Msc. Olivera PRESI[1]

TEACHER EVALUATION WITHIN SCHOOL CONTEXT

Introduction

The assessment is only one component of a comprehensive growth and development system of a teacher. The public education system in the U.S. involves many stakeholders and roles whose responsibilities aim to support and enhance student learning. Unfortunately, the education system itself is a lack of alignment and coherence. Trying to fix what seems to be broken, it may transfer opposite results.

To design and implement programs beneficial to the evaluation there are two basic points to be recognized: the preparation and employment are the most critical to ensure the effectiveness of teachers. Before the teacher logs into assessment, every teacher must demonstrate subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and professional teaching skills. Current efforts to develop performance evaluation for beginner teachers provide promising data by ensuring that teachers enter the profession with the necessary qualifications, regardless of their way into class preparation. In addition, employment practices support teaching effectiveness when used criteria for employment are consistent with the criteria used for evaluating teachers.

Developing high-quality professionals should be available for every teacher. Professional development programs should be based on state standards, the district where the school is located, learning goals and the identified needs of students and teachers. In addition, all new teachers must have objective support and participate in an introductory and counselling program. Beginner teachers should have less responsibility and more time for planning than experienced teachers. They should also have the opportunity to observe experienced teachers. Even the best systems of evaluation of teachers are likely to fail in an educational system that does not provide the new teachers with necessary

[1] University "Aleksandër Moisiu", Durrës; oliverapresi@gmail.com

training and preparation for acquiring the skills, knowledge and dispositions from the first day of independent professional practice.

The purpose of teacher evaluation

Evaluation of teachers tends to influence professional development and career decisions. This assessment is either formative or summative. Formative evaluation aims professional growth to improve individual practices. Formative assessment contains useful information for decisions about teaching ways. By this method, teachers who experience problems with the fulfilment of their duties are assisted by the training services and counselling for the organization, design, planning and presentation of lectures. Formative assessment purposes are important to individual teachers because they help them have a positive perception on evaluation.

Current discourse on teacher evaluation policy is immersed in a corrective and rewarding framework that very often aims:

1. To measure the effectiveness of each teacher
2. Categorization and listing of teachers
3. To reward those at the top
4. To remove those at the end of the list

Such a simple approach not only ignores the complexities of teaching but also overlooks the real purpose of the evaluation of teachers. The main purpose of the evaluation of teachers should be to strengthen the knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and practices of professional teachers in the classroom. This purpose serves to promote the growth of students and learning, and to inspire teachers. Complete systems for the continuous training and professional growth of teachers help them refine their teaching skills, critically analyse their performance and the performance of students and implement the changes necessary for improving teaching and learning. Performance evaluation comprehensive systems provide support, assistance and professional growth opportunities based on individual needs of teachers, students, as well as school itself.

Literature review

A number of studies and articles have been conducted on the impact of teacher evaluation on the performance of teachers. Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) defined the evaluation of teachers as' systematic performance evaluation of teachers or qualifications related to the designatedprofessional role of teacher

and district or school's mission "(p 86). The literature suggests that assessment strategies are used by objective. If the objective is the responsibility, there should be used summative strategies; if the objective is professional growth, there should be used formative strategies (McDougall, 2001). Formative assessment strategies are designed to encourage professional growth. These assessment strategies do not collect on the outside, controlled data for evaluation purposes; they are teacher-oriented, individualized, and supporting professional growth. Although literature suggests that teacher quality and effectiveness of teachers have great impact on the results of the students, many students still show no increase in desired levels of achievement and growth.

Stronge and Tucker (2000) warn of connection students achievement with the evaluation of teachers. The authors offered nine reasons for linking student performance measurements with professional performance reviews:

1. The use of student learning as a single component to the evaluation system that is based on multiple data sources.
2. When judged the effectiveness of teachers, the context in which teachers and administrators works is taken into consideration.
3. Using measurements of students growth for a fixed standard or goal.
4. Comparing achievements of learning from one point of time to another concerning the same student, not groups or different students.
5. Accepting that test scores have traps that must be avoided.
6. Use of a time frame for evaluation allows models of student learning to be documented.
7. Using fair and valid measurements of student learning.
8. Selection of student assessment measures which match at best the existing curriculum.
9. Non limiting the curricula and teaching to adapt to a test, if the test, in fact, does not measure what is to be taught (p 16).

These nine conditions are contrary to other conditions that support the connection of student achievement with teacher evaluation systems.

The achievements of students in state tests should be taken into account for at least half of measuring the quality of teachers, and the rest be based on 'evaluation from running school boards or revisions of peers'. There should be a recognition of the link between the effectiveness of teachers and increase of student performance as well as a major focus on the fact that teachers be guaranteed training and support necessary to be effective as soon as they enter the classroom (Thompson & Barnes 2007, pg. 21). Further, the recommendations point to the fact that teachers must not only be qualified, but also effective. The

shift towards the connection of students growth with the efficacy of teachers is a radical shift with a number of implications.

The obligation for teachers to meet the minimum requirements to be considered qualified is a first step to ensure the effectiveness of teachers, but only the fulfillment of those requirements is no guarantee that teachers will be efficient (Goe, 2007). Along with other measures to ensure the quality and efficacy of teachers, new systems were developed for the purposes of evaluating the performance of teachers. Some performance models focus on standards for instruction, which include content specific pedagogy. Actual responsibility is a challenge for schools that aim to achieve academic success for all students through a comprehensive evaluation system for teachers.

Marshall (2005) supports the monitoring and evaluation for high student achievement, suggesting a new theory of action. Action that stays behind monitoring and evaluation, "the engine that promotes high achievements of students is when teams work collaboratively to meet the same expectations for the curriculum and use temporary assessments to constantly improve teaching and care for students who are not successful '(p. 729)

There are 10 standards for teachers:

1. Knowledge of the subject: teachers must understand the basic concepts, tools of requests, disciplinary structures and design, properly and developmentally.
2. Human Growth and Development: teachers need to understand how children and adolescents develop and learn in a variety of school, in family and community and must provide opportunities that support their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.
3. Students with different learning skills: teachers must understand teaching practices culturally.
4. Instructional planning and strategies: teachers should understand the instructional planning, long-term and short-term plans of projects based on the knowledge of subject, students, community and curriculum goals, and should involve a variety of development strategies, appropriate, in order to promote critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills of all students.
5. Evaluation: teachers should understand and use multiple assessments and interpret the results to assess and promote student learning and to modify instructions in order to promote continuous development of students.
6. Learning environment: teachers need to understand the motivation, group and individual behavior and should create a supportive and respectful

environment that encourages interaction, active learning and self-motivation.

7. Special needs: teachers need to adapt and modify instruction to accommodate the special needs of all children.

8. Communication: teachers should use the knowledge of effective techniques of verbal and nonverbal communication and written communication, tools of literacy of information to promote the use of research, cooperation and supportive interactions.

9. Cooperation and partnerships: teachers should build relationships with parents, caretakers, families and the wide community agencies to support students' learning and wellbeing.

10. Professional development: teachers should participate as active, accountable members of the professional community, by engaging in a wide range of reflective practices, pursuing opportunities for professional growth to establish collegial relations to improve teaching and learning process.

The development of these new standards changed the model of teachers from a simple retainer of t information into a model that emphasizes the complex and multiple role of teachers who use their knowledge to improve student learning.

Historically, the purpose of evaluation of teachers has been to improve instructional practices (formative) and / or to determine the maintenance of a teacher in a teaching position (summative). The arrival of the movement for standards called for more effective evaluation systems that would allow more accurate measurement of the performance of teachers. Different evaluation models for teachers emerged, where in the early 1980s, a study examining the practice through a conceptual frame of evaluation of teachers. Darling-Hammond (1986) studied the differences between theory and practice in teacher assessment by examining two types of theoretical literature: teaching efficiency and organizational and implementation research.

According to the authors the purpose of evaluation of teachers and organizational conditions dictated a level of standardization in assessment and adherence processes for the validity and reliability of assessment decisions. They argued that the assessment to be effective in improving the performance of teachers, it must have a balance between standardized, centralized, administered expectations of the performance with approaches of teacher specifics for the evaluation and professional growth (Kimball, 2001). In this climate of accountability at all levels of the educational spectrum, it is of great importance that teachers and school leaders focus on what matters most, students' achievements. Reform movement triggered a new paradigm for the roles of teachers and school administrators.

Recent reviews of the responsibility of teacher evaluation process

Responsibility is an acceptable aspect of the educational system in the world today. Weems and Rogers (2010) reported reforms 'Act of No Neglected Child' of 2001, as they related to teachers focused mainly on teacher input methods. Teacher quality capital within the mandate of the legislation was the high quality mandate. This mandate was focused on degrees obtained from teachers, teacher years of experience or types of professional development they had attended. All rolled around teachers and inputs teachers had reached in their certification process. Weems and Rogers explained that with everything that was required by teachers, teachers quality was supposed to be extremely high today.

Responsibility in terms of the evaluation of teachers, typically is considered as summative. Danielson (2001) explained that measures of accountability in education today generally reflect a need to determine the competencies of teachers, which are related to the way in which teachers provide their services, where these services generally include providing instructions, conducting school activities and professionalism in decisions and actions. The public as well as politicians, want to ensure that those services are effective, therefore, many of the teachers of the evaluation criteria are judged since at the beginning because of political and social constructs of what society is based on (Kyriakides & Demetriou, 2007); so the teachers modify their teaching by what others think is effective.

Stumbo and McWalters (2011) discovered a recent shift in the focus of teacher evaluation in terms of responsibility. Their research found that before this shift, as mentioned earlier, the definition of responsibility from the public was generally based on input from teachers. Now, the focus has shifted from the quality of teachers in teacher efficacy. Stumbo and McWalters explained that the shift is best described as a way to see the teacher. Under the model of quality, teachers were measured in how well they knew their subject.

Summary

Teacher evaluation process can be one of the most effective ways to improve student performance. In order to achieve this, teachers must perceive the process as useful, unbiased and worthy. According to a literature review, the emphasis is on the importance of a supportive environment in teacher evaluation system. School culture was focused on teaching and learning for all, the cooperation between teachers and reflection on practices benefited results of teachers assessment.

Danielson and McGreal (2000) showed that the essential context of the assessment includes: school climate and the nature of a continuing professional development as a contributor to effective evaluation; promoting linkages between assessment and school improvement, professional development and students' learning; and understanding of the role of school leaders as an instructional leader. Research findings show that many teachers and administrators perceive formative assessments, when done with the intent to improve, as a powerful tool to influence the practices of professional growth of teachers towards students achievement.

Findings of the research on the perceptions of teachers show that most teachers believe that knowledge of the supervisors on the technical aspects of teaching, classroom experience and ability to provide a useful model for suggestions are very important (Colby, 2002). According toCollins (1990), an evaluation system for teachers based on standards is a complex system that requires evaluation. Assessment data are crucial to guide the changes for implementation of the system. Through the development of such data and their delivery systems of evaluation based on the standards may become more important and be not merely an evaluation system but a key tool for encouraging improvements in teachers' competencies and students learning.

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