Peterson, 2000).

Another key area of an effective teacher evaluation relates to the manner in which a teacher moves a student toward a pre-established goals or completion of a program. This is often called the value-added part of evaluation, and this component is proposed for the TEAM evaluations in Tennessee. Value-added measures provide a summary score of the "contribution of various factors toward growth in student achievement" (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2003, p. 38). Value-added models can be defined as "a collection of complex statistical techniques that use multiple years of students' test score data to estimate the effects of individual schools or teachers" (McCaffrey, Lockwood, Koretz, & Hamilton, 2003, p. xi). Although value-added models also may be used to evaluate schools for accountability purposes, this research synthesis concerns their use for doing

performance evaluations for teachers in terms of their effectiveness relative to established standards.

Jerald and Van Hook (2011) offer some suggestions about the most effective ways to carry out evaluations that are new to the teachers, such as the TEAM. In Jerald and Van Hook's research, several respondents described their introduction to the new evaluation system as a frustrating experience. One respondent explained that administrators were unclear about the new evaluation themselves, so they could not present it clearly and effectively. Another noted that there was a great deal of confusion surrounding the new evaluation system. Jerald and Van Hook emphasized that it is necessary for the evaluator to communicate the rubrics, the purposes, and the possible outcomes for any new teacher evaluation system, such as the TEAM being considered in this research.

To facilitate effective teacher evaluations, the Tennessee Consortium on Research and Educational Development (TCRED) is an independent, external research group responsible for conducting a detailed, focused, program of research as part of Tennessee's *Race to the Top* grant. In collaboration with researchers and practitioners from across Tennessee and the nation, the Consortium leads and engages in research studies, program and policy evaluations, and subsequent development activities to promote results-oriented decision-making. As part of their participation in *Race to the Top*, all of Tennessee's school districts (including alternative settings) have agreed to participate in the Consortium's research so the materials presented are easy to interpret and apply (TCRED, 2012).

According to Goe, Bell, and Little (2008), evaluation is done based on what a teacher brings to his or her position, generally measured as teacher background, beliefs, expectations, experience, pedagogical and content knowledge, certification and licensure, and educational attainment. These measures are sometimes discussed in the literature as "teacher quality"; for instance, the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) requirement for highly qualified teachers refers specifically to teacher qualifications and credentials. Secondly, many of the current teacher evaluation models are based on observations by the supervisor or principal of the alternative school. The third element of evaluation may also be based on impact on student achievement, graduation rates, student behavior, engagement, attitudes, and social-emotional well-being.

According to Peterson (2000), the particular quality of the evaluation model directly affects choices of actions taken, efficiency of activities associated with those actions, satisfaction level of the participants, and consequences or ultimate results of those actions. Therefore, evaluation models should possess multiple characteristics aligned with those choices, efficiencies, satisfactions, and consequences (Peterson, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

The 2010 federal *Race to the Top* (RTT) competition has spurred unprecedented action among states such as Tennessee to secure a share of the four billion dollars being offered by the federal government. As a result of the new federal requirements, teacher evaluation standards have changed in an effort to improve teacher and student performance. For example, a new Tennessee statute, passed in 2011, significantly changes the criteria by which teachers employed after July 1, 2011 can achieve and retain

tenure status. TEAM results will directly affect these teachers' eligibility for tenure according to this legislation.

This researcher studied whether the 2010 teacher evaluation acceleration model (TEAM) can be implemented to provide some more creative methodologies to evaluate Tennessee teachers in non-traditional settings; the dissertation research sought to identify suggestions about the minimum level of effectiveness for the Tennessee teacher working in alternative settings. After seeking teacher and administrator feedback, and reviewing feedback from alternative teachers, this research considered the applicability of the new TEAM evaluation as a "replacement for the Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth (1996-1999) model" in special school districts and private schools.

The responsibility of an alternative school district is to provide a suitable performance evaluation and staff development opportunities; furthermore, the TEAM rubric was analyzed in relation to its ability to foster teaching talk and to employ a system that is both complementary and supplementary to staff development. A study of TEAM allowed performance evaluations to be linked to teachers' future professional growth plans. This is the way evaluation and professional development are most reasonably linked (Sparks, 1986).

For teachers in non-traditional and alternative schools in Tennessee the TEAM evaluation has been modified to meet the program requirements. For example, teacher in Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) schools are evaluated without using the value-added components. TDOC policy simply states that teachers shall be evaluated using the approved Tennessee State Department of Education approved model (TDOC, policy 117.01).

It is essential for teachers to know that they have been evaluated fairly and that they have been participants in shaping their work environment (Woods & Weasmer, 2002). As stakeholders, they need to know that their contributions in designing and developing programs and curricula are recognized as valuable and meaningful. Lortie (1975) emphasized that a teacher's sense of his or her contributions to the culture of the school influences job satisfaction.

One of the primary concerns of the TEAM and the previous Framework process has been that the evaluation does not promote teacher satisfaction, and thus the performance of students may be limited. One of the concerns in this study that was addressed is whether the alternative teachers perceive they are being evaluated effectively, so that guidance and direction can impact the classroom and teacher self-efficacy.

The TEAM is a new system that aims at building teacher morale and performance in specialized settings across Tennessee. The problem is that TEAM should encourage performance accomplishments through effective evaluations for alternative teachers. Positive evaluations perceived as genuine build a high sense of self-efficacy. On the other hand, failures perceived as genuine deflate self-efficacy (Gibbs, 2003).

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the new TEAM process is based on multiple measures, including classroom observations and student achievement data in relation to improved teacher satisfaction and teacher professional development. The perceived problem was that teachers in alternative settings are being evaluated without guidance and direction about the consequences of the evaluation process. In this dissertation the researcher studied teacher perceptions of the TEAM evaluation, as it

provides feedback into the consequences for students and the choices of learning environments that promote teacher efficacy (the belief in one's ability to perform the job effectively). Additionally, previous research on teacher concerns related to evaluation indicated the one source of dissatisfaction among teachers centered on basic issues such as the teacher's ability to maintain discipline and control over the classroom in alternative settings.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How satisfied are Tennessee alternative school education teachers with TEAM or other approved evaluations?

2. For professional teachers in alternative settings in Tennessee what is their connection to higher education institutions that provide professional development?

3. What are the relationships among teacher satisfaction and teacher professional development opportunities linked to higher education institutions through alternative school districts in Tennessee identified on the state website (www.tn.gov.)?

4. Do positive perceptions on the TEAM evaluation help guide professional teacher growth and development programs in Tennessee?

Significance of the Study

Evaluation systems work best when they are viewed as a subset of a district-wide commitment to the enhancement of classroom instruction and teacher growth (Goe et al, 2008). Staff professional development research seems to clearly support the notion that the more people talk about teaching, the better they get at it. This dissertation sought to link the TEAM to effective teacher development and teacher self-efficacy.

The current federal legislation reflects the teachers' critical role as the most important institutional factor in the student learning process (First to the Top, 2012). The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires school districts to place a highly qualified teacher in every classroom (including alternative settings), so the performance of teachers must be evaluated and self-efficacy must be improved for Tennessee's alternative teachers.

To date, few studies have examined the relationships among one or more of the concepts related to teacher job satisfaction and performance evaluations in alternative settings in special schools in Tennessee. This knowledge will provide a foundation for assessing school procedures and policies to facilitate support of alternative education teachers and address their concerns.

This dissertation sought to provide specific information related to the alternative schools that are often ignored when discussing the TEAM process. The TCRED claims to have information about the effectiveness of the TEAM in specialized or alternative settings, but no specific data is available from any TDOE sources. The information gathered in this study will be helpful to those who work in specialized settings as improvement plans are designed.

Furthermore, this dissertation provided information about the possible need for school personnel to improve the school climate through effective alternative teacher evaluations in Tennessee. The data may provide evidence for stakeholders that teacher satisfaction and efficacy is improved through the use of TEAM.

Definition of Key Terms

Alternative schools: Schools that are not classified as public K-12 schools, and that usually offer instruction in non-traditional settings. This may include residential juvenile facilities, prisons, day treatment schools, etc.

Job dissatisfaction: The negative emotional state that results from the appraisal of the school or job experiences in educational settings (Locke & Schweiger, 1979).

Job satisfaction: The measure of the extent of an employee's perception and value of the characteristics of the school situation including: Compensation, autonomy, co-workers, and achievement (Rice, Gentile, & McFarlin, 1991).

Performance-Based Teacher Evaluation: An elaborate method of making professional judgments about teacher performance for the purposes of improving teacher instruction and personnel decision-making.

Student Achievement: For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and teacher-designed end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are comprehensive and comparable across classrooms.

Teacher empowerment: A process that allows alternative teachers to develop student competence and assist them as professionals in taking charge of their own growth (Rinehart, Short & Eckley, 1998).

Teacher efficacy: "A teacher's general feeling that the education system is capable of fostering satisfactorily student academic achievement despite negative influences external to the teacher" (Rich, Lev, & Fischer, 1996, p. 1016).

Teacher evaluation: The process of collecting data and making professional judgments about teacher performance for the purpose of school decision-making related to teacher outcomes.

Teacher professional development: Effective professional development is on-going, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate training time and follow-up support. This training is in addition to that required for initial licensure and tends to be developed based on teacher needs from evaluations. For this study the training will be linked to higher education institutions and collaborative efforts with local alternative schools.

Conceptual Framework

Teacher satisfaction, a value closely associated with the concept of classroom climate (Owens, 1998), should exist if teacher evaluation systems are to fulfill their potential. A critical variable in creating a climate of satisfaction in the workplace is that of consideration and compassion among employees and between employer and employee. George (1987) believed that performance evaluation is based on communications and personal relationships and that, similar to other relationships, "the qualities of empathy, honesty, and esteem need to be consistent" (p.23).

Teacher evaluation is primarily about documenting (through measures such as TEAM) the quality of teacher performance; the essential focus shifts to helping teachers improve their performance as well as holding them accountability for their work. Stronge (2002) stated

In recent years, as the field of education has moved toward a stronger focus on accountability and on careful analysis of variables affecting educational outcomes,

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the teacher has proven time and again to be the most influential school-related force

in student achievement. (p. viii)

Therefore, the TEAM evaluation has been proposed as a tool for teacher growth and

improving student achievement.   Using the TEAM in Tennessee will allow teachers in

alternate settings to engage in self-reflection and improve outcomes. This process may

involve selected growth opportunities and professional development through a local

university.

Assumptions

When reform efforts are disconnected from the TEAM results, there is no way to

measure success in the reform effort. For this dissertation it was assumed that the TEAM

evaluation system is conceptually and technically sound and that it promotes teacher

efficacy and satisfaction, thus leading to successful school reforms.

It was also assumed that improved evaluation systems such as TEAM in

coordination with positive conditions for teaching and learning achieved equitable access

to effective teachers for students in alternative settings. With information on how

effective teachers are performing in relations to teaching domains, districts can be more

deliberate and create strategic conditions that attract, grow, and keep strong teachers in

alternative schools (The Education Trust, 2012).

Furthermore, summative evaluation using TEAM suggests the importance of

professional development and in-service training with a balance between the interests of

the teacher and the interests of the alternative school in a continuous improvement cycle

(Little, 1993). This basic assumption implies that the basic purpose of an evaluation is to

improve both the individual's and institution's performance (Colby, Bradshaw, & Joyner,

2002). The summative evaluation tools may provide needed recommendations for

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systematic reforms to be initiated by local universities and school districts (Crawford, Roberts, & Hickman, 2008).

Limitations

The school districts in this study vary greatly and may utilize numerous teacher performance measures approved by the State Department of Education other than the TEAM rubric. Alternative schools may include special high schools, adult education programs, and correctional schools. Another limitation of the study was that participation is voluntary and limited to teachers in the non-public schools in Tennessee. The value added portion of the teacher evaluation score may be defined using several assessments devices that are not consistent with normal K-12 standards-based tests. The validity of the study was limited to the reliability of the teacher survey questions and the ability of the researcher to interpret perceived responses to evaluations, teacher satisfaction and efficacy, and measurable professional development.

Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) noted the following limitations concerning self-reported data solicited via questionnaires:

> Self-report instruments ...have notable limits. The researcher can never be sure that individuals are expressing their true attitudes, interest, values, or personalities. A common problem with studies that use self-report instruments is the existence of a response set or a control group. (p.29)

In addition, the TEAM rubric has not been modified at this time by the Tennessee Department of Education, allowing specific value-added measures to meet the needs of most alternative schools. Therefore, the overall scores on TEAM may not be reliable without the value-added components of the evaluation that are included in public schools.

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In addition, as noted in a 1988 study conducted by the Educational Research Service, 99.8% of American public school administrators use direct classroom observation as the primary data collection technique. The ability to measure teacher efficacy and satisfaction may be difficult since the TEAM evaluation relies primarily on direct classroom observations in the alternative settings.

<center>**Chapter 2**</center>

<center>**Review of Literature**</center>

Introduction and Descriptors

This chapter begins with a short history of teacher professional evaluation and moves to a thorough historical review of efficacy. Literature from the area of education evaluation, job satisfaction, student achievement and value-added scores, and teacher professional development quality are included. Rationale for the importance of job satisfaction and personal teacher efficacy in the area of alternative teachers (non-public K-12 schools) are explored. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Empowerment is defined "as a process whereby school professionals develop teacher competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems" (Rinehart et al., 1998, p. 635). An important aspect of teacher empowerment is self-efficacy and job satisfaction as measured by professional evaluations.

Teacher quality matters and must be addressed by administrators (Rice, 2003). The reality is that teaching is a complicated task influenced by many elements; therefore, evaluation of teachers in alternative settings is extremely important and complex. Educators and policymakers view teacher quality and professional evaluation as a significant concern. This concern is based on the absence of high levels of student achievement among students in alternative schools, especially minority and students from disadvantaged families (Sawchuk, 2009).

Organizations should exist to provide an opportunity for organizational members (teachers) to improve (Senge, 1990). As the teachers within the alternative organization improve, it can be assumed that the organization will also improve. The theory behind

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teacher evaluation in this study was that teachers want to improve and be more satisfied with their role as a professional.

The TEAM evaluation was designed to assist the public schools as an organization in maximizing its assets through effective accountability. In the case of the non-traditional school, the outcome would be measured in terms of maximized instruction for more effective alternative programs (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Furthermore, the teacher evaluation model should have two principle purposes in the alternative school: teacher personal growth and overall accountability for research-based, best practices (Duke & Stiggins, 1990). TEAM is by nature designed to provide opportunities for self-reflection and improved delivery of instruction.

Brief History of Teacher Evaluations

The evaluation of certified teachers has undergone numerous changes over the last 60 years. Hoskins (1987) suggested the process of teacher evaluation is multifaceted and affected by several complex and constantly changing factors. The evaluation of licensed teachers is a part of the continually progressing dynamics of the entire educational system. Numerous factors still enter into the equation concerning the way teachers teach and the way teaching is evaluated and those must be evaluated regularly.

In 1992 the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) collaborated with teachers, teacher educators, and state licensing officials to create a set of core standards that defined the knowledge, dispositions, and performances essential for all beginning teachers (Weiss, 1998). Performance assessments, modeled from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards initiatives, evolved from the collaboration that included:

videotapes and analyses of teaching, samples of lessons, teacher demonstrations showing

how their teaching related to student learning and how their teaching fostered higher-

level reasoning and problem-solving skills (Weiss & Weiss, 1998).

In 1996, a seminal work on supervision and evaluation was published by

Charlotte Danielson. Danielson's book, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework*

for Teaching, which was updated in 2007, was based on her work with the Educational

Testing Service and it focused on measuring the competence of teachers. Since it has

been so popular, the Danielson model was assumed to be the reference point for any new

proposals regarding evaluation in Tennessee. Whereas, Madeline Hunter had described

steps in the teaching process and Goldhammer had done the same for the supervisory

process, Danielson worked to develop the dynamic process of classroom teaching

evaluation (Danielson, 1996; Goldhammer, 1969; Hunter, 1982).

Recently, the TEAM (2010) evaluation system was introduced. TEAM measures

both the quality of each teacher's work in the classroom (qualitative) as well as what the

students learn (quantitative) in order to present a comprehensive picture of the teacher's

effectiveness. Thirty five percent of the rating is a measure of student growth over a

year's time and 15% of the rating is student achievement relative to state standards. This

model of evaluation has not been fully developed for alternative schools at this time in

Tennessee; however, the TDOE is working diligently to develop standards for the

quantitative measure in the TEAM model (TCRED, 2012).

According to the TEAM manual (2010), under the First to the Top Act, the new

teacher evaluation system must be a calculation of 50% qualitative and 50% quantitative

data. What this means is that the frequent observations will be scored using a rubric that

outlines clear expectations of high-quality instruction, planning, classroom environment and professionalism. The scores from these areas are combined with measures of student learning. TEAM uses both a measure of growth and an achievement measure. This total calculation results in an effectiveness rating.

According to Goe, et al. (2008), evaluation is done based on what a teacher possesses in relation to his or her position, generally measured as teacher background, beliefs, expectations, experience, pedagogical and content knowledge, certification and licensure, and educational attainment. These measures are sometimes discussed in the literature as "teacher quality"; for instance, the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) requirement for highly qualified teachers refers specifically to teacher qualifications and credentials. Secondly, many of the current teacher evaluation models are based on observations by the supervisor or principal of the alternative school. The third element of evaluation may also be based on impact on student achievement, graduation rates, student behavior, engagement, attitudes, and social-emotional well-being.

It was proposed that the alternative schools and private schools that continue to utilize the evaluation framework would be able to emphasize the importance of learning and communicate enthusiasm for their content, and thus help students to achieve better. If the TEAM model is utilized there will be more opportunities provided by the TDOE so that judgments about performance inform the best teaching practices and promote positive teacher belief systems (Agne, Greenwood, & Miller, 1994).

Part of the reason the new TEAM model was proposed in Tennessee is because it focused on evaluating teachers more often than the once every five years, as required for professional educators under the old framework for evaluation. Furthermore, the TEAM minimum four or more evaluations result in result in a Skills, Knowledge, and

Responsibilities (SKR) score of 1-5, with the mean score nationwide of 3.5 out of 5.

NIET says that SKR score provides more useful feedback to the teachers and

administrators than those with the framework that uniformly rate teachers high

irrespective of the teacher's actual performance (TEAM Evaluation System Handbook,

p.93).

To facilitate teacher evaluations, the Tennessee Consortium is an independent,

external research group responsible for conducting a detailed, focused, program of

research as part of Tennessee's *Race to the Top* grant. In collaboration with researchers

and practitioners from across Tennessee and the nation, the Consortium leads and

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participation in *Race to the Top*, all of Tennessee's school districts (including alternative

settings) have agreed to participate in the Consortium's research so the materials

presented are easy to interpret and apply (TCRED, 2012).

Trends in Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation, with the inclusion of teacher empowerment through

professional development and collaboration through higher education institutions, is an

integral part of the school's organizational culture. Using research conducted by Darling-

Hammond (2000), Ebmeier (2003), and Stockard and Lehman (2004) as the conceptual

framework, this study identified the degree of the relationship between current teacher

evaluation practices and teacher job perceptions.

The task of ensuring that instructors are highly qualified teachers has quickly

become a priority for principals and alternative school directors. Teacher evaluation,

subsequently, becomes not only a state and federal mandate, but also an opportunity for school districts to hire quality teachers who are employed within their non-traditional schools.

According to Mayo (1997), nine evaluation procedures are available for general use. These include: classroom observations by a trained supervisor, peer partnership with other qualified teachers, and teacher mentoring. It is also possible to model peer coaching, design professional portfolios, engage in self-evaluation that may include student/parent evaluation. Lastly, professional evaluation may entail artifact collection by the teacher and supervisor, as well as action research (Mayo, 1997). These trends in evaluation emphasize that teachers draw on a reliable body of technical knowledge and that teacher evaluation is conducted in collaboration with other professional colleagues. Teacher evaluation, in this view, is a collaborative professional enterprise meeting the needs of the organization and all members (Mayo, 1997).

Several professional development activities are available from which teachers could choose. Options include mentoring a new teacher, action research, study group participation, individualized professional activity, peer coaching, school-wide or district-wide action research, and participation in an industrial experience. Professional development plans are approved by the administrator in the fall and reviewed annually in the spring. Plans may span a multi-year time frame (Davis & Wilson, 2000).

Background of Alternative and Non-traditional Schools Evaluation

Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37, Juveniles, has established policies for special school districts, such as youth development centers. Section 37-5-119 states: "the schools shall meet the requirements of the law for public schools and rules and

regulations of the state board of education." The commissioner of education in Tennessee has granted a waiver for such special or non-traditional schools in Tennessee as far as the value-added portion of the performance evaluation TEAM score.

For the Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) schools, the Commissioner of TDOC as director of education has approved a policy stating that teachers should be evaluated two times yearly using TEAM without reference to the value-added portion of the evaluation (TDOC policy 117.01). This evaluation process has been approved by the Tennessee commissioner of education, and TEAM scores are based solely on the approved supervisor observations and evaluations.

According to the state policy, "Any charter or state agency school interested in proposing its own evaluation model may submit an application for approval to the Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education shall have the authority to approve the use of the evaluation model" (TDOE, 2014). The TDOC director of education has secured permission to use the modified in TEAM evaluation in the state correctional schools, and several of the alternative settings in special school districts have made requests for modified evaluation formats that focus solely on teacher observations.

Alternative schools as defined by public school law relates to the establishment of a school setting for students in grades 1 through 12. In 2007, Public Chapter Number 517 mandated a transition plan for students entering and leaving an alternative education setting, it and established greater accountability measures to include monitoring academic and behavioral progress of students. That same year, Public Chapter Number 211 required that the Advisory Council for Alternative Education study issues relating to the establishment of pilot alternative school programs.

In January, 2008, the Advisory Council in Tennessee released its definition of alternative schools as follows: "A nontraditional academic program designed to meet the student's educational, behavioral and social needs." For the first time, in 2011, at the recommendation of the Governor's Advisory Council for Alternative Education, the Tennessee Department of Education authorized the creation of the nontraditional school for students that are off-track and need an alternative route to a high school diploma (TAEA, 2014).

During that same year the Advisory Council voted to partner with the National Alternative Education Association (NAEA). The NAEA has adopted standards and "exemplary practices" for professional development that will support the research in the study. NAEA Standard 4.5 states:

> Staff members create written professional development plans that facilitate personal and professional growth, identify the professional development needs of the individual, establish short and long term goals, and align professional development training to address the individual's overall plan. (TAEA, 2014)

Evaluation and Teacher Effectiveness

In 2009, a study entitled *The Widget Effect* (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009) heavily criticized teacher evaluation practices in the United States. The *Widget Effect* was the product of research into the evaluation practices in 12 districts across four states including approximately 15,000 teachers, 1,300 administrators, and more than 80 local and state education officials. Specific findings indicated major flaws in the teacher evaluation process. Overall findings suggested that evaluations are short and infrequent (most are based on two or fewer classroom observations totaling 60

minutes or less), conducted by untrained administrators, and influenced by powerful

cultural forces that advocate that teachers are among the top rated performers in society

(Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011).

Achievement data as one measure of effectiveness should be used in teacher

evaluation because they are so important in the outcomes and work of teachers. In

addition, they are called for by important stake holders. While the overall performance of

teachers in this country is high (Berliner & Biddle, 1995), there can be instances where

performance show contrast in teacher evaluation scores, and should be taken into account.

Some teachers see pupil achievement and performance evaluation as a proper and

deserved focus for their work, and can make the technical case that it can be assessed in

their case (Peterson, 2000). However, for alternative and non-traditional schools the

measure of success is often not tied to pupil achievement. This is generally because there

are no standardized tests used with students in short-term alternative placements.

Teachers' perceptions of the performance evaluation and feedback they receive is

likely to be shaped by the degree to which they consider it a fair and just assessment of

their work (Peterson, 2000). It may be assumed that teachers who do not consider their

evaluation and feedback a fair assessment of their work would also have a negative view

of other aspects of its impact and role within their school. Impressions of fairness are also

linked to indicators of the extent to which the outcomes and intrinsic rewards of an

appraisal and feedback system are properly aligned with teachers' work, what they

consider to be important in their teaching, and the school's organizational objectives. For

example, if teachers are appraised and receive feedback on a particularly narrow set of

criteria or on a particular student outcome measure which they feel does not fully or

fairly reflect their work, a measure of the fairness of the system should highlight this problem (OECD, 2009).

Milanowski (2004) notes that observation-based teaching evaluations, especially standards-based evaluations that carefully measure specific dimensions of teaching, have been found to be significantly related to student achievement gains. Furthermore, when these observations are used for feedback about professional development and coaching, they can help teachers develop greater effectiveness and impact the learning environment.

The demand for school changes to improve the quality of teaching for students in alternative schools and the need to improve student learning is clear across the State of Tennessee. All alternative educators, researchers, and politicians, recognize the importance of developing successful, productive citizens (Wu & Short, 1996). The attempt to build better Tennessee schools has placed the focus on teachers and other organizational factors such as ethical standards that influence teacher evaluation and continuing growth conditions. The basis of the focus is the belief that factors affecting teacher quality, such as teacher evaluations and teacher improvement, could lead to more effective schools.

As described above, structured teacher performance assessments such as the TEAM address the need to improve effectiveness. They evaluate directly what teachers do in the classroom, and they often incorporate specific evidence of student learning that is linked to evidence of the associated teaching efforts. Such formal assessments have been found to be stronger predictors of teachers' contributions to student learning gains than traditional statewide achievement tests. Research-based teacher evaluations are also more broadly interpreted than most state mandated teacher exams, and can be used for

new teachers about to become a part of the profession, as well more experienced veteran educators (Newton, 2010).

Evaluation and Job Satisfaction

Teachers are arguably the most important group of professionals for our nation's future. Therefore, it is disturbing to find that many of today's teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs (Bishay, 1996). This study investigated how TEAM evaluations may influence teacher job satisfaction.

Moore (1987) suggested the differences in teacher satisfaction, while related to individual differences in education, gender, age, socio-economic status, and ethnicity, are further complicated by the dedication and motivation teachers have for their profession. Teachers often speak of their work being a calling or a mission and attach little importance to advancement or extrinsic rewards. In alternative schools or non-traditional schools there seems to be a link to performance evaluations and job satisfaction (Moore, 1987).

Job satisfaction among public school principals and teachers has decreased in the past five years, with teacher satisfaction reaching its lowest levels in 25 years, according to survey results released by MetLife (2012). Only 39% of teachers reported being very satisfied in their job, and more than half said they felt under great stress several days a week according to the 29th annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (Resmovits, 2013).

Identifying and employing quality teachers are key components to the most current national school reform initiative, the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002). Documenting that quality instruction is being implemented in classrooms suggests that

teacher evaluation processes will soon shift to a higher priority. As accountability for student learning becomes a determining factor for the evaluations teachers receive and the accreditation school districts are awarded, teacher evaluation procedures will become a high priority for school administrators. Studies are needed to judge the state of teacher evaluation practices in schools. Furthermore, data are needed to determine which components of current teacher evaluation practices are perceived as effective in increasing teacher job satisfaction.

In a new 2012 study by The Education Trust, authors Sarah Almy, director of teacher quality, and Melissa Tooley, a teacher quality data and policy analyst, found that the classroom conditions for teaching and learning are critical to teacher satisfaction, especially in struggling schools (Almy & Tooley, 2012). The study suggests that satisfaction is possible when "teachers have the time, tools, and trust they need to improve teaching and learning; growth tools are essential ingredients to building strong public schools and a quality teaching force" (Almy & Tooley, 2012, p. 13).

Job satisfaction and teacher motivation are important for long-term growth in any education system. They are important in the same way as professional knowledge, teaching abilities, and access to educational teaching tools (Oloube, 2005). Filak and Sheldon (2003) stated that job satisfaction and increased motivation to perform in a positive manner occur when the teacher feels effective, taking on and completing challenging tasks directed at educational growth and performance. In this context, job satisfaction can be the ability of the teaching job or position to meet an individual teacher's needs and improve their job/teaching performance (Filak & Sheldon, 2003).

A teacher's commitment to teaching and the workplace have been found to be enhanced by verbal rewards such as acknowledgement of teaching competence (Palmer, 1990). This satisfaction may be in the form of meaningful and varied work, task autonomy and participatory decision-making. Also, positive feedback on evaluations, collaboration, supervisory support, reasonable work load, adequate resources and professional development is helpful (Firestone & Pennel, 1993).

Anxiety over the evaluation process, stress, and burnout can affect a teacher's ability to lead the classroom in creative learning. As a result, professional burnout may often occur for those teachers who are very dedicated and committed to their careers. They tend to work extra hours after school to achieve their goals (Farber, 1991). Thus, for teachers to remain enthusiastic year after year, the principal/evaluator must implement strategies that will promote and monitor the mental status of the teaching staff (Eberhard, Reinhardt-Mondragon, & Stottlemyer, 2000).

Evaluation and Teacher Efficacy

Teachers are faced with rapid changes in student populations and reform movements in professional evaluation methodology; thus, practicing teachers may feel inadequate and, in lieu of seeking professional development to build mastery, may engage in survival behaviors designed to preserve their sense of self-efficacy. Administrators should carefully monitor and adjust the level of teacher motivation, and provide the feedback that persuades teachers they can be successful (Gregoire, 2003).

Further changes in public law have led some educators to feel unfairly burdened by certification or evaluation requirements. In 2012, Public Chapter 1020 in Tennessee school law was adopted by the Tennessee General Assembly and had unintended

consequences for many alternative educators. The law requires all teachers-of-record for courses where there is a state-level End-of-Course (EOC) exam to carry a subject-specific endorsement. The law further states that teachers of the EOC courses who do not have the required endorsement demonstrate sufficient content knowledge in the course material by taking, at the teacher's expense, the standardized or criterion-referenced test for the content area (TAEA, 2012).

Some literature supports that the teacher who possesses high efficacy characteristics will be able accept challenging roles with the confidence and ability to change the student's belief system about school and learning, while at the same time fostering a strong desire to learn within the student (Henson, 2001). Teachers with high self-efficacy characteristics will tend to score more highly on performance evaluations and display more positive learning environments. These types of practical strategies help students to become motivated, focused on learning, and succeed academically (Henson, 2001).

Thus, as self-efficacy theory suggests, efficacious teachers are more likely to engage in challenging activities, strive to obtain more individualized goals, and persevere through difficult school situations (Bandura, 1997). Efficacious teachers, therefore, should exhibit teaching behaviors that show this generative ability. Theoretically, teachers' beliefs in their ability could influence the creativity they exhibit in the classroom, the goals they set for themselves and their students, the instructional practices they utilize, and how they perform in the face of performance evaluation (Looney, 2003).

Most school accountability systems are evaluations provided by outsiders or people occupying a higher political place on the bureaucratic ladder. The state holds school districts accountable, and principals and other supervisors assess and evaluate the quality of the teaching in their school. That isn't the norm in other professional practice. For example, a lawyer doesn't provide good service because he/she is seeking to receive positive marks or because of concern about getting a poor evaluation, nor does a medical doctor provide treatment because of fear of a reprimand from the hospital administrator. When teachers have timely data on performance and feel empowered to make appropriate classroom changes based upon supported data, then the teacher will begin to feel greater efficacy and a greater willingness to hold themselves to the highest standards of professional performance (Sager, 2000).

Evaluation and Student Growth

`   In a growing effort to recognize and reward teachers for their contributions to students' learning, a number of states such as Tennessee are rethinking their teacher evaluation systems to incorporate measures of student performance. This change stems from evidence that teachers' evaluations and reward structures have not adequately identified teachers who are more effective at raising student achievement from those who are less effective (Toch & Rothman, 2008).

A strong observation rubric should focus almost exclusively on teacher practices and student behaviors that can be observed in the classroom. While other criteria are important, they may call for too much subjectivity and guesswork on the part of the evaluator. Too many performance evaluations fail to take into account evidence of student behavior. It is not enough to ask for observed measures of teacher performance

without looking for evidence that the teacher's performance is having an appropriate impact on the students (NCTQ, 2011).

According to James Stronge and Pamela Tucker (2001), two experts in the field of teacher evaluation, good teaching can be identified through value-added assessment. This value-added score analyzes year-to-year student achievement scores. Tennessee's value added system (TVAAS) compares each individual student's growth to his or her previous growth rate. TVAAS has been used successfully statewide in Tennessee for several years. It measures whether teachers bring about measurable gains that are equal to or greater than those earned by the same students under previous teachers (Stronge & Tucker, 2001).

Value-added scores for alternative settings have created even more division about the evaluation system for teachers. The ability to test students in non-graded materials and standards is difficult. Even though student achievement is linked to a particular teacher, it is often challenging to link specific student gains to a particular teacher. Furthermore, students who are working on a non-standard school calendar may achieve gains during summer months where specialized tutoring may be available (Krebs, 2012).

Some alternative school systems try to create indicators of teacher effectiveness by combining measures of student achievement growth on state tests with measures of teachers' instructional behavior (such as those based on observations by principals or supervisor). Other evaluators use diverse measures of student outcomes (such as scores on district-administered assessments). Unfortunately, there is a problem finding state assessments in Tennessee's alternative schools that are uniform for special school settings. Value-added estimates can be calculated only for teachers of subjects and grades

that are tested at least annually, such as those required under a state's accountability system (TEAM Evaluation System Handbook, 2012).

Furthermore, only about 50% of public school teachers teach subjects at grade levels in which students are tested annually, eliminating the prospect of an evaluation system that applies fairly to all teachers. Second, most standardized tests in use today measure only a narrow segment of low-level skills, such as recalling or restating facts, rather than high-level skills requiring the ability to analyze information. As a result, the tests tend to leave the highest rated teachers (those with wider teaching toolboxes who are able to move students beyond the basics) at a disadvantage, while allowing the entire school system to focus on those in alternative schools who may have lower-level skills (Toch, 2008).

Empowerment has been defined as the overall belief that teamwork and collegiality allows collaboration and the sharing of ideas to surround the school culture and thus enhance the instructional efforts of teachers (Short, Greer, & Melvin, 1994). Empowerment is not as simple as joining committees or sharing common planning periods. It is the processes involved in teamwork that are the greater assets to a school's primary function. "In essence, empowerment expresses an overall school philosophy of teamwork, collegiality, participation in decision-making and problem solving without constraints of a bureaucratic organization" (Short, Greer, & Melvin, p. 41).

A teacher who believes his or her students cannot reach rigorous expectations is not the right fit for that classroom. Great teachers across the country prove every day that students can consistently reach higher levels in spite of enormous challenges outside the classroom. Furthermore, in alternative settings it is possible to set reasonable goals for

the amount of academic progress each student should be able to make in a year through individualized measures, taking into account the student's academic history (The New Teacher Project, 2010).

Due to the continuing controversy about value-added scores, Linda Darling-Hammond (2013) stated that there is at least a 25 % variance in the student progress scores. The National Research Council and the Educational Testing Service, among other research organizations, have concluded that ratings of teacher effectiveness based on mandated statewide student test scores are too unreliable, and these ratings measure too many things other than the teacher performance. That implies that these ratings should not be used to make high-stakes decisions. Test-score gains can reflect a student's social factors and attendance, schools' class sizes, and the influence of other teachers and tutors. Because these outside factors are not weighed, individual teachers' scores do not accurately reveal their ability to teach and improve instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

In conclusion, the TEAM model and the previous Framework model offer details on what kinds of practices distinguish outstanding teaching from less effective teaching, and TEAM should provide guidance on how teachers can improve their practice. It is important to realize that no information is perfect, but better information should lead to better decisions. Overall, teachers and principals believed the TEAM and Framework evaluation models could build instructional improvement in the schools (Urban Education Institute, 2013).

Evaluation using Formative and Summative Measures through TEAM

Formative evaluations have been viewed as a means of growth for teachers for a number of years. The formative process involves the teacher and the evaluator and the

two act as a team to identify short term goals to work on and revisit in the next weekly meeting. These types of evaluation are not like the evaluations that happen once or twice a year, and often at the end of the school year. With so many areas to look at and potentially improve, an observer can see how a teacher can be overwhelmed by the summative end of year types of evaluation. With shorter, more frequent evaluations with one or two goals, a teacher can feel comfortable working on their own improvement and see real results. The focus is on a coaching model, where the supervisor is a coaching teacher, versus a checklist model, where the evaluator simply hands the teacher a final outcome each year (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012).

For this section of the review there is a large database of literature available from the National Council on Teacher Quality (2011) and the foundations for the old Tennessee Framework for Evaluation (1999). The goal of formative assessment is to form feedback that can be used by the instructor and the students to guide improvements in the ongoing teaching and learning context. These assessments are practical for students and instructors. The goal of summative assessment is to measure the level of achievement or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of an instructional unit, by comparing it against some common core standard or benchmark. These are more formal assessments for students and instructors, often with a rating or scale attached.

Although formative and summative assessments serve different purposes, they should be used cooperatively within an integrated system of assessment, curriculum, and instruction. To be effective in developing the learning process, assessments must be directly integrated with theories about the content, instruction, and the learning process (Herman, Osmundson, Ayala, Schneider, & Timms, 2006). They should also be valid

and reliable for the purposes for which they are used. Summative assessments should be in place prior to classroom instruction to capture and identify both the content and process of learning that represent the desired goals. In this way, summative assessment can serve as a model for directing the curriculum and instruction. On the other hand, formative assessment can result in significant learning gains when the assessment results are used to inform the instructional and learning process for the school personnel (Black & William, 1998).

Evaluation and professional growth using TEAM. This research study involved current research used by the Association for Curriculum and Development. The suggested programs of ACD that promote professional growth as it relates to improved teacher effectiveness have been developed. Available courses were investigated at the professional development website (professional development resources). In addition, the National Association of Secondary School Principals knowledge center website was found to be helpful (NASSP, 2014).

Legislation in 25 states requires school districts to develop a professional growth plan for teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Over half the states involved in the federal educational programs are in the process of implementing some type of training or support system for new teachers (Giebelhaus & Bendixen-Noe, 2001).

A 2011 survey from the New Teacher Center entitled TELL (Tennessee Teaching, Empowering, Leading, Learning) recommended that professional growth become a part of the responsibility of institutions of higher education. They suggested partnerships with institutions of higher education to ensure new principal candidates graduate from programs with the knowledge and skills they need to create supportive school climates

(Hirsch, Sioberg, & Dougherty, 2011). Linking higher education in Tennessee to the requirements of the TEAM evaluation appears to offer great potential for more effective alternative school programs.

Glatthorn (1997) cautioned that using any performance evaluation alone in an unreceptive environment inhibited the professional growth of teachers. Professional growth is so complicated that it requires a systemic approach in a creating a supportive environment. Regardless of its form, planned professional development can effectively foster growth only when certain steps are taken to ensure completion of goals. These steps usually included: (a) providing a supportive culture; (b) ensuring lower level, teacher involvement and top-down, administrative support; (c) keeping the process of growth simple; and (d) providing the needed training and in-service (Glatthorn, 1997).

The use of evaluation results to inform professional development opportunities for teachers is essential. Unfortunately, the link to ongoing professional training is limited in Tennessee and no state funding is set aside for this teacher development. In Tennessee, teacher professional development is primarily provided for and funded at the local level. According to a Tennessee School Board Association brief, the state education funding formula does not include a professional development funding component (Wright, 2012). Evaluations have the information to reveal teachers' instructional strengths and weaknesses. Teachers could set their individual future professional goals on the basis of evaluation feedback. Likewise, a collective picture of the staff's professional needs could guide administrative decisions about plans for professional development (Oliva, Mathers, & Laine, 2009).

Ebersold's (2004) study compared teachers' and administrators' perspectives of teacher evaluation related to the purpose of the evaluation process. Ebersold's forty-two

respondents provided a mixed response regarding the performance-based teacher evaluation's impact on professional growth. Forty percent of the respondents indicated the performance-based teacher evaluation was used to promote professional growth and 28% indicated very little use of the performance-based teacher evaluation in promoting professional growth.

Ebersold (2004) additionally indicated that teachers' perspectives were mixed regarding the use of various data sources during the performance-based evaluation process. Sixty percent of the teachers surveyed indicated very little connection between portfolio creation and professional growth, but indicated that reflective practice was connected to professional growth (Ebersold, 2004).

The current interest by TDOE in teacher evaluation and continuing professional growth offers both opportunities for higher education and pitfalls. Universities could very easily become involved in offering workshops and courses on teacher development, but the need to fine tune the objectives so that the work is appropriate and well grounded training must be based in current research (Barrett, 2009).

The work of the states is not just about creating new systems of teacher evaluation, but also about putting a set of standards in place to ensure the success of these systems. This means that teachers and principals must receive training in the new systems; evaluators must receive appropriate support; rubrics and standards for observation must be identified and tested; strong teacher-student data links must be in place that prove that the teacher in charge is tied to the right students for purposes of assessing teacher impact; and growth plans must be devised that allow teachers to track their progress toward professional development goals (Partee, 2012).

Ryan (2007) emphasized that with the new *No Child Left Behind* legislation, it has become even more important for the supervisors and evaluators to become instructional leaders. This implies that the process of growth for teachers in alternative settings must be fashioned by a transforming leader. The work of the school personnel must involve careful monitoring and implementation of effective teacher professional development opportunities (Ryan, 2007).

Both administrator and teachers alike are faced with more decision-making responsibilities and more professional development issues than ever before. Without empowerment through university partnerships and teacher leadership, neither side wins (Keaster, 1995). If teacher evaluations are to be effective, the administrators must work with regional universities in developing a continuing education plan for alternative educators.

Educators are recognizing the job of accountability that effective teacher evaluations can play, not only in assessing teacher competency, but in strengthening collegiality and increasing teacher empowerment (Protheroe, 2002). More productive approaches to teacher evaluation need to be ongoing, linked to professional development, and based on multiple goals and plans for growth.

Professional development opportunities for alternative teachers must be focused on the specific needs identified through the TEAM process. Several professional development activities should be available from which alternative teachers could choose. Options might include mentoring a new teacher utilizing the local higher education teacher preparation staff, action research of effective teacher practices through the local university library, study group participation with credit offered through the regional university, individualized professional activity funded by the districts or universities, peer coaching, and

participation in a hands-on job related industrial experience. Professional development plans might be approved by the building administrator in the fall and reviewed annually in the spring (Corcoran, 1995).

Some states such as North Carolina, Michigan, and Washington believe that evaluation should help make the College of Education the intellectual center for a range of school-improvement and teacher continuing education programs from around the region (Kerr, 2013).   Identifying key speakers to provide training at the university for local alternative school teachers may be a means to collaborative professional development. This opportunity for a supportive administrative context may help to address the interesting questions about teaching and learning (Kerr, 2013).

The NAEA exemplary practices challenges the school leaders to ensure that ongoing professional development is geared towards the adult learner, promotes lifelong learning, and helps build the staff's capacity through the use of research based strategies and best practices (TAEA, 2014). Furthermore, providing adequate resources for professional development and growth is essential. Partnering with neighboring teacher preparation universities can help to ensure that the curriculum is supported by access to a balance of up-to-date, well-maintained collection of textbooks, library media, technology, software, and other instructional supplies and materials (TAEA, 2014).

Learning how to continually improve practice should be part of the ordinary operations of a school. Every school should be learning communities for teachers as well as students. The TEAM evaluation should be a means of growth for all teachers in alternative settings. Creating a culture which focuses on professional development is important to school improvement (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Latham (1998) and Mertler (2002) suggested increasing teacher job satisfaction as one of several methods to build a stronger teaching profession. This would encourage the best and brightest prospects to enter the field of teaching and increase the retention of experienced teachers through quality continuing education. For teachers, continued growth is as important as the learned skills and professional toolbox. Teachers in alternative and non-traditional settings must not be stopped in their efforts to teach and to improve (Ellis & Bernhardt, 1992). Professional teachers need a better understanding of the difficulties alternative teachers face in achieving a higher level of satisfaction from teaching; also, administrators should focus on how teachers' levels of overall satisfaction influence the quality of instruction in schools (Houchins, Shippen, & Cattret, 2004). The challenge for school leaders may be to identify the factors that schools can control leading to teacher career growth and satisfaction. Job improvement plans must do more than help retain quality teachers in the non-traditional roles; rather carefully designed and supported growth plans can improve their teaching (Latham, 1998).

Overview of Literature

There is a continuum of state preparedness to implement *Race to the Top* criteria regarding teacher evaluation. This continuum is particularly prevalent in state readiness to measure student growth and thus link student performance to teacher performance. Further, states such as Tennessee and Delaware are starting to think about other quantitative measures (other than student achievement on state standardized tests), which can be used to evaluate teachers of students in untested grades and subject areas not normally taught in public schools. Although states already have established teacher evaluation rubrics, the *Race to the Top* application emphasized reforms. Rather than

starting with the Danielson model called Framework, it was a decided among states to look to already established models of teacher evaluation (such as TAP) for setting standards at the state education agency and local education agency levels (Learning Point Associates, 2010).

Pulling the process together in Tennessee will involve existing research reports on the TEAM process available at the Tennessee Department of Education TEAM website. This website defines the model and the process of developing the evaluation. However, to develop the dissertation, research will focus on how alternative settings use evaluation. Several items of research are available through the WestEd website related to teacher accountability (WestED, 2014).

Various conclusions can be drawn about teacher evaluation, satisfaction, and efficacy. First of all, it doesn't seem to totally exempt from the accountability required by the *No Child Left Behind*, or new evaluation procedures or any of those other school issues various people have researched. Quite simply, it is dependent on multiple factors. Such questions as the following are relevant: do schools have enough money to hire good teachers and evaluators? Furthermore, is there money for training and materials that are required following the evaluation process? Is there enough information available to make formative assessments a reality? In other words, does the public value education enough to pay for it and encourage new evaluation policies such as TEAM that support effective teaching (Tingley, 2013)?

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Many studies such as those by the National Council on Teacher Quality (2011) have been conducted on teachers' job performance evaluations because the relevance of job satisfaction, efficacy, and professional growth is very important to the long-term growth of any educational system (Ololube, 2006).

> These factors probably rank alongside professional knowledge and skills,
>
> performance rubrics, educational resources and strategies as the veritable
>
> determinants of educational success and performance. (Ololube, 2006, p. 1)

Ololube indicates that more effective teacher evaluations will move all schools forward and help empower teachers for future success. Thus, teacher evaluation measures are ranked as one of the highest indicators of overall success in a school system. Also, Morgan and O'Leary (2004) state that there is documented evidence that when teachers feel positive about their work, pupil achievement may show positive gains. It appears that not only do job evaluations affect teacher roles, but they also influence student achievement. As a result, the topic of teacher job performance evaluation is one that needs to be examined from every aspect and angle.

The issue of teacher evaluation is of even more important today than it was a few years ago because as Brunetti (2001) mentions, teachers have had to contend with difficult working conditions for more than two decades. These work conditions include large class sizes, a highly diverse student population (such as English language learners), inadequate facilities and trained supervisors (Brunetti, 2001, p. 49). Due to changing

evaluation standards and higher teacher expectations, the study of the TEAM model seems even more important in specialized settings, such as alternative schools and non-traditional schools (TEAM New Observer Manual, 2012).

Although looking at teacher job evaluations and student achievement is widely researched, not much is known about the extrinsic factors that relate to teacher job satisfaction and efficacy including performance standards, professional growth opportunities, and current job experience. As mentioned above, teachers play a major role in the growth of the educational system and there is a need to understand and better prepare for teacher efficacy and job performance. Thus, this dissertation research will aim to understand the relationship between teacher job evaluations using TEAM and the variables mentioned above.

Research Design and Research Questions

This quantitative study attempted to analyze the relationship between the dependent extrinsic factors and the Tennessee TEAM model of evaluation. The main source of data collection used in this study was a teacher questionnaire called the TEAM Professional Teacher Evaluation Survey identified as quantitative data. The researcher has selected and modified several relevant issues from the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) from Stiggins and Duke (1988), so that alternative school teachers using the new evaluation model could respond.

The original TEP focused on several issues that were addressed in the modified version of the TEAM Professional Teacher Evaluation Survey. The TEP focused on questions related to the sources of performance information considered as part of the evaluation. For purposes of this research it was assumed that a major portion of the TEAM process focused on the classroom observations. The original TEP allowed the

45

participant to rate the degree that the following performance information sources were used:

       1. Observation of your classroom performance.

       2. Examination of classroom or school records.

       3. Examination of student achievement.

       4. Completion of professional development or growth plans.

Since most alternative schools are not able to use a standardized test in measuring student achievement, the examination of student achievement was eliminated. Therefore, the primary focus of the TPTES was on observation and the completion of a professional development or growth plan.

The following definitions for research were used: "Quantitative research is the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena of interest" (Gay et al., 2009, p.7). Furthermore, the term "survey" means "to look or see over or beyond the casual glance or superficial observation" (Leedy, 1997, p. 190). My research questions and associated hypotheses were as follows:

1. How satisfied are Tennessee alternative school education teachers with evaluations? My hypothesis is that the higher the teachers' perception of the TEAM the more satisfied he/ she feels with the process. The null hypothesis states that there is no association between the two categorical variables.

2. What are the perceived relationships among teacher performance evaluation and perceived growth in job skills for alternative school education teachers from various special districts in Tennessee identified on the TDOE website? The null hypothesis is that there is no association between teacher evaluation and teacher growth and satisfaction in special settings.

3. What are the relationships between perceived job evaluation effectiveness and teacher professional development opportunities provided through higher education institutions for teachers using the TEAM evaluation in alternative school districts in Tennessee? My hypothesis, which states that there is a dependent relationship between the above mentioned variables on the dependent variable of positive teacher evaluation. The null hypothesis states that there is no relationship between the variables.

4. Do positive perceptions by teachers on the TEAM evaluation help improve the potential for professional development collaboration with local higher education institutions and assist in teacher growth and learning in alternative schools in Tennessee? My hypothesis is that the higher the teachers' perception of TEAM performance measures, the higher the level of connection to continuing professional development. The null hypothesis states that there is no association between the two categorical variables.

Sample

The study's sample included teachers in alternative schools, working in approximately 30 schools in the state of Tennessee. Teachers that were included in the sample were drawn from eight participating correctional schools and other alternative schools teaching the GED preparation program in the State of Tennessee. To be included in the sample, teachers were supposed to be in the formal evaluation year of the TEAM evaluation system or other state approved evaluation model such as the Framework for Teacher Evaluation. This sample was identified from an overall population of all alternative instructors teaching non-graded curriculum or GED preparation courses, using the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling was used to identify the study sample from the total of population of teachers who met several specific criteria.

Participating teachers had to be participants in the beginning formal evaluation phase of the TEAM evaluation system or the other approved evaluation instruments; also, these teachers had to have previous data from the Framework or other state approved evaluation model that could be successfully matched to them.

Preliminary data collection was conducted in fall, 2014, and the researcher identified teacher/participants from alternative settings to be included in the study. The principals of the district's correctional schools were contacted via email or through phone calls, and the surveys were mailed or faxed to the school address. The surveys included information about teacher perceptions, efficacy, and professional development opportunities. The school principals were asked to place the surveys in the alternative teachers' mailboxes. The surveys were included in a large envelope with a return address mailer or fax number; participating teachers were able to fill out the survey and the informed consent.

The TPTES was mailed by the United States Postal Service to 300 teachers that included persons teaching in 30 alternative schools across the state of Tennessee from the western tip to the extreme eastern sections of the state. Many of these persons were also members of the Tennessee Alternative Education Association, but all were listed as certified teachers by the Tennessee Department of Education. The surveys were also mailed to all the Tennessee Department of Corrections teachers, along with a cover letter to each principal in the eight correctional facilities that included: Northwest, West Tennessee State, Mark Luttrell, Charles Bass, Turney Center, Northeast, Morgan County, and CCA of Hardeman County.

There were 122 surveys of the 300 mailed returned to the researcher, and this represented a 40.6% rate of return. A few items were marked by the respondent with a "no response," but overall the responses were in the expected one to five range using the Likert rating scale.

In summarizing, for the purpose of this study, all known Tennessee alternative teachers were selected from a sample of alternative school settings (those teaching non-standard curriculum associated with public K-12 schools). The sample of teachers completed a survey and as primary researcher, I gathered all the data related to alternative teachers identified by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE).

There were currently 30 identified alternative schools recognized by the TDOE, and each had an average of five teachers. Correctional schools were identified as special, public schools, and the Tennessee Department of Corrections had eight full time facilities with an average of 20 teachers in each.

Procedures and Data Collection

Data were collected for this study using a researcher-designed survey (TPTES) generated by the research questions. The purpose of the survey was explained by the primary researcher in a cover letter to all participants, who then were required to sign a consent form before taking the questionnaire. They were told that no portion of this study or results will be used for publication; it is all for the purpose of furthering the quantitative research and policies affecting TEAM evaluation methodologies in alternative settings.

For this study, the researcher only chose to focus on teachers currently certified to teach in a Tennessee school. The focus of the researcher was on teachers in specialized settings and therefore the researcher did not specify a grade level.

Additionally, due to the public nature of the data for the dissertation, with IRB approval, all educators of any subject and level who might be required to complete an annual performance evaluation (either TEAM or the Framework) were included. Participants were given opportunities to ask questions and contact the IRB if needed.

The surveys were mailed using regular postage with a stamped, return address envelope, because teachers in alternative settings often do not have valid school emails or access to electronic surveys. *Survey Monkey* or other similar electronic surveys were ruled out because of feedback from teachers participating in an initial pilot project of the survey. Response rates during the pilot survey were better than 50% using the conventional post-paid method.

Participants were asked to complete and return the TPTES within 10 days. A follow-up reminder was sent five days after the distribution of the survey to participants, requesting the return of the completed instruments and thanking them for their participation. A copy of the cover letter/reminder is included in Appendix B.

Data was collected by using a closed-ended survey instrument to obtain statistical data collected at one point in time (Creswell, 2003). Surveys have been used for over a century to gather data for understanding the human condition and have become essential tools of school management to improve the performance of an organization (Groves et al., 2004). It is a common practice among school districts, states, and the federal government to use surveys to collect data regarding various aspects of education. For example, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) routinely uses surveys to collect data.

NCES School and Staffing Survey has been conducted since the mid-1980s to collect information on school climate, compensation, hiring practices, and student characteristics (NCES, 2011). The rationale for this design selection was based upon the constraints of implementation for a limited population of alternative teachers in Tennessee.

Logistic regression analysis was used to predict, within reason, outcomes based on inputs of independent variables. The outcomes of positive attitudes by the teachers being evaluated will be linked to the independent variables including teacher knowledge of the TEAM process, the application of teaching standards, and other variables in questions in the study survey.

Data Analysis and Measures

Three different tests were used to measure teacher job performance evaluation for the purpose of this dissertation. The first were multiple regressions, where different variables were used as predictors of why a teacher performs positively in a current job. The variables included perceived satisfaction with TEAM, professional development opportunities, and higher education involvement in teacher performance measures.

Multiple regressions can be used to examine the relationship between several independent variables (IVs) and a single continuous dependent variable (DV) (Pedzahur, 1997). The general formula for least squares or ordinary least squares regression with one predictor is as follows, where a is a constant, b represents slope (regression coefficient or b coefficient), and X reflects a value for the (IV), or a level of engagement in a teacher evaluation program (Pedzahur, 1997): $Y^\wedge = a + bX$.

The second test used in this doctoral research was a Pearson correlation test for association. An analysis of job satisfaction and teacher efficacy level related to

professional development will be conducted for the purpose of this paper. Teacher job satisfaction using the TEAM was rated from five Likert categories. The categories were: very dissatisfied (1); dissatisfied (2); neutral (3); satisfied (4); and very satisfied (5). No response/not applicable was the rating for those choosing not to answer a particular item.

An analysis of the differences on perceptions of performance evaluation will be conducted using the categorical variable positive teacher growth and professional development controlling for diverse evaluation factors.

Statistical results were interpreted in terms of statistical significance tests and effect sizes measures, with consideration of the sample being limited for purposes of this research to alternative teachers. Statistical significance at the $p < .01$ or the $p<.05$ levels were sought. Effect size measures were interpreted as small, based on the limited scope of the participants (Cohen, 1988).

The primary variables tested were teacher attitude toward evaluation, as measured by their perceptions on the TEAM professional teacher evaluation survey (TPTES) ratings. The criterion variable, teacher attitude towards measured observations on the TEAM, was measured by individual teacher ratings on 8 performance questions (2 through 9) on the TPTES. The questions were used to solicit information about the teachers' self-rated ability to stimulate critical thinking, differentiated instruction, and feedback in relation to the criterion variable, with each teacher's perceived opportunity for professional growth rated on a 5-point rating scale.

The research used the logistic regression command to run a model predicting the outcome variable teacher satisfaction with TEAM, using clear self-expectations, collaboration in teaching methods, achievement through learner-centered instruction, and

quality feedback for continuing education for the alternative teacher. The output was shown in sections, each of which was discussed in the analysis.

The last set of information pertained to personal and demographic information of the subjects. Due to the limited nature of this research population, the data was limited to specific alternative settings in the state of Tennessee. Teacher education levels, ethnic origin, level of students taught, and sex will be identified; personal identification of teaching styles and professional expectations of the teachers were identified, as well as information about teacher knowledge of the technical aspects of teaching.

Validity and Reliability

Validity is the extent to which the survey measures what the research purports to measure. Content validity was measured to determine if the TEAM Professional Teacher Evaluation Survey (TPTES) considers all the concepts that are essential in answering the research questions. The researcher determined whether the questions assess teacher performance and work satisfaction issues addressed in the relevant literature. The literature was searched and the TPTES checked for validity concerns related to job satisfaction, teacher efficacy, and professional development opportunities.

Criterion validity for this instrument was not obtained. One method of establishing criterion validity is through relating a newly created instrument with another instrument measuring the same concepts. Since no other instrument existed with the TCRED with the primary purpose of measuring teacher job satisfaction, establishing criterion validity through this method was not feasible.

Reliability is the degree to which my TPTES survey consistently measures whatever it is measuring; in the case of this dissertation, this would be confidence in TEAM, teacher satisfaction, efficacy, and professional development. For this dissertation

research, the reliability was expressed as a reliability coefficient, measuring whether the teachers' ratings were consistent with the teacher performance evaluation being measured (Gay et al., 2009).

The Cronbach alpha was considered for this research, since internal consistency involves a survey with more than two choices. This affective teacher survey is using a Likert scale and the internal consistency is important to the outcome of the results and may also influence the standard error of measurement (an estimate of how often a researcher could expect errors of a given size on the survey).

A field test was conducted in January, 2013, using the TPTES to determine if the survey had adequate questions and was organized in an understandable format. This pilot study also allowed 76 alternative teachers to provide feedback about the instrument being used. One minor change was suggested that included placing sub-categories in the survey (Appendix C).

Glossary of Abbreviations Used in Descriptive Tables

There are several specialized words and abbreviations that I used in the tables for the analysis of data. These words and abbreviations are essential words that could not be spelled out due to the limited nature of the space for tables. The formal definitions and spellings are lengthy and require an abbreviated version. The jargon of teacher evaluation and word usages are important for the interpretation of the data presented in chapter four. A glossary of terms and abbreviations is a common practice doing quantitative research. The following abbreviated words are explained in the glossary of abbreviations.

Agree/Disagree: Agr/Dis.

Confidence..measures..effectiveness: Confi.   Eff.

Critical thinking, problem solving: Crit.thk., pr.solving

Feedback: fdbk.

Higher Education helps w/TEAM teaching practices: Higher educ.institutions..tchg. prac.

In-Service: In-Serv.

Perceptions: Perc.

Previous: Prev.

Professional Development: P D   or Prof.Dev.

Question "D", Question "G", Question "H", Question 13, 16, etc.: Q-"D", Q-"G".

Recommendations…Managing Student Behavior: Recom.   Mang. Stud. Behav.

Specificity of Information: Spec. of Info.

Teacher: tchr.

Teacher evaluations: tchr. Eval.   And Evaluations is eval.

University provides PD & Training: Univ. prov. Prof.Dev. & Trg.

Chapter 3 Summary

As stated in the introductory section, the quantitative study examined the attitudes and perceptions of teachers engaging in the TEAM or other professional evaluation in alternative school settings. The first section of the results reported the perceived satisfaction using the performance evaluation model. The next portion of the paper identified the manner in which teachers believed the evaluation impacted the student learning environment. After that, the results examined the manner in which the evaluation encouraged student motivation and teacher professional growth using critical

thinking skills. The last paragraphs discussed the perceived role of the evaluation in informing teachers of needed professional development and timely feedback for continuing employment decisions.

Teacher Evaluation Acceleration Model (TEAM) in Tennessee was studied in alternative schools to provide some more creative methodologies to evaluate Tennessee teachers. This quantitative study sought to offer some suggestions about the minimum level of effectiveness for the money invested by the federal and state governments in school improvement in alternative settings.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Data

Introduction

    This study investigated the relationship between current TEAM evaluation practices and teacher professional development information in alternative schools in Tennessee. The researcher investigated the perceptions of certificated teachers (N=300) who were teaching in the alternative school districts regarding their most recent TEAM evaluation experience, the degree to which they ere provided opportunities for professional development, and the involvement by universities in their professional development.

    The data collected on the TEAM Professional Teacher Evaluation Survey (TPTES) were summarized using a frequency and distribution summary using the first five questions; a profile of means and standard deviations, a correlational analysis, and multiple regression analysis was used for the remaining research questions. Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Packet for Social Services) version 22. For research question 1, item-level percentages were obtained for all relevant items concerned with teacher evaluation.

    Descriptive data of the participants' gender, highest degree attained by the teacher, ethnicity of the teacher, and current teaching assignment age level are included. Descriptions of the teaching sites and the population and sample are included in this chapter. Statistical analysis of each question is reviewed, and the results of data analyses are presented in tables to illustrate statistical significance. Tables were also used to

describe correlations between TEAM perceptions and teacher professional development plans. Statistical analyses of the hypotheses are also presented.

Descriptive and Statistical Analyses

The research sites were the alternative schools identified by the State of Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). For this quantitative study the participating school districts were comprised of public and private alternative schools and state correctional schools administered by the Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC). Thirty state alternative schools were asked to participate and 8 TDOC schools that were using the TEAM were surveyed.

The target population for this study consisted of 300 full-time certificated teachers employed in the alternative schools identified through the TDOE. Only certificated teachers who had taught in the district at least one year were asked to participate, thus allowing a full TEAM evaluation cycle. To ensure full geographic, ethnic, gender, and current teaching assignment age level representation, all certificated teachers in alternative schools across Tennessee were given an opportunity to participate (Cui, 2003). All participants received packets consisting of a cover letter, informed consent information, researcher contact information for the primary researcher, the TPTES, and a self-addressed stamped return envelope. Of the 300 teachers sampled, completed surveys were obtained from 122 participants, for a response rate of 40.6%.

Table 3 provides the means and standard deviations from the score of the first five items dealing with perceptions using the TPTES, consisting of a total of 28 items. Subscale one has 5 items; subscale two Professional Development 5 items, the overall summary has 4 items and the subscale University Professional Development has 4 items.

Each item on the TPTES has a scale of 1 through 6 and the range is indicated for each instrument and subscale. The number of participants is also provided.

Table 1 provides the highest educational level attained by the teachers responding to the TPTES.   The largest number percentage of teachers responding to the TPTES were teachers holding a masters degree and masters plus level with about 49% in those two categories. This appears to be a reasonable number because teachers in alternative settings tend to work with more difficult students requiring special teacher skills.

Table 1 also provides the percent for the ages taught by the alternative teachers responding to the TPTES. The largest percentage of respondents taught in alternative schools serving juveniles, closely followed by the ones ranging in age from 18-34 years old. Table 1 indicated that persons teaching in alternative settings with students 18-34 were in the correctional setting since only persons under eighteen are allowed in public alternative schools. Persons teaching in adult education programs in correctional settings generally deal with persons ages 18-34 years. This appears to be representative of teachers working in alternative settings across Tennessee.

Last of all, Table 1 provides the demographic data for the ethnicity of the teachers responding to the TPTES. The largest percentage of responding teachers working in alternative schools were Caucasians, with only 11% falling into other ethnic categories. These percentages that are close to 10% appear to be representative of the current number of African American teachers across the state of Tennessee in regular public schools.

Table 1

Demographics: Highest Degree/Education Attained by the Responding Teacher

Group

Responding (by numbers)	49	27	33	9	1	3
By Percentages						
N= 122						

Bachelors degree	40.2%					
Masters degree	--	22.1%				
Masters Plus (+)	--	--	27.0%			
Educational Specialist	--	--	--	8.2%		
Doctorate	--	--	--	--	0.8%	
No Response	--	--	--	--	--	1.6%

Age Level Grouping by Percentages for Responding Teachers in Alternative Settings

Primary Age Taught by tchr. (by numbers)	36	32	32	21	1
Under 18 years	29.3%				
Ages 18-24 years	--	26.2%			
Ages 25-34 years	--	--	26.2%		
Ages 35 & over	--	--	--	17.5%	
No Response	--	--	--	--	0.8%

Demographic for Teachers Grouped by Ethnicity Teaching in Alternative Settings

Ethnic Origin (by numbers) Of the Teacher	98	11	0	2	11
White/Caucasian	80.3%				
African American	--	9.1%			
Asian	--	--	0%		
Hispanic	--	--	--	1.6%	
Other or no response	--	--	--	--	9.1%

The percentages and overall quality of TEAM ratings based on question 20 (the constant) of TPTES is reported in Table 2. Table 3 provides the means and standard deviations from the score of the first five items and other significant questions dealing with perceptions using the TPTES, consisting of a total of 28 items. Subscale one has 5 items; subscale two Professional Development 5 items, the overall summary has 4 items and the subscale University Professional Development has 4 items. Each item on the TPTES has a scale of one through six and the range is indicated for each instrument and subscale. The number of participants is also provided.

Table 2

Frequency by percentage of TPTES Perceptions of the TEAM Professional Evaluations

Item (*N*=122) *	Strgly.Disagree # *1* %	Disagree # *2* %	Neither # *3*Agr/Dis %	Slghtly agree # *4* %	Highly Agree # *5* %	NR #6 %
1. Confi. in measuring Eff.	39.3	14.8	19.7	14.8	10.7	0.8
2. TEAM promotes student learning & Expectations	37.7	2.5	28.7	23.8	6.6	0.8
3. Extent that TEAM allows support/engage student learning	38.5	3.3	28.7	18.0	9.0	2.5
4. TEAM assists in Critical thinking & varied instruction	44.3	2.5	15.6	19.7	16.4	1.6

(Table 2 Continues)

Table 2 (continued)

Item (*N*=122) *	Strgly.Disagree # *1* %	Disagree # *2* %	Neither # *3*Agr/Dis %	Slghtly agree # *4* %	Highly Agree # *5* %	NR #6 %
5. # of elements are manageable	44.3	6.6	9.0	23.0	12.3	4.9
6. Extent TEAM leads to professional development	41.8	12.2	17.2	11.5	12.3	4.9
9. TEAM provides Recommendations related to Managing Students	27.9	18.9	21.3	12.3	16.4	3.3
10. Universities provide P.D. & Training Opportunities	41.8	23.0	18.0	8.0	7.4	1.6
13. Higher Educ. Institutions Help w/ TEAM practices	45.1	22. 1	10.7	13.1	4.9	3.3
16. In-Service/P.D. are generic and not specific to TEAM	43.5	13.1	22.1	14.8	15.4	4.1
20. Overall Rating Perceptions Quality of TEAM evaluation	39.3	27.0	18.0	6.6	9.0	-
Q-"D" Previous Experience w/Tch.eval. Prior to TEAM (A Waste-VeryHelp)	0.8	20.5	4.1	38.5	32.8	3.3
Q-"G" Specificity Of information provided By TEAM evaluation	18.9	4.1	43.4	15.6	15.6	2.5

Table 3 provides the information about means and standard deviations for each of the selected questions. This statistical information is essential for the study since it provides data that can be used in the correlation of selected variables related to overall TEAM satisfaction. Within the study, professional development (Questions 6) had a mean of 2.370 with a standard deviation of 1.47, university involvement in professional teacher growth (Question 10) had a mean of 2.15 with a standard deviation of 1.27, perceived help through universities in implementing TEAM practices (Question 13) had a mean of 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.23, and teacher background with evaluations (Question D) had a mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 1.14.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations on Selected Survey Item for all Participants

Standard Item	*N*	*Min.*	*Max.*	*Mean*	*Standard Dev*.
Q-1. Confid. That TEAM Measures eff.	121	1.00	5.00	2.42	1.41
Q-6 TEAM Provides fdbd Ldg.to P.D.	116	1.00	5.00	2.37	1.47
Q-9 TEAM Prov.spec. Rec.on stud. Beh.mangem.	118	1.00	5.00	2.69	1.49
Q-10 Univ. Provides PD & Trg.oppor.	120	1.00	5.00	2.15	1.27

(Table 3 continues)

Table 3 (Continued)

_____

Standard Item	*N*	*Min.*	*Max.*	*Mean*	*Standard Dev.*
Q-13 Higher Educ.Inst.Helps w/tch.practices	118	1.00	5.00	2.24	1.23
Q-16 In-Serv. P.D. Generic/ Not specific	116	1.00	5.00	2.16	1.24
Q-20 Personal Rating Overall Perc. Of TEAM	122	1.00	5.00	2.19	1.27
Q-"D" Prev. Exp.w/tchg. Eval.prior to TEAM	118	1.00	5.00	3.85	1.14
Q-"G" Spec. Of Inform. Prov.by TEAM	119	1.00	5.00	3.05	1.27
Q-"H" Nature Of Info. Provided	120	1.00	5.00	2.70	1.36

_____

Table 4 reports the data from the correlations of the total score of the TPTES on selected questions; the selected scores from the TPTES are for the following: Overall perception, Professional development recommendations; Higher education institution involvement in Professional development; Perceived help from higher education institutions; Teacher prior involvement with evaluations; and Specificity of information

provided by the TEAM. The results from each of the above six questions was reported

due to their connections to research questions 2 through 4. Question 20 provided an

overall rating of the teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation, and was used to

complete the study due to its summative qualities.

Table 4

Pearson's Correlations for Personal Perceptions(A), Professional Development(B),
University Involvement(C), Links to Professional Development(D), Teacher
Background(E), and Team Process(F)

Correlation	A	B	C	D	E	F
	N= 122	117	120	118	118	119
20. Overall quality of TEAM eval.	--					
16. In-Serv. & Prof.Dev. are Generic/not spec.	.92**	--				
10. local university Provides continuing Education & P.D. opportunities.	.98** .	.94**	--			
13. Higher educ. Inst. Help w/TEAM Tchg. Prac.	.53**	.52**	.54**	--		
"D." Previous exp. w/ tchr.eval.prior to recent TEAM	.75**	.76**	.75**	.42**	--	
"G." Specificity of Information prov. By TEAM eval.	.85**	.82**	.85**	.47	.93**	--

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The data generated from this study indicated a significant correlation at the 0.01

level between the TEAM Perceptions overall (Question 20) and each of the five subscales,

ranging in significance levels from .533 to .982. The findings are consistent with the

initial pilot study for the TPTES conducted in 2013 by this researcher. In that study

teachers perceived a direct correlation to professional development opportunities and

higher personal perceptions of the TEAM evaluation. Question 10 (related to hypothesis

two) indicated that there is a relationship with the teachers' perceptions of TEAM as

measured by TPTES to the perceived professional development and continuing education

provided by local universities. This appeared to indicate that teachers' negative

perceptions can be addressed though professional development and continued growth

opportunities as indicated by the 0.98 result in Table 4.

Additional statistically significant correlations at the 0.01 level were found at

the .93 level between the Question G, Specificity of information provided and Question

D, Prior experience with evaluation at the 0.93 level. Also, the TPTES Question 10,

Higher Education involvement in professional development, and Question 16,

Perceptions of professional development opportunities resulted in a significant

correlation at the .94 level. The TPTES question 10 about university involvement had the

high correlations to the other four questions related to the research questions (question 16,

question 13, Question D, and Question G) that ranged from .53 to .94. The total range of

correlations for the TPTES questions was .42 to .98.

Higher Education Perceived Involvement (question 10) and the Overall TEAM

Rating (Question 20) had the highest correlation at .98. The next highest correlation

was .92 for Question 16 (Professional Development on TEAM) and Question 20 (Overall TEAM Rating).

In this study, research questions 2 through 4 examined the perceived relationship between three variables: job growth through professional development; professional development opportunities though universities; perceived professional development growth through the higher education settings. A significant relationship first had to exist between the scores of the two instruments used to address any existing differences in the relationship depending on the specified variables. There was a statistically significant correlation found between the TEAM results and the professional development and the level of professional development provided by local universities according to Table 4. One subscale of the TPTES, Professional Development Collaboration (Question 10) resulted in the highest statistically significant correlation to the TEAM Perceptions at the 0.05 level.

Due to the interval level data collected for research questions 2 through 4, a multiple regression was conducted for each of the three research questions. Table 6 reports the unstandardized and standardized coefficients, t-scores, and significance values generated from the multiple regression using question 6, "Professional Development," as the constant variable. Although there was a statistically significant correlation between TEAM Perception and TEAM practices using Question 13, University Professional Development Perceptions (.53); however, according to Table 7, the data did not show a statistically significant relationship (.25) between the variable of how higher education helps with professional development and the TEAM perceptions. Question 16 in Table 7

addressed the fourth hypothesis related to perceived help by higher education with the TEAM best practices.

Unstandardized and standardized coefficients, t-scores, and significance values generated from the multiple regression using university professional development experiences (Question 9, TPTES) as the variable are also shown in Table 7. The data did not show a statistically significant relationship (.809) between the variable of years of university professional development experience and TEAM evaluation.

Table 7 provides unstandardized and standardized coefficients, t-scores, and significance values generated from the multiple regression using the perceived higher education collaboration (TPTES Question 10) using TEAM as the variable. There was a statistically significant relationship between teacher TEAM perception and research question four using the University Professional Development subscale (.001).

Table 5

Summary of Regression Analysis of TEAM Perception Using Q6, Q9, Q10, QH as Variables

Mod Summ.	*R*	*R Square*	*Adjusted R Square*	*Std.Error of the Estimate*	*R Square Change*	*F Change*	*Df1*	*Df2*	*Sig F Change*
	.980[a]	.960	.959	.22971	.960	662.718	4	110	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), QH, Q10, Q6, Q9

Table 6

Coefficients using Regression Analysis

Mod. Coeff.[a]	Unstand. Coefficients		St.Coeff.	t	Sig.	95%Conf. Interval for B	
	B	*Std.Error*	*Beta*			*Lower Bd.*	*Upper Bound*
(Constant)	.014	.051		.264	.793	-.088	.115
Q-6 TEAM Leads to Prof.Dev.	-.085	.066	-.111	-1.293	199	-.216	.045
Q-9 TEAM Spec.recom. For PD con. Behavior	-.019	.079	-.024	-.242	-.089	-.176	.138
Q-10 Univ. Provides PD & trg.oppor.	.871	.069	.903	12.648	.000	.735	1.007
Q"H" Nature of Info.prov.	.189	.074	.219	2.535	.013	.041	.336

a. Dependent Variable: Question 20 $p<.05.$

Table 7

Team Perceptions Using Professional Development Through Universities as Variable Q-13, Q-16, Q-G(Specificity of Info), and Q-D (Prior Experience)

Model	*R*	*R Square*	*Adjusted R Square*	*Std. Error of Estimate*
Summary	.944[a]	.892	.888	.38764

a. Predictors: (Constant = Question 20 Overall Perception) Q-13, Q-16, Q-D, Q-G

(Table 7 continues)

Table 7 (Continued)

Model Coeff.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.

(Constant) .269 .149 1.805 .074

Q-13
Higher ed
Institution Help
Tchg. Prac. .022 .019 .042 1.148 .253

Q-16
In-Service &
Prof.Dev. are
Generic/not
Specific Rec .628 .053 .669 11.791 .001

Table 7 Continued

Q-D Previous
Experience w/
Evaluation prior
to TEAM -.304 .090 -.298 -3.389 .001

Q-"G"
Specificity of
Inform. provided
By TEAM .516 .092 .561 5.640 .000

a. Dependent Variable: Question 20 (Overall Quality of TEAM personal rating)

Hypotheses

This study addressed the following hypotheses:

HO_1: The higher the alternative teachers' perception of the TEAM the more

satisfied he/she feels with the process. The process for alternative teachers revealed that

54.1% of the teachers responding were not satisfied with TEAM. Also, only 30.6% of

alternative teachers believed that expectations were clearly communicated through

70

TEAM. Furthermore, the overall quality of TEAM received a low rating based on question 20 of TPTES, as reported in Table 2.

HO$_2$: There is no statistically significant relationship between TEAM perceptions and current teacher evaluation professional development practices, as measured by the TPTES subscale, Professional Development. Using the data in Table 5 and Table 6, the study failed to reject HO$_2$. Team Perceptions as the constant are affected by perceived opportunities for professional development.

HO$_3$: There is a statistically significant relationship between teachers' perceptions on TEAM and available involvement by higher education institutions in Professional Development. The null hypothesis for HO$_3$ was rejected. Alternative teachers negative perceptions of TEAM have a significant relationship to the perceived university involvement in a professional growth plan.

The variable examined for HO$_4$ was the collaboration for growth by higher education with TEAM evaluation. No statistically significant relationship was found between the university professional development and collaboration and current TEAM evaluation perceptions. Based on Table 7 data results, the local higher education institutions were not perceived as a help in facilitating teaching practices using the TEAM in a proactive manner. The study failed to reject HO$_4$.

Summary

This chapter presented the results centered on four research questions. Descriptive and survey data provided information helpful in determining the degree of the relationship between TEAM evaluation in alternative schools and professional development.   Additional descriptive statistics provided insight to gauge the degree of

differences in the relationship between TEAM practices and the respondent teachers'

growth through higher education institutions. Chapter 5 presents an overview of the study

and a summary of findings. Conclusions and recommendations for future studies are also

discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Summary of Findings and Discussion

Evaluation of teachers occupies a large segment of the discussion in school districts across the country and is often the evaluation is different from best practices in education (Peterson, 2000). Many schools use alternative schools to meet special needs. Further, most schools use supervision and evaluation in an attempt to increase teacher effectiveness in the special classroom, which should enhance student learning. School districts across the state of Tennessee have begun to develop the TEAM evaluation, a student focused observation model, in an attempt to foster teacher growth and professional development through the evaluation process. Collaboration using higher education through professional development has become the normal practice.

In the state of Tennessee the Framework for Teacher Evaluation has evolved from a limited model based on a checklist, to a diversified evaluation called TEAM. The TEAM evaluation has been adopted by the majority of Tennessee's alternative schools because it is focused on the individualized needs and standards for alternative schools (TAEA, 2014).

School administrators are in a position to build professional development plans and to utilize local universities in the process of teacher growth. Increased job satisfaction and more positive perceptions can lead to increased performance and higher organizational performance (Rinehart et al., 1998).

The purpose of this study was to conduct a detailed examination of the relationship between TEAM practices in Tennessee alternative schools and teachers'

professional development opportunities. The findings of this study were based on data collected in the form of a self-designed instrument, the TPTES.

Summary of Findings

A total of 122 certificated teachers who were teaching in Tennessee alternative school settings participated in the study, resulting in a 40.6% response rate. The TPTES was used to gather descriptive and quantitative self-reported data from a sample of 300 teachers. Over 80% of the respondents were female, and this appeared to represent the normal pool of alternative teachers. Of the alternative teachers responding, there were 29.5% who taught juveniles or younger. There were 52.8% of the respondents who taught the largest age group (18-35 years old), representing alternative prison schools. Teachers responding with a bachelor's degree represented 40.8%, while those with a masters or master plus represented 50%.

The first research question examined the self-reported degree of satisfaction for alternative teachers evaluated using the TEAM evaluation. According to Table 2, the descriptive statistics revealed that 66% of alternative teachers are not satisfied with the TEAM evaluation. Likewise, only 25.5% rated the TEAM evaluation as effectively improving educational performance. This implied that those surveyed were not pleased with the current TEAM evaluation and this dissatisfaction might lead to poor performance, even though the teachers had high expectations for their teaching (according to the teacher background section of TPTES).

The data suggested a strong relationship based on Table 5 between TEAM perceptions and the two professional development components of the survey. However,

there was no statistically significant relationship with hypotheses 2 or 4 related to teacher growth through professional development and collaboration using university programs.

To examine questions 2 through 4, a multiple regression was calculated for each question using related responses on the TPTES. Differences in the relationship between the TEAM perceptions and teacher professional development were measured using data generated from the TPTES. The total TEAM perception (Question 20) was the dependent variable in the study and the predictors were as follows: TEAM leads to planned professional development; university offers training on TEAM criteria; prior experience with teacher evaluations; higher education involvement in contacting local alternative teachers; and specificity of information. The statistically significant responses were based on the connections that the university has related to professional development and alternative teacher growth (Question 10 of TPTES).

Conclusions

Overall findings for this study offer several implications for professional educational practice. Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were discovered:

1. Alternative teachers desired that the TEAM be revised to meet the needs of their setting. Even though teachers in alternative settings feel confident and set high expectations according to the Teacher Background section of TPTES, the teachers responding expected a better system more comparable to the national alternative standards. The TPTES was divided into five subscales: Perceptions; Plans for Professional Development; University Involvement in Growth; Overall Quality of TEAM; and Teacher Background. The local higher

education institutions were perceived as being in collaboration with alternative teachers about TEAM evaluation issues.

2. The perceived relationship concerning the connections to professional development   using the TEAM evaluation is not a significant factor with positive TEAM perceptions and outcomes.

3. Alternative teachers perceived that universities and teacher preparation programs are aware of the need to assist alternative teachers as they move forward with the TEAM evaluation, according to question ten of the TPTES at the level of significance (.001).

4. Even though universities are perceived to be involved in the teacher growth process, the higher education institutions have not significantly impacted alternative teacher perceptions of the TEAM evaluation.

The data from this study indicated that the alternative teachers' low perception of the TEAM can correlate with the overall utilization and teachers' perceptions of the professional growth opportunities provided. Glatthorn (1997) suggested that there must be a supportive, positive environment if professional development is going to be helpful.

This study has suggested that teachers need professional development and that a positive dialogue is needed between the evaluator and the teacher (Ebmeir, 2003). The role of the university in collaborative efforts has not been fully identified for alternative settings. Before evaluations such as TEAM can be of maximum value, the level of positive perceptions must be increased above 68%. Since the study revealed a significant relationship between perceptions and

university involvement in TEAM, the mechanism for raising alternative teachers'
perceptions in the alternative school is available.

Since the research has confirmed that teacher attitude is improved though the help
of local universities, the intellectual center for teachers at the College of Education could
become the training ground for a range of school-improvement and teacher continuing
education programs (Kerr, 2013). This study has suggested that TEAM evaluators and
alternative teachers can partner with universities (Keaster, 1995). My experience as
alternative teacher has confirmed that developing better alternative teachers with strong
self-confidence may be waiting in the pool of resources at the local universities.

Recommendations for Future Studies

One perception in this study is that the evidence suggests that professional
development and university involvement in teacher growth can increase the usefulness of
the TEAM evaluation. Correlational studies by other researchers such as Hill, Rowan,
and Ball (2005) suggested that better teaching practices did not necessarily improve
student outcomes. Furthermore, professional development according to research by
Darling-Hammond (2001) and Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, &
Orphanos (2009) should be on-going and focused on specific school improvement goals.
Without knowing more about the overall needs for specific alternative school settings, it
seems that professional development plans may not be based on the prioritized needs of
students.

Bunting (1999) indicated collegiality facilitated collaboration, team building,
school improvement, and professional development. Reflection, as part of the TEAM
process, allowed a teacher to constantly re-formulate his or her own teaching goals, either

individually or in a collegial manner. Life experiences provided a diverse and varied backdrop for professional discourse that might be initiated by higher education institutions with the assistance of local school districts. The professional discourse, conducted in a university setting, could allow new ideas to be generated.   In response to this need for collegiality, the University of Memphis, College of Education, conducted a "working collaboratively" workshop for educators in the local area on March 27, 2015.

Based on my 15 years of teaching in alternative settings, I have concluded that regular professional development programs recommended for teachers may not be able to meet the specialized needs of alternative teachers. Professional development activities must be different from those for regular teachers. Classroom management techniques, diversity training, and alternative instructional methods are some of the areas that are most often requested by Tennessee's alternative educators (TAEA, 2014). When in-service programs that are one-day training events focus on TEAM evaluations, alternative teachers experience an even greater gap in meeting basic educational needs. For example, my experience has led me to conclude that if in-service focuses on applying creative methodologies and technologies, alternative teachers in correctional settings are very limited due to high security requirements. My pilot study allowed me to gather comments from alternative teachers in search of a more supportive personal professional growth plan. A more detailed qualitative research method might help connect the follow up growth plan for alternative teachers to the overall improvement needs of specialized schools.

Further study is needed to see if the investment in the TEAM evaluation is generating better teachers and leading to bigger payoffs in alternative schools. In-

service training is not the same as on-going professional development; therefore, it seems that there could be a qualitative study conducted where university teacher preparation personnel invest in alternative districts, thus helping teachers move through a planned professional growth cycle.

Teachers must become directly involved in making decisions and crafting policies, especially when the decisions and policies involve the design and evaluation of curriculum and the assessment of student learning. To make this practice a reality, focused professional development must be provided for all teachers (Baker, Oluwole, & Green, 2013).

Since alternative teachers in this study reported a negative perception of the TEAM in specialized settings, a longitudinal study could be conducted focusing on alternative schools near one specific university such as Middle Tennessee State University or the University of Memphis where there are several alternative schools. Research has suggested that professional development is just one of the many tools needed to improve teacher practices and perceptions. Utilizing university teacher preparation professors and strengthening on-campus graduate programs in education might result from such a study.

Professional development is considered to be the primary means by which educators continually enhance their professional knowledge and practice (Guskey & Passaro, 1994). This study has confirmed other research studies indicating that alternative teachers believe that professional development is important and worthwhile. The results of this study indicate clear implications for all educators using TEAM for further professional development.

The state holds school districts accountable, and principals and other supervisors assess and evaluate the quality of the teaching in their school. It becomes the responsibility of the administrator to stretch the opportunities for professional growth. Since universities are in the business of teacher preparation, it appeared reasonable to assume that higher education institutions want to assist alternative educators in Tennessee. Regional universities should be contacted by TEAM evaluators in alternative settings so that additional opportunities are available to improve the quality of teaching in Tennessee.

Recommendations for Practice

There was a perceived disconnect reported between TEAM practices for alternative teachers and the professional development that is connected with teacher growth and better teaching practices. Tennessee public school teachers have been using the TEAM evaluation since 2010. The TCRED has reported successful results and overall high satisfaction in the public sector. However, in alternative schools approximately 68% of the teachers surveyed were not confident that TEAM had improved best teaching practices. The ability to increase alternative teachers' perceptions of TEAM through professional development should be addressed. Additionally, since each alternative school setting is unique, varying from a one-room teacher fits all model to a very specialized, behavioral classroom, my research was very generalized. Further practical studies might limit alternative settings only to correctional settings or to those settings only serving specifically challenged teens.

Administrators performing evaluations in alternative settings have a pool of knowledge waiting at local universities. Teacher preparation programs have been aligned

to match new TEAM standards, and collaborative research is ongoing. Future growth

plans for alternative teachers may include rubrics that connect the climate of the

classroom to signification situations in daily life.

Summary of Chapter 5

The literature confirmed that better teacher evaluation systems are needed in

Tennessee. Getting desirable student outcomes in alternative settings only comes through

motivating students to grow. Likewise, the administrators in alternative schools are

challenged to motivate teachers do their very best so that their abilities match the labor

market. Professional opportunities help the teachers grow and they in turn are able to

motivate others to excel. Regional university professors from Middle Tennessee State

University and University of Tennessee commented at a recent alternative education

conference that their school of education wanted to model good leadership and best

evaluation practices, thus enabling alternative teachers to move forward (TAEA, 2014).

Retaining qualified teachers and improving student learning has been an

emphasis of the *Race to Top* emphasis adopted using the TEAM evaluation. The

federal mandate of the 2002 *No Child Left Behind Act* has emphasized the

importance of improving education in Tennessee. Even though professional

development is expensive, alternative school teachers need to given extended

learning opportunities through collaborative efforts with the universities.

Research has suggested that collaborative teacher evaluation and professional

development opportunities can help improve the learning environment (Butt &

Lance, 2005).

Even though data from TCRED (July, 2012) has suggested that teachers across Tennessee are satisfied with TEAM, the alternative teachers in this study had some negative perceptions.

Teachers in alternative settings face unique problems and generally stick to practices that have worked over time. TEAM is relatively new as a method of evaluation and gradually the changes that are being implemented may bring further changes to professional development and evaluation in Tennessee's alternative settings. Unanswered implementation questions still remain concerning the value-added portion of the TEAM evaluation. However, addressing how the portion of the TEAM will be implemented remains to be discussed by the state legislators.

Final Thoughts

Tennessee schools are on the cutting edge of new teacher evaluation programs. Accountability has increased the demands for all educators, including those assigned to specialized alternative schools. Higher education institutions have adapted to meet the demands of local educators as they seek on-going growth. I embarked on this study to connect public education to alternative education as the TEAM was being introduced. Throughout this process since 2010, there has been an evolution of standards and the teacher evaluation growth process has changed for educators.

My research verified through the teacher background section of the TPTES that teachers take their work very seriously. In fact, since the TEAM process began in 2010, modifications have been made through the TDOE and the

State Legislature that assist teachers in meeting higher standards. Positive

perceptions of TEAM should continue to grow as alternative teachers connect

with better teaching practices in their settings.

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Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

1. I understand the purpose of this research is to empirically determine the level of confidence and understanding of the new TEAM evaluation for teachers in alternative education settings such as prisons, alternative schools, juvenile detention, etc.

2. I understand that my participation is totally voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits and I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. Also I may terminate the survey at any time that I desire. No names will be used thereby insuring that my identification and all information will be handled in the strictest of confidence. I will be allowed the opportunity to complete the survey in a setting that is convenient to me and in which I am comfortable.

3. I understand the survey instrument that I have been asked to complete is a survey based on a six point Likert-type scale. This survey seeks reactions to the TEAM evaluation for professional teachers. I further understand that I will be asked to complete a simple demographics survey which in no way may be used to identify any individual participant within the scope of this research. I understand the total amount of time required to complete the survey should be approximately fifteen-twenty minutes.

4. I further understand that the researcher will be surveying all teachers in Corrections, known alternative schools, and other alternative settings in Tennessee. I understand that in no case will the research reveal my identity, or identifying information to anyone within my school district or anywhere else. It is my understanding that during this research, my identity, responses, school district and identifying information will be kept in the strictest confidence.

5. I understand that my cooperation may benefit administrators and policy-makers comprehension of the TEAM evaluation (or other approved models) and will be of personal benefit only as it relates to better understanding of this research project and its completion.

6. I understand that I may choose not to respond to a particular question (by marking #6) if it makes me feel uneasy in any way.

7. I am aware that a summary of the results of this study will be made available to me at the completion of the research if I so desire.

8. I fully acknowledge that I am in receipt of a copy of the informed consent form.

9. I wish to cooperate voluntarily as a participant.

10. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and that my identification will be kept hidden. I understand that no names will be used in the research report and that upon completion of the research, individual survey instruments will be maintained in a secure location for a period of three years and then destroyed.

11. I understand that the primary and only researcher, Dale Mathis, will be the only person who will have access to the identities of each of the participants and identifying information. No instructor or administrator will have access to the surveys or the identities of the participants at any time. The strictest of confidentiality will be maintained and access regarding the true identities of participants providing information is limited to this researcher only.

12. I understand that for any questions about the study or my involvement, I can
        contact: Dale Mathis
                            P O Box 494
                            Gleason, Tn 38229-0494
                    work email: dale.v.mathis@tn.gov
                    home email: dr_mathis2000@yahoo.com
        I can contact the Institutional Review Board, University of Memphis, If I have
questions regarding my rights as a research participant at:

                    IRB Administrator
                    Research Support Services
                    University of Memphis
                315 Admin Bldg
                Memphis, TN 38152-3370

I give my consent to participate, and understand that I am completely free to withdraw my
consent and discontinue participation at any time. By completing this survey and returning it,
you consent to participate in this research.

Signature of the researcher/investigator: *Dr. Dale Mathis*
Date: September 15, 2014

_____

Appendix B

TEAM Rating Categories for Evaluation

Planning   **(1 to 5 scores are used here)**

                                                        Observer Score   Self Score

Instructional Plans (IP)
Student Work (SW)
Assessment (AS)

Environment

                                                        Observer Score   Self Score

Expectations (ES)
Managing Student Behavior (MSB)
Environment (ENV)
Respectful Culture (RC)

Instruction   Observer Score   Self Score

Standards and Objectives (SO)
Motivating Students (MOT)
Presenting Instructional Content (PIC)
Lesson Structure and Pacing (LS)
Activities and Materials (ACT)
Questioning (QU)
Academic Feedback (FEED)
Grouping Students (GRP)
Teacher Content Knowledge (TCK)
Teacher Knowledge of Students (TKS)
Thinking (TH)
Problem Solving (PS)

- This information was adapted from the TEAM Observer Manual

- The TEAM also has an extensive professional attributes rating scale

Appendix C
Cover Letter

Dale V. Mathis
TN. Dept. of Corrections
Tiptonville, TN. 38079
731 648-0042
Dale.v.mathis@tn.gov

Dear Participating Teacher,
I am a doctoral student at the University of Memphis and am completing a dissertation with the HIAD Department. I am requesting your assistance in a study examining the relationship between teacher evaluation practices and teacher professional development opportunities in your district. Your responses will provide data that will assist educational leaders related to teacher evaluation practices.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may stop at any time during the study. Completion and return of the survey signifies your informed consent. Every licensed teacher in your school will be asked to participate in the study. All data collected will be confidential and all individual rights and privacies will be protected. The findings of the study will be compiled in aggregate form and distributed as anonymous data in summary.

To participate in the study you are being asked to complete the attached survey instrument. If you are willing to participate, please complete TEAM survey and return them in the provided stamped envelope by October 10, 2014. If you have specific questions or want additional information about the survey instrument, please contact me at the address, phone number or email listed above.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

Dale V. Mathis, doctoral student

TEAM PROFESSIONAL TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY (TPTES)

Guide: Mark only one   1 Negative   2   3   4   5 Positive   6

1=strongly disagree/not helpful   2=disagree/not very important   3= neither agree/disagree   4=slight agreement/helpful somewhat 5=highly agree/very helpful 6=not applicable /No Response (NR)

Perception of the TEAM evaluation

1. How confident are you that the current teaching evaluation approach

    accurately measures teaching effectiveness?   1   2   3   4   5   6

2. To what extent does the evaluation help the teacher communicate

    clear expectations for achievement and behavior that promote and

    encourage self-discipline and self-directed learning?

                                                      1   2   3   4   5   6

3. To what extent does the evaluation allow the teacher to provide

    support to achieve a positive, equitable, and engaging

    learning environment?   1   2   3   4   5   6

4. To what extent is this evaluation system able to assist the school

    and teachers in implementing varied instruction that integrates

    critical thinking, inquiry, and problem solving? 1   2   3   4   5   6

5. Is the number of standards or elements an observer is expected

    to evaluate manageable for the teacher? 1   2   3   4   5   6

Professional development and the TEAM evaluation

6. To what extent does the TEAM evaluation provide feedback leading

    to a professional development plan?   1   2   3   4   5   6

7. The TEAM evaluation provided specific training recommendations for

    further growth & advancement as a teacher.1   2   3   4   5   6

8. To what extent is this teacher evaluation process able to provide quality

    and timely feedback to the educator or those providing PD in higher education?

                                                    1   2   3   4   5   6

9. TEAM provided specific recommendations for ongoing professional development

    related to managing student behavior more effectively.

                                                    1   2   3   4   5   6

Professional development possibilities using TEAM through local universities

10. My local Tennessee university or teacher preparation university provides

    continuing training and opportunities based on the criteria of TEAM

                                                    1   2   3   4   5   6

11. The local higher education institution is involved in professional development

    research and contacts local teachers about TEAM evaluation issues.

                                                    1   2   3   4   5   6

12. There is a university nearby that provides a link to the opportunities and

    continuing education in such areas as behavior issues for teachers in specialized

    or alternative settings.   1   2   3   4   5   6

13. Higher education institutions have helped me to facilitate practices and to

    study my teaching practices using TEAM in a proactive manner.

                                                    1   2   3   4   5   6

14. TEAM offered specific in-service or PD recommendations for grouping students

    for an improved learning environment.   1   2   3   4   5   6

15. Based on the results of TEAM, professional growth opportunities were individually

     designed for alternative or specialized settings1   2   3   4   5   6

16. In-service or professional development opportunities are generic and do not

     address the scoring rubrics of TEAM   1   2   3   4   5   6

Overall summary

17. Professional Development and the TEAM help me develop verbal techniques and

     become more creative in my teaching   1   2   3   4   5   6

18. TEAM assisted & provided suggestions that assisted me in integrating the

     arts into alternative or specialized settings1   2   3   4   5   6

19. TEAM offered suggestions for Professional development and Growth that

     deal with classroom management and a safe school environment.

                                            1   2   3   4   5   6

20. My personal rating of the overall quality of the TEAM evaluation.

                                            1   2   3   4   5   6

Demographc information   * NR   no response

Highest education level attained:

 Bachelors___   Masters___   Masters Plus___   Educ.Specialist___   Doctorate___

Sex   Male___   Female___   No response (NR)___

Ethnic Origin

   White___   African American___   Asian___   Hispanic___   Other___   NR___

Primary age of the students you teach

   Under 17___   ages 18-25___   ages 25-35___   over 35___   NR___

Teacher background

Describe yourself in relation to the following rating attributes on a scale of 1-5

A. The strength of your professional expectations for yourself

   I demand a little   1   2   3   4   5   I demand a great deal   NR___

B.   Orientation to change and experimentation in your classroom   (change factor)

   I don't experiment   1   2   3   4   5   I experiment frequently NR___

C.   Knowledge of the technical aspects of teaching

   I know a little   1   2   3   4   5   I know a great deal   NR___

D.   Experience with teacher evaluation prior to the

   most recent experience with TEAM

   Waste of time or none 1   2   3   4   5   Very helpful   NR___

TEAM Process

E.   Following TEAM evaluation observations, meetings with

   the evaluator were held & discussions held

   Not considered(held) 1 2 3 4 5   Used extensively   NR___

F. Examination of artifacts (lesson plans, materials,

home/school communication, PD plans)

   Not considered(viewed) 1 2 3 4 5 Used extensively   NR___

G. Specificity of information provided by evaluation

   Broad (General)   1   2 3 4   5 Specific   NR ___

H. Nature of the TEAM information provided

   Judgmental   1   2   3 4 5   Descriptive   NR ____

Other details

If   the TEAM (Tennessee Evaluation Acceleration Model) is not used locally,

what form of approved performance evaluation issued by our school and/or district

_____ (i.e. Framework, TIGER, etc)_____

   If you have questions you may contact me by email or phone the researcher

Dale.v.mathis@tn.gov   or   dr_mathis2000@yahoo.com   (731)648-0042

Appendix E

Research approval letter from IRB

PI NAME: Dale Mathis
CO-PI:
PROJECT TITLE: TEAM evaluations in alternative settings
FACULTY ADVISOR NAME (if applicable): Jeffery Wilson
IRB ID: #2432
APPROVAL DATE: 1/25/2013
EXPIRATION DATE:
LEVEL OF REVIEW: Exempt

Please Note: Modifications do not extend the expiration of the original approval

Approval of this project is given with the following obligations:

1. If this IRB approval has an expiration date, an approved renewal must be in effect to continue the project prior to that date. If approval is not obtained, the human consent form(s) and recruiting material(s) are no longer valid and any research activities involving human subjects must stop.

2. When the project is finished or terminated, a completion form must be completed and sent to the board.

3. No change may be made in the approved protocol without prior board approval, whether the approved protocol was reviewed at the Exempt, Expedited or Full Board level.

4. Exempt approval are considered to have no expiration date.