

**EVALUATING TEACHERS USING STUDENT GROWTH MEASURES: IMPACT ON
TRUST AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE**

A Dissertation by

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I dedicated this to my family and friends; without the support of these amazing people, this dissertation would not have been possible

“It always seems impossible until it’s done.” –Nelson Mandela

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the inclusion of student growth measures in the teacher evaluation process may alter teacher's perceptions of the trust relationship with building level administrators and influence changes in classroom practices. A theoretical frame built around the five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness was used as the lens to inform the research questions. Participants were purposefully selected by their years of experience, grade level and content teaching assignments and employment at one of the three selected high schools chosen in the study. Findings indicate benevolence and reliability were two facets of trust that were most important in building or destroying trust. For teachers with a solid trust relationship with their evaluating administrator, the uncertainties about the inclusion of student growth measures to the evaluation process was mitigated by the perception teachers had that the administrator would look out for their best interest and knew multiple factors would be taken into consideration. For those with low levels or no trust, the inclusion of student growth measures created behaviors of self-preservation and concern about the intentions of the administration. Student growth measures added to the evaluation process has been promoted as a way to improve teacher performance, teachers had differing views on how it would influence practices including unintended consequences.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Empirical studies have found high levels of trust among school faculty to be conducive to improvements in the academic performance of students (Adams, 2008; Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams, 2006; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Improved performance has been attributed to an atmosphere of collaboration, collective ownership, and problem-solving found in schools where teachers and administrators trust and depend on each other for doing what is necessary and right (Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2009).

This is an important consideration in the current reform environment, including questionable use of data to evaluate the performance of teachers, changing curriculum standards, new state assessments, cuts in school funding, and legislative changes to teacher rights. Factors outside the administrator's control such as policy changes may influence teacher perceptions about administrators. As a result, teachers may view administrators as incompetent, dishonest, uncaring, and unreliable. All of these qualities are important in the development or erosion of trust (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). The decline in trust increases an environment of self-preservation and caution (Gambetta, 2000). This situation makes it less likely a teacher will take professional risks to improve performance (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006; Price, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). The value of collegial relationships as it relates to trust is difficult to measure, yet high trust environments enhance and improve reform efforts (Adams, 2013; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Ensley, 2014; Forsyth et al., 2006; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Tschannen-Moran

& Hoy, 1998). If the goal of reform efforts is to improve student academic achievement by focusing on teacher quality, the role of trust is a factor worth considering.

1.1.1 Educational Policy Focus on Teacher Performance

The present educational reform cycle attributes the poor progress of American public schools to ineffective teachers (E. Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Eppley, 2009). For example, the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act (ESEA) Waiver and Race to the Top (RTTT) grant requirements reflect this reasoning by using student growth measures on standardized tests to assess an individual teacher's effect on student achievement. The data are to be used as a "significant" factor in the teacher evaluation process. Both the waiver and grant describe the purpose of these reformulated teacher evaluations as guides for selecting what kinds of professional development to provide, retaining and rewarding effective teachers, and removing ineffective ones. Additionally, both the waiver and grant encourage state legislators to change statutes and regulations that inhibit the removal of ineffective teachers (United States Department of Education, 2012). U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan explained the premise behind the RTTT grant's requirement on teacher evaluation procedures to teachers at a National Education Association Conference. He stated the current evaluation system is flawed and children are the ones suffering. Good teachers are not being rewarded, struggling teachers are not being helped, and poor teachers continue to teach. All of which are damaging the profession of teaching (Duncan 2009).

In terms of school reform, the focus on an individual teacher's contribution to student achievement represents a notable shift from No Child Left Behind ([NCLB], 2002) that instead concentrated on evaluating overall school quality by assessing the academic performance of designated student sub-groups in a school (United States Department of Education, 2002). This

evaluation rubric, known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), was calculated from the aggregated performance benchmarks earned by different student cohort groups on standardized tests administered in a given academic year, an approach known as a status model of measurement (Betebenner, 2009). Evidence gathered in recent years has shown NCLB reform efforts fell short of expectations. NCLB did not develop the competitive marketplace between schools policymakers had envisioned nor did it close racial, ethnic, or social class achievement gaps (Aske, Connolly, & Corman, 2013; Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2006; Houston, 2007; Hursh, 2007; Labaree, 2010; Rothstein, 2004; Wallis & Steptoe, 2007). Yet, by using student growth measures to determine teacher quality, the flawed data used to guide NCLB reforms are again being applied, only in a slightly different manner.

A teacher's effect on student achievement as measured by standardized assessments is difficult to determine with a high degree of accuracy. Out-of-school influences affect student academics gains in positive or negative ways. Factors such as socio-economics, family status, health issues, mobility, cognitive ability, English language acquisition, loss of skills over the summer, previous teachers, and curriculum alignment, among others, are all outside a teacher's immediate control. Issues resulting in negative academic outcomes are hard to overcome in one school year, even by the best teachers (Barile et al., 2012; Braun, 2005; Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 1999; Johnson et al., 2012; Labaree, 2010; Pil & Leana, 2009; Pina-Neves, Faria, & Raty, 2013; Posner & Vandell, 1999; Quintero, 2014; Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013; Rothstein, 2004; Rumberger & Palardy, 2005; Steinberg, 1988). With so many variables influencing student academic performance lying outside of a teacher's control, how can a standardized assessment be a valid measure of a teacher's effect on students' academic gains in a given year? Using assessment data that inaccurately reflect a teacher's performance

compromises the competency and integrity of the administration using the data to make performance decisions. Adams (2008) found that teachers work harder to improve student performance in environments predicated on trust. The likelihood that mistrust will weaken these new teacher performance instruments does not bode well for increasing teacher motivation or improving classroom performance. Exacerbating teachers' potential loss of trust in educational policy is the inclusion of unreliable data to the teacher evaluation system.

1.1.2 Valued-Added and Student Growth Measures: A Statistical Model

To improve validity concerns with student assessment data used in teacher evaluations, a statistical model, known as valued-added models (VAM) or student growth measures (SGM) (these terms will be used interchangeably), was developed by William Sanders to determine the effect a single teacher has on a student's academic gains (Braun, 2005). The model tracks individual student performance data for several years in different subjects to evaluate the relative contributions made by different teachers. Individual student performance data are evaluated against district totals, class totals, previous teacher effect, and anticipated growth rates to generate a composite "teacher effect" score (Braun, 2005). Different states have developed variations of the model but the premise is the same.

Viewed as an improvement from an exclusive reliance on unadulterated student assessment data, reliability and validity issues plague this approach (E. Baker et al., 2010; Berliner, 2014). The Educational Testing Service (ETS) Policy Information Center concluded that insufficient knowledge about technical problems threatened the validity of value-added model data. They recommend not making consequential decisions about teachers using growth data (E. Baker et al., 2010; Braun, 2005). Despite the obvious flaws in the VAM model, educational policy makers, state departments of education, and school districts under their

purview are increasingly adopting this method into their evaluation process as a way of assessing teacher quality.

1.1.3 Kansas' Approach to Implementation of the Teacher Evaluation System

Each state has the flexibility to develop reform efforts that meet the requirements of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver and RTTT grant. The waiver application submitted by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) addresses the teacher evaluation requirement by allowing individual districts to choose an approved evaluation tool or use the state recommended evaluation system, known as the Kansas Educator Evaluation Protocol (KEEP) (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014b). According to KSDE, 80 school districts used the KEEP evaluation tool during the 2014-2015 academic year. One hundred and three districts selected the Mid-Continent Education Research Laboratory (McRel) tool, 48 used the Southwest Plains Regional Service Centers e4E model, and 51 selected locally developed evaluation models. The remaining 23 districts chose other instruments: Danielson (10), Marzano (3), Greenbush Service Center evaluation tool (8), OASYS (1) and TCAS (1) (Kansas State Department of Education, 2015a). Each tool incorporates the required student growth measures component; however, the significant factor requirement (a vague metric not clearly defined at the state or federal level), varies among districts. Some districts weight SGM as 30% of the overall evaluation score whereas others weight the assessment data at 50% of the overall evaluation score. The variation in weighting, the ambiguous meaning of “significant,” issues with SGM data, along with other issues, may influence the trust teachers perceive in the evaluation process and thus the trust relationship they share with the administrators completing the evaluations.

1.2 Research Problem

National and state policy makers are acting on the premise that an evaluation system that calculates growth in student standardized tests scores can isolate the academic “effect” created by a single teacher in a given year. Moreover, this effect is deemed stable enough to mandate its use in the evaluation process and make high stakes decisions that reward or dismiss teachers according to their presumed pedagogical capacity to raise an individual student’s academic performance (E. Baker et al., 2010). In this latest embodiment of evidence-based school reform, legislation directly linking teacher performance to student academic performance is being implemented across the country (Duncan, 2009; Hazi & Rucinski, 2009; Kansas State Department of Education, 2014b; United States Department of Education, 2009, 2012). As of this writing, states have already adopted student growth measures as a key metric in judging teacher quality (Brown, 2015; Gill, English, Furgeson, & McCullough, 2014; Lacireno-Paquet, Morgan, & Mello, 2014; Lynn, 2013).

There is no debate among educational researchers about the importance of improving teacher quality. Johnson et al., (2012) found that a teacher is the most influential school level factor influencing student academic growth. For this reason, teacher evaluations are an important component of the process guiding instructional improvement and providing performance feedback aimed at strengthening a teacher’s ability to provide classroom learning that meets the needs of all students (DeMitchell, DeMitchell, & Gagnon, 2012).

The problem stems from federal and state policies that now require the inclusion of student growth data in teacher evaluation systems. This requirement flies in the face of research that questions the stability of the data used to generate student growth scores for determining the

teacher effect and making high-stakes decisions related to job performance (B. Baker, Oluwole, & Green, 2013; E. Baker et al., 2010; Braun, 2005; DeMitchell et al., 2012). Despite refinement to the statistical models (VAM or SGM) such as aggregating several years of student growth data instead of just one or two, reliability and validity concerns remain (American Statistical Association, 2014; E. Baker et al., 2010; Braun, 2005; Steinbrecher, Selig, Cosby, & Thorstensen, 2014).

With the advent of the 2014-2015 academic year, Kansas education policy stipulated the use of student growth data in teacher evaluation systems. This policy shift from whole-school assessment to individual teacher assessment of student academic growth runs the risk of changing teachers' perceptions of the trust relationships shared with building-level administrators, school district personnel, and other educational decision makers. The change in perception may subsequently influence teacher classroom practices. Johnson's et al., (2012) study found that collegial relationships and principal leadership were strong factors influencing teacher performance. Given the association between teacher-principal collegiality and teacher performance in the classroom, it is important to observe the consequences of including SGM in the teacher evaluation process, as this new generation of evaluations is being touted as a trustworthy indicator of teacher performance on student academic achievement. Although better quality teacher performance is the ultimate goal, the policy may generate unintended consequences that will actually work to undermine the effectiveness of the reform effort.

1.3 Theoretical Framework: Foundational Aspects of Trust

While trust is a complex concept to articulate, it serves as the foundation for relationships predicated on collaboration and communication (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Attempts to define trust and operationalize its more theoretical components led Gambetta (2000) to expand

on previous definitions by explaining that trust is the likelihood that one will execute an action perceived as mutually beneficial or achieve a favorable outcome for both parties. Engaging in a trust relationship is a cooperative activity that can be thought of in terms of risk versus reward with another person (Deutsch, 1958).

The teacher evaluation process is an example of a cooperative activity in which the trust relationship has the potential to strengthen or weaken the process and outcomes. The understandings and expectations held by a teacher and administrator toward a present-day trust relationship, especially in terms of the evaluation process, are rooted in past interactions (Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005). It is possible to arrange these prior trust experiences along a continuum marked by a series of increasingly favorable or unfavorable conditions. On a scale of zero to five, full trust would be a five while the absence of trust, or distrust, would be zero (Gambetta, 2000). The level of trust determines the amount of risk either party exhibits toward the evaluation process. Given the nearly countless number of permutations falling between the extremes of full trust and distrust, a teacher-administrator trust relationship is no simple affair. It is the complex product of large and small interactions ranging from the efficacy of classroom management techniques to personal issues involving illness or disruptive family situations. By its very nature, trust is multifaceted and subject to a host of internal and external influences.

Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) extensively reviewed four decades of literature in the area of trust and identified five common facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. In a teacher-administrator relationship, the five conditions of trust establish the context within which each individual determines their willingness to work cooperatively in carrying out the formal teacher evaluation process. A trust relationship becomes more complicated when exogenous policy mandates, such as the KSDE's requirement to include

student growth measures in the teacher evaluation process, influence the capacity of both the teacher and supervising administrator to behave in a manner deemed beneficial and ethical by the other.

1.3.1 Facets of Trust

The most fundamental facet of trust is benevolence. Benevolence is the perception of care shown along with the consideration of the best interest towards another (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). As it applies to the teacher evaluation process, benevolence is present if the teacher believes the evaluating administrator is acting with good will and in the best interest of the teacher. Teachers who believe an administrator is behaving in a benevolent manner are more likely to develop a level of comfort and be receptive to constructive feedback (Adams, 2013; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Shaubroeck, Peng, & Hannah, 2013). However, when mitigating external factors potentially influence the actions of another, such as with the Kansas educational policy requiring the inclusion of student growth data in teacher evaluations, the capacity for a teacher and administrator to develop a benevolent relationship may be altered or diminished.

Hoy and Tschannen (1999) identified reliability as another facet of trust. Reliability develops over time and depends on benevolence. If a teacher can anticipate the future actions of her administrator based on their history of previous interactions and is confident with the ability of the administrator to follow through with commitments and promises, then a level of reliability is established (Bird, Wang, Watson, & Murray, 2009). Similarly, when previous interactions convince an administrator she safely can rely on the future actions of a particular teacher, their level of trust is strengthened.

Competence is a third facet of trust. The level of skill exhibited by each party is a prime determinant of competence (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). If an administrator shows weak ability in administrative tasks despite caring about his teachers and demonstrates poor reliability skills, the level of trust diminishes. In the Kansas teacher evaluation process that now includes student growth data, if an administrator is unaware how student assessment scores are calculated and used in the evaluation, the teacher may become concerned about the administrator's level of competence. Handford and Leithwood (2013) found that teachers rank administrative competence as the most significant factor in determining credibility. A teacher who views an administrator as incompetent is less likely to engage in the recommended suggestions for improvement noted in the evaluation process.

Honesty and openness are the final facets of trust identified by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999). Honesty attests to integrity (Deutsch, 1958). The ability to be genuine, accept responsibility, and communicate with truthfulness each demonstrates a capacity for honesty. Openness is a reciprocal action that relies on both participants sharing information in a straightforward exchange; nothing is withheld and information is not exploited for personal gain. Administrators and teachers either gain something valuable together or lose something valuable. Participants are mutually dependent and neither moves closer to achieving their professional goals without the knowledge and assent of the other. The teacher evaluation process relies heavily on openness. If neither party is willing to be honest and open with the other, suspicion is aroused and questions about motives may surface. Being open and honest about policy changes and the potential ramifications for teachers is an example of how administrators demonstrate this trust facet and indicate to teachers they are a valued part of a problem solving team (Handford & Leithwood, 2013).

When people work closely with each other, have regular interactions, and share common goals such as teaching and learning, there is a greater likelihood of establishing a trust relationship. Bryk and Schneider (1996) found trust to be a relevant framework for studying the relationships of stakeholders in the organizational structure of schools. Schools are social entities that rely heavily on the relationships of all stakeholders to achieve goals (Evans, 1996). Building administrators need to have implicit trust in classroom teachers who prepare the lessons that address student academic needs. Teachers need to trust administrators to provide support and guide staff toward common goals and the completion of honest, fair evaluations. In school organizations structured around trust, members can depend on the relationships of the school community during stressful events or changes (Adams, 2008; Louis, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).

In this study, I applied the five facets of trust in a theoretical framework to examine the potential effects that may result from external policies influencing the teacher evaluation process. In particular, I investigated how the inclusion of student growth measures potentially alters the dynamics of the teacher-administrator trust relationship in three high schools with heterogeneous student populations (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). Teachers and building administrators have to navigate through the factors influencing the teacher evaluation process and understand the obligations each must fulfill to make the process meaningful. For example, trust may be impacted by the dissemination of knowledge about the teacher evaluation policies and procedures, the ends toward which student growth data are used, and the perception of trustworthiness within the organization (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). If teachers or administrators feel betrayed, observe a decline in care, or hear a comment that creates insecurity

or violates expectations, then the trust relationship between teacher and administrator is at risk of damage (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).

Empirical research in the area of trust in schools has established that trust between principal and teacher can be an influential factor in the academic performance of students (Adams, 2013; Blomeke & Klein, 2013; Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Forsyth et al., 2006; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Price, 2012; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Assessing teachers using the kinds of unreliable data derived from student growth measures may detrimentally tip the balance of trust between teachers and administrators. If the goal of teacher evaluations using student growth measures is to improve academic outcomes through improved teacher performance, then the effect the process has on trust is worthy of investigation.

1.4 Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the inclusion of student growth measures in the teacher evaluation process may alter teacher's perceptions of the trust relationship with building level administrators. I intended to examine teacher perspectives of the trust relationship between teachers and administrators through a theoretical frame built around the five facets of trust described in the theoretical framework: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. Moreover, I hoped to gather information on changes in classroom practices and if possible, relate them to the implementation of Kansas' new teacher evaluation process. The following research questions were used to inform this study:

1. How do teachers describe the nature of their trust relationship with administration prior to the introduction of student growth data?

2. How has the mandated inclusion of student growth data in the teacher evaluation process affected teacher trust in administration?

3. How have teachers changed their classroom practices in response to the mandated inclusion of student growth data in the teacher evaluation process?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Across the country, administrators work hard to develop schools with high quality instruction provided by caring competent teachers in an environment conducive for student learning. The way teachers are determined to be effective is changing as pressure to target teacher performance as a reform strategy to improve student performance has become the focus of legislative action. Public and political forces have led to federal incentives for states to change the teacher and administrative evaluation process to include standardized test scores using academic growth of individual students as a significant measure of effectiveness (E. Baker et al., 2010; Kansas State Department of Education, 2014b; United States Department of Education, 2014).

The public and political focus on improving schools is not a new phenomenon. The *Nation at Risk* report from 1983 ascertained teaching and learning were in peril and needed to be overhauled. It further indicated that students were receiving a watered down education and the teachers providing the instruction were being drawn from “the bottom quarter of graduating high school and college students” receiving little professional training in subject matter courses (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In 2002, NCLB legislation addressed the issues of under qualified teachers, by requiring teachers in core content areas be highly qualified (United States Department of Education, 2005).

To be considered highly qualified, teachers must have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification or licensure, and demonstrate knowledge of subject areas taught. In order to demonstrate competency teachers have to earn enough college credits in the taught content, pass

a standardized test approved by the state in each content area taught, or meet the requirements in the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) rubric. The rubric was established to help schools and existing staff meet the NCLB highly qualified requirement by the 2006 deadline (No Child Left Behind, 2002).

Although improving teacher quality was part of NCLB, the legislation also targeted school performance by implementing high stakes testing to evaluate schools based on collective individual student performance with the goal of improving the achievement gap between low-socio-economics and race by 2014 (E. Baker et al., 2010; United States Department of Education, 2002). NCLB catapulted the era of standards-based reform efforts to the next level by increasing school accountability based on student proficiency rates on approved standardized assessment scores. The policy asserted that competition between schools would improve teaching and learning and close the achievement gap (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Eppley, 2009).

2.1 Post NCLB: ESEA Flexibility Waiver and Race to the Top

The data post-NCLB has indicated the use of high stakes tests to evaluate schools did not improve the achievement gap (Labaree, 2010; Rothstein, 2004). At the time of this study, legislative efforts to reform NCLB had failed to pass and ESEA-NCLB had yet to be re-authorized or replaced. With the knowledge that the NCLB goal for all schools to reach 100% proficiency in math and reading by 2014 was looming and the goal would not be reached, politicians and the United States Secretary of Education unveiled a path for states to earn a waiver from the NCLB requirements (McAndrews, 2013). The path was a voluntary application for an ESEA Flexibility Waiver requiring states to develop a plan addressing four principles. The first was to provide college and career ready standards programs for all students.

Developing ways to differentiate between low and high performing schools, address accountability, and support for closing the gaps between student groups was the second principle. The third was to adopt guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluations as a way to improve student achievement and the quality of classroom instruction, and the fourth principle was to reduce duplication and unnecessary burdens (United States Department of Education, 2013a).

Additionally, states could apply for RTTT grant money if they developed reform efforts addressing four areas. Adopting standards and assessments to prepare students for college, developing data systems to monitor student growth, developing teacher evaluation systems using student growth data to make personnel decisions, and turn around low performing schools are the target initiatives (United States Department of Education, 2013b). States awarded RTTT grants earned the most points on a scoring rubric that weighed the teacher evaluation plan as the heaviest portion of the grant.

2.2 Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluations provide some measure of job performance. The method used is varied and comes from one of two theoretical backgrounds: economic or psychological (Firestone, 2014). Current educational reform policies concentrate on economic theory with extrinsic motivations. Evaluation systems that focus on performance pay, tenure, rewards, and punishment fall under this umbrella. The premise of these types of systems assumes that teachers will respond to factors that provide extrinsic motivation (Firestone, 2014). In this case, teachers earn the incentives by producing increased measurable outcomes in the form of standardized test scores showing student growth. The ideals in the economic theory of evaluation are mirrored in the RTTT grant requirements pushing states to implement evaluation

systems that use quantitative data to reward, retain, promote, and remove teachers (Eppley, 2009; Lavigne, 2013; United States Department of Education, 2013b).

The second theory based on psychology, focuses on teacher evaluation as a way to improve intrinsic motivation. The purpose of the evaluation in a system such as this is to improve teachers through capacity building, professional development, and regular feedback (Firestone, 2014). Teachers who develop strong self-efficacy show increased motivation and commitment. Providing professional development and a collegial work environment help build the capacity of self-efficacy (Adams, 2008; Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Forsyth et al., 2006). A psychological based evaluation system requires a trust relationship with the evaluator and must happen in a timely manner to improve instruction (Firestone, 2014).

2.3 Summative and Formative Teacher Evaluations

These two fields of thought can be categorized as summative (accountability) and formative (teacher improvement) (Benedict, Thomas, Kimerling, & Leko, 2013). There are commonly six types of evaluation tools used which combine summative and formative factors. The first is an observation checklist that provides the evaluator with a list of standards that must be observed and evaluated and typically are marked by performance categories such as non-proficient, proficient, exceeds standards. Peer reviews are a method of evaluation completed by peer teachers or instructional coaches. Portfolios to demonstrate performance is another evaluation tool where teachers collect artifacts that meet a set of criteria. Standards evaluations require teachers to demonstrate proficiency on a set of established benchmarks. The Danielson (2011) framework is a popular tool used that evaluates teachers in four areas, planning, classroom management, instruction, and professionalism. The sixth method used and currently a popular method of evaluation is value-added modeling. This system uses statistical data as a

way to isolate the effect a teacher has on student achievement gained over the course of a school term (Benedict et al., 2013).

Evaluations can and should be a tool to promote and improve teaching and learning. Evaluation data used to reflect on building and individual professional growth can be a powerful form of school improvement. The struggle becomes adopting a quality tool, ensuring teachers and administrators are clear about the expectations and measurements used, consistent implementation, and meaningful feedback given to teachers (Maslow & Kelley, 2012; Papay, 2012).

2.5 Value-Added Modeling and Student Growth Measures

Value-added modeling, also known as student growth measures, is a statistical evaluation of student growth using standardized test scores in reading and math. William Sanders, a statistician at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, developed the system to help remove bias from the evaluation process. He did not include student characteristics as a factor because he did not see them as a mitigating factor (Braun, 2005). Originally known as the Educational Value-Added Assessment System, the process took five years of individual assessment data to determine the average growth rate. A district average for each grade level and year was developed. The data was compared to individual classroom averages to then subtract out and identify the amount of “effect” imposed by a teacher. The teacher effect rating was a number devised from the difference between the expected gains and the average gains achieved. This system has been in effect in Tennessee since 1993 with variations developed by a few other states (Braun, 2005).

VAM is considered an evaluation model that can isolate the effect teachers have on student achievement (Scherrer, 2011). In theory, VAM removes subjectivity and imposes a

higher level of accountability by creating a more equitable evaluation of a teacher's performance than assessment scores alone (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012; B. Baker et al., 2013; Lincove, Osborne, Dillon, & Mills, 2014).

2.4.1 Concerns with VAM

Concerns with the use of VAM are numerous and raised questions about the validity and reliability of the data. The model assumes that all students have the same academic goals, that each receives the same teaching methods and does not account for individual learning differences (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012). Validity of the assessments used in the VAM process is also questionable. Most state assessments are designed to test the proficiency rate of students against state standards, and are at best indirect measures of teacher quality (Dietel, 2011). Most of the tests are multiple choice limiting the scope and span. In order for a test to be feasible in a school setting, some standards are not tested while others are given one or two questions tested questioning the validity of the items (American Statistical Association, 2014). For teachers aware of this fact, teaching to the tested indicators instead of the full scope of the standards will influence student test scores.

The tests given to students are not the same assessments each year. The tests change based on the spiraling of concepts and standards as student progress through school. The difficulty of the tests increase each year as students are moved from knowledge based regurgitation to application and analysis of concepts (Lynn, 2013). In addition to test design and instructional methods, factors not measured but are significant to student achievement on tests include classroom environment, availability of resources, school policies, and school design models (Berliner, 2014; Braun, 2005).

Other VAM concerns identified included the difficulty controlling for achievement gained prior to the start of school. Children taken on family vacations gain experiences and knowledge that can improve academic outcomes, while those sitting at home may lose skills. Children provided with tutoring outside of school are given additional learning time and instruction students without tutors cannot access. Family support is another factor not considered by VAM. Some students have parents who will read to them, take them to summer library programs, and practice math skills, all effects that will result in academic gains not attributed to a teacher (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012; B. Baker et al., 2013; E. Baker et al., 2010; Berliner, 2014; DeMitchell et al., 2012; Scherrer, 2011).

VAM does not establish a valid criterion of an effective teacher. Stronge, Ward, and Grant (2011) stated “effectiveness is an elusive concept to define, when we consider the complex task of teaching and the multiple contexts in which teachers work.” (p. 340). Determining a teacher’s effectiveness based on a narrow set of quantitative criteria fails to acknowledge other qualities necessary for teachers to assist students with the attainment of skills in a school setting. In a study completed by Range, Duncan, Scherz, and Haines (2012) evaluating school leader’s perceptions about incompetent teachers, he found from his participants that poor teacher performance may be an indication of many factors, not just inadequate pupil test scores. The consistency of research on VAM, definitions about what constitutes an effective teacher, and what administrators determine as effective are often contradictory. Whatever the differences, building administrators must find a way to comply with teacher evaluation procedures, protect good teachers, and remove poor teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003).

2.5 VAM Evaluations Used for High-Stakes Decisions

Reports advise against using VAM to make important decisions such as the removal of a teacher (American Statistical Association, 2014; B. Baker et al., 2013; E. Baker et al., 2010; Lynn, 2013). The method of evaluation has been found to be unreliable and not valid; yet even with a strong body of research to show the negative implications of VAM, the model is still a requirement for federal funding (E. Baker et al., 2010). Tennessee, Texas, and New York use student growth scores as a significant factor in teacher evaluation. New York's system requires teachers be terminated if they have two years of low value-added scores regardless of other measures (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012). Not only are teachers being dismissed because of VAM evaluations, in some areas of the country, media sources have developed a desire to publish VAM results as a way to indicate the quality of local schools. Teachers' professional reputations can be impacted by publicizing their VAM results (Pullin, 2013). Furthermore, there is a growing population of parents and students who are using VAM results to file educational malpractice claims against teachers (DeMitchell et al., 2012).

VAM evaluations typically have student assessment data pre-populated into the evaluation from a state or district database. The scores then determine a teacher's performance level. Some administrators are able to change the performance category with an explanation of why the performance level is being changed from the pre-set criteria. Most evaluation systems have additional evaluation data included like observations, student artifacts, lesson plans, professional development plans etc. allowing administrators to select a performance category based on factors other than assessment (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012; Lavigne, 2013; Papay, 2012). Like Kansas, different categories are weighted to determine an overall performance level. For example, if the student assessment factor determines a teacher non-

proficient, yet the administrator's rating of observation data and other subjective factors earn a highly effective ranking, how can a teacher be non-proficient on one side and highly effective on the other side? Concern arises when the two performance levels contrast (Lavigne, 2013). Numbers are easy to defend; however, subjective factors or changes in ratings away from VAM scores are not. Amrein-Beardsley & Collins (2012) found that 55% of teachers surveyed had VAM evaluations that did not match the administrator's ratings and suggested that administrators are under pressure to make their ratings (observation data, student work artifacts) match VAM ratings.

2.6 Legal Challenges Associated with Teacher Evaluations

Effective school leaders are expected to develop student-centered learning environments, with a collaborative professional teaching staff as well as setting instructional direction and developing the skills of those within the organization (Huang et al., 2012). Administrators are required to complete complicated evaluations, perform multiple observations, and keep meticulous records, and detailed documentation. If evaluation data indicates the necessity to remove or non-renew an ineffective teacher caution is required. Although the removal of tenure may make termination less complicated, as Rasmussen and Church (2014) reminded administrators, evaluations are more important now than ever before. They indicated the anticipation of increased litigation toward school districts and administrators for discrimination claims and retaliatory practices. The National Education Association has promised more legal representation to members who seek to sue districts over dismissal, which was predicted by researchers studying the issue.

Baker, Oluwole, and Green (2013) note several cases that have already been litigated on this topic. Based on the legal outcomes so far, they explained that administrators will be in

treacherous water if they dismiss a teacher based on a narrow set of quantitative factors. An example is a case in the Florida district courts. A calculus teacher whose students were primarily juniors and seniors received an evaluation based 50 percent on a value-added score assigned from the results of readings scores from 9th and 10th graders. Similar cases of evaluations based on courses and students not taught are pending in New Mexico and Tennessee (Brown, 2015). Nixon (2010) summed up the situation for building leaders well “The principal is made to feel as if he/she is on trial rather than the teacher’s performance.” (p. 45). Administrators will have to work with their teachers and other school leaders to develop a fair and equitable system of evaluating teachers in an era of high stakes testing, politics, and litigation.

2.7 Kansas Evaluation System

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, all schools in the state of Kansas were required to implement the KEEP system with newly added student growth measures or another approved evaluation system with the same requirements. The evaluations systems must address the six guidelines required as part of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver for the implementation of teacher and principal evaluation. The six mandated target areas are: used for continual improvement of instruction, used at least three performance levels, used multiple measures including student growth as a significant factor, evaluated on a regular basis, provided clear, timely, and useful feedback and finally, used to inform personnel decisions (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014b). It is unclear how much weight each factor has in the final summative rating. The only clarifying statement on weighting is that the student growth measure is a “significant” factor (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014c). There is already variation across the state in the implementation of “significant” to the teacher evaluation process. Some of the tools allow districts to select the percentage of weighting, while others like the KEEP system established the

student growth rating as half of the final summary evaluation rating (Kansas State Department of Education, 2015b). The student growth measure summary rating is determined by the combination of multiple assessments. The state of Kansas has provided a list of approved assessments for use to determine student growth. A minimum of two assessment types is required for a teacher to earn a rating of effective. Only if three are included, can a teacher have the opportunity be highly effective (Kansas State Department of Education, 2015b).

Another issue ambiguous to the evaluation process is the use of Kansas State assessments as a required measure for student growth. The assessments are only required to be included in the evaluations of those teachers who teach at the grade levels and content areas tested however, each district has the flexibility to decide how or if state assessment data will be included as a growth measure for other teachers. As of 2014-2015, KSDE had not established the cut scores for each performance category for the SGM ratings using state assessment data. Additionally, the date for the required use of state assessment data keeps being moved due to issues with the development of assessments; currently, full implementation is now set for 2016-2017. However, changes made by the ESSA legislation may change the timelines and requirements.

The confusion over how the state assessment data will be used along with who will have them included in the evaluations is just part of the concern. The tests are currently under development and are evaluating student knowledge over standards newly adopted, but currently debated by the Kansas Legislature (Kansas State Department of Education, 2015a). Many districts are still in the process of aligning curriculum, learning about the tests, and acquiring resources to address the assessed standards. Even though schools are not completely transitioned with all the necessary tools, starting in 2015-2016, teachers, and administrators were partially evaluated using student assessment data with full implementation by 2017-2018 (Kansas State

Department of Education, 2015a). While Kansas and school districts across the state were still in the process of reviewing and implementing the requirements for teacher evaluations, in the midst of this study, in December of 2015, ESEA was reauthorized, (Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA) changing the requirements again.

Undefined student growth measures criteria, changes in curriculum standards, state assessments still under revision and development, variation in what assessments are used to determine a teacher's summary SGM rating, a new system for evaluating teacher effectiveness, and changing dates on full implementation for SGM state assessment inclusion, all contribute to the uneasiness and uncertainty teachers and administrators have toward the teacher evaluation policies. How administrators and teachers make sense of all the policies that influence their work may have unintended consequences and may influence the amount of trust each has toward the other (Kochanek, 2005; Tyler & DeGoey, 1996; Walker, Kutsyruba, & Noonan, 2011).

2.8 Trust: The Role in Schools

Several studies have evaluated the relationship of trust among school stakeholders and the impact on student performance (Adams, 2013; Bird et al., 2009; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Ensley, 2014; Forsyth et al., 2006; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Kochanek, 2005; Louis, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Bryk and Schneider (1996) studied urban schools in Chicago and found the level of trust in a school is a substantial dynamic for teacher performance. Among the factors most influencing trust was principal leadership. If teachers believed in the efforts of the administration, specifically, care, integrity, and genuine interest in the staff, the level of trust increases. In addition, administration that allows teachers to have input in decisions create a feeling of professional respect (Bryk & Schneider, 1996). As reform efforts continue to increase in number and intensity, it an important consideration for schools to

develop intentional opportunities to grow trust. The patterns identified in Bryk and Schneider's (1996) study affirmed that schools with higher levels of trust were more innovative and able to successfully implement reform efforts with positive outcomes for students.

Trust although difficult to define, is a fundamental building block for relationship construction. The foundation of trust sits at the core of individual respect, personal regard for others, upholding the dignity of each individual, and acknowledging a person's worth (Bryk & Schneider, 1996). The qualities of competence, honesty, openness, and reliability are necessary for a reciprocal trust relationship (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2011). Additionally, "individuals must decide whether or not to engage in an action with another individual that incorporates some degree of risk." (Bryk & Schneider, 1996, p. 4). The knowledge of trust and the facets that anchor it must be considered in a teacher focused reform era. The way teachers perceive the intent of administration may sway with reform efforts, such as the use of SGM in the teacher evaluation process. Failure to be open about the process, procedure, and assessments being used to evaluate teachers could lead to a decline in trust. Furthermore, if teachers feel left out of decisions regarding assessments selected for evaluation, an "us" against "them" mentality is likely to develop. Kutsyuruba, Walker, and Noonan (2011) summarized this idea as interdependence, where the interest of one cannot be achieved without the support of the other. The vulnerability in situations such as teacher evaluations is inevitable for both the administrator and teacher. Administrators may feel caught in the crossfire of policy requirements and doing what is right for their teachers (Walker et al., 2011). Teachers may feel the need to protect their integrity in the evaluation process while trying to meet the demands of changing requirements. Trust can play an important role mediating the demands placed on administration and teachers (Moye et al., 2005).

In order to develop trust, building administrators must have regular interactions with teachers to establish a pattern of trust behavior such as caring or benevolence. When teachers believe administrators care for them the level of trust may increase. Lack of benevolence can erode the amount of trust in the relationship (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). School leaders are often times seen as agents of upper-administration and responsible for implementing mandates which can create a wedge between building leaders and teachers (Kutsyuruba et al., 2011). For this reason, building administrators must make intentional efforts to be visible and spend time with teachers to be seen as competent, caring, and reliable (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Trust perceptions increase when an administrator's actions are consistent with the expectations of their role in the school (Adams, 2008; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Louis, 2007).

Research in several fields has determined that when organizations have a high level of trust, they are able to achieve great things (Adams, 2008; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Forsyth et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). This is an important concept when looking at schools. Teachers who perceive they work in a trusting environment work harder and improve student performance (Adams, 2008). Handford and Leithwood (2013) studied teachers' perceptions on principal leadership and found that five characteristics lead teachers to view administrators as trustworthy, competence, consistency, and reliability, openness, respect, and integrity. Failure to demonstrate the above five characteristics could lead teachers to have diminished trust (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Trust is hard to earn, but even more difficult to repair.

The breakdown of trust between an educator and administrator could result in teacher hyper vigilance, revenge, and retribution any of which are actions that could damage school climate and effectiveness (Kutsyuruba et al., 2011). A breakdown in trust not only impacts the school climate, but also impairs a teacher's willingness to take constructive feedback from an

administrator especially during a formal evaluation (Berliner, 2014; Lavigne, Good, & Marx, 2014). A barrier such as this inhibits improved teacher performance. Within a school setting, Johnson et.al (2012) found highlighted teachers' professional abilities in a high trust culture and that school administration was an influential factor. When teachers perceive they have support and encouragement from their administrator, they are more motivated. This is a vital consideration in reform efforts since teachers are the most important school level factor influencing student achievement (Johnson et al., 2012; Rothstein, 2004).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I utilized a qualitative research method to examine the phenomenon under investigation. I chose this approach because it allowed me to gather rich emic descriptions from the study participants that were instrumental in determining their understanding of how the inclusion of student growth measures to the teacher evaluation system does or does not affect teacher-administrator trust relationships. These data also enabled me to gain insights into how the inclusion of student growth measures may be changing classroom practices (Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative inquiry is well suited for examining the holistic perceptions of the individuals directly involved in Kansas' new teacher evaluation requirements and the factors that may influence the emergent picture of the study at hand (Creswell, 2009). The nature of teacher-administrator relationships is multifaceted and as I explained in my theoretical framework, hinges on five facets of trust: benevolence, competence, honesty, openness, and reliability (Adams, 2013; Bird et al., 2009; Forsyth et al., 2006; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). The facets of trust described in the theoretical framework were applied in the gathering and analysis of my data (Merriam, 2009). A qualitative method is the most appropriate research design to study trust relationships because it provided a structure that allowed me to emphasize the voices of participants (Creswell, 2012). Magnolia High School in Magnolia, Kansas, Cedar High School in Cedar, Kansas, and Venice High School, in Venice, Kansas provided the contextual reference populations that anchored the phenomenon under study and enhanced the transferability of my findings (Merriam, 2009).

3.1 Research Site Locations

Selection of high school teachers began by getting a picture of high schools across Kansas. KSDE collects and publishes data about schools across the state. I used data from the 2013-2014 building and state report cards to gather demographic information. KSDE reported that Kansas has the following average school demographics: a free and reduced lunch rate of 50% (commonly used in educational research as a proxy measure for poverty) and ethnicity averages of 66% white, 7% African American, 18% Hispanic, and 9% other (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a). To determine the average school size in Kansas, I gathered data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). The average student membership of a regular public secondary school in Kansas for 2010-2011 was 432 (Keaton, 2014). In addition to poverty level, ethnic composition, and school size, school locations were selected in accordance with the locale codes used by NCES: city, suburban, town, and rural. To break the average school size down more specifically, data from 2012-2013 NCES report on the number of Kansas public schools by locale codes (city, suburban, town, and rural) were used (Keaton, 2014).

To focus on how the perception of trust may be altered by the inclusion of SGM to the evaluation process, it was important to identify research sites where factors such as race, ethnicity, and poverty would have less of a chance of adversely affecting the ability of teachers to develop trust relationships with their administration. Since these factors correlate with lower student achievement and more challenging classroom environments, and because city or urban schools usually enroll a higher prevalence of students with these demographic characteristics, I chose not to collect data from city schools in this study. Additionally, research on trust in schools has identified more factors that can negatively impact trust in large urban schools. These

factors include large student to faculty ratios, large faculty to administration ratios, and school district bureaucratic structure (Bryk et al., 1999; Daly & Finnigan, 2012; Goddard et al., 2001; Guin, 2004; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Payne & Kaba, 2007). An examination of trust in urban school environments to see how they compare to non-urban school environments is warranted but beyond the scope of this study. However, despite eliminating city schools as potential research sites, the remaining schools in suburban, town, and rural locales make up 82% of the schools in Kansas.

The four locale codes used by NCES categorize school location by proximity to an urbanized area. The “city” category was divided into large, midsize, and small subcategories and was based on populations that range from 250,000 or more to less than 100,000. Suburbs are also broken into large, midsize, and small with populations of 250,000 or less. Towns are defined as territory within 35 miles of urbanized area but inside an urban cluster. Towns also are broken into smaller segments: fringe (less than 10 miles), distant (more than 10 miles but less than 35 away) and remote, (more than 35 miles from an urbanized area). Similar to towns, rural codes are segmented into fringe, distant, and remote. The codes range from five miles outside an urban cluster area to more than 25 miles (Keaton, 2014). For simplicity, the categories used in this study were the four broad locale codes: city, suburban, town, and rural.

The 233 city schools in Kansas comprise 27% of the overall student population; the state’s 145 suburban schools house 18% of students; and the 320 schools located in towns share 27% of students. Rural areas contain 598 schools and 28% of students, the largest number of schools and highest percentage of students in the state (Keaton, 2014). The average student membership of suburban schools was 574 students; town schools had 397 students, and rural

schools had 223. The averages derived from taking the total number of students divided by the number of schools in each locale category (Keaton, 2014).

I used suburban, town, and rural student membership numbers to select schools whose populations most closely resembled schools in the same category. It was important to select schools whose student memberships were representative of similar schools. For this reason, identifying schools with similar free and reduced lunch and student ethnicity percentages enabled me to reduce the number of potential sites to three, one from each of the selected locale categories. To increase the transferability of the findings, I identified schools with close to average characteristics of schools in the same locale categories. I selected my study participants from teachers in these three schools. I discussed the selection process in detail in the participant selection section.

3.2 School Descriptions

Cedar High School is a suburban school with 536 students. The ethnicity of the student membership is 90% white, 1% African American, 4% Hispanic, and 4% other (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a). The school reported a 26% free and reduced percentage and a 91% graduation rate in 2013. The school has a building principal, assistant principal, and athletic director. There are thirty-eight certified teachers of whom 100% are fully licensed (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a)

The district is a consolidation of six small communities. The district spans 175 square miles. The middle school is located in one community, and there are four elementary schools located across the communities served by the Cedar School District. The high school is located in Cedar, which has a population of almost 1,400 people and is 26 miles from a large urban city. (Cedar Public Schools, 2015).

The second research site, Venice High School (VHS), is classified as a town with 476 students attending in 2014-2015. Of those students, 81% were white, 2% African American, 12% Hispanic, and 5% other. The school reported a free and reduced lunch rate of 54%. In 2013, VHS had a 90% graduation rate, a significant improvement from the previous year's rate of 82% (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a). The school is served by three administrators and 39 teachers. Ninety-four percent of the teachers are fully certified to teach the courses they are assigned. Of the 6% who are not fully licensed, 23% are teaching core content classes—i.e., math, social studies, English, and science (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a). Venice is a town of almost 8,000 people located 35 miles south of a large urban city (City of Venice, 2015).

The eponymously named Magnolia High School is a rural school with 304 students located in the central Kansas town of Magnolia. Student membership is comprised of students classified as 82% white, 1% African American, 12% Hispanic, and 5% other. The school has a graduation rate of 84% with 58% of students qualifying free or reduced-price lunch. The staff is comprised of two administrators and 29 teachers of whom 96% are fully licensed (Kansas State Department of Education, 2014a). Magnolia has a population of 1,100 people and is 63 miles northwest of Wichita and 13 miles northwest of a small city (City of Magnolia, 2015).

Cedar High School, Venice High School, and Magnolia High School are characteristic of many Kansas schools of the same size, student membership, and locale category. The next section describes the process of participant selection.

3.3 Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling allows for the selection of participants who meet specific criteria with the potential to yield information rich insights into the issue under investigation (Patton, 2002). For this study, teachers at Cedar, Venice, and Magnolia High Schools informed the study about their perceptions and experiences with Kansas' new teacher evaluation system and how the inclusion of SGMs potentially affect teacher-administrator trust and spurs changes in classroom practices (Patton, 2002).

As part of the new teacher evaluation process, KSDE will use state assessment scores from the 2015-2016 testing sessions as the beginning data points for calculating student growth measures. Grades 3 through 8 are tested annually in math and language arts. Tests in science, social studies, and writing are administered every other year in these same grade levels. There is a high probability that the SGM data used in an elementary teacher's evaluation are directly linked to students they instruct. At the high school level, and relevant to this study, only one data point per assessed content area is collected over the course of a student's four-year tenure. This may be concerning to secondary level educators teaching assessed content in the year the assessments are given. This may also be a concern for those teaching the same content in years not assessed depending on how the assessment scores and SGM are used in their evaluation process. For example, if a teacher only teaches 12th grade English but the state assessment is given at the 11th grade level, how will the scores from the assessment affect the senior English teacher's evaluation? For these reasons, this study focused on the perceptions of high school teachers teaching in content areas assessed by the state.

The criterion for participation selection was limited to teachers who taught for five or more years and were to be in the evaluation cycle during the 2015-2016 school year. It was critical to my investigation that participating teachers have several years of teaching experience and experience with the evaluation process prior to the inclusion of SGM. Additionally, participants taught in a core content area regularly assessed by the Kansas state assessment. I expected these individuals to serve as knowledgeable informants because of their teaching experience, prior involvement with evaluations before the inclusion of SGMs, and direct connection with state-assessed core content. Because Kansas intends to use data from the state assessment to calculate student growth and the same assessment data may be included in the evaluation of teachers who do not teach grade-level courses that are annually assessed, I anticipated the perceptions of the teachers selected would provide rich perspectives on how the changes may impact teacher-administrator trust.

The selection criteria for potential participants limited the number of teachers eligible for the study; therefore, three teachers per building was my immediate goal. I shared the criteria for participant selection with the building principals of Cedar, Venice, and Magnolia. The contact administrator sent a list of teachers who meet the criteria to participate in the study to me. I then made email contact with the qualifying participant pool to identify candidates for the study. Once teachers agreed to participate then I worked with them to arrange times and dates for individual interviews at a location of the participant's choice that was conducive to an individual interview.

The inability to secure a third participant from the suburban school led to the selection of a fourth participant from the town school meeting the selection criteria. The nine teachers interviewed for this study had an experience range of 13 to 33 years, for an average of 18.5 years

of collective service in public education. Of the teachers interviewed, six have been with the same district their entire career.

The participants chosen for this study taught in one of the four state assessed content areas: three taught English, two math, two science, and two were history teachers. Each participant shared they had taught all high school grade levels (9-12), and a variety of courses in his or her discipline over the years. Two participants also had middle school experience.

Once interviewing began, I considered employing snowball sampling to identify other participants with information useful to the study (Patton, 2002). The number of participants remained flexible based on availability and willingness to participate in the study. I interviewed the nine participants and found the data became saturated and no new information was forthcoming (Merriam, 2009).

3.4 Interviews

My primary data collection method was individual interviews. I asked participants to discuss their understandings and perceptions associated with teacher evaluations using SGMs and the effect the process had on the facets of trust with their administrators. Because the information teachers shared with me was personally or professionally sensitive, there was a need to address participant privacy while enhancing the likelihood of honest responses. Individual interviews can safeguard confidentiality and promote candid responses. Individual interviews were conducted with teachers allowing them the freedom to openly share their perspectives with me without risk of being swayed or inhibited by others (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, personal perspectives and experiences are not data that can be gathered adequately through the use of surveys or observations so for these reasons, individual interviews are the most appropriate method for collecting data from the participants (Merriam, 2009).

I used a semi-structured interview protocol that allowed for consistency in the questions but flexibility for participants and the researcher to explore ideas that more completely informed the research questions. Semi-structured interviews allowed for participants to share rich, thick descriptions of their experiences and expand on ideas to inform the research questions in areas that may not have been considered (Merriam, 2009). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for accuracy and were compared to field notes for clarification (Merriam, 2009). Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. The interview protocol is contained in Appendix A.

3.4 Data Analysis

Audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and placed in an Excel spreadsheet by interview question for unitization. The data was coded into ideas and concepts as related to the research questions and the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2002). The information was evaluated for overlapping and redundancy in codes. Once the codes had been consolidated into similar concepts, categories were established (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I sorted and analyzed the categories using a constant-comparative approach. This approach allowed me to identify similarities and differences among the data. Assessment of the identification of repetitive ideas in the categories, along with the constant-comparative approach lead to the development of themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The process continued until other possible themes were exhausted leading to the establishment of comprehensive themes (Creswell, 2009). I then organized themes by major and minor concepts and sorted them using a graphic organizer to compare them to the facets of trust in my theoretical framework. The process took the information gathered from study participants so findings addressing the research questions were uncovered (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2012).

3.6 Research Quality, Credibility, and Trustworthiness

To ensure trustworthiness of the study, I employed data triangulation and an audit trail. Data were triangulated through interviews with different individuals in different assessed content areas, and through the site selection of three different high schools, one from each locale category, providing multiple perspectives on the issue under study. Though the use of triangulation, I hoped to reduce bias and confirm the accuracy of my data since it came from different points of views (Maxwell, 2012). To improve research quality and credibility, I maintained an audit trail that logged data collection, analysis, and the research process (Merriam, 2009). The audit trail was a continuous exhibit of the processes, thoughts, and questions used during the course of the study. By reflecting on and reviewing the audit trail information, I was more aware of areas in the study that needed to be addressed more adequately and identified places where my positionality intruded into the research.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the protection of human subjects, I received the approval of Wichita State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to entering the field. Due to the nature of the study and participants, I anticipated limited risk. I explained the procedures and protections of informed consent to all participants prior to engaging in the study. Participants signed one copy of the consent form and upon request, were given a second copy to keep for their records. Informed consent grants subjects anonymity and confidentiality in all facets of the study and in anything I may publish that relates to the research. I secured data and research related materials using password protected hardware for materials electronically housed; those in hard copy will be kept in a locked cabinet located in the office of the researcher. I will retain all materials for three years following the conclusion of the study. The consent form is included in Appendix B.

3.9 Researcher Positionality

Researcher positionality is a consideration in the interpretation of the findings (Merriam, 2009). It was important for me to consider my experiences, values, beliefs, and worldview as I carried out this study. I have spent most of my life in Kansas. I spent the majority of my K-12 educational years in communities much like Venice, Magnolia, and Cedar. During the study, I lived in one of large urban cities, suburban communities and worked as an administrator in a high school meeting the criteria for the suburban school selection.

I have been in education almost 20 years and have watched a variety of policies influence the day-to-day workings of schools and teachers. Some of the reforms have been beneficial and some not. I also work closely with classroom teachers and hear their day-to-day concerns about the use of student growth data, how political issues shape their teaching, and questions about how it all ties back to their evaluations. I have tried to be honest and open with the staff I work with; however, it would be presumptuous of me to believe that my performance as an administrator is exemplary or that all the teachers I work with believe I meet their needs in terms of trust.

I have witnessed how relationships and trust issues influence school climate. I have seen an administrator with outstanding leadership qualities undermined by an entire building because she would not tell teachers and staff every detail in a decision-making process. They perceived her as incompetent and dishonest when in fact she was acting in an extremely professional manner that protected the integrity of other staff. I have also seen schools with strong collective trust accomplish amazing reforms that made big differences for students. At the end of the day, as building leader, I believe my job is to find ways to create the best environment for student learning which includes establishing a school climate where teachers and other staff feel

appreciated and supported. Students excel when their teachers are empowered and have strong efficacy in their job abilities.

To protect the integrity and authenticity of the study, I constantly considered my positionality and subjectivity surrounding the use of student growth scores in the teacher evaluation process. I hold strong opinions about the wisdom of including SGMs in the teacher evaluation process so it was important for me to discover, in the data, the perceptions teachers had about SGMs, not my view of the policy. Since these characteristics are impossible to avoid, my best approach was to confront them as openly as possible (Peshkin, 1988). I used a reflexive journal to record my thoughts and feelings throughout the study. The information was reviewed regularly so I could remain cognizant of my position in the research (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Being aware of these issues allowed for the voices of the participants to be the emic sound guiding the study (Peshkin, 1988).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Teachers had similar responses regardless of school type, therefore the findings are not separated by locale, but organized by the five facets of trust; benevolence, reliability, competence, openness, and honesty. Each facet contributes to the amount of trust one person has for another. This is an important consideration because as Bryk and Schneider (1996) found, trust is an essential component for creating an environment of school improvement that aims to increase student academic success. Because the addition of student growth measures to the teacher evaluation system is promoted by policy makers as a method for improving teacher performance, it logically follows that trust should be evaluated as a factor in the process.

4.1 Benevolence

A fundamental factor in a trust relationship is benevolence. Benevolence is one's understanding of care demonstrated by another. When a person believes another will act in his or her best interest and appears to sincerely care, benevolence is affirmed. The teacher-administrator trust relationship is vital to the effectiveness of the evaluation process. Because benevolence is central to the amount of trust in a relationship, I asked teachers about their relationships with their evaluating administrators to ascertain the presence or absence of benevolence. Teachers had varying observations about these relationships. Most teachers focused on the professional relationships established through personal interactions such as discussions during class changes and lunch periods, professional meetings, and outside of school social exchanges with their administrator. One teacher shared that he had a good working relationship with his principal based on previous exchanges when the administrator was still a

teacher and the two worked together as colleagues. The participant shared, “I think being a teacher, he understands some of the issues that come up and he is supportive.” Student needs, testing, difficult parents, grading, frustrations with technology, and changing requirements were some of the issues shared by teachers. If an administrator was able to demonstrate empathy and provide support when dealing with issues as noted above, benevolence was confirmed. With regard to the same administrator, another teacher described them as “good friends” who have known each other for many years and shared experiences such as teaching and coaching. Based on those interactions, he described a relationship in which he could depend on the good will of the administrator. The series of benevolent exchanges helped grow the amount of trust perceived by the teacher. Another educator explained that a major reason she applied for a teaching position at her school was the respect paid her administrator by other teachers in the building. A person with a reputation for exhibiting benevolent behavior toward one person is judged as having the ability to establish similar benevolent relationships with others. According to teachers, a culture of benevolence breeds a climate of trust.

A recurring theme related to benevolence was a constructive relationship between administrators and teachers based on common professional goals. One participant stated, “We are both very interested in what is good for students and we are both open to change, which is motivating to me.” A second teacher shared he had a satisfactory relationship with his administrator because they each had a good idea of what to expect from each other. Along the same lines, a third teacher said, “I think he trusts me as a good employee and I appreciate that; he gives you confidence and encourages you.” This teacher believed her administrator demonstrated the care and attention that were in her best interest, thereby establishing a rapport that operationalized the construct of benevolence. In contrast, another teacher felt his social and

professional relationship with his administrator was on solid ground even though each had different views about how best to run the school. The teacher explained he did not necessarily agree with how disciplinary decisions were made and communicated to students but accepted that those decisions were administrative rather than a teacher's responsibility.

Participation in a constructive relationship, however, did not necessarily imply having a more personal relationship than what was required to maintain a casual professional connection. For instance, one teacher shared that his administrator was a "great guy, I like being around him socially, he's a good person to be around." Other teachers indicated a similar level of security when in less formal settings such as the teachers' lounge and other places where conversations about family and other outside-of-school topics commonly occurred. Most participants also indicated the ability to "joke" around with their administrator, showing a level of comfort around each other that transcended status in the school's authority structure. Being comfortable around a person hinged on developing a degree of trust with that other person. One teacher referred back to the assistant principal as the person responsible for his evaluation. He had a good working relationship with the AP because, "he is interested and makes an effort to get to know people and students." The AP demonstrated benevolence not only for teachers but also created benevolent relationships with students. Benevolent relationships between administrators, teachers, and students engendered a supportive school culture in which caring for others was the norm. This facet of trust was a catalyst that sustained trust and allowed it to grow.

Conversely, a lack of benevolence had the power to erode trust. The teacher who shared he had a good relationship with the AP did not have a comparably positive relationship with the building principal. A situation that arose over a comment made in a previous year indicated to the teacher a lack of benevolence that undermined administrative support that was in the best

interest of the teacher. Because of that and other similar incidents, the teacher and principal have not interacted much since then. Bryk and Schneider (1996) found that trust in leadership was the most substantial factor influencing teacher performance.

4.2 Reliability

When teachers can confidently anticipate the actions of their administrator based on previous interactions, and expect administrators to follow through with promises and commitments, reliability is established. The perception of benevolence is paramount to the establishment of reliability in a trust relationship. These actions apply to both administrators and teachers. Using evidence from everyday interactions and observations, an administrator judges the professional reliability of a teacher, an assessment with the potential to increase administrative trust in the teacher. Because one of the primary purposes of the teacher evaluation process is the improvement of teacher performance, then the professional reliability to perform job tasks assumed through verification of previous interactions in the teacher-administrator relationship is something significant to consider. If an administrator observes a teacher consistently teaching the adopted curriculum, using research-based instructional techniques, and demonstrates other qualities that contribute to student growth, then reliability is more readily established. The same is true for teachers. If a teacher observes an administrator providing support and encouragement and follows through with commitment and promises, the teacher will be more apt to develop a sense of reliability with the administrator.

To gain insights into teacher perceptions about administrative reliability in the teacher evaluation process, I asked participants to describe how their administrator evaluated their abilities as a teacher. All participants reported that their evaluating administrator occasionally completed an unannounced walk-through in the classroom to check on teacher practices. One

teacher shared that her administrator usually dropped in for five minutes looking for specific things such as objectives written on the board or signs of student engagement but the administrator had only been in once this year. Teacher participants understood the purpose of a walk-through was to discern teacher reliability in terms of performance. A teacher confirmed this notion by stating, “I like more of a random show up anytime...I think there has to be some random sampling to see if kids are engaged every day.” He suggested that in a formally arranged visit, any teacher could throw out the best lesson of the day to impress an administrator. Another teacher shared that administrators should not “pop in” only once to evaluate a teacher’s ability. “You need to have eyes on a teacher,” he said. He thought administrators should spend extended time in the classroom spread out over successive visits to obtain a clearer picture of the relationships teachers developed with students. Teacher participants communicated the need for administrators to observe teachers in a day-to-day setting if they intended to reach valid conclusions about teacher quality.

Some teachers questioned how a five-minute walk-through a couple of times a year could reliably gauge a teacher’s ability. This uncertainty existed for a number of reasons: lack of communication about the walk-through process, minimal visibility of the administrator, or possibly an underdeveloped trust relationship between the teacher and administrator. Some participants saw administrators overextended with workload issues and as a result, administrative priorities frequently made classroom visits secondary in importance. One teacher observed, “Those gentlemen are quite busy with other issues before they can get a chance to sit in my room to find out how I teach.” The participant did not perceive the lack of frequency of classroom visits to reduced administrative reliability, but held an understanding of the differing demands of the building administrator in relationship to her classroom position. She indicated a belief the

administration trusted her and relied on her to continue performing her position effectively. Her interpretation demonstrated the degree of reliability typically developed in a healthy teacher-administrator trust relationship.

The participants indicated that some type of feedback was usually provided when administrators visited classrooms unannounced. One teacher explained she received electronic feedback from a walk-through visit based on pre-established items in an evaluation rubric. She thought that electronic feedback was a good technique for ensuring the continuity of communication; however, it suffered from being impersonal. She shared that while she appreciated the feedback, she preferred having direct personal interactions with her administrator when discussing performance observations. A different teacher saw the capacity of electronic feedback to track visits and communications as an improvement over the old system. The teacher remarked that because everyone had a busy schedule, the previous system made it easy for administrators to hand you a piece of paper without engaging in some form of direct interaction. Two teacher participants appreciated the increase in communication and feedback about observations, which appeared to increase the level of administrative reliability in the evaluation process perceived by the teachers. However, the findings also highlighted the different individual needs of teachers. Like students, not all teachers should be treated the same. Administrators and teachers need to understand the other to develop skills necessary to enhance relationship growth and diminish misunderstandings that decrease trust.

Participants indicated that outside-of-school factors such as community pressure, school board directives, and state regulations could have an influence on the reliability and benevolence of administrators. This concern surfaced at all three study sites. One teacher shared that there have been times when administrators have responded to public pressure about teachers, grades,

classroom management procedures, etc. in order to maintain positive relations. When situations like that happened, he explained, “As a staff, we do not feel exactly supported.” In situations such as this, teachers perceived the actions of administrators as uncaring toward the teacher because they did not provide adequate support and understanding. Impressions matter because rightly or wrongly, they may lead to decreased trust in the decisions made by the administrator. Both influence the teacher-administrator trust relationship. In a related matter, a teacher observed how the school board put pressure on administrators to behave in expected ways. “As long as you are in good graces you can continue to have a career, but if you upset the wrong group, you could be gone,” she said. A participant from a different school echoed this sentiment when she noted that regardless of administrative support, if directed by the school board or higher administration to act in a certain way, “He still has to do his job, no matter what he thinks may be right.” One participant shared a concern that state and political factors were forcing schools and administrators to make decisions based on issues other than what were best for teachers and students. Although teachers understood the motives behind actions taken by administrators, the consequences of those actions held the potential to undermine reliability and benevolence.

4.3 The Influence of Competence on Trust

All participants communicated that by providing support and understanding, administrators’ demonstrated competence. For example, several mentioned support in terms of arranging time to collaborate with colleagues, encouragement to try new instructional strategies, understanding individual student challenges in a classroom, and supporting teacher decisions when challenged by parents and students. In essence, participants explained administrative competence as providing collaborative time, resources, and an educational environment

conducive to teaching and learning. One teacher shared, “They trust me and trust us to manage our classrooms effectively.” He believed his administrator saw him as a competent teacher with the ability to make sound decisions in the classroom. The teacher viewed this as an indication that the administrator had trust in him. He elaborated that when situations arose that exceeded his ability or experience to handle effectively, his administrator supported him by providing assistance. Another participant shared a similar feeling: “He [principal] trusts me to do what I should, and if I have trouble, if I have a situation that comes up, maybe a conflict with a student or parent, he is always available to step in.” The comments of a third participant paralleled the first two: “He pretty much lets me handle it with the parent; but said he would be there if I felt things were escalating to a point where I wouldn’t be able to handle it anymore.” Administrators who trusted in their teachers’ abilities helped increase teacher self-efficacy, which in turn increased motivation and commitment to teaching. Teacher-administrator trust is strengthened when each actor believes in the competence of the other.

Confidence in teachers’ discretionary judgment and granting them limited professional autonomy was interpreted as a sign of trust in a teacher’s competence and professional abilities. A participant stated, “I think that they [administrators] just support and endorse those things we can do to help students on an individual level as much as we can.” Another shared, “They are trying to let us collaborate as departments because they know we want to do well and we want our kids to do well.” Echoing the idea of collaborative support, another teacher added, “He [administrator] really does encourage us to collaborate with other teachers and examine what we are doing.” Not only did teachers perceive professional discretion as a sign of the administrator’s trust in their teaching attributes but as an indication that administrators were

competent instructional leaders who provided qualified educators the opportunity to perform their craft as they saw fit.

Teachers understood that administrators did not have expertise in all content areas. Participants saw the role of administrators in the area of curriculum support as providing the critical resources needed to teach effectively and respect for the specialized training possessed by teachers. One teacher shared, “We have a better understanding of what we can and cannot implement.” This comment referred to curriculum adoption, knowledge about appropriate curriculum content, and the proper sequence for teaching the curriculum. This knowledge and trust in teachers’ abilities to make educational decisions about the curriculum was a measure of trust between a teacher and administrator. A teacher clarified this point when she said, “The administrator trusts us to design and deliver an appropriate curriculum.”

With regard to curriculum and instructional support provided by the administrator, a participant said he did not desire or expect that type of help. Instead, he saw the administrator as focused on discipline and other building level operational needs. He clarified what he meant by role differentiation when he said, “I’m the teacher; he is the building administrator.” The teacher went on to explain that because he had many years of training and experience in his content area, he was a respected resource around the state in terms of curriculum development. He viewed the administrator’s position as limited to establishing an environment that allowed him to deliver a quality education to his students. When administrators were competent in their abilities to enhance teacher professional abilities, teachers felt valued and the resulting boost in self-efficacy tended to increase the trust climate in a school (Johnson, 2012).

4.4 Honesty, Openness, and Student Growth Measures

Participants had varying degrees of understanding about the use of student growth measures in their evaluations. A participant stated, “It [SGM] hasn’t been explained very well at all, but only that you have to show student growth.” Another shared, “I get the message they [the district] haven’t specifically connected evaluation measures to student data.” One participant commented that in his district, two of the three assessment measures were required, but administrators were letting teachers pick a third measure to be included. Teachers were aware that student growth measures were the latest metric to be factored into their evaluations but communicated limited understanding about the impact they would actually have on their evaluations. A teacher summarized the lack of clear communication about the evaluation process and the addition of SGM: “I really think it is nothing against my administrator but like everyone else, he doesn’t really know what it means.” All participants indicated they felt administrators were sharing whatever information they had and were not intentionally withholding anything. Delivering an honest message about the evaluation process, even if not all the information were available, attested to a relationship of honesty. Trust was enhanced when teachers and administrators communicated with truthfulness stemming from genuine concern for each other. Failure to do so resulted in suspicion about motives and a decline in trust.

To gather data about openness in the teacher evaluation process, participants were asked about the data used in their evaluations. A teacher shared he did not know what assessments were going to be used and was told when he asked his administrator, “You are going to retire in two years, don’t worry about it.” Because of his particular circumstances, this teacher had no reason to worry about the addition of SGMs to his evaluation. He explained the comment as willingness on the part of the administrator to be candid about how the current change in the

evaluation process would affect the teacher. The administrator was also mindful that the teacher did not incur any unnecessary stress. This type of concern for a teacher and the ability of an administrator to be honest and open about the impact of SGMs in the teacher evaluation process was a sign of a trusting relationship. The teacher believed the administrator when he told him not to worry and appreciated the assurance.

A similar conversation came from a different school administrator who tried to calm teachers by explaining that he understood the limitations of the data used in the evaluations. One participant said when the administration was asked to meet with a department about SGMs, “He sent out a ‘Don’t freak out about it; don’t worry about it’ email” to the entire staff to reassure them that everything would turn out okay. The teacher understood the action as the administrator’s sincere attempt to relieve teachers’ fears about the addition of SGMs to the annual evaluation. For each teacher, depending on the trust relationship established with the administrator, the message had the potential to build or hinder trust. A participant provided insight when he explained that if he trusted his administrator to use his best judgment in evaluating him, then as a professional educator, he had to believe there was no cause for worry because things would be okay. However, he elaborated by saying, “If my administrator thinks I’m not doing something that I should be doing, then I have to trust he is communicating that to me.” Teachers who enjoyed a trust relationship with administration grounded in openness and honesty appreciated the message because it reduced their fear. Teachers engaged in less trusting relationships were apt to become suspicious and anxious, potentially eroding trust.

4.5 The Influence of Trust on the Addition of Student Growth Measures

Although the majority of teachers did not report undue alarm by the addition of SGMs to the evaluation, they still expressed several concerns. One shared, “Testing doesn’t measure how

well a teacher has taught or how well students are learning. To me, there is a lot of time where students aren't ready, and no matter how much you teach them, they aren't ready." The teacher explained that as individuals, students came with different learning needs. Some students had an exceptionalism that caused them to be academically delayed or advanced. Others had behavioral issues that interfered with their ability to learn, in addition to students with mental health or situations at home that made it difficult to focus on instruction at school. No two students were identical and consequently, it was unreasonable to expect they would learn in the same manner, at the same rate, or with the same system of supports. To assess them as equals and expect common results was illogical. As a different teacher pointed out, "Teachers are not all dealt the same hand," a reference to using common metrics to compare teachers even though some schools had student populations from high-income two-parent families while other schools had student populations from low-income, single-parent families.

To illustrate the important differences between teachers, students, and schools, one teacher shared a story about a student who struggled at school because he was the primary care giver to his younger siblings in the evening when his parents worked. His family responsibilities were neither optional nor negotiable and left him with inadequate time to complete his homework. The lack of homework completion made it more difficult for the teacher to assess his academic strengths and weaknesses and prepare the student for a high stakes assessment. Another teacher shared a similar frustration with a high achieving student who spent only five minutes on the formal assessment before setting it aside. A teacher explained that for students such as these, assessments that did not count for a grade were meaningless because little effort was applied to them. Students unconcerned about assessments that do not affect them personally have little or no interest in expending effort to complete them. In fact, they often consider them

a waste of time. This teacher pointed out that, “Having [low test scores] on your evaluation is unsettling.” When educators worked hard, tried multiple interventions, yet still could not encourage a student to attempt an assessment used for a SGM in the teacher evaluation process, frustration and discouragement were likely to surface. Teacher-administrator trust relationships were instrumental to a credible evaluation process. If both parties demonstrated the trust facets of benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness, then the concerns identified by participants about student performance stood a chance of mitigation. On the other hand, teacher motivation and pedagogical self-efficacy might diminish if trust were not in place to help navigate the implementation changes planned for the teacher evaluation process.

4.6 The Influence of Student Growth Measures on Classroom Practice

A participant discussed the ACT was one of the assessments he was required to use to measure student growth. “I teach freshman, sophomores, and juniors; only a few juniors take the ACT. If a student has never taken the ACT, how could I possibly—fairly--consider using the ACT?” This teacher worked in a district that allowed teachers to select one SGM of their own choosing and the SGM they selected was the ACT. The teachers said they chose the ACT over other standardized assessments because they believed it was the most valid of all the options given them. A teacher from a different district discussed his use of teacher generated pre- and post-tests to demonstrate student growth. Each teacher in the district was required to develop a pre- and posttest to measure growth in each course. He explained that using a curriculum-based test that was relevant to the students he taught made more sense than using the ACT for students he had never before instructed. The teacher explained that he was able to make specific changes to how he taught units based on the data he received from the pre- and posttests. All teachers shared a concern about using one-size fits all state assessments. Said one participant,

It's just that if I had a good way to measure that [growth] I would be happy to share that. But I'm afraid the state board of education has had trouble after trouble--state assessments that don't work, state assessment systems that don't work, and evaluation systems that don't work. So to me it seems like another thing the state has done that is ill conceived and definitely ill executed.

Although each participant identified concerns with the types of data being considered for inclusion in SGMs, most saw some value in the approach. A teacher said she felt there had to be some type of accountability system or teachers would do whatever they wanted. "I would love to have a tangible piece of data that tells me where each one of my students is, if I felt it was reliable." Another teacher reflected, "At least it makes me aware at some level that I need to think about the students I have. Is there a way to tell down the road if they were better off because they were in my classroom?" She left the question unanswered. Some participants did not foresee making any changes in their classroom practice in response to the addition of SGMs to their evaluation while a few explained that they were already making slight adjustments. One participant observed that because teachers were not evaluated every year, it would take a little while for changes to work their way into everyday practice. "I don't think teachers would change right away, until they received an unfavorable evaluation because of scores." The teacher did not describe this hesitancy as unwillingness to improve instruction. Rather, he noted that almost every new policy mandate required teachers to implement some type of pedagogical or curricular change. Veteran teachers who had been through this cycle more than once resisted making changes unless they saw a direct link to student improvement. Additionally, the data would have to be a valid measure of student performance. Making changes on invalid data would be difficult, at best.

One teacher shared, "I think most of the stuff you want to work on just comes daily, it's not even written in the evaluation." Another participant provided a similar insight about

teachers. He said, “I think if you are a good teacher, you always have growth in mind and make sure your students are doing well.” Quality teachers continually sought ways to help students grow and learn. Administrators who developed relationships of benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness with teachers knew the abilities of their teachers and were able to use multiple measures such as observations, instructional strategies, student personalization, collaborations with colleagues, and content knowledge to assist in making decisions about teacher performance. Assessment scores were not their only source of data. Conversely, teachers who had a solid trust relationship with their administrator were motivated to work hard for students and the school. An evaluation completed every three years was less likely to have a lasting impact on teachers than day-to-day communications about performance.

Teacher participants understood the purpose of SGMs and believed the concept had some value. “It [SGM] has made me think more about the whole process of being able to show that my students are improving.” Teachers found it beneficial to have concrete data to document student progress and inform decisions about student needs. Many teachers were willing to do whatever it took to help students and welcomed quality data that could guide decisions. A participant said, “I don’t know that I agree with the latest whatever, but it [SGM] would give me something to focus on, it would make me aware of what my students are lacking.” Yet, another teacher confided that she had already implemented several improvements focused on student achievement and individualized instruction and was not about to abandon those strategies. “Maybe we would do more of that kind of stuff, or maybe even add a class that gears more toward those that struggle,” she suggested. In general, teachers had no argument with the value of assessment data for improving student learning. As one teacher explained it, she believed the requirements and strategies established under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 still had

value and considered returning to many of the test preparation strategies she employed in the past to help students raise their scores on state assessments. Whether teachers made subtle changes to practice, spent time reflecting on lessons, identified student weaknesses, or implemented specific test taking strategies, all participants indicated a desire to become better teachers regardless of the inclusion of SGM to their evaluations.

4.7 Unintended Consequences

Participants suggested possible consequences of the current requirements to include SGM in evaluations. One wondered what the process would be from district to district if a teacher were dismissed due to a lack of student growth. She wondered if the hiring district would look at data from the previous district such as student and community demographics and other factors that might have influenced growth scores. Would one district's policy on employment based on SGMs affect a teacher's ability to gain employment in other districts? Another teacher believed teachers would take the new requirements in stride until "you start throwing the pay thing out there, and then it starts concerning teachers," an allusion to merit pay based on teacher evaluations that incorporate SGMs. Using student assessment scores to make determinations about salary was supposed to be an extrinsic motivator. The tactic begged the question of whether student achievement improved or if teachers and administrators would resort to self-preservation. Looking out for the good of oneself rather than the good of others does not increase trust.

One teacher questioned how her contributions as a department member might influence the scores of students she did not teach. "We work as a team so hopefully, what I contribute to the team shows up in how a student that never had me does on the ACT." Despite any misgivings she might have had, remaining positive was the only way she could think about the

current system. She noted that the other option was “isolationism,” an unacceptable alternative. The teacher was concerned that if teachers worried only about themselves and boosting student scores as high as possible, teachers would isolate themselves and cease collaborating for the best interest of the entire school. She went on to say, “If I think SGMs are pitting me against another teacher, saying you can’t use this or do that in your English class...then a student does poorly so it must be the fault of the other teachers, then that isn’t productive.” Her comment alluded to a school community bereft of trust or benevolence for each other. An environment such as that was not conducive to improving student achievement or strengthening the bonds of a professional learning community. Another educator believed that teachers who lacked trust in their administrator were most worried how SGMs were going to affect them. “It’s a valid concern,” he went on to say, “and it has caused a little bit of tension in our department and maybe in our building. It is not a good situation.” He was worried that unethical administrators could use SGM scores to “get back” at teachers who they did not like or respect or had caused them problems. This concern spoke directly to the teacher-administrator trust relationship and the unintended consequences of school policies contingent on the quality of interpersonal relations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the inclusion of student growth measures in the teacher evaluation process may alter teacher's perceptions of the trust relationship with building level administrators. Additionally, I gathered data about teacher perceptions of changes in classroom practices stemming from the implementation of Kansas' new teacher evaluation process. I organized the theoretical framework used to investigate the teacher and administrator trust relationship and the influence of adding SGMs to the teacher evaluation around the five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do teachers describe the nature of their trust relationship with administration prior to the introduction of student growth data?
2. How has the mandated inclusion of student growth data in the teacher evaluation process affected teacher trust in administration?
3. How have teachers changed their classroom practices in response to the mandated inclusion of student growth data in the teacher evaluation process?

The findings came from nine veteran teachers who ranged between 13-33 years of experience in education. The educators were employed in three different sized and geographically situated high schools: one rural, one town, and one suburban. Although the schools and experiences that formed the teachers' understandings of the issues examined in this study were different, their perceptions about trust relationships with administration, and the inclusion of SGMs, were similar.

5.1 How the Facets of Trust Influenced Teacher-Administrator Relationships

The most influential facet of trust was benevolence. This facet of trust developed through a series of personal exchanges between teachers and administration that confirmed care, support, and empathy in a professional setting. Teachers responded to benevolent behaviors from their administrators when they asked about their family, supported the teacher having a problem with a difficult student, found resources to facilitate the teaching of a unit, were empathetic with personal or professional situations, and generally looked out for the best interest of the teacher.

Teachers also perceived benevolence as present in a constructive relationship with administrators. When administrators helped teachers expand their knowledge and skills individually or as a collective school community, teachers understood these efforts as constructive and facilitative of professional growth. Factors in this type of relationship were based on common professional goals such as working toward the best interest of students, openness for change, and trust in the teacher's abilities as a professional educator. Working toward common goals and supporting each other demonstrated benevolence. Teachers involved in a benevolent relationship with their administrator displayed a willingness to problem-solve methods to implement the requirements of SGM into the teacher evaluation process in a manner that not only addressed the evaluation but also provided useful data to inform classroom practice. If benevolence was missing or damaged, the trust relationship was limited or non-existent, teachers reverted to protecting their self-interest. They become suspicious about the intentions of others, specifically administration and district level officials. Educators who felt their trust relationship with administration was somehow impaired were less likely to focus on the goals of

providing an environment conducive for student academic growth (Gareis & Tschannen-Moran, 2015).

The second facet of trust indicated as important was administrative and teacher reliability, or consistency and dependability. Teachers appreciated an administrator spending time in their classrooms on a regular basis, even if it was only for five minutes. Teachers believed this practice helped establish administrator reliability in evaluating their effectiveness. Additionally, teachers viewed this practice as beneficial for administrators seeking to firm-up their credibility as objective judges of the teacher's ability to manage a classroom and provide instruction. Feedback provided by an administrator after a classroom walk-through visit, increased communication, demonstrated follow-through, and provided a snapshot from the administration about the teacher's performance. Some teachers viewed feedback given in an email or through the evaluation software as immediate and positive while others saw it as beneficial but impersonal. The differences in the teachers' attitudes about the value of feedback demonstrated that in this regard, the individual needs of teachers are no different from the individual needs of students. Some teachers want continual reassurance, but others need little individual attention. One group of teachers may want to be told exactly what to do and when to do it whereas another group may want the flexibility to complete tasks in ways that work best for them. The range of individual teacher needs is vast--one size does not fit all, an important factor for administrators to remember when developing trust with teachers.

The complexity of teaching goes beyond the capacity of any single assessment tool to capture fully its subtleties. Classroom visits by administrators provided an alternate perspective of teacher abilities that differs significantly from interpretations based on assessment scores. Teachers revealed the value they placed on classroom visits in the comments they made about

administrators understanding the make-up of certain classes, the behavior of specific students, and recognizing the logic underlying changes they made in curriculum and instructional strategies. Teachers ascribed less concern about the influence of SGM in their evaluation if they believed their administrator had an understanding of the complexities regularly faced in the classroom.

For teachers, reliability hinged on the amount of benevolence they received from administrators. The two facets of trust--benevolence and reliability--appeared to be the most influential in the development of the teacher-administrator trust relationship. Belief that an administrator had the best interest of the teacher in mind and demonstrated this ideal through caring and supportive actions increased teachers' willingness to trust the administrator in the evaluation process. Teachers had faith that the evaluating administrator would take all factors (e.g., observations, conversations, student characteristics, curriculum alignments, assessment tools etc.) into consideration, not just student growth measures. However, benevolence and reliability were also the two elements of trust that were most at risk from outside forces. Pressure on administrators to act and respond to satisfy demands from the public, school boards, local community, or state regulations each had the potential of altering teacher perceptions of benevolence and reliability. A trust relationship could be damaged if teachers believed administrators chose public perceptions as a priority over protecting the integrity and interest of teachers. This translated into concerns that emerged in the evaluation process. Teachers worried that if a group of parents or a board of education member had an issue with a teacher and then saw a low SGM number, this combination of factors could become a justifiable reason to pressure an administrator to terminate that teacher's employment.

A third facet of trust I investigated was competence. Participants saw the provision of collaborative time, resources, and a conducive environment for teaching and learning as ways for administrators to effectively demonstrate competence. Conversely, teachers believed administrators viewed them as competent if they allowed them to demonstrate professional discretion in decision-making processes. Teachers were sensitive to professional slights. Several thought that administrators questioned their professional abilities if they tried to interfere in curriculum decisions that were content specific, especially when those teachers had years of experience and training in that specific area. This intrusion into their judgment and expertise was especially disheartening if the administrator had no background in the content area. Allowing teachers to exercise the full range of their professional capabilities in the area of curriculum and instruction enhanced the competency of an administrator as an instructional leader. When administrators acknowledged and respected a teacher's professional abilities, their motivation and self-efficacy increased. This finding is important because teachers with strong professional self-esteem and confidence about their pedagogical abilities are more effective in providing high quality instruction to students (Adams, 2006; Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Gareis & Tschannen-Moran, 2015). Teacher and administrator trust relationships are mutually dependent and can be strengthened if each believes in the competence of the other.

When teachers had solid trust relationships with their administrators, they were likely to accept at face value the information shared about the evaluation process and the inclusion of SGMs. This trust was contingent on believing that no relevant information was purposefully withheld, even though details such as how assessments data would be used and calculate into the evaluation were still being discerned at the state and local levels. Acceptance demonstrated the trust facets of honesty and openness. Teachers believed the administrators were gaining

knowledge about SGMs and assessments, just as they were, and were generous in their attitudes toward them. Nevertheless, uncertainty about data from newly developed state assessments, growth data used but in assignments but not assessed by the state, and whether evaluations would be shared between districts created a heightened level of anxiety for teachers. The lack of understanding by teachers and administrators of growth data, the evaluation process, and the long-term implications of the data included in the evaluation process was understood by teachers as issues originating at the state level. Although teachers shared a lack of trust in decisions and changes directed by state educational agencies, they did not associate this with a lack of honesty on the part of building administration. Honesty and openness remained intact only if the interactions between the teacher and administrator had been developed through previous encounters and continued to be demonstrated.

For teachers with low levels of administrator trust, the lack of specific details about how the inclusion of SGM to the evaluation process were to be implemented was perceived as suspicious. Worries about the underlying intent of adding growth scores to the evaluation became a center of attention and created paranoid, self-protective behaviors that not only influenced individual teachers with a diminished trust relationship but spread throughout the entire school building. Comments circulated in these schools about wanting to rid the district of high paid teachers and exchange them for less experienced teachers whose salaries were lower. There were similar rumors about wanting teachers who did not “rock the boat.” Speculation about the intentions of building administration, district administration, and state political figures jeopardized the stability of individual school cultures and seemed related to a break in trust between a teacher and administrator. However, administrators who were willing to listen to teacher concerns and consider their recommendations for meeting the assessment requirements

for SGM, validated openness and strengthened trust. Instrumental to the process of building trust between teachers and administrators was establishing mutual confidence in the abilities of each other to come to common agreements. Teachers whose trust relationships predated the introduction of the SGM policy believed administrators were honest and open when they reassured them things would be okay. In long established relationships, teachers also tended to believe that administrators were genuinely looking out for their best interests. Those with diminished trust relationships worried that the inclusion of SGMs in the teacher evaluation could be used as leverage to “get back” at teachers who questioned administration or caused problems.

5.2 How Trust Informed the Study’s Research Questions

My first main research question inquired about the teacher-administrator trust relationship prior to the inclusion of an SGM in the evaluation. It was evident from examining these relationships through the five facets of trust that for teachers who had developed a relationship based on benevolence and reliability, there was a well-established level of trust. None of the study participants indicated any concerns with the other three facets of trust if they viewed the first two (i.e., benevolence and reliability) as positive. One participant indicated a negative trust relationship and indicated the breakdown occurred in the violation of benevolent behaviors by both parties in the relationship. This collapse of benevolence made it impossible to build trust, even if the other facets had been positively in place. Not only was there an erosion of trust, but repair of the trust relationship appeared unlikely to happen. In this particular relationship, the lack of trust had a negative ripple effect on the rest of the building. Apparently, not only is trust hard to build; it is even harder to mend once it has been broken. Because teachers and administrators are only human, relationships reflect the complexity of each participant. Teachers, like students, have individual needs and bring to their relationships

individual personality traits and experiences. It is hard to predict how much damage trust can endure before negative results occur.

The second research question sought to understand the impact on the trust relationship of including an SGM in the teacher evaluation process. At the time of this study, because of a lack of understanding about the potential impact of adding an SGM to the evaluation, the newness of the requirement, and speculation at the state and federal levels of impending changes to education policy, the decision to add SGMs to the evaluation did not seem to significantly affect the trust relationship. For those teachers with a diminished trust relationship with their administration prior to the implementation, the uncertainties surrounding the addition of an SGM created concern and amplified suspicions about the intentions of administration. For participants who already enjoyed a solid trust relationship with their administrator, the addition of student growth scores to their assessment was mitigated by a belief that the administrator cared for the teacher and acted with their best interest in mind. Administrators demonstrated their confidence and concern through previous and current actions that enhanced any or all of the five facets of trust. Although teachers were generally not enthusiastic using SGM data in their evaluations, they tended to believe their administrators when they explained to them that this policy shift was not going to be an educational apocalypse and that the school mission would remain focused on serving the best interest of students. For those with poor trust, the addition of an SGM to their evaluation was patently unnerving. Study participants talked about engaging in self-protective behaviors and even paranoia among teachers with diminished trust relationships and how these reactions had widespread effects, interfering with department collaboration and diminishing the quality of the school climate. Fear of termination over student growth measures based on faulty

data was disconcerting to most participants. A firm trust relationship with administration, however, significantly diminished, if not eliminated, this fear.

The findings in this study are similar to those found by Bryk and Schneider (1996) in their study about the influence collective faculty trust has on schools. These researchers determined that trust is the glue that will make or break the success of school improvement initiatives. For teachers and administrators with strongly developed trust relationships and shared professional goals, teacher capacity to provide effective instruction and feelings of self-efficacy are likely to be enhanced. For teachers working without strong trust relationships, measuring performance in an evaluation using unreliable data is likely to decrease motivation and create a ripple effect that may diminish trust throughout the school.

5.3 The Influence of SGMs on Classroom Practice

Participants had varying opinions about the influence of SGMs on classroom practice. Despite these differences, however, all participants expressed concern with the specific data used for the SGM. Teachers understood that even a standardized test administered in an ideal testing environment does not take into account the varying degrees of individual student factors. Issues such as home environment, illness, socioeconomic background, stress related to peer interactions; academic progress, access to food, and a multitude of other factors affect individual students in different but important ways. Veteran teachers described specific situations when a particular student factor influenced a test score. These teachers saw test data as one piece of a larger puzzle used to understand a student. Misgivings arose with regard to the actual implementation of the SGMs and how decisions about including specific student data were to be decided. There was a generalized belief that the inability of the tests to control for extraneous factors made them an unreliable and invalid method for assessing teacher performance.

In-school and out-of-school effects on student test scores was an area of concern; what assessments were to be used as valid measures of student growth was another. For example, some districts used ACT scores. Teachers expressed concern about this instrument because not all students took the ACT and the scores represented only a small portion of the larger school community. Moreover, few schools in these districts aligned curriculum with the ACT. Teachers were justifiably troubled by the use of ACT scores belonging to students they may or may not have had in class and found it a stretch to claim the ACT was an accurate gauge of a teacher's performance. Local assessments such as curriculum probes, common department assessments, and teacher-constructed pre- and post-tests were more acceptable. With local assessments, teachers reported a stronger connection with the curriculum, assessment standards, and a general ability to test specific content. Teachers indicated that local assessments enabled them to provide valuable and timely feedback to students. Teachers saw advantages in local assessments in terms of addressing specific student needs and shoring up weaknesses in curriculum and instruction.

Nevertheless, some saw value in the data. Participants recognized the pedagogical purpose behind using student growth to evaluate teacher performance. Most agreed, in theory at least, that SGMs were not a bad idea. For instance, teachers thought the ability to compare a student's performance against state and national scores was important for targeting areas for improvement. Teachers clearly saw a benefit in using the data to guide instruction and design individual plans of study for students. Teachers wanted good data because good teachers work hard to tailor instruction and assessment to specific student needs.

In response to the more demanding pedagogical environment that included SGMs, several teachers reported that collaboration among colleagues provided critical support,

improved individual and collective performance, and stimulated idea development. The goal of breaking up, so-called, egg-carton schools hinged on embracing and supporting strong collaborative teams. Imposing initiatives that put negative pressure on trust relationships was likely to motivate teachers to revert to old habits and close their classroom doors.

All participants indicated limited confidence in data gathered from the current state assessments. Their concerns ranged from uncertainty about which standards were to be tested, how specific items were to be asked, lack of curriculum alignment due to changes in state standards, lack of understanding about test results, delay in receiving scores, and rumblings at the state level that standards and testing may change again soon. These concerns fell outside the control of a classroom teacher, as did personal and family issues students brought to the test, but they exerted a palpable influence on school climate nonetheless.

When considering the influence of SGMs on classroom practice, teachers did not necessarily see a direct correlation. Participants identified areas of uncertainty with the new evaluation method: a lack of clarity about the process, what the scores mean, and how scores would be translated into an effective and fair evaluation. It was difficult for some teachers to say they would make definitive changes in classroom practice as a direct result of SGMs. Teachers believed that systemic changes would not occur until a pattern of negative evaluations was established that were directly traceable to SGMs. On an encouraging note, participants shared how SGMs made them more reflective about finding ways to measure what students gained from being in their classes. They also expressed a desire to continue to implement interventions and processes that improved student performance. Still, teachers made it clear they would do this regardless of the evaluation process.

5.4 Unintended Consequences Resulting from SGMs

Participants expressed apprehensions about the change in trust and school climate if pressure to evaluate teachers using faulty SGM data continued. The process was new in Kansas and so the long-term consequences were hard to predict; however, teachers anticipated a negative consequence. Most participants believed that trust relationships with colleagues and administration already existed and did not want SGMs to undermine their continuation. Their immediate goal was to improve methods that addressed the needs of students. Would that goal remain the same if the inclusion of SGMs in the evaluation process motivated teachers to move into self-preservation mode, acting on their own behalf instead of for the students and the school? Participants believed that if tying individual student scores to specific teachers became the focus, teachers would respond to this disincentive by reducing collaboration and moving toward isolation. The idea of closing the classroom door and not working with others would be unintentionally reinforced at a time when schools were striving to reduce dependency on the factory model and encourage more transparency and collaboration. Under the competitive logic of the factory model, a teacher is unlikely to share strategies or lessons with another teacher if there is a risk that the other teacher will net higher test scores as a result.

A second concern applied to teaching assignments and how, under this new evaluation regime, teachers were to be assigned what students. There was a fear that teachers would see low-performing students as liabilities, not opportunities. Teachers viewing students in this manner have the potential to harm children cognitively and emotionally. This fear is hardly irrational; it is common for people to reveal a harsh judgment a teacher made to them in the past about not amounting to anything. These observations stay with students because to some extent, they permanently damaged the student-teacher relationship. A student who feels a teacher does

not care or expect much from them will not be of a mindset to learn. If improving student achievement is the overarching purpose for adding SGM to the evaluation process, this consequence should be factored in before irreparable harm is done.

5.5 Implications

Trust relationships in a school culture increase or inhibit the implementation of initiatives targeting school improvement such as curriculum adoptions, instructional strategies, positive behavioral supports, multi-tiered systems of support, professional learning communities, and data-driven decision making, to name a few (Adams, 2008; Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams, 2006; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Many people find accepting and incorporating change a challenge but in educational institutions, constant change is the reality. Teacher and administrative relationships based on trust can mitigate the stress of change initiatives that create anxiety and discomfort. Working with teachers to implement new strategies or initiatives on top of existing ones or in place of others not yet fully implemented is intrinsic to the culture of schools. Creating a school climate of trust between administrators and teachers is vital if the goal is to implement reform efforts that aim to improve student academic performance. School environments with high trust levels are positive and collaborative, a combination that increases teacher motivation and self-efficacy. If teachers believe they are effective and receive candid feedback and regular support from administration, good things are likely to happen for students. Teachers with reasons to be mistrustful tend to isolate themselves and will often limit their collaboration with colleagues and make only a minimal effort in the classroom.

Teachers want quality data to help guide instructional practices. Finding a balance between data to improve student performance and data used to gauge teacher performance is

important. Teachers do not see value in evaluations based on faulty data. Study participants saw value in multiple measures and opportunities to evaluate their performance. Ideas ranged from observations, portfolios, interviews, and the standard quantitative assessment scores. Teachers want to be good at their craft. They know a single test score cannot define the effectiveness of a teacher; no assessment given can take into account all the intricate human factors that influence achievement scores. Similarly, they understand that no evaluation process can take into consideration the complexity of teaching and learning. Nonetheless, teachers believe that regardless of any faults, an accountability system is necessary to protect the integrity of the profession and push educators to improve. Finding a system that includes measures of student growth along with other measures that can identify teacher strengths and weaknesses is a formidable challenge but one worth striving to perfect. Changing the ideology of evaluation from a punitive process (loss of employment, pay, etc.) to one focused on providing professional development that strengthens individual and collective goals may do more, in the long term, to improve the academic achievement of students than approaches currently in use.

Administrators must become cognizant (or more fully cognizant) of the important role played by trust in developing a collaborative school culture. Taking the time to visit with teachers when walking down the hall, sending a personal email to see how things are going, showing care and compassion, providing supports, building in collaborative time, and demonstrating dependability are different ways to build trust. Toward this end, small consistent actions may be more effective at paving the way toward increasing trust relationships than one-time, grand interventions. In an era when leadership credibility is under increased scrutiny, it is understandable how easily administrators can find themselves consumed with managerial tasks, leaving little time for instructional leadership or culture building. Teachers depend on

administrators to create environments that facilitate teaching and learning. This means providing resources, encouraging collaboration, and recognizing the professional attributes and individual trust needs of teachers.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Individual Interview Protocol

Hello, my name is Catherine Wilson and I represent Wichita State University as a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program. I appreciate your willingness to participate in my dissertation research. This study will examine how the inclusion of student growth measures included in the teacher evaluation process may be altering the perception teachers have about the teacher-administrator trust relationship and if this has any influence on classroom practices. You have been selected because of your veteran experience as a high school teacher and courses you teach. Please keep in mind this study is seeking your perception about the inclusion of student growth data to the teacher evaluation system.

Before we begin, I would like to share a few procedures for our conversation. With your permission, I would like to audio record our conversations for response clarity and accurate analysis of data when reporting the findings of this study. I will ask you to state your name, position, and years of teaching to begin the interview. After the initial transcription, the names will be replaced with pseudonyms and subsequent analysis will result in text without identifiers. Although we will be on a first name basis, no names or identifying comments will be used when I report the results of this session. You can be assured of complete confidentiality. This individual interview session will last approximately 45-75 minutes. Again, thank you for your participation.

1. How long have you been a teacher in this building?
Describe your teaching assignment.(*Background*)
2. How long have you worked with your current administrator?(*Background*)
 - How long has he/she been an administrator in the building?
 - What prior knowledge did you have about your administrator?
3. Describe the nature of your relationship with the administrator who is responsible for your evaluation?(*Benevolence*)
4. How do you describe the way administration assesses your ability as a teacher?(*Reliability*)
5. How does your evaluating administrator assist you with curriculum?
 - Instruction?
 - Classroom management?
 - Duties as a teacher?(*Competence*)
6. What evaluation tool does your district use?(*Background*)
 - How long has the tool been in place?
 - Explain the training you received?
7. How has your administration communicated the addition of SGM to the teacher evaluation process?(*Openness/Honesty*)
 - What assessments are used?
 - How many years have they been used?
8. How much weight do SGMs have to your overall evaluation rating? (*Honesty*)
9. Explain your perception of how the use of SGMs in your evaluation influences your work as a teacher.

APPENDIX A (continued)

10. Has the addition of SGM to your evaluation resulted in changes to your classroom practices?

- Why or why not have you made changes?

APPENDIX B



*Department of Counseling, Educational Leadership, Educational and School Psychology
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142*

Individual Interview Consent Form

Purpose: You are invited to participate in a research study that will examine teacher perceptions about the inclusion of student growth measures to the teacher evaluation process and how it may be altering the teacher-administrator trust relationship and classroom practices.

Participant Selection: You were selected as a possible participation in this study based on your veteran experience as a high school teacher and courses you teach. Approximately 9 individuals have been invited to participate in an individual interview.

Explanation of Procedures: If you decide to participate, you will be asked to be involved in an individual interview conducted by me. The interview will consist of 10 open-ended questions to seek your perception of the use of student growth measures to the teacher evaluation process and its effect on the teacher-administrator trust relationship and classroom practices. An example of a question is, "How has your administration communicated the addition of SGM to the teacher evaluation process." The interview will last approximately 45-75 minutes and at a mutually agreed location. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview so an accurate transcript can be created which will facilitate data analysis and assist me in reporting accurate findings.

Discomfort/Risks: There are minimal risks, discomforts, or inconveniences expected from your participation in this study. Sharing your perceptions about your relationship with your administrator is sensitive information. The information shared will be confidential. However, if you are uncomfortable with a question, you may skip it.

Benefits: The purpose of this study is to understand the perceptions high school teachers have about the inclusion of student growth measures to the teacher evaluation process effects the teacher-administrator trust relationship and classroom practices. The results of the study will inform readers of the perceptions of teachers have about the influence the inclusion of student growth measures has on their trust relationship with their administrator and on their classroom practices. This study hopes to add to the body of knowledge student growth measures use in teacher evaluations and trust relationships in schools. Results may be published in journals and presented at conferences so I can share with others what is learned from the study.

APPENDIX B (continued)

Confidentiality: Every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, in order to make sure the study is done properly and safely there may be circumstances where this information must be released. By signing this form, you are giving the research team permission to share information about you with the following groups:

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Wichita State University Institutional Review Board;

The researchers may publish the results of the study. If they do, they will only discuss group results. Your name will not be used in any publication or presentation about the study.

Recordings and transcriptions of the interviews will be stored in a secure, online, password-protected program. At the conclusion of the study, transcripts and recordings will be stored in a single password protected file and maintained indefinitely at WSU by my dissertation committee chair. Transcripts and recordings will not be labeled with identifiable information. The anonymity of all participants will be preserved in presentations of the research findings, written and oral, published and unpublished. No one other than me and my dissertation committee chair at Wichita State University will have access to the raw data.

Refusal/Withdrawal: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with Wichita State University, the researchers, or your school district. If you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You will be provided with a copy of this consent form for your records.

Contact: If you have any questions about this study, please contact Catherine Wilson, (316) 655-1659(personal phone) e-mail cgwilson@wichita.edu or my advisor Dr. Eric Freeman, (316) 978-6392 (office phone) e-mail eric.freeman@wichita.edu. If you have questions pertaining to your rights as a subject, or about research-related injury, you can contact Office of Research and Technology Transfer at Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount Street, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that:

- You have read (or someone has read to you) the information provided above,
- You are aware that this is a research study,
- You have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to your satisfaction, and
- You have voluntarily decided to participate.

You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

APPENDIX B (continued)

Printed Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

Printed Name of Witness

Witness Signature

Date