

**A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF A NEW TEACHER EVALUATION POLICY ON THE
WORK OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

A Dissertation by

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The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education with a major in Educational Leadership.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my family. To my parents for their constant encouragement and support in all things. They taught me the value of hard work, persistence, and compassion. To my children, Taylor and Garrett, whose own hard work and academic dedication was an inspiration to their father. Finally, to my amazing wife for her patient encouragement and support as I have pursued a number of personal and professional goals. Her passionate dedication to children inspires me every single day.

“Do not pray for an easy life, pray for the strength to endure a difficult one.” – Bruce Lee

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Thank God for all the blessings in my life. I pray I can live and serve in a way that inspires others as I have been inspired.

ABSTRACT

Public schools are arguably the most diverse and challenging organizations to lead due to the vast number and type of stakeholders as well as the vulnerable clientele within. The continually rising demands of leading public schools is both rewarding and exhausting. The purpose of this study was to learn about how principals perceive their workload, additional requirements, and develop strategies to effectively implement and manage a new mandate. The study used a new teacher evaluation requirement as the new mandate that has the potential to increase the overall workload of the high school principal. The school principal, historically, has been the person tasked with taking on additional duties in order to allow teachers to spend their time focusing on classroom instruction. However, over time, an expectation of instructional leadership has been added to the principal's job requirements.

This basic qualitative study was conducted across a diverse range of high schools across Kansas. Twelve high school principals were purposefully selected to represent schools of various sizes, differing current and previous evaluation models, and varied amounts of administrative experience. A conceptual framework consisting of contingency theory and open systems theory was used to examine the phenomenon. Interview data was coded and analyzed and, as themes emerged, three major findings were developed. First, principals recognized and expressed frustration in the difference between what they were expected to do and what they were able to do as a school leader. Second, a number of challenges prevented principals from implementing the new evaluation process with fidelity. Finally, principals shared the strategies they developed to address challenges and survive in their role. It was clear that if teacher evaluations are to be completed as intended, a systemic change in either the leadership structure of schools or in the framework of the evaluation model will have to take place.

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CHAPTER 1

Public schools in the United States are a constant focus of attention, whether a source of pride or the target of blame for whatever societal success or problem exists at the time.

American schools are unique in that they were established and exist to educate all students and serve the greater good. This broad scope creates a dynamic inviting numerous stakeholders to influence public schools operation and goals (Mazzoni, 1994; Moynihan & Hawes, 2012). These stakeholders, parents, business owners, legislators, special interest groups, and numerous others impart their influence by creating policies and mandates which require action and reaction by those tasked with educating children.

The most recent example of an external influence on education was the federal legislative reform initiative, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001). This reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), aimed at closing the racial achievement gap and ensuring accountability for federal spending, forced schools to contend with the challenge of using high-stakes tests to measure student and school effectiveness (Noddings, 2007). The measure of NCLB success was to ensure all students met a proficient standard in reading and math by the year 2014. When Congress failed to reauthorize ESEA and the 100% proficient deadline approached, the predictable failure of an unattainable goal for all schools became eminent (McDermott, 2007; Mickelson, Giersch, Stearns, & Moller, 2013). The United States Department of Education (USDE) developed a state-level waiver system, or NCLB flexibility, which would allow states to “opt-out” of NCLB (United States Department of Education, 2014). The waiver required states to apply for the flexibility and outline the steps ensuring compliance with four separate principles of school accountability. The four principles include the establishment of college and career-ready standards, a recognition of differentiation in learning,

effective instruction and school leadership, and academic efficiency. Every state has the ability to decide how each principle will be addressed. Many states, including Kansas, have adopted the rigorous Common Core set of standards in order to meet the first principle. The third principle, addressing the establishment of high standards for instruction and leadership, was the focus of this research. Specifically, the time and labor-intensive practice of teacher evaluations by building-level principals was investigated.

Research Problem

The work of evaluating teachers is both valuable and time-consuming when done as prescribed (Murphy, Hallinger, & Heck, 2013). High school principals feeling the pressure to not only comply with new state requirements but also to use the evaluation tool as intended may struggle to adequately perform other assigned duties. The role of the high school principal is complex, diverse, and changes from day to day and year to year (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). High school principals are tasked with a variety of duties that range from monitoring a crowded lunchroom to confronting an angry parent to developing plans for instructional improvement.

The current picture of the principalship involves two separate and somewhat overlapping roles, which include the role of school manager and the role of instructional leader. These roles can vary depending on a number of factors, including school size, principal experience, school demographics, administrative leadership structure, and external and internal pressures (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Grubb & Flessa, 2006). These roles each have primary functions which can both complement each other and compete for the principal's time, depending on the priorities placed on each role and the skill with which the principal can balance the two. High school principals who are able to mesh many of the tasks required by each role, are able to

effectively run a school while continually developing the instructional program. In contrast, principals who treat these roles as separate responsibilities, or who limit the value of one role, may struggle under the pressure applied by those who expect both roles be skillfully addressed (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003; D. P. Thompson, McNamara, & Hoyle, 1997). This conflict of roles can compound the challenges that are already inherent in the profession (Dimmock, 1996; Portin, Jianping Shen, & Williams, 1998; Southworth, 2002).

One of those roles, the school manager, is task-oriented and involves routines such as completion of required clerical work, staff meetings, student supervision, parent communication, and activity planning (Goodwin et al., 2003; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010). While there may be some flexibility in the timing and deadlines to complete these management tasks, they are still critical to the daily operation of the school. In fact, the perception of a successful school and principal by some stakeholders is based solely on the efficiency and organization of the school day (Spillane, Camburn, & Stitzel Pareja, 2007; Spillane & Hunt, 2010).

The second primary function of the principal, the instructional leader, has continued to gain popularity during the past four decades. Tasks associated with the instructional leadership role involve managing and monitoring instructional practices and design, working directly with teachers and students on academic goals, and the supervision and evaluation of teachers (Walker, 2009). The instructional leadership ability of the principal became a focus as an important characteristic of a quality principal in the 1980's with the introduction of effective schools research and standards-based education reforms (Hallinger, 1992; Kafka, 2009). The principal's involvement in developing and monitoring comprehensive, school-wide instructional practices began to consume more of the principals' time and attention. The pressures created by this

additional role by external stakeholders and policymakers have only added to the difficulty of the principalship (Gronn & Rawlings-Sanaei, 2003).

There is little argument that the high school principal is a key figure in both the way the school is perceived by parents and the community (Goldring & Greenfield, 2002; Møller, 2009) as well as the impact they have on student achievement (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). The value of each of these two major principal roles is critical to the continued growth and improvement of the school. The problem that exists is how principals balance their limited time, knowledge, and focus to the tasks required to be both the school manager and instructional leader.

As the role of the high school principal has expanded from an origin of school manager to include instructional leader, only a minimal amount of financial or personnel support has been added (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Eagle, 2005). Providing additional support for the principal is difficult due to a lack of funding available, the negative political perception of school administration, and a lack of quality candidates for the positions if they were added (Gajda & Militello, 2008; Gronn & Rawlings-Sanaei, 2003; Stone-Johnson, 2014; Whitaker, 2001). Financially, schools must constantly and carefully manage a tax-dependent budget and be good stewards of their constituencies' money. School budgets tend to have limited flexibility and minimal growth, so adding support personnel would likely mean the deletion of another position, program, or activity. Another issue that makes the addition of administrative support difficult to accomplish is the politics surrounding the perception of the school bureaucracy (Meier, Polinard, & Wrinkle, 2000). Because schools are funded by taxpayers, the scrutiny of additional staffing not directed towards the classroom may not be worth the negative politics faced by the district office or school board. Teachers are also likely to be critical of the additional support or

expenditures, as they themselves may desire to receive the additional dollars. As additional tasks and responsibilities are required, it is much easier for the district office or school board to view the principal as the expert, “heroic leader” who has the knowledge and skills to take on these additional duties without the need to expend additional dollars or face a potential public backlash (Thomson, 2004, p. 47). One of these additional duties is the new teacher evaluation system being implemented throughout the U.S. to comply with federal policy, whether Race to the Top or ESEA Flexibility Waivers.

These teacher evaluation models mandated by federal policy, approved by the state, and required of each district may be time and labor-intensive for school principals. In a job already saturated with time-demanding tasks and intense scrutiny, the additional responsibilities required by the new evaluation models may create a number of issues in the profession or in education as a whole. In the face of these new demands, principals may be required to spend less time on tasks necessary to run the school efficiently and effectively. The diminished capacity of the principalship may become increasingly problematic as previous job responsibilities continue to exist but with less time available to complete them. Gronn and Rawlings-Sanaei (2003) found that principals already consumed by their jobs may burn-out and leave the profession earlier than they would have otherwise. They also recognized that teachers witnessing the hardships placed on principals may be less inclined to move into those positions later in their career. Each of these potential problems is detrimental to education and the work of educators because of the impact they have on the school leader. Necessary school management and leadership tasks may get forgotten, ignored, minimalized, or burn out the principal altogether. Through exhaustion or attrition, this could ultimately lead to an overall reduction in the quality of school leadership across the state and country (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Whitaker, 2003).

A paradox that principals could be struggling with in relation to the additional time and work associated with the new evaluation models is they may view the evaluation process as having a valuable purpose and likely believe they are beneficial to the improvement of instruction and overall student growth. Effective school leaders want to perform the activities necessary to help teachers and students be successful, but at what cost (Klocko & Wells, 2015)? What are they willing and able to give up or let go of to accomplish the work required to meet the demands of the new evaluation model (Hornig et al., 2010)? It may also be possible that, over time, principals find ways around the observation and evaluation mandate in order to manage their schools and the essential operational demands. This circumvention would create another gap between educational policy and practice, that is, the intention of school leaders and the reality of life in the principalship.

The increasing demands of the high school principal as the managerial head of the school as well as the increased expectations to be the instructional leader has created a professional responsibility gap as well as a limit to the quality of work completed. The intensification of roles and oversaturation of responsibilities has crept up so slowly that it has been difficult to address politically. Principals tend to be effective and efficient leaders able to sufficiently balance the assigned tasks and meet the expectations of their constituents (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). But, it may be these skills of organizational effectiveness invite added responsibilities without the support needed to adequately meet them.

External application of tasks or duties, whether they are new or modifications of existing responsibilities, impact a principal's work load and work routines. In order to further understand the complexity of the situation in Kansas, where the study was conducted, an explanation of the teacher evaluation practices will be important. Because the supervision and evaluation of

teachers is a major responsibility assigned to the high school principal, modifications to the requirements and processes can create a problem.

Teacher Evaluation Mandate in Kansas

In July of 2012 a waiver submitted by the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) for a reprieve from the federal No Child Left Behind requirements was granted (Kansas Department of Education, 2014a). This waiver provided KSDE with the flexibility to develop a set of standards and expectations to meet the needs of students in Kansas. Consequently, during the past five years, in an effort to move beyond the federally mandated No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) has been transitioning to a new accreditation model, has adopted the Common Core State Standards, and is currently implementing new testing requirements (Kansas Department of Education, 2014a).

A significant component of the federal waiver includes the state adoption of a teacher evaluation system that meets certain, stringent requirements. To meet this guideline, KSDE developed a set of criteria that all public schools must include in their teacher evaluation models. Teacher evaluation models approved by KSDE are research-based and claim to use the process of teacher evaluation and supervision to improve student performance. The evaluation system adopted by each Kansas public school must be used to promote continual teacher growth, identify differentiated performance, and be based on valid measures. Each school was required to have its evaluation system approved by KSDE and began implementation in the 2014-2015 school year.

Prior to the NCLB Flexibility waiver, schools were required by state statute to evaluate non-tenured teachers twice annually in their first two years in the district and then once annually during the subsequent two years. Once a teacher has been removed from probationary status he

or she was to be evaluated once every three years (Kansas Legislature, 2013). Schools had the authority to develop local expectations, either through board of education policy or contractual agreements, outlining the number of classroom observations, principal-teacher conferences, goal-setting procedures, or self-evaluations. However, even prior to the NCLB waiver application neither Kansas statute nor KSDE provided specific guidance for the evaluation process nor were there methods for ensuring compliance. Even though state statute remains the same and dictates the number of formal evaluations required for each teacher, this requirement in the NCLB waiver raises the accountability of the principal to ensure completeness of the evaluation process for all teachers in the district that are to be evaluated per state statute.

In order to facilitate the school adoption and implementation of teacher evaluation programs, KSDE pre-approved three specific models which meet NCLB waiver guidelines. As described in the background of this proposal, three models serve as templates for the teacher evaluation protocols schools must adopt in order to achieve these state developed criteria (Danielson, 2007; Kansas Department of Education, 2010; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). One model includes the KSDE developed Kansas Educator Evaluation Protocol (KEEP) as the standard for evaluation systems (Kansas Department of Education, 2010). KSDE has also approved the evaluation models developed by the Mid-Continent Education Research Laboratory (McREL) based on Robert Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works* (Marzano et al., 2001) and the model developed by Charlotte Danielson (Danielson, 2007). In Kansas, the Danielson framework was used as the foundation for the development of the Southwest Plains Regional Service Center's (SWPRSC) e4E teacher evaluation model. Schools were also able to continue using or modify their current evaluation model, providing it met the criteria established by KSDE.

All three KSDE approved models are very similar and contain major domains used to organize the evaluation process and include classroom strategies and behavior, planning and preparing, reflecting on teaching, and collegiality and professionalism. Successful implementation of these approved models requires numerous classroom observations, evaluation of student performance data, review of instructional artifacts, administrator-teacher conferences, the completion of a comprehensive evaluation report, and potentially the development of an action plan for teacher improvement. Differences between the models are subtle and include terminology variations as well as the timing and number of teacher conferences and observations.

The evaluation models list requirements for principals, such as a review of teacher artifacts to support evaluation criteria, the implementation and review of multiple student growth measures, numerous observation conferences with teachers, completions of narrative summaries of teacher observations and conferences, and the completion of a comprehensive evaluation report. These requirements, while well-intentioned, continue to expand the growing set of responsibilities being placed on the desk of the principal (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). Prior to the KSDE adopted guidelines, some schools across the state were already using these or similar models as their approved evaluation protocol. Other schools, however, used evaluation systems requiring much less time on the part of the principal. It was these principals, who recently transitioned to a teacher evaluation model requiring more time and work, who were the focus of this study.

Conceptual Framework

The educational arena is both unique and complex. The business of school is to develop a product no other organization can, a societally productive young adult while the overall

purpose of a business is to produce a product or service and yield a profit. Despite the purposeful difference between schools, a number of reasonable comparisons can be made between the two types of organizations. Each deal with budgets, patrons, legal issues, and an employee hierarchy. From the business or organizational perspective, the school principal is positioned in the middle of the school bureaucracy. From a bureaucratic perspective, principals are the middle managers of the school system and have little voice in the roles they play due to their position in the professional hierarchy (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). They guide and direct the work of teachers and other support staff while following the policies and mandates prescribed by the district office and school board. It is this position in the school setting, similar to the middle manager in the corporate world, that makes balancing task demands and leadership roles problematic internally as well as externally (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). From this position, principals contend with push and pull from numerous stakeholders on each side of the organizational spectrum. School boards, superintendents, and community leaders establish expectations leading to results while teachers, students, and parents demand valuable time and attention. What makes this middle-management position even more difficult is the growing divide between the two major roles principals are expected to constantly fulfill, that of the instructional leader and school manager.

This study was framed by viewing the public high school as a complex organization. Two organizational theories, contingency theory and open systems theory, provided an ideal lens in which to view the complexity of the school principal role when an external mandate is applied. Organizational theory is a large body of work which helps to explain how businesses and other organizations operate. The study of organizations is founded on the work of Max Weber who developed what is now known as bureaucratic management, or bureaucracy (Weber,

1947). Weber's theory of bureaucracy helped outline the organizational structure necessary for companies to perform at peak efficiency by creating a managerial hierarchy and using a strictly developed set of operational rules and the specialized training of staff. Then, in the early 1900's, Fredrick Taylor's theory of scientific management gained many followers in both the business and educational community (Foster, 1986). Scientific management, or Taylorism, is founded on the belief that there is a single best way to complete any task, formalizing an organization to operate much like a machine (Taylor, 1914). These fundamental operational structures for organizations created a model for the efficient development of products but are not without flaws, most of which are created by the human aspect of an organization.

While the rigidly structured framework proposed by Weber and Taylor for organizational efficiency is prevalent in schools, the uniqueness of the more personal business of education made the application of bureaucracy and scientific management problematic. These rigid theories of organizational operation, also considered authoritarian and directive, have opposing arguments. Some forms of organizational structure and leadership involve the collaboration of multilevel participants in decision-making. These perspectives, called humanistic, democratic, organic, and supportive sit on the opposite end of the spectrum to those proposed by Weber and Taylor (Owens, 2011; J. D. Thompson, 1967). It is the space between these two views of organizational theory where contingency theory falls (Fiedler, 1967; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967).

Contingency Theory

Contingency theory contradicts the view of organizational efficiency models of Weber and Taylor with the belief that there is not a single best way to make an organization effective (J. D. Thompson, 2011). As an organization works to effectively operate it will continually seek out contingencies and address them individually. The predictability of these contingencies is

possible but where, how, and to what extent can vary widely. For the sake of self-preservation, the organization continually seeks out the most effective way to deal with contingencies as they arise (Owens, 2011). Two separate perspectives of contingency theory can be applied to schools. The first perspective looks at how the school system is organized to address the internal and external contingencies and self-correct effectively. The second perspective views the leadership of the school and the ability to address contingencies effectively (Chance, 2009). Schools have a large and evolving set of variables which contribute to the varying set of contingencies schools and school leaders must address to preserve the integrity of the organization.

From an organizational perspective, both the school and school leadership practice fall into the gap between the structure of a bureaucracy and the more humanistic democracy (Marion & Gonzales, 2013). Schooling tradition and external expectations call for order and efficiency but the work of teachers and the personal nature of education requires a more humanistic structure. It is because of this paradox the framework for this study was contingency theory, which helped understand how principals lead and manage their schools while addressing the additional workload of an externally mandated policy.

Open Systems Theory

Understanding how general organizational theory can apply to the operation of a school, one must also have some understanding of open systems theory. During the middle of the 20th century, Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1956b) theorized and described how most phenomena functioned as a system and the parts of the system were dependent only on those entities within the system. Later, Boulding (1964) theorized on complex systems being open, and could be influenced by their environments as well as create their own external influence. It was Thompson (1967) who described open systems as made up of multiple and unpredictable

variables and comprised of numerous interdependent components. The goal of an open system is to survive and when the expected dysfunction of a system component occurs, other components will adjust or the system will degenerate. Schools tend to function as complex open systems, with a large number of influences, yet are difficult to change systemically. This perspective of the school organization makes the application of contingency theory valuable in this study.

A model of social systems developed by Getzel and Guba (1957) provides a conceptual representation of the school organization and the internal and external dynamics that affect it. This model is comprised of two parts. The organizational dimension of the system, or nomothetic component, comprises the structure of assigning roles and establishing expectations. The personal dimension, or idiographic component, is made up of individuals each having their own needs and dispositions. The exterior portion of the model is outlined by an environment that can influence the internal components of the system. It is this open system perspective of a school, with both the internal bureaucratic and humanistic dynamic at play, along with external contingencies, which framed the study. Abbott (1965) expanded this model and described how these variables and contingencies should all be considered when designing the organization of the school and selecting the leadership (Owens, 2011). Creating a structural balance between the principal and teachers along with their respective skills and dispositions make the effective management and resolution of contingencies possible (Marion & Gonzales, 2013).

The premise of contingency theory created an ideal lens in which to study how the addition of work responsibilities to the principalship was perceived and managed by principals. In this study, I examined the school and the work of the principal in the context of a large, complex open system. This perspective considered the influence of multiple variables and contingencies that must routinely and effectively be addressed not only for the survival of the

school but for the promotion of continual improvement. The addition of a new, for some schools, system of evaluating teachers was used as the externally applied contingency into an open system. The characteristics of school leaders and their experiences were valuable in addressing the numerous contingencies that can arise in a school from day to day or year to year. From an organizational perspective, the kind of bureaucracy that exists in a school and the level of influence it has in addressing contingencies were also important to consider.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the complexity of the principalship in order to understand how a policy mandate affected their work. The framework for the study provided the field with a perspective of the principalship with respect to the introduction of a major initiative or mandate. There is a great deal of research regarding the work that principals do, the demands that are placed on their position, how the work has changed over time, and alternatives to the predominate organizational structure of educational leadership (Goodwin et al., 2005; Thomson, 2004; Walker, 2009). However, there is little research available on how a specific mandate or initiative impacts the work responsibilities of the principal. Because this study was conducted during the initial years of a required mandate that impacts the work of so many principals, the findings of this study provide the field with an account of how principals have managed the changes and what impact it has had on the profession and education. Additionally, the research provided a comprehensive look at the strategies principals used to navigate their jobs and daily lives as the internal and external expectations of stakeholders continually fluctuate.

Research Questions

The study examined how the increased workload and expectations of a new teacher evaluation model impacted the work of a high school principal. To examine this in the detail needed, the study was guided by three research questions:

- 1) How do high school principals define and prioritize the specific roles and responsibilities of their jobs?
- 2) How do high school principals describe ways the new evaluation system impacts their job?
- 3) What strategies do high school principals employ in order to better perform the specific roles and responsibilities of their jobs?

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

A review of the literature clarifies the problem of adding new responsibilities to the already task saturated work of principals. The review also helps provide a perspective of the study by examining the research that exists on the history of the principal's role in schools, the unique nature of the school organization, and the use and value of teacher evaluation in schools.

History of the Principalship

The modern day principal has evolved significantly during the past two centuries. While evidence suggests there has always been an expectation that principals be actively involved in the teaching and learning aspect of the school, the expectation of that role has ramped up significantly during the past thirty years (Kafka, 2009). The principal's job has evolved from its origins as a principal teacher, responsible for daily clerical and janitorial work for a few hours of the day (Pierce, 1935) to the "heroic" figure in charge of facilities, budgets, student behavior and learning, and supervision of teaching staff (Thomson, 2004, p. 47). As the American value of public education grew over time, so have the expectations of the principal (Kafka, 2009).

During the early 1800's, schools functioned without principals, requiring teachers to attend to their own managerial tasks while superintendents and boards of education made administrative decisions (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Then, during the mid-1800's, schools began to see the first wave of reform in the form of graded classrooms and expansion of the bureaucracy. At this time, large schools began using full-time principals to manage a growing student and staff population as well as the newly structured classrooms (Pierce, 1935). At the turn of the next century, principals began to gain wide acceptance as the authority in their schools and a significant figure in their communities (Tyack & Hansot, 1982).

National principal organizations were developed under the umbrella of the National Education Association. An increase in certification requirements and the development of university preparation programs signified a professional distinction (Brown, 2005). It was at this time principals were given great authority, autonomy, and respect by both school superintendents and teachers to be the democratic head of the school (Goodwin et al., 2005). During the mid-1900's, the authority of principals grew using public relations to expand their community reach and become more actively involved in parent and civic organizations (Cuban, 1988). Later in the 20th century, as federal mandates filtered through the public schools, the management role of the principal intensified. At the same time, effective schools research became the catalyst to ignite an education reform wave and the increased value of instructional leadership from the principal's desk (Hallinger, 1992). Finally, as the 20th century came to a close, principals were structuring school staff and curriculum to meet the standardized accountability demands of the federally mandated No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ("No Child Left Behind Act," 2002). With this movement came the threat of sanctions for schools not meeting an increasingly difficult student achievement standard each year (Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008). This new level of accountability and expectation increased the pressure on principals to become leaders of their schools.

Role Duality of the Principal

Prior to the effective schools movement of the 1980's, the work of the principal was viewed as mostly managerial, having little impact on the process of instruction or student achievement (Peterson, 1977; Wolcott, 1973). However, schools today require more than someone to deal with the day-to-day managerial demands of the organization. Principals are being called upon to be the leaders of their schools, that is, to engage in curricular and instructional decision-making with and for the teachers (Nettles & Herrington, 2007). These two

roles, both necessary, require different sets of skills, training, and time but are being placed in the hands of the same person. As external expectations of accountability have risen, so has the additional task of instructional leadership been placed on the principal's repertoire (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). While the managerial responsibilities of the principal remain constant, the task of working with teachers and students to improve learning continues to expand the role and increase the demand of the principal's time (Walker, 2009).

With the growing call for more emphasis to be placed on the instructional leadership role, principals still struggle finding the time to devote to this aspect of the job. In a typical work week, principals are spending between eight and thirteen hours on instructional leadership, depending on the demands required by the school context (Goldring, Huff, May, & Camburn, 2008). Even more problematic are the unrealistic expectations placed on principals to not only balance the work but know all that is expected from wide-ranging instructional strategies to test-taking skills, to available instructional tools, to analysis of student test scores (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Spillane et al., 2007). As the instructional leadership component of the principal's job description expands, even less time is available for the professional development needed to improve those skills.

As teachers transition and train to become principals, the coursework involves management-heavy topics including legal and organizational issues that are necessary to be successful in the position (Cuban, 1988; Murphy, 1992). Little time or training is spent on the instructional supervision portion of the principal's job (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). School management and leadership are often learned, like many other professionals, using an apprenticeship model. That is, principals learn how to be principals and develop their own strategies by observing their supervisors while teaching or serving as assistant principals (Brazer

& Bauer, 2013; Greenfield, 1995). This method of learning simply means that principals are using management and leadership strategies derived from theories, which established the educational bureaucracy paradigm a century ago.

Schools as Unique Organizations to Lead

It is hard to argue, although often done by policymakers, that schools cannot be compared to other organizations in the way they operate, are managed, and in what is produced. Principals must often navigate a number of obstacles that exist in the world of public education.

Challenges vary from state to state and school to school depending on governing statutes, community size, population demographics, and school climate. External expectations create a continually moving target and often schools are publicly ridiculed for underperforming in one area or another. Greenfield (1995) described schools as “uniquely moral enterprises” and “the most normative of organizations” to explain why their management and leadership is so critical, yet difficult (p. 61-62). Greenfield (2002, p. 3) identified four characteristics of school administration that separate it from leadership in other organizations. These four characteristics include “The moral dimensions; stewardship of the public’s trust; complexity of the core schooling activities; and the highly normative and people-intensive character of the school workplace.” The work of educating children requires an inherently moral and ethical set of personal character traits that are used to guide the decisions of the principal. Principals often must make decisions regarding what is best for all students of a school but may be detrimental to some. Strong stewardship of the school and educational value to students and society is an imperative attribute of a school principal. The school leader must be at the forefront of education policy and garner public support in order to protect the interests of all children, especially those already disadvantaged. The range of student and teacher backgrounds, skills,

and personalities enhance the complexity of the school setting only compounding the challenge of leadership. Finally, the very personal and normative aspect of the school organization makes the work of school leadership like an art. The collaborative and trust-building skills needed to effectively communicate with teachers, district leaders, parents, and community members to create positive change, both small and large, make the work of the principal unique and complex (Greenfield, 1985). These characteristics highlight the potential and ongoing challenges that exist for school leaders who must constantly balance decisions based on the best interests of the students, staff, and community.

Principal Leadership

A large body of research has been completed during the past half century on the value, styles, and impact of principal leadership (Goodwin et al., 2003; Greenfield, 1995; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2008). In general, the principal's role as a leader is a measure of his or her ability to inform, motivate, encourage, and facilitate the school staff, especially the classroom teachers, toward constant improvement (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). During those fifty years, scholars have developed terms such as distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2007) and transformational leadership (Hallinger, 2003) to more narrowly define styles and outcomes. However, the broader calling of instructional leadership has become an expected task of the school principal. Hallinger and Murphy (2013, p. 7) defined instructional leadership as “an influence process through which leaders identify a direction for the school, motivate staff, and coordinate school and classroom-based strategies aimed at improvements in teaching and learning.” Research empirically linking strong instructional leadership with school and student improvement was a matter of time (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2008). Now, the expectation by all educational stakeholders for principals to expand and continually improve

their instructional leadership role can only continue to grow. School improvement reform and external accountability expectations have increased the expectations of principals as instructional leaders by raising teacher and principal evaluation standards and tying jobs to school improvement measures (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). This is especially true for high school principals who experience unique challenges.

The Challenges of the High School Principal

School principals at each level face unique challenges both on a day-to-day basis and in their overall responsibilities. To understand the challenges faced by high school principals, it is important to understand the underlying differences between high schools and elementary schools. In their research on the development of accountability systems, Fuhrman and Elmore (2004) outlined different aspects of high schools that arguably make the job of the high school principal more challenging than that of their elementary level peers. The institution of the high school has strong traditions and inherited external expectations, making reform efforts very difficult to manage. Another unique challenge at the high school level is the importance placed on non-academic activities and vocational programs that make prioritization difficult (Gilson, 2008). At the high school level, the variety of influential stakeholders make developing a narrow focus on the most critical outcomes for students a constant struggle. Principals may find themselves constantly shifting priorities based on the most current influence. Because the high school is the capstone of a student's public school career, and the springboard to their future, pressure on educators at that level is at its highest. Another challenge faced by high school principals is trying to solve the greater span between struggling students' academic ability and their age or position in school. At the lower grade levels, students may be a few years behind academically with some hope and possible solutions for remediation. By the time students reach

the high school, it is possible for some to be so far behind academically that solutions for successful remediation are minimal. The structure of the high school academic schedule and the specialization of teachers creates a more isolated environment (Herriott & Firestone, 1984; Robinson, Bendikson, & Hattie, 2011). The more diverse and challenging subject matter at the high school level only compounds the isolated environment, making teachers more difficult to reach. Finally, as students age and reach the high school level, academic motivation becomes more of a challenge (Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012; Fuhrman & Elmore, 2004). While this list is not comprehensive, it paints a picture of the challenges and balancing act high school principals must contend with.

Another significant difference between the jobs of an elementary and high school principal is the amount of time each can dedicate to instructional leadership responsibilities. Research indicates that elementary principals are able to spend more of their professional focus on instructional leadership tasks (Bryk, 2010; Robinson et al., 2011). The differences in the job demands, specifically the segmented nature of their daily duties, makes focusing on time-intensive instructional leadership more difficult (Lyons, 1999; Murphy & Louis, 1994). High school principals navigate numerous and varied responsibilities throughout a typically long work day.

At the high school level, a principal's day is often stretched into the evening due to the number of athletic and activity events that require administrative supervision (Gilson, 2008). This responsibility not only consumes a high school principal's time but the challenge of student and adult supervision at some of these activities can create a great deal of professional stress. This additional responsibility demand is often cited as one reason for the burn-out of high school

principals as well as the difficulty in filling these positions (Pounder & Merrill, 2001). Another demand on a high school principal's time is the requirement to supervise and evaluate teachers.

Teacher Evaluation

The process and value of teacher evaluation has long been the source of critical research. During this era of school accountability and research that indicates the importance of teachers on student achievement (Sanders, Wright, & Horn, 1997; Stronge, Ward, Tucker, & Hindman, 2007a), teacher evaluation research and development has spiked (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012; Hallinger, Heck, & Murphy, 2014). Focal areas of teacher evaluation research include the subjective nature of the process (Murphy et al., 2013), the value of collectable data (Hill & Grossman, 2013), the use of student growth measures (Danielson, 2007), and the realistic ability for principals to adequately perform evaluations (Nagel, 2014). However, there is a great deal of research available highlighting the value of using teacher evaluations on improving the effectiveness of teachers and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Jacob and Lefgren (2008) studied the relationship between student achievement and the principal's subjective evaluations of teachers. They found that principals' identification of effective teachers corresponded to improved student learning. They also discovered that principals' evaluations could predict ineffective teaching and low student progress.

Researchers identified many characteristics principals use to identify and distinguish between effective and ineffective teachers. A lack of classroom control, persistent mistakes, poor student relationships, disregard for school norms and personnel, and a lack of content knowledge are some of the most common terms associated with ineffective teachers (Brieschke, 1986; Chait, 2010; Tucker, 1997). Bridges and Groves (1992) and Phillips and Young (1997)

asserted complaints by parents, students, and fellow teachers can be considered as identification of incompetence. However, it can be argued that the true measure of the effectiveness of teachers can be evaluated by the performance of the students (Stronge, 2007b). The objective and subjective differences between evaluation theory and practice are significant problems for both teachers and principals.

The purpose of the teacher evaluation tool is to be both formative and summative. When used as intended, evaluations should provide accountability and improve teacher performance (Stronge et al., 2007a). Historically, the evaluation process of teachers has mostly been viewed and used as a bureaucratic hoop to jump through and was rarely used to improve teaching and learning (Ellett & Garland, 1987; Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996). However, the current political climate of school, teacher, and principal accountability has driven researchers and educators to develop evaluation systems that can more effectively improve practices and, therefore, improve student performance (Danielson, 2007; Murphy et al., 2013). As principals learn or relearn how to effectively use current or new methods of teacher evaluation, many hurdles will need to be cleared for the efforts not to be in vain.

Two of the most popular evaluation models in Kansas and across the country are those briefly described earlier in this proposal (Danielson, 2007; Marzano et al., 2001). These two models are well researched and face little resistance in schools as to their effectiveness (Stecher, Garet, Holtzman, & Hamilton, 2012). However, two major problems exist for schools adopting either of these models that need to be addressed. One is the lack of time principals can devote to the process and the second is the method of data collection used to complete evaluations (Hill & Grossman, 2013; Stecher et al., 2012). The daily responsibilities of the principal tend to be consumed by tasks related to management rather than instructional leadership (Hallinger &

Murphy, 1985). Teacher evaluation tools and processes can often be either so cumbersome or explicit that administrators cannot or will not perform them adequately (Brieschke, 1986; Essex, 2005). Consequently, teacher evaluations often become a secondary task. And, since the bulk of teacher evaluations rely on classroom observations, it is likely that a limited amount of data is used to render valuable decisions based on teacher evaluations (Loup et al., 1996). With a limited number of observations it is possible that teachers at any performance level may be able to fool their supervisors (Bridges & Groves, 1992). One way to improve teacher evaluations calls for the inclusion of multiple measures of data to properly evaluate teachers (Stronge et al., 2007a). This additional process of data collection only perpetuates the problems of limited administrative time, staffing, and training.

The internal and local politics that surround schools make the supervision and evaluation of teachers problematic. Cooper, Ehrensall, and Bromme (2005) identified three “traps” that can make effective teacher evaluations inconsequential. One is the bureaucratic or labor-management trap that can create a top down environment that makes the supervision process impersonal. A second trap, on the other end of the professional spectrum, is the creation of an environment where teachers recognize their required education and training and view themselves as too qualified to be supervised. A final trap is the creation of a collegial or teacher empowered atmosphere. This trap can produce a continually moving gray line between teachers and principals, which can create problems when tough decisions have to be made.

Other issues related to teacher evaluation exist which make the process ineffective in either holding teachers accountable or improving their instruction. Principals often lack the proper training required to perform adequate evaluations (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). Schools, especially with increasingly limited financial resources, may not have

the staffing necessary to properly evaluate the teaching staff. Finally, if teachers and principals do not believe the evaluation tool can be used for accountability and ultimately for termination, it may be difficult for either party to value the process (Chait, 2010).

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

This section will include the research design, a description of the participants and selection process, and data collection methods for the study as well as the study context, data collection and analysis procedures, and discussion of research quality. A basic qualitative study was used as the research design (Merriam, 2009). This design improved the quality of the study because it provided a preliminary structure to collect the needed data but also allowed for the flexibility that was necessary as data were analyzed for emergent trends (Maxwell, 2013). Because of the complexity and dynamics of the principal's dual role as school manager and instructional leader, the study allowed for the construction of a holistic picture of how principals perceived their roles when an additional set of tasks is introduced. The basic qualitative study permitted me to analyze the impact of a time and labor intensive initiative on a profession already consumed by multiple roles and responsibilities.

The selection of the basic qualitative design was driven by the contingency theory framework and the complexity of the school organization. Because contingency theory suggests there are a number of variables that may determine how a school and school leader are impacted by a required change in practice, it was important that data were collected and analyzed from participants with different levels of experience and in different types of environments. A preliminary and secondary set of participants was identified using the KSDE and Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) databases which are described later. This preliminary data on the principals and the schools prior to conducting interviews along with the data collected from participants provided a clearer picture of how the addition of a new teacher evaluation system has impacted the work of the principal and potentially the school system.

The process of careful, meticulous collection and analysis of data was crucial to improving the quality of the study as well as describing the phenomenon under review (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Data were collected by identifying interview participants who were able to provide valuable insight into the professional responsibilities of high school principals and how the job changes when a required set of new tasks were inserted. Additional methods of procuring and analyzing data are described in further detail later in this section.

Research Context: State of Kansas

Research was conducted in multiple Kansas public high schools. The overall student enrollment in the 286 Kansas school districts are comprised of 66% white students, 18% Hispanic students, 7% African-American students, and 8% other ethnicity. Approximately one-half of all students in Kansas schools are considered economically disadvantaged (Kansas Department of Education, 2013). There are 326 public high schools in Kansas and nearly all house grades 9-12. These high schools vary greatly in size, demographics, and geography. High schools in Kansas range in size from an enrollment of 23 students up to 2,258 students (Kansas State High School Activities Association, 2013). The diversity of these schools can include a student population with very little poverty or ethnic diversity to schools with most students being minorities and/or living in disadvantaged homes. High schools in Kansas can reside in rural areas, more than 30 miles from the closest neighboring high school, or sit in the center of a metropolitan area only a few miles from another high school.

Kansas schools are governed by a State Board of Education (KBOE) which supervises a Commissioner of Education in charge of the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE). The KBOE develops policies and guidelines for public schools and KSDE is responsible for implementation, support, and monitoring of those policies. Each school district in the Kansas is

governed by a locally-elected board of education and each district is required to have a licensed superintendent responsible for the implementation, support, and monitoring of both state and local education policies.

KSDE outlines specific guidelines for obtaining and maintaining proper licensure for teachers, principals, and superintendents. In Kansas, prior to the 2014-2015 school year, principals were required to have a Master's degree in Educational Leadership or similar and have had at least three years of accredited experience as a teacher. KSDE recently increased the minimum classroom experience up to five years for educators seeking a building leadership license. Kansas high schools are led by a single principal and, as the school size and enrollment dictate, assistant principals are hired to take on additional supervisory duties.

It was important for this study to understand the vast differences that may exist among schools in the same state. Kansas schools and high school principals each contend with different kinds of problems related to their location, staffing, or student population. Because of these differences in schools, it was important to vary the characteristics of the participants and collect enough data for maximum variation (Patton, 2002).

Participant Selection

The high school principal was chosen as the focus of this study because of the job complexity and massive workload as described previously in the literature review. Studying the impact of an external mandate on the work of a principal was best analyzed by using participants with arguably the most challenging job as a building leader. Therefore, the high school principal was selected for three main reasons. The primary reason for choosing principals in the high school is the distinctive time-intensive nature of the job as it relates to the number of activities required for supervision and participation. A second reason is the greater challenge that exists

for the high school principals as an instructional leader to garner the content knowledge needed in a broader instructional base (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013, p. 9-10). Finally, the pressures high school principals face to ensure high graduation and attendance rates and the greater behavior and violence risks to plan for arguably make the job of the high school principal less conducive to managing increased responsibilities.

In order to obtain a clear picture of the problem, participants were chosen that provided variance in the type of evaluation tool used in the high school, the size of the school, and the administrative experience of the principal. Other factors such as geographical region and student demographics were considered during participant selection. The pool of participants only included those who were currently in their first or second year of using a newly adopted teacher evaluation model. Schools that have used the current evaluation tool for more than two years prior to the 2014-2015 school year were not included.

The first step to identify qualified participants was to poll all Kansas superintendents by using a statewide email list. An introductory email was sent requesting information on schools who had recently adopted a new evaluation model that is different than the model previously used by the district. The response to this initial inquiry was positive and I was able to develop an initial list of qualified participants. Additionally, numerous superintendents expressed appreciation and support of the research, citing concern about the challenges posed by the new evaluation adoption. Results of this inquiry helped identify schools and principals experiencing a noticeable change in teacher evaluation responsibilities. Initially, nine high school principals were selected for interviews but an additional three interviews were added in order to better understand the emerging trends observed during data collection. Of these twelve participants, four used the KEEP model, four used the McRel model, and four used the SWPRSC e4E model,

which was built from the Danielson framework. Those three groups of model-like participants included principals from small (1A-2A), medium (3A-4A), and large (5A-6A) schools according to their KSHSAA classification (Kansas State High School Activities Association, 2013).

Finally, each group included at least one participant with three to six years of experience as a high school principal and at least one principal with more than 20 years of experience as a high school principal.

To aid in the participant selection process I used two informational databases, organized by KSDE and the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) to analyze and sort principals based on the characteristics mentioned above. The KSDE database was compiled by the teacher evaluation department in order to ensure compliance with the federal NCLB waiver. Included in this document are the names of each school and district in the state, and the evaluation system used by each district in the current and previous year. The second database is created annually by the research division of KASB based on school and administrative survey data collected. This document includes a large amount of demographic information on all school administrators in the state, including their experience, school size, teaching field, education level, and number of subordinates.

In order to better analyze the data for potential participants, I used these two databases to create a single, large data set. See Appendix A – Participant Selection Database. The first step was to sort the KSDE database by the adopted evaluation tools used by each district. I then selected and separated the three most commonly used evaluation tools. Once the schools were sorted according to evaluation tool, I sorted each list by county, which was used to later select participants from different regions of the state. This allowed me to provide even greater variance in participant selection. The breakdown of the KSDE database produced three lists of schools

arranged according to county and became the foundation for a participant selection database. I then used the KASB database to match high schools and principals with the districts in the three lists made from the KASB database. To do this, I sorted the KASB database by school size in order to remove all elementary and middle school principals. I then matched the USD numbers between the two databases and moved each matching set of data from the KASB database to the new participant selection database. Once completed, the participant selection database was arranged by the three most commonly used evaluation tools and participants were identified by high school size, geographical region, and principal experience.

Using the participant selection database, purposeful sampling was used to create a primary and secondary list of participants by cross-referencing these two databases in order to provide the variance needed to better construct a picture of the phenomenon (Light, Singer, & Willett, 1990). This purposeful sampling allowed for a large variation of contexts, perspectives, and participant experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). By using purposeful sampling I was able to interview high school principals with different experiences, philosophies, and strategies for addressing contingencies introduced to their school organization (Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012). This technique allowed me to create a list of high school principals who were representative of high schools across Kansas, ensure a heterogeneous sample, investigate cases that were typical of the phenomenon, and create the ability to compare and contrast the data collected (Maxwell, 2013). A primary list of participants included a heterogeneous mixture of high school principals who met multiple variable combinations of the characteristics sought for the initial data collection. A secondary list was created to identify high school principals who could fill a void should a primary participant be unable to complete an interview. The secondary

list also was to be used to expedite the process if it was determined that further data collection was needed during the collection of data from the primary list.

Once the lists of potential participants were created, invitations were submitted in order to develop a data collection schedule. I received an acceptance to participate from most of the principals on the primary list through the formal invitations and subsequent follow-up emails. I then evaluated potential participants from the secondary list. Invitations were sent to new potential participants who met specific criteria that matched the criteria of participants unwilling or unable to participate from the primary list. Through a persistent effort, a final list of participants was completed and a data collection schedule set. Then, a series of interviews were conducted with 12 high school principals to collect perception data on the impact of the new teacher evaluation models on job demands. A synthesis of the data provided a vivid picture of the principalship when an additional variable was applied to the school organization.

Data Collection

The data collection component of the study involved individual semi-structured interviews with 12 purposively selected high school principals and a content analysis of the three evaluation instruments.

Interviews. Participant interviews were an effective way to collect perspective data and better develop a construction of what was going on in the schools and the work of the principals (Weiss, 1995). The interviews were semi-structured in nature using open-ended questions to guide the process. This helped promote a comfortable atmosphere allowing participants to openly share what was on their minds, which generated new perspectives on the phenomenon. Individual interviews were the ideal data collection method for this study as it allowed principals to be free to speak openly about their work responsibilities (Merriam, 2009). Each interview

lasted between thirty-one and fifty-one minutes in length and took place during the first three months of 2015. Initially, participants were interviewed once but I asked permission of each to contact them via email or phone with follow-up questions had the need arisen. These questions would have been used for clarification of initial interview responses or secondary questions developed from subsequent participant interviews.

An initial interview protocol was developed prior to data collection. The interview tool was tested using peers in the administrative profession in order to anticipate responses, develop probes, and improve the overall value of the interview tool (Merriam, 2009). Due to the amount of data collected and overall number of participants, a constant comparative method of analysis was used during the principal interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The semi-structured interview questions could have been modified throughout the process as needed to collect a complete set of responses from all participants. Interview questions were modified as data emerged from the survey results in order to clarify and analyze the data better. To increase reliability, interviews were audio recorded on a primary and secondary digital device. A list of the participant interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

Review of evaluation instruments. Document analysis can provide both detailed and descriptive data and is unaltered due to the presence of an investigator (Merriam, 2009). Analyzing documents can also provide clarity and an improved understanding of the phenomenon or group being studied (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2011). During data collection, I analyzed the research base, procedural protocols, technology applications, and documents associated with each evaluation model. This research was done adjacent to an analysis of the practical application of the instruments and protocol used by principals in the field. The simultaneous analysis of the tools and how they are applied provided insight into how principals

were impacted by the increased time and workload created by the addition of the new evaluation model.

The three most commonly adopted evaluation models in Kansas high schools, which include KEEP, McREL, and e4E, have many similarities. Each has been developed with significant and credible research on the supervision and evaluation of teachers (Danielson, 2007; Marzano et al., 2001). Each model outlines a recommended process and procedure for both principals and teachers to follow during an evaluation cycle. The models all provide forms to use and a technology component for classroom observations and data collection. Finally, each model uses a Likert-scale rating system used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of classroom teachers. The models are fundamentally very similar but differences can be identified.

Interview data provided information on how and why schools adopted their particular model. The KEEP model was developed by KSDE and piloted in schools throughout the state for two years prior to completion. KSDE provides the tools and applications at no cost to schools and initial teacher and administrator training was free as well. The McREL model was adopted by the Kansas Association of School Board (KASB) as their evaluation model of choice. The McREL model has initial and annual costs for schools who adopt this model and KASB provides training at a cost as well. The e4E model was developed by the SWPRSC in western Kansas who manages the system and provides training. The e4E model is not free but is accessible to any school regardless of membership in the regional service center. The process for how schools selected their evaluation model was investigated and considered when evaluating how well it was being implemented by principals.

Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data is an interactive process and was done throughout the study. A process of transcribing and coding all interviews was used to systematically evaluate and interpret the data (Creswell, 2009). Transcribing involves the detailed documentation of each interview in written form. After each interview, I reviewed and converted the audio record into a text record to better segment and analyze the data. The process of transcription allows the researcher to develop a closer relationship with the data, and to begin to interpret meaning and themes. The transcribed text from each interview was broken down into single-thought units and entered into an Excel spreadsheet for organized manipulation. These units were then coded, which is an interactive process of breaking the data into small chunks of similar information. Codes were developed using a constant comparative method described by Schwandt, Lincoln, and Guba (2007). These coded chunks were carefully analyzed and organized into themes that emerged from the data (Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). This entire analytic process was done circularly rather than linearly as the research progressed.

Research Quality & Ethical Considerations

A qualitative study should result in a rich, thick description of the phenomenon in order to strengthen the transferability of the research (Merriam, 2009). Several steps were used to ensure the quality of the research throughout the study including triangulation, the use of member checks, and peer review (Creswell, 2009; C. Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Triangulation was accomplished by collecting data from multiple perspectives and multiple sites which also provided for maximum variation (Merriam, 2009). Using a technique known as member checking (Merriam, 2009) or validity checks (Lapan et al., 2012), participants were encouraged to review transcripts of interviews to limit the possibility of misinterpreted findings based on

their interview responses. As a student researcher, peers were consulted throughout the study development, during data collection, and in reviewing data and findings prior to study completion.

One other valuable component which improves research quality is to provide a protective climate for those individuals being studied (Creswell, 2009). Participants will feel more willing to provide detailed information if they are certain of confidentiality. To ensure ethical compliance, all statutory and professional policies and guidelines for educational research were adhered to (Wichita State University, 2014). The research study was approved by the Wichita State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) once the proposal was approved by the dissertation team. Research participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form which included information about the study's purpose, how participants were selected, procedures, potential risks, benefits of the study, confidentiality, ability to refuse or withdraw from participation, and contact information. Additionally, pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the schools, the communities in which they reside, and the research participants (Creswell, 2009). The consent form can be found in Appendix C.

Researcher Positionality

I am a life-long resident of Kansas and have been a public educator for twenty-one years. I am married to an elementary school teacher and have two children who have both graduated from a public high school. During my career, I taught three years in a large high school, spent nine years as a building administrator in a medium sized high school, spent another six years as a superintendent in a small, central Kansas school district, and am currently in my second year as the superintendent of a large suburban school district. I supervise four assistant superintendents and one executive director who supervise and monitor the work of two middle school principals,

three high school principals, and six elementary school principals. I have strong belief in the value of a quality classroom teacher and hold myself, our executive support staff, and our principals responsible for supporting, training, evaluating, and developing teachers.

As a school superintendent, I had to be conscious of my perceived supervisory status when interviewing high school principals. Principals who felt they may be judged by the honest answers they gave would have been less likely to provide the insight that was needed to gain an understanding of all aspects of this phenomenon. It was imperative that I created a comfortable environment of trust prior to and during interviews. To do this I reiterated the research guidelines of confidentiality, the importance of honesty to the value of this research, and what this research may be able to provide for principals in the future.

As a school administrator and previous high school principal it was important to both use my experience yet separate my beliefs about the job responsibilities and teacher evaluation in order to both effectively evaluate the data being collected as well as develop my skills as a researcher (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The authenticity of the study was strengthened by establishing and using a reflexive journal throughout the research process. The practice of reflexivity is described as a process by which the researcher can separate bias and assumption from the phenomena being experienced prior to, during, and after data collection (Kleinsasser, 2010; T. A. Schwandt, 1997). I used a separate, running document and voice recorder throughout the research process to record my thoughts and beliefs about what was being collected in the research, data collection, and analysis. This record was constantly reviewed throughout the research process and helped me compare initial perceptions with actual data collected. Another step to improve validity was the intentional placement of dissertation committee members with little or no experience as school principals. This lack of experience in

the field provided a critical perspective on the data collection process and analysis. Finally, I kept in mind that this work was to be used as the development of only a picture of what is going on and not providing a solution to a problem or proof of something I anticipated finding (Peshkin, 1993). I recognize and have recorded my preconceptions of this study and continually reflected throughout the process in order to identify my own issues as a researcher.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

The purpose of this study was to understand how a policy mandate affects the work of a high school principal. As discovered through a review of the literature, the complexity and rigorous nature of the high school principalship may be impacted when the external application changes the work responsibilities of the principal. The literature describes the changing role of the principal over time from mainly the school head, responsible for the management and order of the school to the modern version where instructional leadership is an expectation without a diminished need to operate a safe, orderly school. To understand the challenging role of the principal and the impact of a new teacher evaluation model, a qualitative study design was used.

This chapter is organized to review the study design and data analysis, and to present the findings. The study was guided by three primary research questions,

- 1) How do high school principals define and prioritize the specific roles and responsibilities of their jobs?
- 2) How do high school principals describe ways the new evaluation system impacts their job?
- 3) What strategies do high school principals employ in order to better perform the specific roles and responsibilities of their jobs?

Design and Analysis

To answer the research questions, a piloted interview protocol was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with twelve high school principals in Kansas. A spiraled pattern of analysis, conducting interviews, listening to the recorded interviews, and reviewing scripted notes, was used throughout the data collection process. Audio recordings of each interview were

transcribed. Additionally, participants provided documents related to the study that included sample evaluation schedules and observation templates. The length of each interview ranged from thirty-one to fifty-one minutes. Participants were encouraged throughout the interviews to expand on their experiences and beliefs. Transcription data were compiled in a large database, organized, coded, and categorized for common themes among the participants.

Evaluation Tool Analysis

As a part of the waiver from NCLB, the KSDE required all school districts in Kansas to adopt a teacher evaluation tool which was rigorous, transparent, and equitable for all educators (Kansas Department of Education, 2017). KSDE outlined six guidelines each school must follow in order for their adopted evaluation tool to be compliant. The evaluation system must be used for continual growth in learning and instruction, citing the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards (Van Meter & Murphy, 1997) and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards as resources (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011). Each tool should meaningfully differentiate teacher performance using a minimum of three performance levels. A system of measures should be incorporated that considers data from multiple sources. The evaluation system should, at a minimum, be used to evaluate teachers frequently enough to comply with Kansas state statute. A process of providing useful, timely, and clear feedback must be a component of the adopted evaluation system. This feedback should identify both professional strengths as well as areas for growth in conjunction with high-quality, continual professional development for the teacher. Finally, districts must be able to use the evaluation tool to make informed professional decisions. KSDE developed a model tool that complied with each guideline and provided it and accompanying training to all school districts in the state. School districts who chose to use their

own locally-developed tool or one from another source were required to navigate a formal approval process. However, because certain evaluation systems, such as McRel and e4E, had been vetted and approved by KSDE, schools who adopted these were granted expedited approval.

An analysis of the three evaluation models included in the study was done in order to understand the differences and similarities in both content and process. Even though these evaluation systems, because of the required stringent guidelines, were similar, some subtle differences existed which were recognized by the participants. All three of the models referenced the standards developed by InTASC as a resource (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011). Additionally, KEEP references ISLLC and McRel claims a foundation built on the work of Marzano (2001), furthered by Dean, Hubbell, Pitler, and Stone (2012).

Process. The KEEP and e4E models suggest an initial orientation with all teachers within 10 or 30 days respectively, followed by a more thorough training and/or planning session with those teachers who will be evaluated during the current school year. After the initial training, each outlines a recommended process for both principals and teachers to follow for each evaluation cycle. Each model begins with the teacher completing a self-assessment. Teachers then establish goals in the KEEP and e4E system and a professional development plan in the McRel system. Once these tasks are completed, a series of teacher-principal conferences and classroom observations begin. In KEEP, each evaluation cycle consists of a pre-, mid-, and end-of-cycle conference between teacher and principal. There are a recommended set of topics to be discussed during each of these conferences. Both the e4E and McRel models prescribe only a pre- and post-observation conference once the observation and data collection is completed for each cycle. However, for teachers who are evaluated twice in a school year, a mid-year

conference is conducted between evaluation cycles with McRel. The KSDE expectation of using multiple sources of data is more prevalent with the KEEP and McRel tools as each outline a process of collecting and reviewing evidence and artifacts provided by the teacher. All three processes conclude with a comprehensive evaluation which includes a score or rating reviewed during the summative conference.

Measurement. The measurement used in each of the evaluation tools involves a rubric built around each model's core principles and the required differentiation of performance levels. Each principle then has a subset of indicators included in each performance level as a scoring guide for the teacher and principal. The core principles identified by KEEP are called constructs and include: Learner and Learning; Content Knowledge; Instructional Practice; and Responsibility. The KEEP tool uses four performance levels which include: ineffective; developing; effective; and highly effective. The McRel model uses four core principles called standards and include: Content; Understanding; Environment; and Support. The four performance levels for McRel include: developing; proficient; accomplished; and distinguished. The e4E evaluation model also uses four principles, called elements, and includes: Learner; Knowledge Base; Instruction; and The Professional. Like the other two tools, e4E includes four performance levels: novice; developing; proficient; and distinguished. For both the KEEP and e4E tools, these principles and performance levels are compiled into a set of 10 rubrics that are used during each formal observation. The McRel model contains a set of 23 rubrics for the same process.

Through this analysis, it was clear the McRel model was more thorough and descriptive whereas the KEEP and e4E allowed for greater flexibility. This was neither good nor bad, depending on the needs and abilities of the school staff. One of the areas where this was most

evident was the number of observations each tool recommends for each evaluation cycle. Depending on the experience of the teacher, both the e4E and McRel model recommend either a minimum of three or three to five formal observations along with a set of at least three informal observations for each evaluation cycle. The KEEP system simple expects principals to conduct multiple observations for each cycle, which can be defined as merely more than one. It is also recommended, for KEEP, that principals conduct a minimum of one informal observation per month. However, participants who used the KEEP system seemed to believe that three observations per cycle were the expectation, which could have been due to locally-developed guidelines. This expectation of observation frequency was routinely referenced as a concern for principals due to the amount of time required.

Evaluation Adoption Process

Each participant was asked about the process his or her district used to adopt the current evaluation model. Participants described various strategies and rationale used by their school districts during the evaluation adoption processes. Schools were required to adopt teacher evaluation models that included specific criteria outlined by KSDE. However, the process schools used to adopt those models was left up to each individual school district. Some districts engaged a broad committee of stakeholders representing various members of the school community. They evaluated multiple models through a formal process and collaboratively selected the tool they believed to be best suited for their needs.

In other districts, such as Evan's, the principals were given latitude to select the model they would use. Evan described their process, "Our superintendent really just let [principals] evaluate. He just said yes to whatever we wanted to since he didn't have to really use it all that much." Other schools used a small team of administrators to select the tool or as Howard

described, were simply told by the superintendent, “This is what the state's going with, and this is what we're going to do.” Other districts, like Les’s, didn’t give “teachers much input at all” in the selection process. David explained that they had volunteered to be a KEEP pilot school for KSDE in previous years and simply decided to stay with that model. Aaron described a regional factor in the decision process whereby schools in the same special education cooperative wanted to “get on the same page” since each of them shared special education staff members.

The overall cost of the evaluation tools as a deciding factor was mentioned several times among participants. Generally, schools who chose KEEP did it because KSDE provided the materials and training at no cost to schools. Evan stated, “We just decided KEEP, for the money which is free, that's what we would go with for a couple of years and reevaluate it.” The other two were selected in part because of lack of other options, they believed it was a good tool, or they expressed concerns about KEEP being supported for an extended period of time. Chris explained their decision,

McRel cost us more than KEEP, but we saw that as a minor cost compared to really stability I think was a key factor. The uncertainty of where the KEEP was at, how it might continue to change from one year to the next when, in essence, we felt pretty comfortable that McRel was going to be steady.

Chris stated, “Given historical facts, data, information between the two, we felt like going the route of McRel was a better option long-term than” KEEP. Irving supported the adoption of the e4E model in his school because “it looked like the least cumbersome.”

Participant Selection

In order to collect a broad range of perspectives, purposeful sampling was used to select principals with varied levels of experience from different sizes of schools. The amount of

experience principals have could impact their beliefs about teacher evaluations as well as their ability to manage the application of a new protocol to their established job routine.

The size of a school in which the principal works impacts the types of duties in which they are responsible for on a daily basis. To select participants from a different-sized schools, I used the KSHSAA classification list to select principals from a broad range of student enrollment sizes. Using this classification system, I selected four participants from small schools, 1A and 2A, four participants from medium sized schools, 3A and 4A, and four participants from large schools, 5A and 6A.

Characteristics of Participants and High Schools

The 12 participants were selected from schools of various sizes. The smallest school in the study had a student enrollment of 91 and employed 12 licensed teachers. The largest school included in the study had an enrollment of 1389 students and employed 90 licensed teachers. It is important to note that, because of the small high school size in which some of the participants were selected, a few were also responsible for duties in grades below the ninth grade.

Per Kansas statute, teachers are evaluated either once or twice during the school year and veteran teachers require only one evaluation every three years. Veteran teachers are considered those who have completed four years of teaching under an evaluation process. Because of this statute, the number of evaluations required in any school varies depending on the professional experience of the teacher population. The number of evaluations required in all schools and in any given school can vary from year to year. The participant in the study who needed to complete the fewest number of evaluations during the study year had nine to do and the participant who needed to complete the most evaluations had thirty.

As stated in the previous section, it was important to have participants with different amounts of experience in education and as principals. The participant with the least amount of education experience had seven years and served two years as a principal. The most veteran educator participating in the study had 41 years of service and the participant with the most years of administrative experience was in his 23rd year.

Participants involved in the study, depending on the size of the school, may or may not have had administrative support staff eligible to complete teacher evaluations. Of the twelve participants, six had no assistant principals, three had one assistant principal, and three had either two or three assistants. These support staff often are able to alleviate or minimize certain administrative responsibilities from the principal including student discipline, assessment implementation, and/or supervision.

As described in a previous section, most school districts in the state had adopted one of three KSDE approved evaluation models. These models included McREL, KEEP, and the e4E evaluation tools. There were an equal number of participants who used each of these three tools. Tools used by participants prior to the adoption of the new model ranged from simple, paper copy tools to models similar to those KSDE approved models. Table 1 provides a summary of participant and school demographics and other information related to teacher evaluation.

Table 1**Demographics of Participant and School**

Participant:	Aaron	Bruce	Chris	David	Evan	Frank	Greg	Howard	Irving	James	Kevin	Les
HS Size	1A	5A	5A	6A	1A	5A	3A	2A	3A	4A	1A	3A
Enrollment	155	1067	851	1389	96	647	203	189	278	470	91	249
Cert Staff	20	91	53	90	16	72	19	26	28	43	12	22
Eval - 2x	5	15	5	1	2	9	2	8	10	10	6	5
Eval - 1x	4	0	6	9	7	7	5	4	9	3	2	9
Total annual eval	14	30	16	11	11	25	9	20	29	23	14	19
Asst do eval	0	3	2	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Admin:Cert ratio	20	22.75	17.67	22.5	16	36	19	26	14	21.5	12	22
admin exp	3	17	12	12	23	9	2	4	7	20	6	22
teach exp	11	15	6	8	6	15	5	22	27	21	11	5
Ed exp	14	32	18	20	29	24	7	26	34	41	17	27
Tool	M	M	M	K	K	K	E	K	E	E	E	M

Key:

McRel M
KEEP K
e4E E

Perceptions of Teacher Evaluation

It is important to understand the transition some principals faced as they began using a new teacher evaluation model. Prior to 2012, school districts had a great amount of flexibility in determining how teachers were professionally evaluated. The only requirement that needed to be followed was the statutory minimum frequency in which each teacher was to be evaluated. The

process and procedures of the evaluation were determined by the local board of education in cooperation with the formal collective bargaining unit. In many cases, only a simple form was mandated without a specific directive regarding the number of teacher observations, conferences, or professional evidence. It is these three main factors which impacted the work of the principal in the schools with minimal expectations regarding the formal process.

In 2012, the Kansas State Department of Education outlined new criteria for the evaluation process and required all public schools to adopt a model that met these standards. Generally, the criteria included more frequent and lengthy classroom observations than many principals were used to, a series of professional conferences with each teacher throughout each evaluation cycle, and a set of artifacts that were considered evidence of the teacher's performance. For some, one or more of these components were new or more complex than previous models used. Additionally, the fact that the process and documentation were required at the state level, potentially adds to the pressure to complete the process with fidelity.

The inclusion of three different evaluation models in the study was intentional in order to understand if there was a difference in how the introduction of the new protocol impacted principals. Generally, the principals' beliefs about how their work was impacted by the new evaluation model was consistent regardless of which model was adopted. Principals who were using the e4E model to evaluate teachers communicated a greater satisfaction with some of the attributes than those using the other two models. However, the differences between the current evaluation model and the previous model had far greater impact on the principal's job. These differences are highlighted in the following sections. The study findings are categorized under three main headings: principal beliefs; challenges; and strategies to address the contingency.

Principal Beliefs

Two themes emerged regarding the beliefs principals have that center around their job functions and the evaluation process. Principals routinely shared that the two main aspects of their job included day-to-day tasks driven by the needs of others and the expectations of what the principal's main priorities should be. Principals also discussed how they experienced the evaluation process when they were teachers and how they perceive the value of the formal process as it exists now.

Job expectations. Participants routinely referenced their job demands as leaning heavily towards tasks related to management functions. Principals in the study described the bulk of their day getting “stuck behind their desk,” “responding to emails and answering questions,” and dealing with the “more trivial and minutia tasks that simply take time.” Several principals used the phrase “putting out fires” to describe the daily duties associated with their assignment as the “random nature of the job.”

Addressing student discipline and supervision, scheduling, paperwork, and resolving or managing facility and maintenance issues were among the most commonly referenced daily management tasks. One principal, Howard, described several recent instances of attending to building maintenance, including fixing “drains that were plugged,” being “on the roof” to resolve a heating issue, and he “had to spend almost a half hour on a toilet” that was broken a day earlier. When asked to estimate the percentage of their time spent on management-related responsibilities versus time dedicated to instructional leadership, participant responses varied from 50% to 90% of their day dealing with management responsibilities. Two participants believed they spent half of their time involved in each type of task while two others felt they only spent 10% of their time on instructional-related content. Chris articulated the burdensome

management duties to have “landlocked us a little bit behind a desk” making it difficult in “finding that balance between what has to be done and yet at the same time what really our focus should be.” The twelve participants indicated a belief that they spend nearly three-quarters of their work time as a manager rather than an instructional leader.

Ten of the twelve participants were responsible for some or all of the student discipline issues in their school. However, all of those solely responsible for managing student behavior believed there were few regular issues with their students outside of tardies and minor infractions. Based on the responses, participants felt a need to “run” or “manage” their schools, both intrinsically and extrinsically. Most of the participants discussed the random nature of the daily responsibilities associated with leading a high school. They described a hope to close each day completing a planned set of tasks only to be derailed by a challenging student, angry parent, broken water fountain, and bickering staff members. Frank believed his “calendar is pretty much just based on everybody else” and he was “just at the free-will of everybody else who comes in, shows up, calls.” Greg described this similarly, “I deal with very few problems I have created myself. It’s usually dealing with either a student or teacher’s problem, and then I’m tasked with trying to find the solution.” The pressure to operate and manage the school seemed to outweigh the need to formally evaluate teachers. This belief extended beyond the school walls, as Les observed, “from a community standpoint, they expect us to have a school that’s well-run.”

Evaluation value. Most participants generally believed the evaluation system in place when they were teachers was not worthwhile. They were asked about their own experiences as teachers with the formal evaluation process and their beliefs about the value of the evaluation tool. Consistently, principals stated that they felt the process was a “hoop” or “something that had to be done” by the administrator and “generally a waste of my time.” The few who spoke

positively about the teacher evaluation process connected it to an administrator they trusted and respected. As discussed in the previous section, a conflict exists between what principals believe about the job expectations and the reality of what is possible for many principals. Participants shared what they had wished for as teachers from the evaluation process and what they currently struggle to provide as principals. Reflecting on it, Frank stated “I think now that I’m on this side of it, I understand why there was no follow-up. There’s just not enough time” to perform teacher evaluations with fidelity.

Generally, participants believed the new evaluation process or tool could be valuable for “improving instruction,” “developing teachers,” and even professionally addressing ineffective teachers better than their previous tool. However, they added the caveat, “if time allowed.” The most common positive attributes identified in the new tools included the value of “discussions that can be generated,” the “opportunity for artifacts,” the “rating levels,” and that they can “make it easier to either improve marginal teachers or not renew them.” Still, some participants believed that they had the professional skills to identify “good teaching” regardless of the tool used. David stated, “I don’t know if it will help me be better. You know when you know and I don’t think that just because I have this document on KEEP that it’s going to make my decision for me.” Irving referenced the value of the informal “walkthroughs” as the best way to “determine whether or not I’ve got a good teacher” in the classroom.

Every participant in the study used an additional observation tool and/or process referred to as a “walkthrough.” The walkthrough is a process where a teacher supervisor briefly, three to five minutes, observes a classroom setting and records the specific data observed. The data collected during these brief observations are not to be used as part of the formal evaluation process but participants routinely stated how valuable the walkthroughs were for compiling a

comprehensive picture of the quality of teacher instruction and classroom management. It was believed that principals could “learn a lot more with those five-minute snapshots, fifty times a year or sixty times a year” to effectively evaluate the quality of the teacher and instruction. They found it “hard not to tie the walkthrough tool with the evaluation tool” and Irving even admitted that “Anytime you see a teacher you’re evaluating them or observing them, and you’re going to carry that on to” the evaluation.

Challenges to Implementing the Evaluation Process

Each participant selected for the study was currently in either his second or third year of implementing the new evaluation model. This purposeful selection ensured that each principal had experienced at least one full year with the adopted tool. During the time period when the interviews were conducted, each principal had completed one full evaluation cycle and part of the second cycle for teachers who required two evaluations during the school year. Principals were also in the middle or recently completed the evaluations of those teachers who required one evaluation during the year. Participants described a number of challenges that made it difficult to implement the teacher evaluation process, including the increased amount of time necessary to complete the process. An expectation of more and longer classroom observations and principal-teacher conferences along with the logistical challenges of scheduling these activities were the greatest consumer of the principal’s time.

Increased time demand. Overwhelmingly the greatest challenge faced by participants in implementing the new teacher evaluation protocol was the increased time demands. Ten principals in the study believed the new process took more of their time than they had spent on teacher evaluations with their previous tool. Participants stated they were spending “twice as much” or “three times as much at least,” while Kevin felt that he was committing “five or six

times as much time” to complete all of his evaluations. Only two principals felt they were spending relatively the same amount of time. One, Aaron, was previously using a form that was completed on paper and he was a self-described “techy” and the other, Greg, was using one of the other evaluation tools (McRel) being studied. Nine of the twelve participants stated they were spending more time during the weekends, in the evenings, or coming to work earlier than normal to complete the new process. The increased time demands were typically attributed to the increased expectation of observation and conference frequency and the logistical challenge of scheduling the observations and conferences.

Sacrifices and priorities changed. The additional time demands of the new evaluation system forced principals to make decisions about how to gain the time needed to complete the required process. In many cases, principals had to sacrifice personal time and/or professional priorities to address the contingency. Chris stated, “we are probably spending more time outside of school hours now than what [we] were previously in the way of evaluations and of course that digs into family time.” Bruce added,

You know how it is. You're here 10 to 12 hours and then you go home and have reports and it gets a little bit depressing. At first, I was taking everything home to do it. I said, "Okay, this is never going to work."

Others were frustrated, believing they had to quit or limit other practices they found valuable in their profession. This sacrifice included limited time building or maintaining relationships with teachers and students. To Chris, the additional time spent on evaluations,

Simply means in many cases less time in the classroom and visibility factor there. I feel like the tool is allowing me to work more closely and maybe grow more so [with] the teachers that I'm evaluating that year, but I'm finding there's more of a disconnect with

the other teachers in the building because my time in their classroom is so much less than it used to be.

Although the evaluation meant spending more time with teachers who were in the evaluation cycle, the trade-off was spending less time with those who were not. Kevin further described a sacrifice of time spent with students,

The part that probably that I've missed the most, whether that was stepping out of the classroom or with the extra added responsibilities with the new evaluation process is that degradation of time with students. That's just, to me, the negative part...

Finally, Howard expressed frustration about a loss of professional development opportunities he attributed to the extra time being spent on the teacher evaluation process, "I haven't gone to as many conferences. I've tried. I want to go to these things, but I just ... You know, you just can't get away." Regardless of how principals addressed the new evaluation contingency, many felt forced to give up something important to them that may never be replaced.

Observation and conference frequency. In their second or third year using the new protocol, ten of the participants stated they were not or only "trying" to complete the recommended three formal observations per evaluation cycle for each teacher and "at least one more conference with the teachers than we used to" conduct. For Bruce, "The biggest change, really, has been, for me, the three formal observations. I think it's better for everyone, but it's amazing, the time." Howard, when asked about completing three conferences for each evaluation, admitted "I didn't this year because I didn't have the time...just couldn't squeeze them in." Aaron claimed, "It's really hard for me to see myself doing it the way it's intended with three observations" because he "wouldn't have time to get anything else done." Further, eight participants admitted they struggled "meeting the timeline periodically for most

observations.” Two of those claimed they had either missed deadlines or did not complete the evaluations of teachers who were not planning to return the following year.

Logistical challenges. Technology and finding time to schedule conferences with teachers were two logistical challenges principals encountered the most when trying to implement the new teacher evaluation system. All three of the new evaluation tools included in the study relied heavily on technology as the platform for observation, measurement, and dialogue. This technology was viewed by participants as an added value in the process, especially by those who previously used tools which were primarily completed using pen and paper. However, each of the evaluation models required a volley or “digital back and forth” of communication between the principal and teacher necessary in completing documentation and then waiting for the other person to respond or acknowledge completion. It was described as a “waiting game” where a principal would complete a portion of the evaluation tool and then “wait for the teacher to go in and read [the] comment, check the box” before additional progress could be made. It was often necessary to “send teachers an email reminder” in order to continue towards the next step in the process. Chris summed up the process this way,

The management aspects [of the evaluation process], I mean just simply scheduling processes takes time in and of itself. We have had to try to work through what’s the best scenario for that to occur, how do we build that into our calendars from that time that we schedule an observation, what chunks of time do we go ahead and block out on our calendar for the sake of writing update, observation, having the meeting with the teacher, the post-observation, sending out those invites accordingly, which are simply emails, but they are emails that take time. Those little pieces of time add up in a hurry when you're trying to do some other things.

Nearly every participant described this process as a logistical challenge which made the new process frustrating and time-consuming. David shared, “When they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing, and they need a reminder email, and they don't check it till the end of the day, it just puts me far behind.” Evan explained,

I have to e-mail them to say, "Would you please check this box and make a comment if you want to. Make some type of comment, so I can go on to the next level.”...Over half of them I have to remind them through an e-mail.

Another logistical challenge included issues principals had trying to schedule observations and conferences. Aaron believed, “probably the biggest time commitment is scheduling those post observation conferences.” The amalgamation of the two logistical challenges was summed up by Frank,

The thing that I have trouble doing with the KEEP is all of the finding time to get together and have the conferences. When you meet and you discuss one level of the evaluation, and then you fill out the paperwork or the process, it opens up the next conference and finding time where their schedule and my schedule meet. Then whenever we meet, I have to make a comment, then they have to go back and comment on that summary and then they have to make all the checks on the boxes before it opens up the next section, just getting everybody on the same schedule has been a challenge.

This problem likely existed before but was now enhanced by the additional time requirements and technology “volley” created by the new evaluation process.

Additional contingencies. Without prompting most of the principals referenced additional or new tasks each had taken responsibility for during the study year. Three participants described the implementation of a 1:1 student laptop initiative during that school

year. Others were training on computerized systems new to their districts and one was transitioning to become a “Google school.” Principals explained how they were taking on new or additional counseling roles, maintenance duties, student-discipline responsibilities, and state-required report completion due to district budget shortages that were impacting many schools across the state. Additionally, participants described other contingencies in which they had some involvement including the development of Professional Learning Communities for their staff, a new student recognition program, and incorporating aspects of a study on student motivation being completed. James’s school had received a large grant that required additional meeting times and Bruce had to take on the students from a recently closed alternative high school in the district. Les was leading a school that had just been part of two neighboring districts consolidating. This process statutorily classified every teacher in the new consolidated district as “probationary” requiring two evaluation cycles per year for three consecutive years. James was in the first year transitioning from a block schedule back to a traditional seven-period schedule while Aaron was heavily involved in the construction and renovation of his building due to a recently passed bond referendum. Each of these additional challenges, or contingencies, added to the work of the principal requires a demand of time, energy, and mental focus.

Two other issues created by the new evaluation protocol that were mentioned, each by one-third of the participants, was the increased stress that was felt by principals and the reduced time spent with teachers and students, thus impacting the relationship school leaders believed was important. These two issues were often intermingled, as Kevin shared, “you’re juggling so many things, and to take that much time, it takes away from the rest of your day and the other things, so it created a little more stress, actually a lot more.” He went on to capture the essence of the pressures and stresses due to the increased demands of the job,

I think that's probably the best way to say it is it's forced me to make sure that my time is very well managed. With that, it's forced me also to be in and out, in and out, in and out of classrooms to where if I want to stay and talk to a student for a little bit, it presses me to stay on my duties a little bit more, other than to relax during the day. It's a lot more stressful than I think people realize just because of the higher expectations that it's putting in.

In a few cases, principals were able to delegate some responsibilities to staff including counselors, secretaries, and other administrators. Bruce delegated supervision duties that he had previously helped with that simply transferred the added stress that can come with increased time and responsibility. He described a previous conversation with the school's athletic director, "we're [principal and assistant principals] going to be in more of a support role with supervising activities and you're going to have to do more trips and spend more time supervising."

It is common for the administrators of a high school to distribute the responsibility of supervising evening activities among themselves in order to limit the additional time and stress that accompanies that part of the job.

Strategies to Address the Contingency

As the work and time demands increased due to the new evaluation tool and other additional responsibilities described in the previous section, principals were still expected to "run the school." Participants each described ways in which they attempted to address the additional time and coordination required by the implementation of the new evaluation protocol. Strategies employed by participants to adequately complete the evaluation requirements varied but a few consistent themes emerged from the investigation. Those common strategies included a

conscientious effort to become more organized and efficient with their time, establishing a specific way to schedule evaluation duties, or simply sacrificing more of their own personal time.

Being organized and efficient. The most common theme related to the participants' strategies to navigate their regular duties, other new responsibilities, and completing teacher evaluations dealt with an improvement of their own organization and efficiency. Principals described the need to "plan ahead" better and become more "rigid" with their schedule. More than half the participants described how critical the use of a digital calendar was to manage their work lives, with Les going as far to say "I think Google calendar, man, I'll beat the drum on that deal. That's helped me a lot...putting this list together, putting a spreadsheet like that together has caused me no doubt to be more organized." The importance of pacing was mentioned by more than one principal. Planning for evaluations next year, Greg claimed, "I'm probably going to try to pace things a little bit different. Try to hold myself more accountable for those pacing guidelines." When asked to compare the scheduling and planning of evaluations now to how it had been done previously, he further stated, that it took "a lot more." He went on to explain,

I don't know how you would do it if you don't do it that way. I say that because of the pre-observation conference, the post-observation conference, the formal conference, and then next the summary. I don't know how you would not want to plan some of those things out. I definitely plan more with this form than the previous.

Two-thirds of the participants included or expanded their use of technology as an organizational strategy they found useful and necessary, one going as far as calling it a "godsend." Principals used a wide array of tech-related resources including Microsoft OneNote and Excel, Google Docs and calendar applications, iPads and Chromebooks, and Apple TV. These tools were used to organize and remind as well as record and document observations and

conferences during the event rather than at a later time. Principals described instances where they would “just have them [teachers] bring their computer with them” to the conference to “work on it while they’re here in the office so that they get it done and we don’t have to keep sending out those reminders.” Irving, who described himself as being “at that age where I’m not as techy as I need to be” found the resource necessary to improve his overall job performance with the added responsibilities.

Creative evaluation scheduling. More than half of the participants described a specific way to arrange and schedule observations and evaluation conferences differently than they had before. With this strategy, principals believe they are more conscientious and deliberate when planning the how, who, and when of the evaluation process through each cycle. In some cases, principals would organize the evaluations of specific teachers into “small groups together.” By “bunching them,” they would evaluate the teachers separately but work through each teacher’s feedback in that group simultaneously. Using this strategy, they could focus both on the specific process components and the evaluations of a few teachers at a time. When asked about this bunching strategy, Greg stated, “at the most three, but I can manage two at the same time. That’s comfortable. I don’t feel like I’m mixing up the teachers. I don’t feel like I’m misrepresenting who I saw and what I’m writing down.” Once one specific group or bunch of evaluations were completed, the evaluations of another small group would begin. Other principals chose to combine all of the teachers who were scheduled to be evaluated during a specific cycle into one large group. In these cases, communication and scheduling could be consistently arranged and principals could focus on one specific component of the process at a time. Howard described a recent meeting where this strategy was used,

I can sit them all down, all together and say, “Hey, this is where you are. This is what all of you need to do next. This is what I’m going to do next.” Then it just seemed to make it go so much smoother and easier, for everybody; me especially.

Other participants’ scheduling strategies included completing one entire evaluation process in one week for each teacher, completing the evaluations of their “strong teachers” first, or simply starting the evaluation cycle earlier than they had in the past.

Sacrificing personal time. Finally, many of the principals admitted to spending more time outside of their normal work day than they used to in order to complete the evaluation process. Kevin believed the new evaluation process “added at least another hour to my job every day” and he would find that hour on the weekend or by “staying later on days that there’s not activities going on.” Based on several responses related to using more personal time, this appeared to be somewhat of a rationalized norm. Comments such as “you just have to work after school” or “you just have to find more time” were made without hesitation as if it were simply part of their expectations. Participants referenced the loss of personal time as a conflict, summed up by Chris who was,

spending more time outside of school hours now than what were previously in the way of evaluations. And, of course, that digs into family time and digs into, you’ve got activity supervision going on almost nightly in high school setting. There’s a lot, just find time. Based on the belief principals have about the need to run or manage their schools, they find it difficult to let go of certain roles and responsibilities. Without the ability to add support staff or delegate tasks, principals believe that the only solution to addressing this new contingency that requires more time is to use the time they have outside of the regular work day.

In summary, a connection can be made between the three key findings that shows an ongoing struggle principals deal with to balance a challenging and unpredictable job. As principals work to balance the necessary school management responsibilities and the role of instructional leader, they are routinely challenged with new or additional expectations. A conflict exists, both internally and externally, to meet the needs of students, teachers, supervisors, and the community. The introduction of the new teacher evaluation model, for most principals, meant a significant impact to their daily responsibilities and overall job demands. However, as school leaders, they addressed this contingency by making themselves more efficient and organized or by simply using time once reserved for personal or other work-related tasks. This new mandate was viewed as a challenge not unlike others they had addressed or others they anticipate as their careers continue.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Implications

This final chapter is organized first to review the study of how the adoption of a new teacher evaluation model impacted the work of high school principals. I then review the theories used to provide a conceptual framework for how the study would be viewed. A description of the three major conclusions developed through the analysis and synthesis of data collected throughout the study is provided. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a review of the study implications along with suggestions for future research.

Review of the Study

The study examined how an externally applied mandate, a new teacher evaluation model, impacted the work of high school principals. The review of literature helped to describe the demanding and challenging job of the principal. High school principals are pulled in a number of different directions, managing student behavior, support staff, parent conflicts, and maintaining facilities (Horng et al., 2010; Klocko & Wells, 2015). At the same time they are expected to lead teachers on an instructional level by guiding curricular and assessment decisions and monitoring the effectiveness of instructors (Goldring et al., 2008; Grubb & Flessa, 2006). High school principals are often also tasked with supervising myriad evening athletic and co-curricular activities in the evenings (Gilson, 2008). The investigation examined how high school principals responded when a new requirement, or contingency, is added to their full plate of expectations.

The research was conducted by viewing the work of the principal through the lens of contingency theory (Fiedler, 1967; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967) and with the school operating as a complex open system (Boulding, 1964), a construct of organizational theory (Von Bertalanffy,

1956a). Contrary to the work of Taylor (1914), which suggests that for any system there is a single construction that provides the most optimal performance, the premise of contingency theory is there is no single best way to address a contingency or issue that impacts a system. Contingency theory contends that the effectiveness of the leader in a system is dependent on how the leader's personality and set of skills is coordinated with other factors within the system. The more closely aligned the leader and the subordinates were, the more successful the organization could be in dealing with contingencies on the system.

Open systems theory describes how an organization is affected by both internal and external factors and describes the organizational dynamics of a system and how it reacts to stimuli. Collectively, these two theories provided the ideal perspective in which to understand how principals respond to an externally applied mandate within the complex high school organization.

Getzels (1957) described the two roles that are filled by a principal. The first is that of an actor who takes on the role assigned by the institution. The second is that of a person, the humanistic role that is influenced by experiences and the personality of the individual. This dual-role responsibility forces a constant balancing act by the principal and creates an internal conflict

Overlaying the typical high school and principal onto Getzels and Guba's model (Figure 1) creates a picture of the operational challenges that affect the school and school leader on a constant basis.

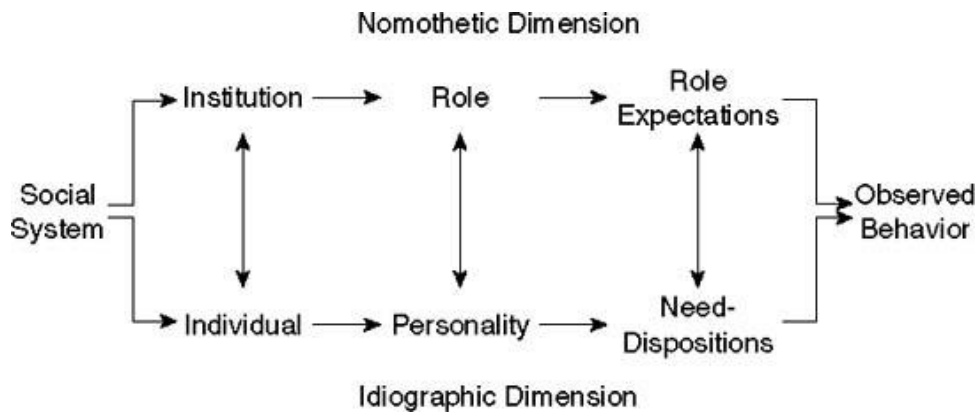


Figure 1 Getzels-Guba Model (Lunenburg, 2006)

The institutional component of the school system, or nomothetic dimension, is made up of the demands and expectations, explicit or perceived, outlined by the federal and state government, the local community, and the staff within the building. They include processes and procedures for accountability and behavior, success in activities, well-managed student body, and professional conduct. The perceived success of the school can often be tied to these areas.

The humanistic piece of the school system, or idiographic dimension, is arguably stronger than other systems due to the compassionate nature of educators and constant personal contact with a vulnerable population. Principals have experiences as teachers, both positive and negative, that have formed their beliefs about staff relationships, school culture, student behavior, and teacher supervision. These experiences drive and can conflict with the institutional role they are assigned.

The formal evaluation process exists within the nomothetic dimension of the system as a required accountability component with strict procedures and deadlines. Principals modify and adjust more of their idiographic, personal portions of the job to meet these demands.

Conclusions

Constant waves of reform attempting to improve villainized public schools or respond to the latest crisis or societal issue have done little to change the appearance of the comprehensive

high school in the United States (Giles, 2006; Watkins, 2015). The most recent, large-scale reform, NCLB, came as a national policy change raising accountability standards for all public schools. However, once the unattainable finish line of 100% student proficiency drew closer, schools and policymakers had to respond. One response, in Kansas, was to request a waiver from the NCLB mandates and ultimate sanctions. Along with the waiver came a new set of top-down mandates, one being the more stringent requirements for teacher evaluation systems. What did not change, and does not much, is the general operation and organization of the high school (Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Tyack & Tobin, 1994).

Public high schools in the US generally operate in a similar fashion to each other and the state of Kansas is no exception. The Kansas State Department of Education outlines a set of minimum graduation requirements (Kansas Department of Education, 2014b), educator licensure requirements (Kansas Department of Education, 2016), and minimum annual student contact time (Kansas Department of Education, 2014c). This prescribed set of guidelines drives high schools to establish a typical number and type of courses in which students must enroll. In turn, schools establish a schedule to meet student needs and employ a similar proportion of teachers, administrators, and other support staff. Principals themselves are also similar from one high school to another. Many likely have followed a professional path from teacher, to assistant principal, into their current role. Coincidentally, since the study was not set up to consider aspects of gender or race, the selection of participants to meet the study criteria of school size, evaluation type, and principal experience, resulted in twelve participants who were all White males. Even though there are significant differences in Kansas high schools regarding enrollment size, socioeconomic and racial diversity, and regional commercial opportunities, most are often entwined into the culture of the surrounding community with varied levels of passion towards

different aspects of the school. The high school organization and leadership structure across Kansas is consistently predictable.

However, there are also a number of characteristics that make high schools and principals differ from one another. What was different between the schools and principals were the types of challenges they were contending with at that time and during that year. Some were dealing with large construction projects and others were battling ongoing facility problems. Because of the size and culture of the school and community, principals were contending with very different levels and types of student behavior. Some principals had relatively few evaluations to complete during that year while another, after a school consolidation process, had to evaluate every teacher in the building, twice. The findings related to principals' beliefs about the multidirectional demands of the middle management principalship by study participants outlined in Chapter 4 were consistent with the research (Hallinger & Murphy, 2013; Klocko & Wells, 2015).

From the findings, three major conclusions emerged. The first is that it is unlikely the process of teacher evaluation will significantly impact instructional improvement or support the process of making informed personnel decisions as long as the same demands are placed on the principal's job (Cooper et al., 2005; Ellett & Garland, 1987; Essex, 2005). The second conclusion describes the middle ground between formal evaluation and the reality of the principalship existing in the classroom walkthrough process. Finally, the conceptual framework used for this study provides perspective of the challenging and chaotic environment that high school principals contend with on a daily basis (Chance, 2009; Marion & Gonzales, 2013; Owens, 2011). The need for principal and school systems to survive as an organization is critical to the ability of the leader to adapt and address the constant stream of internal and external contingencies.

New Will Be Old Again

Consistently, study participants held unfavorable opinions of the teacher evaluation process due to their experiences both as teachers and administrators. This pre-conceived perception likely skewed their approach to the adoption and implementation of a new model. However, many of the principals commented favorably about certain aspects of the new evaluation model, especially the opportunities to have regular, genuine dialogue with teachers about curriculum and pedagogy. There was a consensus opinion that the new evaluation process could be valuable to both improve instruction in their schools as well as be used to make more informed personnel decisions in the future if adequate time was made available. This potential also could enhance the principal's frustration as another professional asset that cannot be fully utilized (Nagel, 2014).

Principals' beliefs about the teacher evaluation process were described from their experiences as both a former teacher, the one being evaluated, and as a principal, the evaluator. While there were some parts of the evaluation process that principals valued, such as the opportunity to be in the instructional setting and productive dialogue generated between teacher and principal, generally principals found the process more time-consuming than it was worth.

As former teachers, participants typically were not impacted by the evaluation process they endured years before. Many described some anxiety about the process as new teachers but quickly realized the necessary formality of the process had little to do with their abilities. Formal evaluations were described as a "box to check" or a "hoop to jump" through for their principals. Anecdotes of principals who observed without knowing what was being taught or writing evaluations with very little classroom observation painted a picture of frustration and time wasted.

Even though these principals wanted their teachers to believe the evaluation process was valuable, they often admitted to using practices that did not align with the prescribed model protocol, just as those who had evaluated them many years before. They, just as their principals may have, skipped observations conferences, cut formal observations short, or used walkthroughs or informal observations as a part of the process, just to get the formal process completed by a deadline. It was observed, during the interviews, when some of the principals were able to connect their past experiences with their current job expectations and recognize why the evaluation process was so difficult to perform with fidelity. This acknowledgement was like a lightbulb of exasperation going off in their heads.

It is this dynamic, whether realized by the principals or not, that limits the value of the formal teacher evaluation process. If the process had little impact on how they performed or improved as teachers and they, as principals, cannot use it to significantly impact the instruction in their schools, why would principals try to shift their priorities, if it were even possible?

As long as the current hierarchy of supervision is in place, it will be a challenge for principals to properly lead schools on an instructional level and effectively evaluate teachers, regardless of the quality of the model or tool. However, it is neither popular nor prudent to suggest that public schools need more administration, at least not the way they function or are currently perceived. Simply adding administrative staff with the intent to create more time for each to focus on instructional leadership may help but not enough to be systemically impactful.

I describe the dynamic as tolerant frustration due to the principal's understanding of how the system works. Principals simply comply and adapt as best they can while still dealing with the other contingencies on the system. Along with the hopelessness of middle-management, with the challenges of demands from both below and above the bureaucratic hierarchy, principals

can accurately assume that this new teacher evaluation model will be replaced by something else in the not too distant future.

Walkthroughs are the Middle-ground

Principals, many of whom were taking on other new responsibilities, reported frustration with the additional time and logistical challenges the new model brought to their already busy jobs. Nearly all participants compared the time required to complete the new evaluation process to the previous process as anywhere from twice as much time to potentially five or six times. This increase in time was attributed to the additional classroom observations prescribed by the model and the logistical challenges of communicating, electronically, with teachers to complete specific, chronological tasks. Principals described the challenges of scheduling and spending a full class period of time, multiple times, and evaluating multiple teachers.

The one consistent and unexpected response regarding the new evaluation process is the value principals placed on the classroom walkthrough tool that each used. In some cases, the walkthrough tool was adopted simultaneously with the formal evaluation tool and in other cases, the walkthrough model was a process previously used by principals. Even though a process of informal observations is currently outlined as a part of the evaluation process, participants did not believe or were not allowed to include it as a part of the formal process even when developed by the same vendor. However, because of the value principals placed in the walkthrough tool as a measure of a teacher's abilities, some admitted to referencing the data and observations in the formal evaluation process.

The consistent support for the walkthrough tool each principal used was overwhelming, especially since it was not specifically referenced in the data collection process. The popularity of the walkthrough process can be attributed to two factors. One, the process requires very little

planning and multiple teachers can be observed in a short amount of time. Two, the compilation of multiple walkthroughs is perceived to be a better measure of the quality of instruction as well as classroom management. Principals each used some form of technology as a part of their walkthroughs to gather and compile observational data as well as communicate almost immediately with the teacher being observed. I suspect that principals believe the ideal process for a quality evaluation model would include components of formal and informal observations. However, based on the overwhelming support for the walkthrough process, if given the option of one or the other, principals undoubtedly would choose the walkthrough as their preferred tool for observing and evaluating teachers.

The hectic and unpredictable nature of the principalship has been thoroughly researched and supported in this study. The use and popularity of the walkthrough or informal observation as a component of teacher evaluation has steadily increased during the past decade (K. Marshall, 2005; Milanowski, 2011; Ovando & Ramirez Jr, 2007). The flexibility created by an evaluation process that can be used in either short bursts of time or sprinkled throughout a day or week is obviously appealing to a busy school leader. Principals also referenced the quality of the walkthrough as an accurate measure of the teacher for several reasons. The walkthrough was not planned and teachers would be regularly observed in a more natural setting. Walkthroughs are often done at various times of the day which, when compiled in large numbers, can provide data on a teacher at multiple phases of instruction during different courses.

High school principals studied desperately wanted to spend more time in classrooms and work with teachers to develop instructional practice but the need to deal with ongoing management responsibilities kept them away. One final revelation regarding the walkthroughs was the observed positive attitude principals had about the process. When most of the

investigation uncovered feelings of frustration and hopelessness, it was the topic of walkthroughs that generated optimism for the participants.

Leaders as Problem-Solvers

Contingencies change leaders, mold their practices/beliefs. One characteristic often associated with leaders is their ability to problem-solve. As school leaders are expected to do, study participants described a number of different solutions to the challenges they faced due to the evaluation adoption. Many principals developed ways to become more organized and efficient, whether by improving their use of technology tools or arranging the evaluation processes in a more organized manner. This creativity and a willingness to learn served a number of participants well in managing a time-demanding mandate. The principals who shared these strategies also appeared less stressed or overwhelmed by the new evaluation process. It is not possible in this study to know if these individuals simply had a greater ability to adapt to contingencies, a better overall attitude towards addressing challenges, or were in a system that provided more support to manage the leadership balance.

However, it was common for principals, even some who improved their own organization and efficiency, to simply use more of their time away from school to complete the required tasks associated with the evaluation process. As discussed previously, this solution may work in the short-term but could take a personal and professional toll on the principal as time passes.

It is likely that school leaders will always contend with myriad additional self- or externally-applied responsibilities. Some contingencies, such as student discipline issues or employee conflicts, will come and go on a daily basis while others gradually enter or fade away, such as construction projects or motivational initiatives. The principal's responsibilities tied

with each new program, initiative, or problem will replace others that disappear, are better managed through experience, or are simply ignored.

Survival at a cost. Even though some participants acknowledged that even one year of experience with the tool was reducing this demand, spending this amount of additional time impacts other aspects of work or life. Unfortunately, many of the principals felt the need to realign their priorities and sacrifice something important to them either personally or professionally. Principals referenced a loss of time that used to be spent in the classrooms of teachers who were not scheduled to be observed. Others gave up time they used to spend in the hallways or in the lunchroom in order to complete necessary evaluation responsibilities. A reduction in time spent at trainings or other professional development as well as a reduction in time spent reading and researching professional materials was mentioned by participants as well. Finally, principals often admitted to spending more time in the evenings, on weekends, or coming in early and staying late to complete evaluations. Each of these sacrifices modifies the important work-life balance and can take a toll on principals over time. Each of these losses takes away from the necessary humanistic aspect of the job that educators need to grow and thrive in their roles. While survival of the system and principals is critical to the effectiveness of the organization, permanent loss of time used for professional growth, the development of relationships, or quality time with family may impact the principal's overall job satisfaction making survival of the system difficult.

Implications

Many new initiatives are introduced at the school, district, state, and even national level each year. These mandates or programs find their way into schools due to the public nature of the organization, the vast number and diversity of public school stakeholders, and a constant

desire for the school organization to change or improve. The intent of these efforts to improve or reform and the research to support them can and should always be questioned.

Regardless of the intent, the new teacher evaluation model was developed using quality research founded on solid academic principles. Not once throughout the study did a participant criticize the pedagogical or professional quality of the new evaluation model components. In fact, there was a great amount of support for the tool and potential that existed to improve instruction but only with the caveat, “if time allowed.” This shows a disconnect between theory and practice in the supervision and evaluation of teachers. For the evaluation process to become a valuable and meaningful aspect of teaching and learning in schools, the application of a high-quality model must be manageable for practitioners.

Implications for Policy and Practice

One solution is for schools to restructure the supervisory hierarchy and intentionally separate the school management and instructional leadership responsibilities. Purposefully assigning or hiring individuals with strong management and problem-solving skills to be responsible for all non-instructional duties and eliminating teacher supervision could create a more efficient operation of the school. Hiring individuals with a skillset suited to evaluate instructional practices and curricular needs to be solely responsible for the instructional leadership in the school would allow for the expertise and focus necessary to effectively and positively impact teaching and learning. Clearly separating these two main functions of a principal’s job alleviates the personal and professional balancing act that currently prevents significant growth in schools. One challenge would be finding enough educators with outstanding instructional skills who are also willing to supervise, counsel, and criticize peers who may be perceived to be on the same professional level.

A number of potential alternatives to the traditional school leadership models such as distributed leadership, shared leadership, and co-principalship have been attempted and researched during the past decade (Hallinger, 2011; Spillane et al., 2007; Thomson & Blackmore, 2006). Promising conclusions including a reduction of the principal's workload, greater job satisfaction, and increased instructional leadership time provide options for schools to consider (Eckman & Kelber, 2009; Walker, 2009). However, a number of challenges exist for schools considering a change in leadership design. Principals may still crave the need to lead their own school (Grubb & Flessa, 2006) or schools may have a difficult time convincing staff and the community to stray from tradition (Thomson & Blackmore, 2006). Schools would need to evaluate their overall needs alongside the dynamics of staff personality, community expectations, and overall culture in order to develop effective strategies.

What seems to be the most practical solution is for schools to consider the walkthrough evaluation process as a primary model. Formal evaluation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012; Hallinger et al., 2014) is based on solid pedagogical processes but as the classroom and school evolves and as the school leader contends with multiple and random contingencies, this change may be the most effective and adaptable method. The current practice is well-received by principals who find value in the process as an accurate measure of a teacher's instructional effectiveness and classroom management skills. They report that teachers value the immediate and regular feedback from supervisors that the walkthrough allows for. It is possible that teachers could object to the lack of a full class period observation being used as a part of the process.

In a school culture where principals and teachers trust each other and become more comfortable with the walkthrough process, it is likely that principals would increase their

reliance on the walkthroughs and reduce their need to perform formal observations and teacher conferences as a means to complete the formal evaluation. This self-directed diversion from the rigid school-adopted model could produce myriad results. The more efficient walkthrough process could improve both the quality of observational data collected and more accurate professional dialogue between teacher and principal. This result could create a supervisory model that produces the outcomes as intended. However, straying from formality of longer classroom observations and professional conferences could also produce diminished results depending on the characteristics of the leader in the system and the type of contingencies applied to the system over time. A variance from the adopted protocol could also create legal pitfalls if the modified process was used to recommend a teacher termination. It is clear that the walkthrough process should be considered a part of the formal process but only through proper vetting and adoption.

As is common with any policy, changes have taken place during the course of this study. In December 2015 President Barack Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law, replacing the long-standing Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). While ESSA changes and progresses practices of the previous law, very little changed in regards to teacher evaluation. In Kansas, it was an attempt at exemptions from NCLB that drove the state to develop stricter guidelines for teacher evaluations. Since ESSA does not require teacher evaluation systems, it will be up to the state to determine how or if evaluation models change for public schools.

Implications for Further Study

One significant perspective that was not included in this study is that of the teacher's. A study of how teachers perceive the principal as he/she addresses a significant contingency would add to the findings in this research area.

This study did not diversify gender due to a limiting effects other criteria placed on the participant candidate pool. Therefore, by chance, each participant in this study was male. A study on how female principals respond to externally applied contingencies could reveal additional information on similarities and differences between leadership styles and problem-solving skills.

Finally, a study investigating the walkthrough process as an effective way to measure instructional quality and the professional characteristics of a classroom teacher could provide valuable insight into the potential for a systemic change in practice. A parallel study of both teachers and principals could compare and contrast the observed performance of teachers and the overall personal and professional well-being of the principal.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Participant Selection Database

School	Eval Tool	Enroll #	KSHSAA	# Teachers	Yrs in Current Job	Yrs in Other Admin	Yrs as Principal
Chase-Raymond	e4E	73	1A	10.0	2	5	2
Cimarron-Ensign	e4E	300	3A	28.0	1	0	12
Doniphan West Schools	e4E	105	2A	16.0	5	1	5
Minneola	e4E	78	1A	10.0	2	0	2
Hodgeman County Schools	e4E	158	2A	17.0	1	0	9
Oakley	e4E	140	2A	19.0	2	14	3
Oberlin	e4E	167	2A	18.7	2	0	7
Ness City	e4E	143	2A	15.0	6	0	6
Nickerson	e4E	327	4A	28.0	16	0	19
Kaw Valley	e4E	265	3A	26.0	1	0	20
Kingman - Norwich	e4E	248	3A	15.0	2	0	2
Macksville	e4E	93	1A	16.0	3	0	3
Goodland	e4E	236	4A	23.0	2	2	2
Garnett	e4E	464	4A	42.0	7	13	7
Sublette	e4E	207	2A	20.0	5	0	10
Augusta	e4E	617	4A	52.0	4	0	8
Ingalls	e4E	124	1A	15.0	7	0	7
Dighton	e4E	116	1A	14.0	1	0	1
Kismet-Plains	e4E	195	3A	20.0	7	0	9
Hays	e4E	800	5A	65.1	1	19	1
Bucklin	e4E	76	1A	24.0	2	0	2
Bucklin	e4E	71	1A	0.0	2	0	2
Riverside	e4E	200	3A	25.0	12	0	13
Dodge City	e4E	1,718	6A	110.0	13	9	13
Satanta	e4E	122	1A	20.0	1	0	1
Syracuse	e4E	216	2A	23.0	13	0	16
Prairie Hills	e4E	240	3A	24.0	15	0	17
Ulysses	e4E	473	4A	39.0	15	0	27
Ellinwood Public Schools	e4E	201	2A	20.0	3	0	3
Clearwater	e4E	423	4A	38.0	4	12	4
Conway Springs	e4E	224	3A	18.1	3	0	3
Lakin	e4E	188	3A	22.0	1	0	12

Riley County	e4E	225	3A	20.0	1	0	1
Garden City	e4E	2,000	6A	118.0	13	0	15
Rock Hills	KEEP	150	2A	15.0	1	1	1
Washington Co. Schools	KEEP	182	2A	18.0	13	0	15
Moscow Public Schools	KEEP	135	1A	11.0	1	0	1
Rolla	KEEP	107	1A	12.0	3	0	6
Elkhart	KEEP	136	2A	23.0	9	0	10
De Soto	KEEP	689	4A	52.0	2	0	11
De Soto	KEEP	1,290	5A	92.0	4	0	10
Fort Scott	KEEP	545	4A	45.0	8	7	8
Burlington	KEEP	253	3A	25.0	2	1	2
Barber County North	KEEP	191	2A	20.5	3	0	3
South Barber	KEEP	108	1A	16.0	2	0	2
Mulvane	KEEP	585	4A	48.0	4	0	4
Maize	KEEP	767	5A	62.0	3	5	3
Maize	KEEP	1,343	6A	93.0	2	5	2
Renwick	KEEP	195	3A	17.0	5	0	5
Renwick	KEEP	430	4A	30.0	9	0	9
Cheney	KEEP	238	3A	25.0	2	0	2
Beloit	KEEP	357	3A	31.0	5	0	21
Wheatland	KEEP	58	1A	8.0	1	0	1
St Francis Comm Sch	KEEP	135	1A	18.0	1	0	1
Fairfield	KEEP	78	1A	12.0	2	0	2
Pretty Prairie	KEEP	166	1A	13.5	8	0	8
Buhler	KEEP	639	4A	65.0	1	0	18
Concordia	KEEP						
Jefferson West	KEEP	304	4A	23.0	6	5	6
Oskaloosa Public Schools	KEEP	250	2A	25.0	8	9	9
Pleasanton	KEEP	150	1A	17.0	2	0	2
Jayhawk	KEEP	243	3A	24.0	1	2	1
Baldwin City	KEEP	460	4A	35.0	3	3	3
Stafford	KEEP	65	1A	11.0	2	0	15
Wellington	KEEP	500	4A	43.0	2	0	10
Belle Plaine	KEEP	200	3A	18.0	17	0	18
Prairie View	KEEP	314	4A	29.0	7	0	19
Osawatomie	KEEP	360	4A	26.0	15	0	15
Circle	KEEP	540	4A	40.0	3	4	14
Rose Hill Public Schools	KEEP	580	4A	38.0	7	0	13
LaCrosse	KEEP	130	1A	21.0	12	0	12

Atchison Public Schools	KEEP	412	4A	38.5	9	0	17
Hoxie Community Schools	KEEP	123	1A	19.0	19	0	20
Chanute Public Schools	KEEP	553	4A	56.0	14	0	14
Louisburg	KEEP	512	4A	35.0	5	7	5
Osage City	KEEP	187	3A	19.0	11	0	17
Moundridge	KEEP	225	2A	25.0	8	0	15
Troy Public Schools	KEEP	150	2A	18.0	2	0	2
Skyline Schools	KEEP	104	2A	14.0	17	0	22
Cherryvale	KEEP	452	3A	34.0	12	1	14
Leavenworth	KEEP	1,305	5A	86.5	3	0	29
Basehor-Linwood	KEEP	650	4A	45.0	7	1	8
Neodesha	KEEP	330	3A	34.0	16	0	19
Udall	KEEP	200	1A	20.0	2	0	12
Winfield	KEEP	751	4A	56.3	2	6	2
Chapman	KEEP	327	4A	37.0	7	6	13
Columbus	KEEP	316	4A	31.0	3	9	3
Galena	KEEP	420	3A	40.0	2	0	2
Labette County	KEEP	504	4A	41.0	7	0	9
Shawnee Heights	KEEP	1,150	5A	64.0	5	0	18
Wellsville	McRel	275	3A	22.0	1	7	1
Haven Public Schools	McRel	361	3A	34.0	3	4	7
Flinthills	McRel	92	1A	0.0	1	0	8
Republic County	McRel	240	2A	21.0	2	0	0
Central Plains	McRel	105	2A	20.0	5	7	5
Nemaha Central	McRel	78	1A	10.1	3	0	3
Nemaha Central	McRel	199	3A	18.6	13	0	20
Piper-Kansas City	McRel	575	4A	43.0	1	0	1
Bonner Springs	McRel	720	4A	48.0	4	3	4
Wakeeney	McRel	112	1A	13.3	1	0	1
Fowler	McRel	74	1A	12.0	1	0	8
Smith Center	McRel	183	2A	19.5	9	0	9
North Ottawa County	McRel	309	3A	29.0	7	0	14
Twin Valley	McRel	140	2A	19.0	2	0	5
North Lyon County	McRel	144	2A	16.0	2	0	13
Emporia	McRel	1,115	5A	99.0	11	6	16
Marmaton Valley	McRel	147	2A	14.6	1	0	1
Iola	McRel	338	4A	32.0	2	7	2
Humboldt	McRel	182	3A	17.0	2	0	2
Valley Center Pub Sch	McRel	820	5A	57.0	5	2	11

Goddard	McRel	770	5A	53.0	2	6	2
Goddard	McRel	860	5A	54.0	8	12	8
Palco	McRel	63	1A	12.0	1	1	16
Plainville	McRel	185	1A	22.0	1	0	9
Stockton	McRel	89	1A	15.0	6	0	12
Graham County	McRel	164	2A	20.0	7	0	7
West Franklin	McRel	350	3A	35.0	15	0	15
Ottawa	McRel	680	4A	54.0	2	6	2
Quinter Public Schools	McRel	140	1A	15.0	3	0	3
Lincoln	McRel	155	2A	22.0	3	0	3
Sylvan Grove	McRel	95	1A	10.0	4	0	9
Ell-Saline	McRel	230	2A	18.7	2	0	7
Colby Public Schools	McRel	323	4A	27.0	1	0	12
Wamego	McRel	450	4A	44.0	3	3	9
Phillipsburg	McRel	161	3A	23.0	6	0	7
Ellsworth	McRel	262	3A	31.0	12	0	12
Mill Creek Valley	McRel	158	2A	18.0	3	0	7
Mission Valley	McRel	245	3A	25.0	3	0	3
Southern Cloud	McRel	42	1A	14.0	2	5	2
Royal Valley	McRel	310	4A	26.9	20	0	20
Jefferson County North	McRel	136	2A	16.0	14	20	14
McLouth	McRel	270	2A	22.9	2	0	6
Perry Public Schools	McRel	324	4A	25.0	8	0	11
Kinsley-Offerle	McRel	161	2A	17.0	6	0	6
Argonia Public Schools	McRel	79	1A	14.0	6	0	6
Marysville	McRel	235	3A	19.0	5	1	6
Woodson	McRel	135	2A	25.0	2	0	6
Burrton	McRel	121	1A	14.0	1	0	1
Newton	McRel	1,012	5A	88.0	16	0	16
Atchison	McRel	308	3A	30.0	3	2	10
Altoona-Midway	McRel	97	1A	14.0	3	0	0
Eureka	McRel	270	3A	30.0	1	2	1
Osborne County	McRel	150	1A	20.0	18	0	23
Douglass	McRel	248	3A	20.0	1	4	8
Smoky Valley	McRel	285	4A	24.8	8	2	8
Lyons	McRel	188	3A	21.9	5	13	5
Russell County	McRel	250	3A	26.0	21	0	31
Marion-Florence	McRel	160	3A	21.0	23	1	23
Goessel	McRel	149	1A	21.0	3	0	3

Morris County	McRel	217	3A	24.0	10	3	10
Victoria	McRel	116	1A	15.0	1	0	1
Santa Fe Trail	McRel	360	4A	32.0	6	11	22
Abilene	McRel	524	4A	41.0	4	0	7
Auburn Washburn	McRel	1,810	6A	140.0	7	0	7
Sedgwick Public Schools	McRel	160	3A	22.0	6	17	6
Halstead	McRel	247	3A	22.0	3	0	4
Halstead	McRel	242	3A	28.0	3	4	3
Little River	McRel	199	2A	15.7	1	0	9
Independence	McRel	523	4A	40.1	8	0	11
Inman	McRel	195	2A	22.0	11	0	11
Easton	McRel	240	3A	21.0	18	0	21
Marais Des Cygnes Valley	McRel	159	2A	21.0	8	16	0
Tonganoxie	McRel	602	4A	42.0	7	0	13
Scott County	McRel	255	3A	30.0	6	0	10
Herington	McRel	218	2A	21.0	1	0	1
Eudora	McRel	504	4A	24.0	4	0	15
Ft Larned	McRel	282	4A	23.0	4	5	4
Valley Heights	McRel	154	1A	18.0	1	0	13
Parsons	McRel	400	4A	50.0	2	6	9
Peabody-Burns	McRel	180	2A	20.0	7	0	7
Holton	McRel	329	4A	25.3	4	0	10
South Haven	McRel	108	1A	12.0	1	0	1
Erie-Galesburg	McRel	176	3A	25.0	2	0	15
Silver Lake	McRel	336	3A	32.0	4	1	4

Appendix B

Principal Interview Questions

- 1) Describe your school in terms of climate, number of staff, administrative structure.
- 2) Describe your experience as a teacher and administrator in terms of subject taught, grade levels, work experience, and philosophy of administration.
- 3) As a high school principal:
 - a. What tasks do you spend the most time completing during an average week?
 - b. What are your most important responsibilities and specific tasks?
 - c. Describe the percentage of your work time spend on management-related responsibilities vs. instructional leadership work.
- 4) Describe your experience with teacher evaluations as a teacher and as a principal.
- 5) How are evaluations organized/distributed and completed in the school?
 - a. Staff breakdown
 - b. Routines
- 6) What evaluation tool is currently being used in this school?
- 7) How was the tool chosen?
- 8) How long have you worked with this tool?
- 9) How does it compare to the tool used previously used?
 - a. Time, scheduling, paperwork, value
- 10) Describe experiences with this tool in terms of training, value, impact, satisfied with quality
- 11) How have the duties associated with this new tool impacted your work?

- 12) What strategies are you using (or what are you doing differently) to manage previous and additional work tasks?
- 13) Has or will the new evaluation tool make a difference in your school / work?
- 14) Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix C



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Interview Consent Form

Purpose: You are invited to participate in a study to examine the perception Kansas public high school principals have regarding their work responsibilities and how an externally-applied mandate impacts those responsibilities.

Participant Selection: You were purposefully selected as a participant in this study based on the type of evaluation tool used in your school, the size of school you work in, and your experience as a high school principal. As a possible participant you will be individually interviewed along with a pool of approximately fifteen other high school principals.

Explanation of Procedures: If you decide to participate, you will be asked to share your perceptions of your roles and responsibilities as a high school principal and how those roles and responsibilities are impacted by additionally assigned tasks. The interviews will consist of open-ended questions and will last approximately 60 minutes. Interviews will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy. Interviews will be transcribed and data analyzed using qualitative methods.

Discomfort/Risks: There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable with a question, you may skip it.

Benefits: The purpose of this study is to provide the field with a greater understanding of how high school principals perceive the jobs, how they prioritize specific responsibilities, and how added responsibilities impact other duties. Results will be published in academic journals and presented at conferences in order to share what I learn from the study.

Confidentiality: Any identifiable information obtained in this study will remain confidential. Names of individuals and locations will be masked by the use of pseudonyms and will be disclosed only with your permission. Audio files and interview transcripts will be maintained in a secure location and will be accessible only to members of the research team. No identifying information will be used in the final report or subsequent publications. 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 researcher 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 researcher may publish the results of the study. If I do, I will only discuss group results. Your name will not be used in any publication or presentation about the study.

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. If you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Contact: If you have any questions about this study, please contact Mr. Chad Higgins, the principal investigator, at (620) 747-2486 or chad.higgins@wichita.edu. If you have questions pertaining to your rights as a subject, or about research-related injury, you can contact the Office of Administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007 at (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.

Printed Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

Witness Signature

Date