

ENTRANCES, BARRIERS AND BRIDGES TO AUTHENTIC
TENURED TEACHER EVALUATION IN NEWFOUNDLAND:
MOVING BEYOND "GETTING DONE"

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**ENTRANCES, BARRIERS AND BRIDGES TO AUTHENTIC TENURED
TEACHER EVALUATION IN NEWFOUNDLAND: MOVING BEYOND
“GETTING DONE”**

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the need for an authentic tenured teacher evaluation policy within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Using the voices of teachers, the intent was to uncover their evaluation experiences and perceptions as well as gain an understanding of their needs for both tenured evaluation and their role in the process of developing and implementing such policy. A secondary aim was to explore a link between early evaluative experiences and later teaching attitudes and values.

Interviews were conducted with 15 teachers enrolled in the Education Graduate program at Memorial University of Newfoundland during the 2000 summer session in St. John's, Newfoundland. The teachers, all tenured, represented 8 of the 10 school districts in the province. At the time of this study these districts were found in various stages of tenured evaluation policy development and implementation, ranging from acknowledging the need for new policy to recent implementation.

The findings indicated a teacher population that wanted meaningful evaluation but felt powerless in attaining it. They viewed the current evaluation approach for both tenured and untenured alike as a product that sat outside their professional practice. Words such as artificial, judgmental and farcical were used as descriptors. While they envisioned the process of professional growth and goal-setting as a more authentic and empowering form of evaluation, their experiences and perceptions of the traditional, top-down method of school district policy development and implementation gave them little

hope. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between the degree of collegiality and quality feedback early in teachers' careers and their current levels of morale, trust, and collaborative mindset.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

It started the first year I began teaching. A stranger would enter my classroom, sit at the back, and write furiously for the next 30 minutes. I would teach. At the end he would walk out, leaving behind a copy of the sheet, a sheet upon which was written who I was as a teacher. Three to five days later a formalized copy, complete with the lesson's strengths and needs, would arrive. Sometimes we would have an opportunity to discuss what he observed. Sometimes there was a close-ended set of questions to be asked and answered. Sometimes it was a request for long range plans or student notebooks, for more proof of my competence. Always it was me in the passive role.

Variations on this pattern have continued throughout my years of teaching. As the overall educational climate moved to "kinder and gentler," the strangers were replaced with principals and assistant principals. I became adept at teaching to the checklist, over the years getting better and better at translating this vertical evaluation into what minimal requirements I had to fulfill to achieve top marks in each section. Like others, "survival" became my "major goal in supervision" (McBride & Skau, 1995, p. 268). Each time an evaluator entered, the one act play would begin with me in the starring role. As long as I delivered my lines well, used appropriate props, actively engaged my supporting cast, kept the transitions smooth, the pace fast and the ending resounding, the reviewer would rave. Finally, the ritual complete, I would return to teaching children.

At first it was mainly fear, but with years and experience, I felt this distain through many layers. One was the pressure and resentment of having to prove myself.

A recent review of supervisory textbooks found that the perceived purpose of supervision has been to discover and then remediate deficits in teachers' behaviours and skills. While supervisors (usually principals) took the role of experts, "teachers were portrayed as deficient and in need of improvement and help from experts" (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998, p. 69).

Another was a conflict in paradigms. While student evaluation teaching practices moved toward authentic assessment (Prestine & McGreal, 1997), the frustrations of being stuck within a linear and limiting method of evaluation were further accentuated. Supervision was viewed as both "a dog and pony show" (Zepeda and Ponticell, 1998, p. 78) performance, where all the right checklist steps were executed, and "a shallow and hollow ritual in which neither teacher nor supervisor was invested and from which nothing meaningful or useful resulted" (p.79).

Finally there was the hypocrisy that all teachers, be they master or inferior, received the same cursory evaluation in regular intervals while the results, be they good or bad, affected nothing. Good teachers tend to view the annual evaluation as either "tasks to be checked off" (Black, p. 39) or lamentably, "missed opportunities" (p. 41). Clinical evaluations are seldom valuable, leaving teachers to feel "isolated, unappreciated, and unrecognized" (p. 41).

Here in Newfoundland, a recent restructuring transformed 27 school boards into 10 new ones. One of the effects of the restructuring was the need for each board to generate new policy for everything under their control. The negligible advance time

forced boards to use a hodgepodge of policies from their former boards until they could develop their own. Reasonably, the greatest focus has been on policies considered most urgent. It is only now that districts across the province seem to be focussing their attention on tenured teacher evaluation. For the teaching profession in Newfoundland and Labrador, this can be an opportunity to horizontally develop and implement a supportive, relevant policy that considers the values and culture of the learning community. It can also serve as a furtherance of deprofessionalization if teachers are directed to implement yet another in an ongoing series of constricting or perfunctory policies passed down to them. It is an opportunity for fresh air or for further stifling.

Statement of the Problem

Effective teacher evaluation policies contain two types of evaluation: summative and formative (Darling-Hammond, 1983; Sawa, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1995). Summative evaluation measures the observable capabilities of a teacher against a standardized set of characteristics, skills and abilities. Its main purpose is to make judgements, whether that be on new teachers or on teachers with perceived difficulties. Formative, on the other hand, is primarily used with experienced teachers. The emphasis is on using its results “to improve the professional performance of teachers” (Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association, 1999, p.6), thereby “helping good teachers become even better” (Russell, 1998, p. 3). Since 1983, the Newfoundland Teachers’ Association (now known as the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association) has achieved inclusion of both

types within their collective agreement with primary importance placed on formative evaluation. It follows then, in theory at least, that all ten school districts in the province should be working from two distinct teacher evaluation policies.

For the most part this was not happening. Recent school restructuring can take part of the blame. New boards, after all, need new policy. While many were quick to adopt a summative evaluation policy, most boards are only now in the early stages of implementing the formative component. Some remain without policy.

In other situations the formative process was, to varying degrees, only that in name (Hickman, 1983; Mills, 1997). While some jurisdictions may have developed well-written policies, Hickman found that little implementation followed: "What actually happened in the practical application of many models was vastly different from what was advocated by those responsible for the implementation and administration of their efforts" (p.5). In other cases, formative evaluation was differentiated from summative only in the frequency of classroom visitations and the use of the end product.

Related to this was the question of how new policy was developed and implemented. Fullan (1993) summarized implementation research by a policy guideline he created, "You can't mandate what matters" (p.37). According to Green (1998), dictated policy disenfranchises the educational process. The policy becomes a product to be delivered and carried out. As well, Huberman and Miles (1984) found that the shorter the time line from adoption to implementation, the more likely policy is to fail.

So what was happening across the province in regards to tenured teacher

evaluation policy development and implementation? For those who now have policies, the method of choice appears to be bureaucratic. Development seemed to remain at the district level with little input from those lower on the hierarchy. Implementation was reported to have ranged from a thick envelope arriving in the mail to a document left on the staffroom table to a “one-shot” power-point presentation to school staffs.

Significance of the Problem

In its broadest sense, the problem is significant to all affected by quality teaching: students, teachers, parents, administrators, school board members and communities.

More specifically, this problem has significance for school districts within the province of Newfoundland functioning with weak, non-existent or top-down formative evaluation policies. To teachers within the aforementioned districts, the problem is especially significant. As passive receptacles to their own evaluations, their professional growth has been limited. For administrators, the primary implementors of teacher evaluation, the guidance provided by outdated, non-existent or bureaucratically imposed policies stands in direct conflict with current educational leadership theory (Fullan, 1999, Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999, Johansson and Bredeson, 1999, O’Neil, 1995, Owens, 1997, Sergiovanni, 1995).

Purpose of the Research

Lack of authentic formative evaluation has led to a number of problems. One

purpose of this research was to uncover some of the layers of effects stemming from this need. Through these discoveries this study has borne out the importance of collaboratively developing and implementing a professional growth policy for tenured evaluation. As well, it has served to illuminate the long term benefits that such a policy could bring to the learning community at large. Finally, within this probe, perspectives on both the obstacles to improved teaching and learning as well as the opportunities for development of a formative professional growth model have been revealed.

A second purpose was to provide voice to teachers long denied. Interminably powerless within a top-down management system of supervision, teachers were able to articulate and give meaning to their experiences, which will perhaps, as a result, lead to initiating a new framework for their future professional growth and supervision. Pajak (1986) concurs, stating that the first step in studying teacher evaluation is “a sincere attempt to understand as fully as possible the teacher’s point of view” (p. 129). By allowing educators to construct discoveries about their practice, they in turn were given opportunity for empowerment.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in generalizability in sample and setting as well as in researcher bias. The sample is limited to tenured teachers currently pursuing graduate studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. The setting can only be generalized to those school districts within Newfoundland and Labrador from which the participants

come. As well, while attempts were made to give voice to tenured teachers from across the province, the purposive sampling technique used restricted the population sample to those teachers who demonstrated a concern for this area of study.

Researcher subjectivity was anticipated in three key areas. The first were the mindscapes (Sergiovanni, 1992) that I brought as an experienced Albertan educator relatively new to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The second was the perspectives and influence that my position of relative power as an assistant principal, especially with those participants from my own district, brought to the research. Finally, because of my recent arrival in the province, there was both the irony and frustrations that, concurrent with this writing, I was subjected to yet another “for tenure” evaluation process.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Today's leading educators view teacher supervision as an integral part of successful school communities. Owens (1997) states that "the emerging concept is focussed on developing a vision that involves followers, inspires them, and motivates their efforts" (p. 218). Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (1998) reflect these same notions with their definition of supervision being "the function in schools that draws together the discrete elements of instructional effectiveness into whole-school action" (p. 6). Teacher supervision is now viewed as a vehicle for improved teacher growth which, in turn, will directly influence student learning and school development.

Predominant Practice

"Done well, supervision enhances teacher development" (Sergiovanni, 1995, p. 212). If this is the case, one does not have to look far to find examples of supervision done poorly. Comments one teacher:

I've had 'great' evaluations. I have gotten high points or all the boxes checked in and wonderful comments on my abilities. But I have never had an experience where I felt any valuable professional growth occurred. I have not received any valuable information, nor have I changed my teaching approaches because of that information. (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998, p. 77)

Though agreeing with the role of supervision as a path to improved teaching, Isenberg (1990) skeptically adds, "but how often is it done for the sole purpose of meeting contractual obligations" (p. 30).

For the most part supervision is not done well. Often pragmatically motivated, supervision is, at its best, used as a management tool to ensure that teachers are meeting minimum standards and, at its worst, as an instrument of power wielded to keep control. It is no wonder then, that although educators usually agree that the intent of teacher supervision is to foster great teaching, "many words and phrases to describe the evaluation process in their schools: cynical, useless ritual, suspicious, fearful, waste of time" (Santeusano, 1998, p. 30) continue to reverberate throughout staffrooms and hallways across our country. Too often, according to Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), the lines of helping and judgement become blurred, a case of the "the helping hand strikes again" (p. 41). Recent studies support Blumberg (1980) who alludes to the potential destructive nature of this process by stating, "Much of what occurs in the name of supervision in the schools constitutes a waste of time as *teachers see* (italics in original) it Neither side trusts the other. It would be better if they left us alone" (pp. 5-6).

Supervision as it Should Be

What supervisory practices promote teaching excellence? According to Bradley (1993), "What we need to do is to treat teachers as professionals, listen to their suggestions, and encourage them to engage in constant self-improvement" (p. 193). By engaging in reflective practices, supervisors and teachers are encouraged to take a differentiated supervisory approach. In doing so, posit Sergiovanni and Starlett (1988),

differences in teacher needs, personality, professional development levels and learning styles are reflectively accommodated. Teachers work best from a collaborative, non-directive model (Glickman et al, 1998; Norris, 1991). Teachers want advice, assistance and encouragement but not to be told what to do. Teachers want and are moving toward authentic assessment - that which reflects what is happening in their classrooms with their own students. They want to extend the concept of authentic assessment to themselves (Jonsen & Jones, 1998). Based on this research, the school's view of teaching has to be one of professionalism. Teachers need to be nurtured by a sense of professionalism rather than being talked down to (Blumberg, 1980).

The Professionalism of Teaching

"It is impossible to think of a teacher evaluation policy without considering what it means to be a professional" (Duke 1995, p. 6). Its meaning , to a certain extent, depends on one's perspective. To some, images of a superhero are invoked. An article by Spady and Schwahn (1999), written from a school board viewpoint, describes professionals as competent, altruistic individuals who are consistently performing at peak levels. They are in a constant state of self-improvement, never lose their composure, proclaim the virtues of others over themselves and are modest:

Professionalism is a matter of awareness, focus, and courage. Genuine professionals never lose sight of the beliefs and principles that define how they think, who they are, and what they do. They concentrate on how best to contribute to the highest good in the short run and the long run. Their standards shape their

perceptions, guide their actions - even in the face of pressure, tension, and adversity. Their principles are the product of conscious, deliberate, and continuous focus and reflection. In essence, then, professionalism is an awareness and principled way of being. (p. 27)

What Spady and Schwahn describe and, by extension, school boards self-servingly support, is utopian. In essence they have most likely described society's view of the perfect person.

Another view, this one from a commercially-based education magazine, limits professionalism to public perceptions. Dressing well, verbalizing collective successes and talented colleagues in public, and avoiding negative talk are what they seem to convey as the hallmarks of professionalism (Glazer, 1995). Again, it is the setting of the article, to an extent, that dictates the content and depth of treatment. Its audience is generally one that is looking for quick tips and ideas to improved teaching without having to read theory. Its advertisers, in turn, are those that market products that promise to help improve teaching (Pruitt, 2000). A more superficial and, to some extent, materialistic view of professionalism is the result.

For others, a more empowering view prevails. As well as the desire to make a difference in student lives and possessing (and continually seeking) the necessary competencies in order to carry out this desire, "professionalism lies in the discretion one has over the process used to achieve agreed-upon goals" (Lawton, Scane, & Wang, 1995, p. 279). Similar are Hargreaves and Goodson's 1996 principles of postmodern professionalism (as cited in Green, 1998) which include an active commitment to caring

for students, working collaboratively to share expertise in solving mutual collegial teaching problems, increasing opportunities to make decisions on teaching-related issues for their students, and a self-directed pursuit of continuous learning.

Meanings attached to professionalism can either empower or exploit teachers. While the school board article appears to promote "moral martyrdom" and disregard teacher empowerment, the second reference reduces professionalism to an extrinsic quality. Importantly, it is the teachers' intrinsic view of themselves as professionals that in turn directs their professionalism (Green, 1998). The shift must be made from "what am I supposed to do" to actually doing it. Fullan (1997) contended that entrapping systems can foster dependency where "one's actions are predominately shaped ... by events and/or by actions or directions of others"; that empowerment stands as its opposite, "taking charge and ... playing a critical role in determining what is to be done" (p. ix)

Professional Development and Teacher Accountability

In the past, supervision's primary (and often only) role was of accountability. Both proving (summative) and improving (formative) forms of supervision are needed. Sawa (1995) uses an agricultural metaphor to explain the differences between the two, and also tells how both can be helpful. Cultivating focusses on the overall development of teachers by supporting them in opening their "hearts, souls, and minds to one another, thinking critically and actively planning improvements to their teaching" (p. 27). Weeding, on the

other hand, focusses on individuals' weaknesses. Although the majority of teachers fall into the former category, protection of children and society, as well as the reputation of the teaching profession, requires some energy to be directed to weeding the school's garden.

Others agree. According to Sergiovanni (1995), effective schools operate within two systems of evaluation. "Quality control," the first category, monitors teachers and learning in the school. "The process is formal and documented; criteria are explicit and standards are uniform for all teachers" (p. 217). Its role is to protect students and the public from incompetent teachers.

The role of "professional development," the second type of evaluation, is to increase understanding of teaching and to enhance practice, helping teachers to grow and improve within their profession. Using the school's shared vision as a framework, teachers are given ownership over their growth and improvement. Working within a collaborative environment, they identify where they need to grow, set their goals, plan their improvements, then implement and monitor their progress.

Sergiovanni's "80/20 quality rule" addresses where the emphasis in teacher evaluation should be. For maximum effectiveness, the majority of time and effort should be in professional improvement while no more than 20% of effort be tied to quality control. Although the emphasis needs to be on fostering professional growth, "teaching deficiencies and instances where overriding purposes and defining platforms are ignored" (p. 217) cannot be neglected.

Finally, Gleave (1997), while concurring on the need for two types of supervision, urges that a strong distinction be made between them. The development and management functions of supervision need to be separated. When this does not happen, purports Gleave, misunderstandings, discouragement and even distrust can develop. "Recognition of the different focuses for development and appraisal enables the creation of two distinct systems, each effective for its purpose. These distinct systems enhance the school culture" (p. 270).

Key Attributes of a Successful Supervision Program

Quality Control

Quality control, the first supervisory system, has in the past, received most of the emphasis in supervision policies. Summative in nature, its fundamental goal is to assure teaching competence. Sergiovanni (1995) identifies the four teaching knowledge areas of professional competence as:

- sense of purpose
- knowledge of students
- knowledge of subject matter
- master of technique

Supervision procedures that are "rigorous, well-documented, and formal," encompass the key areas of teaching competence, "attempt to save marginal teachers and are legally

defensible" (Glickman et al, 1998, p. 315) are essential in a healthy quality control program.

Professional Growth

Unlike the requisite adherence to minimum standards found in traditional supervision techniques, professional growth supervision aspires to move teachers further along the motivational hierarchy. Root and Overly (1990), in listing key elements of a successful teacher supervision program, assert that teachers, the best source of expertise, need to play a major role in the development and ongoing examination of the school supervision process. Ownership is essential. Within a collegial environment the vision of professional growth as supervision needs to be developed, articulated, clarified and given direction.

Collegiality

As long as a school is simply a set of compartments where adults deal with children several hours each day, "the concept of developing an interpersonally competent organization is meaningless" (Blumberg, 1980, pp. 246-7). Using a sports metaphor, Hoerr (1996) compares figure skating to hockey and says that teachers need to move away from their self-perception of figure skaters and instead embrace the hockey player persona, "all on the same team and working toward the same goal: a better school" (p. 381). The

majority of teachers are superb figure skaters. An experienced teacher commented, "I have taught 20,000 classes; I have been 'evaluated' 30 times; but I have never seen another teacher teach" (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p.10). In contrast, a teacher exposed to the collaborative process stated, "You can learn more by watching peers teach than you can by having someone observe and write an evaluation" (DePasquale Jr., 1990, p.23).

Collegiality simply means working together. Collegial supervision includes peer coaching, peer supervision, professional dialogue, curriculum development and action research. Teacher driven, the emphasis is on joint problem identification and problem solving. Much of the research indicates that collegiality is the preferred mode of evaluation. Walsh (as cited in Sawa, 1995, p. 28) found that benefits included instructional improvement, increased collegial dialogue, and an assault against the "isolation, uncertainty, and loneliness that characterizes a great deal of teaching." According to Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), isolational teaching tends to have teachers working at their lowest level of teaching. Most teachers are very effective but lack access to other teachers. Ineffective teachers are, for the majority, those who have become so over the years. They suggest that in order to increase teaching effectiveness, we must "fight for access to each other's ideas, to assume people will improve under these conditions, and not to tolerate those very few who, in the final analysis, fail to respond" (p. 11). A supporting study, reported by Zepeda and Ponticell (1998), showed that even among teachers formerly identified as either marginal or incompetent, peer collaboration

and self-awareness were the primary factors in their improvements, some of which reached the superior level. Finally, again in Zepeda and Ponticell's article, a teacher commented that after being engaged in shared peer observation and post conferences, "this experience afforded me the opportunity to grow in my position as a teacher, to learn like a professional - from observing others and critiquing our practices" (p. 76).

Self-developed Supervision

After assessing their own needs, teachers also have the option of developing and implementing their own supervision or professional growth plan. Here, maximum teacher choice is provided. Also referred to as the "facilitating" style (Gleave, 1997), the "professionally maturing" level (Sandell and Sullivan, 1992), and the "non-directive" approach (Glickman et al, 1998), the supervisor assists the highly motivated and competent teacher's thinking in developing a professional growth plan. As well as being available for any needed support, the supervisor ensures that the teacher's goals are reasonable and obtainable.

Permeating the Practice

For supervision to encourage and develop teacher growth, the process must be continuous and ongoing, conscious and unconscious (Fullan 1993; Gainey, 1990). Professional development needs to flow seamlessly within supervision, working together

as one process. "Staff development which seeks to enhance and inform reflective practice cannot be conceived as something done on an institute day or in a workshop but must take place in the classroom as professional practice unfolds" (Sergiovanni and Starlett, 1988, p. 403).

Little (1982) found that in successful schools, professional growth was fostered by the norms of collegiality and continuous improvement. Furthermore, she was able to identify the four critical actions that supported these norms:

- Teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice.
- Teachers are frequently observed and provided with useful (if potentially frightening) critiques of their teaching.
- Teachers plan, design, research, evaluate, and prepare teaching materials together.
- Teachers teach each other the practice of teaching. (p. 328)

In essence, an ideal supervisory program would be one that, rather than tagged onto a school's operational framework, would instead be incorporated as part of the everyday school routine. Good supervisory practices should mirror good teaching.

Policy Development

So how can good supervisory practices become policy? Policy development has been described as a process which attempts to systematically anticipate and improve the future (First, 1992). Applied to education, this can translate into devising and then bringing about planned improvements that in turn spin positive effects into the learning

community.

The Learning Community

Successful reforms are those that originate from the needs of the learning community and are acted upon by the policy makers. This bottom-up, top-down approach requires a greater understanding by the policy makers of the needs and values of the learning community in order for the enhancement of teaching and learning to occur (Johansson and Bredeson, 1999). Districts must move away from a system where they dictate policy to one where they defer to teachers to "cooperatively build a variety of programs" (Holmes, 1995, p. 280). Fullan (1993) agrees, stating that "top down reform strategies have virtually no chance of reaching the core problems" (p. 51). Too often new theories are taken on without any thought as to how they can fit within the current system and without first conducting a thorough analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. When such are the methods of change in a district, instead of being viewed by teachers as "the cumulative development of a comprehensive strategy, rather it is 'one damned thing after another' For teachers, change becomes a matter of coping with management's penchant for educational fads" (Baker et al p.13 as cited in Fullan 1993, p. 52). The more policy challenges the existing norms of the learning community, the "least likely it will be implemented in the intended way" (Johansson and Bredeson, 1999, p. 57).

Learning organization research (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999;

Leithwood and Steinbach, 1995; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner, 1994; Taylor, 1995), explains the development of community norms as well as illuminating the reasons why policies that ignore these norms fail. Defined as "an organization in which people at all levels are, collectively, continually enhancing their capacity to create things they really want to create" (Taylor, p. 20), or, more simply, "a great team" (Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner, 1994, p. 17), successful learning organizations are those shaped around the principles of continuous self-improvement, reflective practice, shared visioning, collegiality and system-wide thinking (Taylor). Rather than an event, learning is seen as a process that occurs over time whereby people's beliefs, ways of seeing the world and ultimately, their skills and capabilities change" (p. 23). Activated by the aforementioned principles, this process eventually brings with it a deep shift in thinking, both individually and collectively (Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner).

Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner identify three key elements: "guiding ideas;" "theory, methods and tools;" and "innovations in infrastructure," that, working in conjunction with each other, are essential for effective learning organizations. The first, guiding ideas, are those principles for which the organization stands, that which provides the "overarching sense of direction or purpose" (p. 36). In order for schools to implement changes, they must fit within the guiding ideas to which they are committed.

The second element, theory, methods, and tools, refers to the building of knowledge. All three are needed in concert with one another, asserts Senge, Roberts,

Ross, Smith, and Kleiner. Without the underlying theory, the methods and tools are unreliable. Without the tools, the methods and theories can not be pushed forward. Learning organizations need resources incorporated into their systems. And without the methods, the theory and tools are powerless. Thus, changes that ignore anyone of these thwart the development of skills and abilities needed for deeper learning . "Efforts at change lack depth and are ultimately seen as superficial" (p. 36).

Innovations in infrastructure, the final element, is when learning is integrated within the organizational system rather than functioning as a separate entity. Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner, 1994 refer to this as people making "their 'work space' a learning space" (p. 34). They go on to say that when learning is not part of an organization's inherent structure, new ideas have little chance of adhering, that "learning is left to chance" (p. 37). As well, those infrastructures that fail to connect with the learning organization's guiding ideas can lead to cynicism. Cooperative learning being espoused for the students but ignored for the teachers would be an example of this disjunctive practice.

Successful policy reforms consider both the basic tenets of learning organizations and, indeed, use them to bring about change. They work "toward flatter structures" (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999, p. 187) to transcend the barriers of the echelons and, as such, bring about meaningful changes that gradually shift the thinking of the organization. Those who neglect such principles often create disempowerment on all

levels of the hierarchy. Such communities, states Senge (as cited in Taylor, 1995), are "almost incapable of innovation" (p. 21).

Role of the District

That all said, the district remains an essential player in policy development. While the authoritarian style of dictating policies is seldom effective, it is their position of authority in legitimizing and sustaining created policies that is critical. States Fullan (1991), "Individual schools can become highly innovative for short periods of time without the district, but they cannot *stay* (italics in original) innovative without district action to establish the condition for continuous and long term improvement" (p. 209).

What is needed is for the paradigm to shift toward a continuous back and forth relationship of pressure, negotiation and support. Those districts, schools and individuals who are not able to handle and accept this will, according to Fullan (1993), "become whipsawed by the cross-cutting forces of change" (p. 42).

In her study of stuck and moving school districts, Rosenholtz (1989) found that in healthy districts, teachers and district representatives worked together to develop policy that directly affected teaching and learning. While teachers in stuck districts generally felt powerless and ineffective, teachers in moving districts had their opinions sought out. "To assure that schools will be healthy, educative places, teachers must share responsibility for their professional destiny by engaging in the decisions through which that destiny is

forged" (p. 203).

As well as empowering teachers with both voice and responsibility, Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) found other benefits to this collaborative approach to policy making. Greater participation by educators in the development and implementation processes of policy led to a greater understanding both ways. School cultures and practical realities were considered. As well, realities of the "wider issues faced by the district and those issues not readily evident in schools" (p. 181) were illuminated.

Policy Implementation

The "myth of democratic culture" (Johansson and Bredeson, 1999) is that policy created by the committee is implemented and followed through by schools exactly as designed. A basic flaw with this assumption is that unless the values and beliefs of both the committee and the learning community are alike, this will not happen. As well, according to Johansson and Bredeson, there is much empirical evidence that shows the rarity of identical culture and values between the learning and policy committees. What then happens is that the learning community must transpose and reconfigure the policy to fit their values and norms in order to implement with any success. Otherwise, it either does not get implemented or sits disjunctively beside the operating school, never to become part of their culture. A barrier indeed.

Needs of Policy Implementation

So what must be done to remove the barriers of policy implementation? Fullan (1991) defines implementation as "the process of putting into practice an idea, program, or set of activities and structures new to the people attempting or expecting to change" (p. 65). Thus, one may be permitted to assume that it is the needs relevant to the process that must be examined. Recent literature addresses several.

The first need is the willingness and ability to share the ownership of implementation. Like policy development, both bottom-up and top-down forces are essential in bringing about change (Fullan, 1993). While district mandates do not work, neither do local initiatives that ignore the centre. Without a centralized force working in conjunction with local branches, floundering often occurs. Success is short-lived. For reform to work, teachers need to be better at sharing their power with students, principals sharing their power with teachers, and school districts sharing their power with schools (Fullan, 1996). Needed is a purposeful tension between the local and the centre, between the lives of the students and the arena of the learning society (Fullan, 1993).

A triangulation of support, from the top, the bottom and the middle, is the second need. For teachers, this means examining the validity and the worth of the policy in terms of their lives and the lives of their students. They must see both that the need is important and that this change will serve the need. "However noble, sophisticated, or enlightened proposals for change and improvement might be, they come to nothing if teachers don't

adopt them in their own classrooms and if they don't translate them into effective classroom practice" (Fullan, 1996, p. 13).

From the district level, an allocation of sufficient resources is necessary for successful policy implementation. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) found that successfully implemented district policies were ones that not only promoted learning but also were supported with the necessary resources, access to technical expertise, common release time for planning, and flexibly structured professional development.

The flexibility in professional development includes when, where, what and why. Again, in her comparison of stuck and moving schools, Rosenholtz (1989) found that while stuck schools were limited to pull-out professional development days, moving schools had board personnel render on-site assistance. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) concur, adding that much of district's staff development resources should be dedicated "to opportunities for teachers to learn from, observe and network with each other" (p. 104) rather than be used for "one-shot" workshops and inservices. Assistance, according to Fullan (1991), is needed most in the early stages of implementation while schools attempt to put into practice what they have been given. As well, *what* they are taught is important. While practical "how-to" instructions will get them equipped to start, for implementation that is long lasting and moves beyond superficiality, teachers need to understand the *why* behind the innovation. The theoretical underpinnings have to be taught and understood (Fullan, 1991).

Critical as well is the support from the middle. According to Fullan (1991) and Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999), research has shown that the level of support (including attending training sessions, intellectual stimulus, role modelling, conveying high expectations, giving moral support and providing resources) a principal gives to a change directly influences its success or failure. They are the ones who legitimize the change. Unfortunately, few principals play an active role in policy implementation (Fullan, 1991). Some hypothesize that this is at least partly due to having no clear directions on how to do this - what their specific role should be. "The psychological and sociological problems of change that confront the principal are at least as great as those that confront teachers" (p. 77). Johansson and Bredeson (1999) blame the system. They found too much energy given to control and too little to the support processes when it comes to policy implementation. Moving away from a bureaucratic top-down model to a leadership-driven model, they suggest, is one where the school leader is actively engaged in the whole process, interceding, anticipating and discovering challenges to successful implementation and then actively dealing with them, the whole time keeping the needs of the learning community paramount.

Ongoing monitoring, while oft neglected, is also essential to the change process (Fullan 1997; Rosenholtz, 1989). It is important to know how well or how poorly a change is going, tailoring the necessary support to this information and giving recognition for tasks well done. Fullan and Rosenholtz also found that successful schools and districts

used complex problem-solving techniques, sometimes leading to redesigning the model, providing feedback, additional assistance and/or time and redefining roles. In contrast, less successful schools made trivial attempts such as procrastination, shifting of personnel, avoidance and denial.

Implementation time would be a fourth need. For change to work, says Fullan (1991), implementors must realize that implementation takes time. After all, "change is a process, not an event" (p. 130). While policy makers may desire earlier deadlines to get more immediate results, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) and Miles and Huberman (1984) agree that the shorter the time line from adoption to implementation, the more likely it is to fail. As well, the more complex the policy, the greater the needs of time as well as other forms of support.

The final need is that of clarity. Changes from a district level should be clear while at the same time avoiding false clarity or oversimplified innovation implementation. Guidelines need to be clear enough for the learning community to be able to implement them and yet not so specific that they become disempowering (Fullan, 1991; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989).

When the clarity of policy direction is of "statutory precision" where everything including sequence, rank, regulations and administrative details is formally-directed, barriers to adoption and empowerment, to transcending the culture of the learning community may occur. "Decision making is simplified by documents that clearly

eliminate alternative solutions" (Townsend, 1995, p. 139).

Conversely, policy that serves as framework reduces the amount of precision required. While the "desired future" is specified, the pathways to it are left open. "The more a policy vision and format is opaque, the more it can arouse effect, engender unity, and focus dramatic attention" (Townsend, 1995). When the amount of precision is limited, schools are better able to incorporate it within their own school vision. Sometimes though, cautions Townsend, this decentralized power is abused.

Policy Intent

A second issue related to policy implementation is the perception of the policy's intent. Is the policy viewed as real or symbolic? What Gustafsson (1983), cited in Johansson and Bredeson (1999) found, as shown in Figure 1, is that there are four different scenarios. The first is when both the learning community and policy makers view policy as a real decision. Adequate funding, clear policy and ongoing monitoring for revisions and continued improvements come from the policy makers. Schools implement the policy. Typically, this would be a policy that closely aligns itself with the values and visions of the school.

		Is the intention of the policy maker to implement the decision?	
		YES	NO
Does the learning community believe that the policy makers want to implement the decision?	YES	A real decision	Symbolic decision seen as real decision
	NO	Real decision seen as a symbolic decision	A real symbolic decision

Figure 1. Typology of political decisions¹

Underfunded, unclear policies, "often employed by policy makers to influence other communities" (Johansson and Bredeson, 1999, p. 58) and usually politically motivated, are viewed by both parties as symbolic in nature. Unfortunately, the researchers found, when politicians become challenged by the public, the blame is often shifted to the learning communities who failed to implement their policy.

A third scenario is when educators work hard to implement an underfunded, vague, symbolic policy which they have incorrectly interpreted as real. Without support, financial or otherwise, unnecessary strains are placed on the learning community, possibly

¹ From "Value Orchestration by the policy community for the learning community: Reality or myth," by O. Johansson and P. V. Bredeson, 1999, in *Values and Educational Leadership* (p. 58), by Paul T. Begley (Ed.), New York: State University of New York Press. Copyright 1999 by State University of New York. Reprinted with permission.

to the detriment of other programs.

Finally, the fourth scenario, is when schools view "real" policies as symbolic. For all intents and purposes, implementation does not occur. In such situations, the learning community may:

feign interest, but they cleverly avoid implementation. Educators have grown used to policy makers who lose interest or lose track of various initiatives, and there is no point in redesigning their work to conform to a short-lived, symbolic policy gesture. (Johansson and Bredeson, p. 59)

Recent Research Studies

Few qualitative studies on teachers' perceptions of tenured teacher supervision exist. One, by Singh and Shifflette (1990), studied the perspectives of 14 high school English teachers originally considered marginal or incompetent who later improved to become competent or even superior. They found that self-awareness and peer collaboration was most often acknowledged as the sources of the teachers' improvements.

Another, by Zepeda and Ponticell (1998), used the rich text generated from 114 essays by graduate students (elementary and secondary teachers) enrolled in educational administration in Texas and Oklahoma to gather perspectives on what teachers "need, want and get from supervision" (p. 68). Using comparative content analysis, they discovered that positive supervision included validation, empowerment, coaching, visible presence and a vehicle for professional development while negative perceptions described supervision as a "weapon," . . . "a dog and pony show," . . . "a meaningless/invisible

routine". . . " a fix-it list, and . . . "an unwelcome intervention" (p.73).

In an Alberta study, using dialogue, journal writing and observations, McBride and Skau (1995) reflected upon the processes of supervision to uncover their findings.

Through this study they determined that the essential elements of meaningful supervision consisted of trust, empowerment and reflective problem-solving.

Five quantitative studies on teacher evaluation in Newfoundland were examined (Bayer, 1969; Farrell, 1973; G. Hickman, 1983; J. Hickman, 1975; Mills, 1998). The first, by Bayer, (as cited in J. Hickman, 1975) painted the picture of "snoopervisors" clandestinely journeying by boat into outport communities where they would conduct their hour-long evaluations on each teacher and then make a hasty retreat back to St. John's where their reports would be completed and then filed.

Farrell studied the criteria used by superintendents when evaluating teachers and administrators. He discovered that, for the most part, a common criteria was used across the province. However, while teachers were evaluated according to instructional practices, those seeking administrative posts were evaluated according to personal characteristics. He ended his report by advocating for a province-wide standardized evaluative criteria.

In examining the teachers' perspective, J. Hickman found that teachers wanted an evaluation system that focussed on the process of good teaching rather than on the product of student achievement. Like Farrell, he advocated for a standardized set of evaluative criteria. As well, he recognized the need for teacher involvement, calling for further

research to determine the level of the teacher's role in the evaluative development process.

G. Hickman, in his study comparing school board teacher evaluation policies with actual practices, discovered discord, distrust and noncompliance. Policies were often widely varied from reality, most of the emphasis was summative and most educators viewed the process with extreme negativism.

In the most recent study, Mills (1998) used a survey to examine the relationship between formative evaluation and professional practice. While finding that a positive relationship existed, he, like Hickman, also noticed the incongruity between policy and practice. "Some teachers reported that while their school districts had policies that promoted formative teacher evaluation practice, in reality, these policies were not emphasized in practice" (p. vii). His findings supported the need for a fully implemented formative evaluation policy. For the school system "to be 'transformed . . . ', then our leaders must focus on formative teacher evaluation practices. Only if such practices are truly implemented, will their potential in the development of professionally involved and committed teachers be realized" (p. 56).

Concluding Remarks

Effective teacher evaluation, as the literature clearly shows, extends far beyond the act of comparing a teacher to a checklist. Its roots and goals intertwine with the professional values of continuous self-improvement, empowerment, collegiality and moral

purpose. Instead of the product being that of the linear judgment of an individual, authentic evaluation embraces the ongoing process of sustained whole school action in the quest for student improvement.

While an element of accountability is necessary, the primary focus of teacher evaluation should be on professional growth. A differentiated, growth-enhancing process is required. With the view to the teacher as a professional, the process should be one that involves teachers in making their own decisions on the direction their growth will take as well as the methods they will use. As part of a learning community, their choices and decisions must also fit within the framework of their school's culture.

Additionally, meaningful teacher evaluation should be an integral component of schools rather than yet another task added onto the school day. To do this, supports the literature, the greater extent of teacher evaluation policy development and implementation needs to take place at the school level. Thus, the traditional district role of policy development and delivery must shift to one of active guidance and support.

Teacher evaluation is a powerful component of the school community. When done for the furtherance of teachers, their students and their schools, it can perform as a unifying and growth-producing force. Conversely, when used as a controlling, top-down instrument, it can serve as an agent of division and disempowerment. While recent studies in Newfoundland support the need for meaningful formative evaluation, they also indicate a predominance of the latter.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Research Questions

The questions guiding this study were designed to illuminate the need for a clearly articulated, meaningful professional growth evaluation policy within each of the ten districts. They were:

1. How do teachers view their past and present experiences of teacher evaluation within the framework of what it means to be a professional? What meanings do they construct from this exploration of introspection?
2. How do tenured teachers feel they (and their colleagues) should be evaluated? What experiences and mindscapes give shape to their own understandings of professional practice?
3. How do teachers view policy development and implementation in the area of teacher evaluation? What past experiences with district policy development and implementation have formed these views?

The Research Design

The purpose of this qualitative study was, by giving voice to teachers, to make discoveries and give meaning to their evaluation experiences and non-experiences. By doing so, this study both illuminated the needs and indicated the starting points for the constructive process of building a meaningful and relevant tenured teacher evaluation policy.

Although a good number of theoretically sound, successfully field tested tenured teacher evaluation policies exist, it would be erroneous to assume that a “cut and paste” method of policy adoption would work well here. The unique social, economic and cultural realities of Newfoundland and thus, Newfoundland teachers, bring perspectives that cannot be quantitatively surveyed and enumeratively measured.

Another consideration was the role that policy development and implementation played. No matter how laudable the policy itself may be, ignoring this role was considered by many to be folly (Fullan, 1991; Johansson & Bredeson, 1999; Poster, 1999). Ineffectual, misguided or neglected procedures in development and implementation lead, at best, to not being implemented as intended by the original policy makers and, at worst, to creating an environment of “frustration, wasted time, feelings of incompetence and lack of support, and disillusionment” (Fullan, 1991, p. 73).

Selected as participants were fifteen education graduate students, on campus during the 2000 Summer Session at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), who demonstrated a “more than passing” interest in this topic. They became this study’s primary source of data collection. While the natural setting (ie. the participant’s residence) is usually considered the most desirable location for interviewing, in this study it was the convenience and confidentiality of the participants that dictated the site (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). As such, a quiet, private area in the education building at MUN was the setting for the majority of the interviews. Reasons that influenced this choice included the fact that many of the students were living away from their primary

residence during summer session, the time constraints that come with the intensity of summer session, and the relative neutrality of the campus setting in juxtaposition to their role as school board employees.

Through in-depth interviews, issues relating to tenured teacher evaluation and professionalism were explored, descriptions of the phenomena were constructed, and the complexity of meanings intertwined with their cultural, economic and social realities were discovered:

If our theoretical perspectives do not reflect the beliefs, assumptions, values, opinions, preferences, and predispositions of the teachers and supervisors who put theory into practice in varying contexts, it should not surprise us that these theoretical perspectives do not reflect the conduct of supervision in schools. (Zepeda and Ponticell, 1998, p.87)

Acquiring these understandings was essential to the process of determining what meaningful evaluation would look like in Newfoundland and Labrador. Thus, it was important that the teachers' voices led the study.

Resulting data guided this research. As new constructs took shape and new leads and discoveries arose, the emergent design of this study allowed for flexibility. Through the interviews, "considerations as yet unforeseen" (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 17) led to design modifications. It was by listening to their voices, building thick, rich text and comparatively analysing the data for new and emerging insights that I was able to disentomb and illuminate those "beliefs, assumptions, values, opinions, preferences, and predispositions" (Sergiovanni, 1995).

Selection, Sampling and Data Collection

In this study the intact group selected was Newfoundland and Labrador tenured teachers attending graduate classes at Memorial University during summer session.

“Both logistical and conceptual constraints affect the choice of groups” (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993, p. 59). The range of teachers from across the province gathered at one site for a sustained duration as well as our shared links as teachers and graduate students made this group a rational choice. Geographical proximity and collegially familiarity with the “gate keepers” (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993) due to my role as a graduate student attending summer session and my advisor’s role as a faculty member within the institution being studied, contributed to an ease of site and participant access, therefore making the selection logistically feasible. While my advisor was able to make arrangements with other faculty members to allow me to make presentations in some of their classes, I was able to converse with others whom I knew from classes I had attended as well as those graduate students I encountered in the graduate studies areas of the education building.

Conceptually, the selection of Faculty of Education graduate students was made due to the potentially rich range of views and experiences from across the province that they would be able to provide. The depth of tenured teacher formative evaluation both in practice and policy varied, to some degree, from district to district. As well, I assumed (and found to a great extent true) that this was a group that by virtue of their willingness to commit their own time and money to professional improvement, was keenly interested

in the professional growth of teachers and thus the profession.

Because this study aimed to bring meaning to tenured teachers' perceptions, only those teachers who had completed their probationary requirements were considered as part of the selected group. Using a variation of ideal-typical case selection (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993) and intensity sampling (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Miles and Huberman, 1994), the selected group was further distinguished by consisting of those that demonstrated a fervour and genuine interest in the topic of tenured teacher evaluation.

Two avenues of approach were chosen. The first was by presenting an overview of the topic to three graduate classes during summer session. Two of the presentations were made in separate sessions of a course required in the Teaching and Learning program. The third was made in an early morning class of a leadership elective course.

At the conclusion of each of the five minute presentations, a request was made for those students who fit the aforementioned criteria to consent to participate in a 50 minute interview. Class members were invited to volunteer to independently complete a brief, open-ended survey (see Appendix A) which revealed their interest, experience level and school district as well as their willingness to become an interview participant. In order to ensure confidentiality, at the end of my presentation all students were handed the survey form along with an information sheet and a consent form (see Appendix B). Only those survey participants who indicated their desire to participate further were asked to include their identity and complete the consent form. Then, when sufficient completion time had been given (approximately ten minutes), an attempt was made to collect all forms.

whether completed or not. Of the 49 students who heard the presentation, 40 returned their forms to me. Thirty-four participants completed the survey. From that number, 10 agreed to become interview participants. The data that unfolded from these surveys as well as the observations I was able to make before, during and after the presentations served both as a signpost, to guide the study further, and as source of meaning unto itself with its resulting textually rich data.

The second method of participant selection was by informal conversations. Eleven graduate students were approached and invited to both complete the survey and participate in the interview. This resulted in 7 students completing survey forms and agreeing to become participants. From the two methods of recruitment, of the 17 that volunteered, 2 did not meet the participant criteria .

Eight of the ten school districts in the province were represented, with the greatest proportion (20%) from Avalon East, the province's most populous district. As well, a fairly equal distribution of male and female participants, 9 and 6 respectively, was obtained. Average years of tenure was 10 years with a range of 1 - 18 years. While all were teachers, 4 of the participants were also administrators with an average of 3 years administration experience. Teachers selected covered all grade levels and most subject areas. Both large and small, urban and rural schools were represented (see Appendix C).

I contacted the interview participants in person, by telephone and by electronic mail to arrange mutually convenient dates and times. The interviews were conducted over a two-week period in a small, unoccupied room, located away from the general

traffic area, on the fifth floor of the MUN Education building. All participants completed written consent forms. The interviews, ranging in duration from 40 to 60 minutes, were audio-taped. As well, during the interview I took some handwritten observational notes. I did my own transcribing which was completed within a month of the first interview.

Informed by theory, the research purpose and data emerging from the survey and the initial observations, the interview (Appendix D) consisted of a series of open-ended questions that covered the key issues of the study and served best to invoke, elicit, and reveal the participants' attitudes, meanings, experiences and perceptions. Patton's typology of interview questions (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993) was used as a guide to assist in drawing a range of data. The first part of the interview served to ease the participant and develop a level of trust. Generally, our conversations began on common ground as we shared our graduate journeys. From there the participants were asked to recount their evaluation experiences. The most sensitive, emotion-provoking, and higher level thinking questions were placed near the end of the dialogue. Correspondingly, these purposeful discourses moved from what they had experienced to what meanings they attached to those experiences to what they believed should be done.

Document analysis was the third type of data collection used in this study. A variety of sources such as the NLTA, school district offices, schools and the teachers themselves were utilized in the search for artifacts that provided additional information. Using this secondary analysis strategy, this "nonreactive research provides another perspective on the phenomenon, elaborating its complexity" (Marshall and Rossman,

1999, p. 129) as well as completing the requirements for triangulation.

Methodological Issues

During this study, I was a participant in the sense that I was an active member of the NLTA and a Memorial University of Newfoundland graduate student and that I held deep convictions about the topic. As well, I knew seven of the participants from graduate courses that I had taken and another two (albeit superficially) who were teachers from my own school district. I functioned as an observer by taking on the role of researcher, a role that was previously not being ascribed to me in this context.

Upon first blush, acting as a researcher in my own backyard served to facilitate and ease the process. Negotiating access, establishing common ground with the participants and developing a background understanding of the context in which to frame the collected data were all issues palliated by the roles held at the university by both my advisor and myself. This position, however, warn Glesne and Peshkin (1992), can be fraught with dangers such as role confusion, hidden expectations and “ethical and political dilemmas”(p. 23).

In reflecting upon their cautions, I found that the greatest obstacle was time. This was most apparent at first in gaining initial access to the participants and later in obtaining volunteers. I was cognizant, when making my presentations to the classes, that this use of instructional time, while seemingly perceived as a welcome diversion by some, was surely viewed by others as intrusive. Notably, in one class, before the instructor had

arrived and the class had started, I overheard an exchange between students regarding their concern over the lack of time. They voiced their frustrations over continually not being able to deliver their prepared presentations on their assigned days and, to a large extent, blamed the instructor. There I sat, only to stand before them a few minutes later and shave off even more of their precious minutes.

This factor of time also had some bearing on the availability of participants. The intensity of Summer Session coupled with just finishing, what was for most, ten demanding months of teaching, appeared to leave many with little time for the pursuits of others. So, while several potential participants indicated an interest, they also added their regrets due to self-imposed time limitations.

Another caution I heeded was that of ethics. I was conscious of taking extra care to reassure the participants, both in the survey and in the interviews, that as a researcher, all that they shared with me within the context of the study would remain confidential. Having the students indicate their participation decision directly on the survey rather than publicly, as well as attempting to collect all of the survey forms, hopefully alleviated some of these potential mistrusts. In the interviews, this was particularly important when talking with teachers from my own district as well as with those whose demographics made them more easily identifiable. In some of the cases the nature of the discussion was extremely sensitive and required confidentiality assurances throughout. Though some of these dangers were negated by the fact that I am “one of them,” an adherence to the principles of clarity of intentions and conscious overt practices at the onset and

throughout the research hopefully allayed participant concerns of trust and ethics.

The subjectivity that I brought to my role was multifaceted. Though frustrated for much of my teaching career with the lack of meaningful formative evaluation, three years ago, in another province, I was part of a committee that developed a professional growth evaluation model for our school division. Three months before the implementation date I moved to Newfoundland. Now I am back on the tenure track, both as a teacher and an administrator and, once again, need to prove myself. Discussing this out of province evaluative model with some of my district's assistant directors, they either responded wistfully or stated their unfamiliarity with this model. Finally, charged with the responsibility of fostering a high level of quality teaching within my school, the lack of a formal process to both foster new heights and remediate or eliminate the "lows" was discouraging.

According to LeCompte and Preissle (1993), my awareness of this subjectivity was more of an asset than a detriment to the study. "Research subjectivities are also essential to establishing and building the intimate relationships with participants that permit trust and confidence" (p. 92). I quickly discovered that it was this shared common ground that served as a starting point both in the presentations and during the interviews for building trust and developing confidence.

Ethical considerations included obtaining informed letters of consent from all participants and maintaining assurances of confidentiality. Special care was taken to ensure the protection of participant anonymity. In the writing, fictitious names were

adopted, geographical accuracy was limited to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and descriptors used only to the extent needed to help in interpretation of the findings. As well, gender may or may not be accurate. All tapes and transcripts of the interview will be destroyed once the study has been completed.

Constructs of Qualitative Design

Lincoln and Guba (1985) cite four areas that need to be addressed when evaluating qualitative studies: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. By adhering to the parameters set out in my research purpose and questions, the results of the triangulated data have been analysed in accordance to the perspectives of the Summer Session Faculty of Education graduate students. In this way I have hopefully ensured study credibility.

This study is transferable only to the extent of a similarity of situations. While the “burden of demonstrating the applicability of one’s set of findings to another context rests more with the researcher who would make the transfer than with the original researcher” (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 193), I have endeavoured to provide sufficient detail in regards to setting, sampling and a connection to theory in order to facilitate potential transferability. As well, this study’s use of the multi-data-collection strategy of triangulation provides further strength of transferability (Marshall and Rossman).

Dependability of the study is substantiated by a deliberate description of the conditions that make it unique. In this study, the setting is one whose face has been

changed by numerous political, social and economic upheavals such as school board restructuring, the cod moratorium and out-migration. These conditions are thus accounted for within the study.

The fourth and final construct is confirmability. This study is confirmable in that the potential for researcher bias is acknowledged and detailed. Confirmability is further attended to in the data collection and analysis stages with the objectivity of audio-taped interviews.

Data Analysis

Four sources of data: surveys, interviews, observations and documents, were analysed in this study. First, as previously mentioned, an initial analysis of the surveys was used to guide and refine the interview questions. As well, I focussed on further emerging data while the study was in progress to assist in “fine-tuning” the research design, making slight changes where necessary. In allowance for this methodology, interview participants were advised, both on the consent form and during the interview, that I reserved the right to reinterview should emerging themes dictate this need.

Three notable changes were made during the research. The first was the addition of a third research question. Early on I perceived voices of frustration that moved beyond what the policy was to how policies, both teacher evaluation and others, were created and implemented.

The second change was in response to statements by the first few participants

regarding the role of the NLTA. Reacting to this, I added an interview question on the NLTA's role in tenured teacher evaluation and interviewed an NLTA administrator regarding concerns and issues raised by the participants.

The third change was made after the initial interviews, in response to my reflections on both a comment made by the NLTA administrator interviewed in connection with this study, and upon what I perceived as difficulties experienced by the participants in answering questions linked to professionalism. Here I availed upon my option to reinterview and was able to make contact with 10 of the 15 participants, asking them to both define professionalism and then state and explain whether or not they viewed themselves and their colleagues as such.

With the research completed, the next step was to "tidy up" by organizing the collected data and then revisiting and refocusing on the original research questions (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). The tidying up included printing the participant interviews, writing up rough notes, quantitatively and qualitatively extracting information from the surveys, charting participant characteristics and gathering together the secondary documents.

Following the tidying up, the raw data, primarily the interviews, were read, reread and then read again. Jot-notes made in the margins when specific to the particular text and in a separate notebook when more general insights were illuminated. These notes served "to isolate the initially most striking, if not ultimately most important, aspects of the data" (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993, p. 236).

The next step was to construct a summary of the data, first from memory and then supplemented by a further examination of the data, concentrating on the main events, ideas and features of the study. Again and again I went back to my research questions, an exercise that served to keep the details and impressions within the framework I had set. By the end of this process I was able to view the images of the “big picture” of tenured teacher evaluation perspectives with substantially greater clarity.

Generating patterns, themes and categories is considered the heart of analysis (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). This study used Glaser and Strauss’ (as cited in LeCompte and Preissle) constant comparative method of inductively coding and comparing the collected data. Once again I went through the transcripts, surveys and other data, and by marking in the margins of the passages, I categorized and assigned inductively generated codes to the 224 pages of text. By the end of the segmenting the data was divided into 34 different units of analysis.

My next step was to transfer the information onto index cards using both summary notes and direct quotations. Each of the 423 cards was labelled with the exact source, including page and line numbers as well as the assigned categories and coding. The cards were then sorted into their categories and read through again. Reflecting back on the research questions, considering the emerging themes and looking for redundancy, the data was reduced to 26 patterns of thought.

Writing the data, the final stage of data analysis, was when the data, now “hacked and chopped . . . into bits” (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993, p. 263) were reconstructed to

create new understandings. Chosen were two models of writing that seemed to best suit the purpose. The first model used participant profiles created by reconstructing and reassembling a trio of voices out of the many heard and captured throughout the research. While there were numerous similarities in the teachers' journeys, each began in one of three distinct ways. I grouped the participants according to their initial evaluation experiences and then proceeded by telling their collective stories with one voice for each route taken. Significantly, the similar beginnings correlated strongly with the subsequently described experiences, perceptions and attitudes.

Choosing this method, I found that I was better able to present both the variations and the symmetry in the participants' experiences. Additionally, creating profiles proved to be more facilitative in including the full range of data without compromising participant anonymity. Finally, since the participant interviews were the predominant source of data, presenting the findings by recreating these interviews into three "stories" evolved into a more authentic and natural genre.

The second model blended the participants' views and experiences with the research community's findings, the practice with the theory. Using the framework of *entrances*, *barriers* and *bridges* to tenured teacher evaluation, I found that I was able to give the depth of treatment necessary to the analysed data, include the full range of participant perspectives and still maintain a solid cohesiveness throughout. By organizing the emerging themes, explaining teachers' experiences, challenging current practices, and arriving at fresh understandings, I was able to illuminate the entrances,

open the bridges, and point to paths that negated the barriers of authentic evaluation.

In this study, the writing has taken into consideration the research purpose, the intended audience and my subjectivity as a researcher. It is my hope that the echoing of teachers' voices, both in the composite stories that follow and in the exploration of the entrances, barriers and bridges to an authentic tenured teacher evaluation policy in Newfoundland and Labrador, will reverberate through to those that need to listen.

CHAPTER FOUR

Participant Profiles

The following three profiles were developed using the study's primary data, the 15 research participant interview transcripts. No additional information was added. Each profile was based on a compilation of participants with similar experiences. While there were some cross-over characteristics with two of the participants, the majority of their experiences and views matched their assigned profile. More remarkable, was the unity within each of the groups. Four voices were blended for the first profile, seven for the second and four for the final one.

Names, as well as teaching and school assignments, have been fictionalized. In only the third profile may the sex of the person featured be considered factual. Geographically, while the provincial setting is accurate, the locations within the province are not. One exception to this should be noted. Since all but one of the participants began their teaching career in a relatively isolated area in Newfoundland and Labrador, I too began each profile in a rural area of the province.

The Weapon of Supervision

Patsy's first teaching job, 12 years ago, was a replacement position in a small "fly-in" community in coastal Labrador. Originally the position was for two months. "I was only supposed to be there until November. Turned out I was there until Christmas. Turned out I was there until February. Then, 'you might be here until May'. And then, every time" She was there a full year. Not once during that time was she evaluated:

Nobody came to my classroom. The school board would fly over. There were three new teachers there at the time. One was there on maternity until Christmas so she wasn't evaluated at all. One was there as permanent. She was evaluated. And I was there as well you know, for however long. And I wasn't evaluated. But there were usually three people that would come over from the school board. They would fly across from [the airport nearest the district office] at the time and they would evaluate her but they never came into our classrooms.

She told me that she was relieved not to be evaluated that first year. She saw all the stress that one teacher was under:

Mabel really sweated it out. And you knew they were coming in because you knew when the flights were coming over I was watching her very closely and asking her after, 'How did it go? What did they say?' I don't think there was a lot, from what she told the staff, a lot of constructive criticism. Maybe they chatted it up after, I don't know. But I don't think they were doing a lot of work. It was just something that they had to do. And they always came in the winter because they could go on ski-doo. They enjoyed it. I don't think there was a lot of helpful ideas exchanged.

The following year Patsy secured a permanent teaching position in a small fishing community in north-central Newfoundland. She later married a local fisherman and started a family.

The sum of her teaching, and thus, evaluation experiences, have been at this school. The night before her first evaluation, memories of the experiences of her previous colleague came flooding back. "There was a sleepless night waiting for buddy to come in on the boat the next day to get evaluated. I mean, here is the guy who hired you and you probably have never seen him before." That first year he came in twice and the principal came in once. "The superintendent at the time came in, came into my classroom. My evaluation took about maybe 30 minutes of a period." She told how the main concern

arising from the evaluation was that of a mispronounced word. “To be honest with you, it was a farce. Just something he had to come in and do. I don’t think it was a helpful process. I think it was, I mean, he got to do it because he has to evaluate you in order to give you tenure.”

She was evaluated again that second year. “So the director of the time came in and did one; watched one class and gave me ten minutes. So in regards to some feedback, there wasn’t a whole lot. That was the first two years.” When I asked if she found it helpful at all she replied, “Not really. Especially starting out. I wanted feedback.”

Patsy faults this lack of feedback to her soon adopted complacency, a complacency that nearly ended her career:

I paid the price for it later on. For what happened was that after the second year I got into a rut for a year or so and a brand new principal came in and I don’t know. All of a sudden the principal had a file on me like this. This thick with all these complaints. He pretty much told me that in no uncertain terms there are some problems here being directed to him by parents, by students, whoever. Teachers going in telling major tales, right. I didn’t have a clue about it till one morning I was called into the office and he showed me the file. The Board was coming. Someone from the Board was coming. And I was blown away. I had no idea. I was really floored. Right away you are thinking, there’s no trust. . . .

So I got put on summative evaluation, I’m ashamed to say, for a year and a half for which I was evaluated 10-12 times. So I worked like a dog and I swore they wouldn’t beat me. A lot of the complaints that had come in, according to the NLTA, were unethical. Basically I got put through a year and a half to two years of hell. And I was blind-sided. I’ll be the first to admit there were some cases I needed to address. The issues. But to go about it the way they did, blind-siding and put me in a corner. I came back out fighting, right. I’m ashamed to say that I got put on this evaluation. I guarantee not one person, not one teacher over there can hold a candle to me in regards to work ethic, results or what not now.

I asked her what role the district played in assisting her during the summative evaluation process. She explained, “They came into the class, sat down in the back, and watched.” As for giving assistance, her response was “No, not really. I wouldn’t say they did. A small bit here and there. And well, unless it came from the right people, I wasn’t going to pay them any heed after what they had done.” She went on to say:

You had to have eyes in the back of your head. If I was on hallway duty, I was being watched. Everything I did was watched. It felt like one of those big brother things you see in George Orwell. But I had a lot of sleepless nights during that time. I kept thinking, if I don’t prove these guys wrong, what am I going to do?

She also rearranged her work schedule:

We’re allowed to leave at 20 to 4. And I’d always leave at 20 to 4, just like everyone else. I used to do my work at home. So when this all got brought up I said, “Shag this!” Basically, I started to work at school. So now I am the first one in the school in the morning and the last one to leave. I don’t bring a thing home but my work is always done. So I just stepped it up a couple of notches, made myself with regards to work more visible. Surviving. If I hadn’t married a man from there, I wouldn’t still be there.

The closest she got to formative evaluation was when a new principal came in the year following her summative evaluation:

He wanted to make sure everything was going right. So I was the first person on the evaluation. I asked what the problem was. He said, “I just read your file and I want to make sure everything is alright.” And he called me in later and said I have no problem. And I haven’t been evaluated since.”

While she thought that district policy was to evaluate tenured teachers every three years, she never observed it followed.

Patsy did, however, strongly support evaluating tenured teachers:

I think you have to have something. I don’t know if you would call it evaluation.

But, for example, giving students a test. If they think it is not going to be worth anything, what value is it going to be? How hard will they study? I know we are professionals and we are supposed to perform in a professional way, but if you don't have to do anything. . . .

We talked more about the role that tenured evaluation should take. Benefiting students, both by improving instruction and making teachers accountable, was her main focus:

If everyone is doing a better job then there is going to be a better quality of education for the students. This is the thing. All this restructuring and everything else. Once you forget the children, all this other stuff is useless.

Accountability was also foremost in her mind:

If I got a class of ten and eight fail, something might be wrong and it should be looked at. Accountability should be up there on the top of the list and yet it doesn't seem to be. But accountability towards what you are doing for your students, for what students you have there. Not accountability for a stack of paperwork. And that's crucial. It has to be.

Conversing about what qualities she would like to see in a supervision plan for tenured teachers, Patsy told me that consistency and fairness were very important to her. "And thorough. You can't do with one or two classes. You have to look at the entire teacher as a whole, not just a part. I think evaluation needs to encompass it all."

In selecting an evaluator, Patsy felt that primary importance should be placed on the expertise they would bring. "If you got a principal who used to be a kindergarten teacher and has no idea about chemistry. . . ." In her situation as a high school science teacher, she felt that regular visits from program specialists would be the most beneficial. Patsy's vision was not so much the specialist sitting in the back of the room but that *she* would sit "in the classroom and watch the specialist teach a couple of classes. It doesn't

matter what on.” Not only does it give “them a sense of where my students are” but also “it gives me a chance to sit back and look at my class from a different angle. So to me that is just as beneficial.” As well, she posited, when experts come out over a regular period of time, they can see the progress. Immediate quality feedback, notably missing from her earlier years, was a top priority.

She also felt that the paradigm shift away from “you’re being evaluated” to “this is a growth experience for you,” needed to be made. The power circle of “monitoring you and evaluating you and giving you a grade, placing you somewhere on the scale,” had to be broken. As well, she believed that it was important to have a plan for continued growth, not one that would be written and then filed away but one that would also be carried through. “If you are going to plan like that and carry it through, how can you not grow?”

When asked if professional growth plans would be an effective form of evaluation in her school, in her district, she was somewhat skeptical. She felt that many would consider them “a waste of time”. They would do nothing if there was no motivation. She felt that most of them had no ambition to do anything to improve. Cynically, she stated that others would look for the easy way out by choosing to improve on an area that they were already proficient in. “Probably that particular area could be your strongest area and that could be just a way out of, you know, a loop hole out of it.” Her view was that a system of accountability would have to be put into place. “But the whole idea of following it up has to be the fault of the principal.”

In developing and implementing an evaluation policy for tenured teachers, the first need she perceived was that of communication, “from the Board personnel, between the principal and the teachers, and the teachers and the teachers.” There should be more real input and involvement from the affected parties, especially the teachers. “Have teachers involved in developing it. Don’t just have somebody in the Board office, somebody in the Department of Education and probably people in the bigger areas that are close to the board.”

A second need was to lengthen the implementation time. Too often, she said, “Programs are just thrown at you.” Policy is delivered “in one of those cowboy manners. You know, dash in, we do it right away, you know, make decisions, like a business approach.”

Patsy viewed the final need as that of human resources, a problem of which she could foresee no solution. She explained that fewer and fewer teachers are willing to teach in the more isolated areas. As a result, unsuitable, incompetent teachers are still out there teaching. Boards don’t want to evaluate because then they might have to do something. “So if you got a teacher that by rights shouldn’t even be in the profession, you know, it makes the rest of us look bad It tarnishes the image.” Evaluation of any kind is not happening because Boards don’t want to know. “I don’t think they worry about it because it is a body to fill a place.”

Her final remark bore the tone of disillusionment that seemed to penetrate most of our conversation. “You know, if you’re not willing to stick to your guns and weed out

the bad teachers” what damage are you condoning? “It is no good being just a body.

Who suffers then? The kids.”

“It is Just Something You Have to Do, B’y”

About two-thirds of the way through his masters’ program in Teaching and Learning, Rupert has just completed his 15th year of teaching. He is in his fourth school, third district. He began his teaching career by substituting around St. John’s before getting “a real job in the hinterland, as it were.”

He was evaluated three times that first year and twice in the second year. The standard, traditional format was followed with the requisite university-style lesson plans handed in ahead of time:

I still think of this as very artificial because what he wanted was what you would pass in at MUN and I don’t think that is what the majority of teachers do for daily lesson plans. But anyway, that’s what he wanted so that’s what he got. And of course it was good.

When the first observation came around, he remembers feeling both stressed and excited:

So I thumbed through my books and I had all my notes, my lessons done. I went through the conceptual sets of the classroom. I knew my subject and content was there. I just wanted to impress and I was really curious about the feedback. So halfway, and this part is still really vivid, halfway through the class I looked up and the principal wasn’t engaged in the lesson. He was reading one of the *Time* magazines that I had put on the shelf in the back of the room and that kind of thing, right. So this was my very first evaluation. I was a little disillusioned.

At the end of the day, Rupert met with his principal to discuss the observation.

He couldn't wait to find out what he had thought of the class:

I was really objective of myself and really wanted to improve what I was there to do and I wanted something really sort of itemized. And I said to him, "What did you like about my class, what didn't you like?" You know, what are my pros and cons. And it didn't come. "Oh, it was good, it was good."

And that was just about it. The four other times he was evaluated went about the same. It ended up being a combination of "Oh, it went fine" and focussing on the superficial. Rupert knew that on the days he was supervised he was to watch that his "i's were dotted and t's crossed," making sure he had the best lesson possible. But, while obligingly playing the game, he was still disappointed:

It never really got to the heart of what I was doing right or wrong or could improve on in my teaching. There wasn't anything in terms of an improvement plan or anything that was going to help me in anyway. It was really just done for your accrediting that had to be done and that was it. And, from what I've heard, this is a very typical experience.

At the end of his probationary period he met with his principal who presented him with a document, a final report, to be signed. "It was sort of a rushed job, you know." When Rupert suggested that he should take it and read it before signing it, the principal told him "Oh, no. It's only going over there [to the Board office]. Going to be filed away, anyway."

Reflecting on these events, he told me the lack of meaningful feedback made the whole process seem "worthless." It appeared as if his efforts were "not important or appreciated." While he got a lot of positive "non-verbal clues" from the staff and students, "when I went through this evaluation process, which is done by the leader of the

school,” there was nothing.

Four years later he moved to a school district closer to the Avalon. As an untenured teacher in the new board, he again was required to be evaluated for tenure purposes. Well past the half way point of that first year, someone from district office showed up.

And he said, “I have to evaluate you three times.” I said, “Okay.” I got out my calendar and started setting dates. And he said, “How about Friday?” I said, “Friday?” “Yes, Friday morning. I’ll spend Friday morning with you and we’ll do three classes.”

Ready two days later were “three, according to textbook lesson plans for the three classes that I knew he was going to be in for. And he spent the morning. And that was that. I was done, as it were.”

As for feedback, again little was produced. “At the end of it he didn’t have too much to say other than, ‘Now you’re done, very nice. Thank you for the opportunity.’ He didn’t spend a whole lot of time on how I could improve. But anyway, that was it. I was done.”

That was the last time Rupert experienced the evaluation process first hand. When I asked him if he had ever been evaluated as a tenured teacher, he responded that he didn’t think so.

I shouldn’t say it was never done. Whether a report went into the board office on me as a tenured teacher, I couldn’t say. But I never had any classroom visitations as a tenured teacher although my name was on a list in ‘95 to be done.

We then discussed how he felt about that. “I’ve been lucky,” he quipped. “What

I felt about them not doing it, well I guess, you come to school, what is the purpose of it. You're not going to do anything." Since in the past he had never found them helpful, "not having that hang over my head was fine for me."

Later, on a deeper level, one that reflects upon the professionalism of teachers, he commented:

I think it diminishes us as professionals if there is no process for evaluation. A natural process should be in place in every profession. If it is not, can you really argue that you are a profession? Or are you just simply then a worker protected by a union? And maybe, that's why, in some circles we don't have the respect that I think teachers should have.

As for what it means to him personally, he somewhat bitterly stated, "Well, that teacher evaluation doesn't matter. It doesn't mean a thing. In my job nobody cares how well I teach. Nobody cares if I am in my classroom teaching."

Accountability was predominant among his reasons as to why tenured teachers should be evaluated and he articulated three facets of this. The first was accountability to the public that we serve. "Unfortunately, like any profession, there are people who are not doing their job or, dare I say, incompetent. And it should be brought forward. It should be corrected."

The second was accountability to the school. There has to be a greater awareness of what goes on in each classroom, both for "the administrator who is trying to offer the best programs" and in the building of school culture. "I don't think that we can live in our little boxes anymore. I think there's a wider sense, a wider reach to what you're doing in your own little box."

The third was accountability of self:

It is so easy to become complacent. It is so easy to get into habits and not do a thorough job. When you are not supervised or evaluated there are no weights and checks on you. We need it to keep a microscope on ourselves.

But while strongly supporting the need for tenured teacher evaluation he also cautioned, “For so many years it has just been ‘Go in, boy and evaluate that teacher. Go in and get it done.’ And that is not worthwhile. Nobody is winning. There has to be worthwhile evaluation and supervision.”

So I asked Rupert about his views on worthwhile evaluation. He began by telling me what was wrong with the current system. First was the superficiality of the model.

Evaluation that does not seek to improve your teaching, he felt, was artificial:

Here is the checklist. This is what I’ll be looking for tomorrow. It may cause a teacher to artificially arrange their lesson plans or the class. Something that conforms to the checklist. But it will not inform their practice or involve them in the process. And, as a result, instruction won’t get improved again today.

Second was its limiting nature. For the most part, traditional evaluation, with its accompanying checklist, examines only at the actual lesson:

I guess through my internship I saw people I didn’t think were great teachers get evaluated and they always did the lessons bang on perfect. What you evaluate I don’t think necessarily makes great teachers. They put lots of work in the lesson plans. It’s just an aspect of teaching.

Further limits to this scenario, said Rupert, are made when the evaluator is a stranger, to either the school or the content of the lesson or both. A contrived setting is the result. “It cannot be as in the past. A guy from the board walks in with his supervision suit, sits in the corner and tries to pretend to be a fly on the wall of a very active classroom.”

Rupert's final point was that current evaluation methods do little to achieve their intended purpose, to improve teaching in order to improve student achievement. The onus is passed back to teachers to correct any deficiencies they may have. The "sink or swim philosophy" reigns. They are told, "You'll improve or next time we're going to come in and we're going to have a bigger checklist, larger tick marks. Well, that doesn't work." In reality, the purpose has waxed into fulfilling board and government requirements. "Boards dictated it had to be done and each May the assistant director would call his principals and say, 'Look, where's my four reports? I got to file them away'."

Quality evaluation by contrast, he noted, does improve teaching in order to improve student achievement. "A lot of research will tell you that if you have good teachers, you should be looking at how to help them improve rather than doing the same old thing just for the sake of paper work."

Rupert listed the first step as promoting an arena of trust, moving away from the primary goal of supervision being that of assessment for employment purposes. Teachers have to see it as a process that will support them rather than a product that will get rid of them. "They can't have the mindset that this evaluation determines my status . . . or the shields will go up." He felt, as well, that there should be some type of mechanism in place to ensure the confidentiality of the process. The process must be unthreatening to the teacher.

Moving away from a traditional top-down approach was his second point. "There

should be more latitude at the lower levels . . . our districts have to be more facilitatory than they have been.” More of a bottom-up approach, he believed, would create a greater openness “so that everyone knew what was going on.” Teaching can be a very solitary profession. We need to break down those isolating barriers to bring about improvement. “This could alter practice.”

His third point was that of perspective. The design of supervision, Rupert believed, should be to develop, discuss and plan learning goals:

It should be more of an assistance, more of a help, more of a growing together rather than the traditional view of the guy in the suit with the clipboard. That is not what supervision should be all about. It should be “What do you feel your aims are for this year?” Then you sit down with somebody and you map out what you’d like to accomplish. It is an exchange of ideas, views. It’s more of a development thing than an evaluation process.

This, he believed, was the more professional approach. As professionals, he said, we need to be accountable but it is what we do with the accountability information that is important. Professionals set up a “formative process that informs both the teacher and the echelon within the system of what can be done to improve instruction.” If the focus is on teachers improving their practice, then the quality of education for students will improve. “If you’re better at it, you’re going to be better for the students because they are going to get better.”

We discussed professional growth plans as an avenue for facilitating meaningful tenured teacher evaluation. “One thing that excites me,” he stated, “Is this new tenured teacher route and how the focus is now on improved teaching.” As well as acquiring

some familiarity with the concept through his graduate work, his district has made some preliminary introductions to the schools. "Our district is bringing it in So I think that in the new sense of evaluation or appraisal, I think it would be a detriment not to have the experience. And I see it now, maybe because I have been studying at the university and know there is so much more out there that I could use and develop."

Rupert explained the further benefits of this route over the traditional one. First of all, teacher growth:

becomes a part of your practice and a part of who you are as a teacher instead of living up to someone else's standard. You can actually develop something long term And you make a plan for the year. And because you are working through it, it becomes something that you might incorporate into your own practice. You can try things without having to be afraid. So even after the year is over, you will probably still incorporate the things that you have been doing, improving, developing in your own classroom. This will be a more professional, long term thing where the traditional model was more of a snapshot.

As well, he noted, it can give teachers a vehicle for both identifying and problem-solving challenging areas in a risk-free manner rather than letting them build up, year after year. Along with this, he hoped "it might make a more collaborative climate" by having people work together to develop and then implement growth plans.

He described his vision of the professional growth plan process. First of all, "it has to be a collaborative effort with the teacher and whoever the supervisor is." They have "to sit down and look and say, 'Look, where do you want to work. What is the area you want to study, you want to develop in?'"

The focus has to be on improving practice. "Everyone can improve. Every one of

us. It doesn't matter if you are the best teacher in the world; there are always improvements that can be made." Importantly, he contended, teachers have to believe that through this process they will become better teachers or they "are not going to buy into it. Teachers have to see the merit." As well, the plans must relate to improving teaching which, by extension, would improve student achievement. "Anything that a teacher wants to do to improve should have some sort of impact helping students in the classroom."

Once that has been done, an ongoing plan for implementation and monitoring must be set. "It has to be an ongoing process, not just a one-shot deal either. Particularly not three lessons in a row in the morning!" Collegial sharing, collaborative planning, mentoring and peer coaching were all options he felt would enhance professional growth plans. He described an example:

Let's get the language teachers together and have board personnel sit in. Sit in on this and get your language specialists in and let the board help out where they should be going. And give them time to find out. This is what works so board personnel can go to the other schools and say, hey look. This is what worked in the other schools. Now let's implement that twice a year or whatever and go back and chat.

He also referred to the master teachers that fill our schools. "I maintain there are a lot of expert teachers among us that we could learn a lot from . . . Draw on the teachers on your staff; draw on the teachers in your board to provide professional growth for teachers".

For such a policy to truly work, believed Rupert, its development must begin at

the school level. Teachers would have to be part of the process:

It has to start at the bottom. And instead of getting a teacher from here and a teacher from there to serve on a committee, it almost has to start from a school level in every school. You know, you get four to five *yes mans* on it and you do whatever the leader says. That's what they do. I've seen that happen so often and you know, often the school board, the school board personnel, whoever is guiding this issue, have their own agenda and they are going to force it through, no matter what the teachers say. So teachers are not going to be a part of it. We're just going to throw it out.

Noticing my surprise at his rather strong reaction, he explained that teachers are getting tired of the constant bombardment of new policies with, at the most, token consultation from a few *yes men*. The realignment of districts, he posited, have caused many of these changes. There has been a constant stream of downloading from the department to the boards to principals to teachers. Teachers are feeling resentful and burdened. Teachers have seen "too many band-aid solutions parachuted in. Something else coming from the board, coming from the department. Another parachute."

As a case in point, he referred to the new, somewhat unpopular, special needs program currently being implemented throughout the province:

Right now we're going through the Pathways. Teachers are going to make it sink or swim. The majority of teachers I know have the say. And they can bring in whatever policy. They can bring out new policies as they can see fit but if teachers are not part of it, don't buy into it, the policy is going nowhere.

While he did concede that you can't develop every policy from the ground up, of all policies, teacher evaluation impacts upon us the most. "I think that any policy works better if it's consultation. I also realize, from a managerial standpoint, you can't consult on everything but this is a policy that touches everyone." To his knowledge, there have

been no opportunities for input on the tenured evaluation policy currently being developed within his district:

Well, I don't know for a hundred percent for sure if there has been teacher consultation or not. I think it is a bandwagon that the school board is jumping on. This model has being developed and we don't want to look like we are too far behind. So let's jump on this. . . . If it is a bandwagon they are jumping on and they have it in their minds to do it, the consultation is sort of like the cart before the horse.

When I asked if the NLTA should have a role in tenured evaluation policy development, Rupert responded, "Oh, they have to be involved, too. I mean, the thing is, they are supposed to be our professional organization that is leading us." Their first role, Rupert felt, was to do the research on what works and what doesn't. They should be the ones that could keep up on the current theory as well as practice, knowing "what's working and what's not working" through their networking systems both within the province and across the nation. "We want the expertise."

A second role should be that of teacher advocate. "Somebody has to have the interests of the teachers." In this role, he suggested, they could host forums, publicly endorse suitable policies and, most importantly, put pressure on the school boards to act in the best interests of the teachers. "If that is the best way for teachers to be evaluated; if it is going to be beneficial to teachers and thus beneficial for their students, then by all means, yes, the NLTA should get on board. But they won't, this toothless organization that we have."

My final question was that of implementation. Again he reflected back to the

myriad of new policies that have come out over the last few years, the endless changes in the education system. First of all, he maintained, like policy development, teachers have to be a part of the process. "You can't just throw it at a half-hour staff meeting and say, 'Here it is. Anybody who wants a copy, let me know. I don't want any complaints. Live with it. Here we go.'"

There should be inservicing that goes beyond a "Here's the new way we are taking" power point presentation. Inservicing that actively involves the staff, should explain exactly how professional growth plans work, what they are all about and why they are beneficial to teachers and to their students. Teachers need to buy in. It cannot be "another thing to be tacked onto the day. That's not going to work very well." Teachers need to take ownership. "If they have no personal stake in the policy, they are not going to work their butt off for it. Are you following me on that?"

Rupert also articulated the need for policy to be implemented slowly. Rushing the teacher evaluation policy through only achieves one thing and that is to "satisfy some board chairman, or district office personnel that okay, they're being assessed out there. They're confident to say to their masters at the department that every teacher" has been evaluated. The intended effect, to improve instruction, doesn't happen.

As well, he noted that a fine balance between gentle pressure and not forcing anyone, needs to occur when implementing policy. There has to be some external emphasis. By making the policy Board-sanctioned, he believed, not only would it help maintain those "weights and checks" he referred to earlier, but it would also give teachers

legitimized authority to pursue their own professional development. An example he gave was going into classrooms and watching each other teach. "If I were to even suggest that to some of the teachers now, they would say 'Who in the h___ are you and where do you get off in saying that you're coming in.'"

Neither should teachers be pressured into immediate implementation. Some people take the idea and run. Some view it as something to be tolerated and others as "you're going to force me to do it. You don't want to force anyone to do it because it is intended to improve teaching."

The greatest difficulty to all this, as he saw it, was that of time. "If evaluation and supervision are going to be a worthwhile process, it is going to take a lot of time." Whether it was developing and implementing authentic, relevant policy or engaging in meaningful professional growth, the barrier of time is always there. Explaining the latter, he spoke of an incident the previous year where language teachers in three schools wanted to get together to develop a program desperately needed in their area. "We fought long and hard this past year to get just those three schools together" but the superintendent refused:

To make it work they should give it time. But for us, in our little locale, we will be getting together after school. We will be getting together Sunday evenings. I don't think the board will be giving us time.

He doubted that a new evaluation policy will have any effect. "It is sad because the School Board is supposed to be there primarily to help the children. Huh! I say that because it is so bloody blatant. The last thing sometimes they consider are the kids."

As for districts providing the time needed to develop and implement tenured evaluation policies that teachers will “buy into,” Rupert too, is skeptical that it will happen. For like traditional supervision, the greatest need that districts have for tenured teacher evaluation policy, he felt, was to fulfill bureaucratic requirements. “To get done.”

There to be Helpful

Like many teachers, Rowena started her teaching career in rural Newfoundland. She went where the jobs were. Her first assignment was that of an elementary French and special needs teacher. It was a one year replacement position.

At the beginning of the year, the principal informed Rowena that he would be evaluating her three times with the first visit in the fall. She remembers feeling a “little nervous because you are watched by someone else and the idea is that you’re being judged. That’s what you think, right?” She described the format:

And we together set up a time that was convenient for him and myself. And I had to do a lesson plan and give it to him before the evaluation time. Then he came into my classroom and I taught the lesson. The following afternoon I met with him. And he had an evaluation form with the things he was looking for that he had given to me ahead of time as well. My own personal copy. And he went over the points that he had.

I remember it was very, everything was very positive. I was teaching in a challenging needs position at the time. It was an area that he was not really familiar with and he was pleased with everything. He didn’t have any suggestions to give me. Which was what I did want, suggestions And I thought that, I had only been teaching there a month. I was looking for things, areas where I could improve.

I was very eager and the second time wasn’t as stressful but it was so nerve-

racking and the third time as well. But each time it was the same form. Give him a lesson plan first. He came in and observed. He wasn't a participant. He sat down and watched. Then it ended.

The next year she obtained a one year contract in a different district. More evaluations:

Basically all evaluation then was done by Board personnel, district personnel and the different coordinators would come down and usually, I believe, they would give you some notice. I remember they came down and sat in on my classes and tried to give some very constructive criticism. It wasn't done in a mean way or anything. It was to be helpful. And I felt that. I didn't feel intimidated at all. Although of course you do. There is a certain level of anxiety that you're going to experience. But in our discussions after the class it wasn't that way. They weren't condescending or anything like that. They were there to be helpful. And that's how I took them.

Finally she secured a permanent position in a mid-sized school in a larger urban centre. Four visitations were required each year until tenure but "my principal did more."

Feeling that everything had to be perfect, she again was very nervous:

I was so new that I sometimes didn't know if I was coming or going, if it was the right way to do things. But the administration were super supportive and they weren't under the expectation that things had to be perfect. I had a severe behaviour problem in my class that year. So it was a little nerve-racking in that sense but when it was all said and done I felt a little more confident. It was a woman that had 20 plus years of experience and she was able to say, yes, you're doing a good job. Just keep doing it and these are some suggestions. She gave me some books that she had used at that grade level and told me to keep them. "Use them as you wish."

Rowena mentioned other aspects of this third set of evaluations that stood out:

She wanted the lesson plan, which I gave her. Now the difference that I found was that she interacted. She wanted to be a part of the group which was still nerve-racking. But it was nice to see that she would get involved with the children. She told me that right up front. And it was good. She had more first hand experience. She wasn't back in the corner, writing. So as a teacher, I found

her contribution was very helpful.

Her administrator also requested a set of class assignments that she had corrected.

“And I thought that was a really good thing because she gave me feedback on that. There was a couple of little things I could have changed and how I gave the directions. That was really helpful.”

Finally, at the end of the year, Rowena was presented with a report that went far beyond the requirements of the district, far beyond classroom visitations.

She had a formal-type report on the various aspects she was looking for, two or three for each one. I found that very helpful, summarizing her evaluation for the whole school year including not only my teaching but my involvement in the school.

She summarized her pretenured experiences by stating that the process had helped her to grow as a teacher, affirming her as a professional:

You need someone to validate what you are doing, to say, okay, this is good. Now why don't you try something along these lines. That's what they are there for. They are there to be helpful and to offer constructive criticism. And yes, we're going to make mistakes. Even now we're probably going to make mistakes. But if the evaluator comes in with the idea that I am there to try to help, to assist you, to offer some guidance. . . . I knew at the end I was going to get some feedback. I knew my principals were knowledgeable and fair. And I knew what they were looking for and what they were going to evaluate me for and I was looking for constructive criticism that would help me grow because, like anything, I don't want to stop learning.

She remembers being evaluated once as a tenured teacher. While administrators would frequently drop in, there was “no one taking notes or anything. And there may be some discussion about what is going on and there might not be.” Then the administration changed. This team, Rowena recalled, took the evaluation of tenured teachers a little

more seriously:

They came in and sat down with their forms for untenured teachers and filled them out the same as they would for untenured teachers and went through the same process where they give you your copy and you have to sign. Whether they sent a copy to district office or not, I don't know.

She found the experience ineffective, intimidating and disempowering. "It was just exercise in intimidation and you passed or didn't. And if you didn't, look out. You shouldn't be treated that way. Tenured teachers deserve the respect to work through any challenges in an effective way."

Due to restructuring, the year following this "evaluation" Rowena was transferred to another school. So far there has been no mention of tenured evaluations.

Despite her negative experience, she did believe there should be a process to evaluate tenured teachers. She viewed it as necessary for the good of the teacher, the good of the board and the good of the school:

I think it is very important that from a teacher's perspective, yes, to get the added support and guidance but from the Board so they can hold themselves accountable and maybe let the teachers know, yes, you are being watched and you are going to be evaluated and you are going to be held accountable for what you do.

In terms of the good of the school, she discussed the role of the principal in being actively involved in knowing their staff:

They have to have a handle on it. They should see what you are after doing. I think in some situations they don't know because some people are very good at covering up what they're doing is slack but yet they appear to be very active and they're working really hard and doing all kinds of innovative things and they're not. Sometimes that can cause tension in staffs, you know with undercurrents, politics. I think principals really need to get in there and be more aware of that.

While voicing her support for tenured teacher evaluation, she was also quick to detail what route she believed tenured teacher evaluation should take. Recalling her single tenured evaluation experience, she was definite that it should not be the same as untenured:

I think the purposes of evaluation should be different. I think it should be less formal. Perhaps they can look at some of the activities and the work that our kids are doing. Maybe have somebody come into our class and help us out with new programs, new policies, new approaches. Somebody else might come in and be able to say, "That's what's wrong. Why not try doing it this way?" It should be more of a coaching and sharing of ideas. The purpose should be to improve, to look critically at the ways a teacher can further improve on. They could probably be more self-reflective because they've had the experience. I think it has to be if they want to grow in any way.

As an example, she told me about one teacher who, after doing the research on how to create slide shows, called on a colleague's expertise to help her implement the strategy in the classroom. "And it worked. That is something we don't take advantage of enough."

Our conversation progressed to professional growth plans. While Rowena had not heard of them before, she seemed excited with the possibilities for teachers:

I think that would work well because the teacher is taking responsibility, taking ownership. Then it is not, "I'm going to have to fit what the principal is looking for and I have to make sure that I am doing all those things because that is how I am going to be rated or marked or commented on or whatever." There is so much going on these days. If slide show technology was an area I wanted to know more about or if I had just attended a workshop on it and I was really excited about it or I just saw the teacher in the next room do it then, yes, I think it would work well. I really think ownership is important and sitting down and then discussing the ways you want to be evaluated or expectations that you think you should have.

Rowena viewed the process of goal-setting as one that had multiple benefits. She

observed that not only would there be an affirmation of the teacher's strengths but, done correctly, the supervisor would be able to both build on the teacher's strengths and then give guidance to their plans for growth, suggesting modifications where necessary. "You might see a certain deficit in your teaching, but from the outside, other people looking in might think, that's not the problem at all. And then that needs to be addressed."

Another benefit she envisioned was that it would get teachers to become more self-reflective with their teaching practices and get them to set a focus for themselves for the school year. "And that helps too because teachers may not be focussed on something unless you do this." As well, she ruminated, "when you have to actually write down the goal, you have more of a chance" of undertaking it.

Finally, she saw the goal setting and, by extension, the professional growth process as providing opportunities for teachers to be risk-takers. Setting goals requires, and thus authorizes, them to try out new ideas in the classroom "which they may not necessarily do otherwise if they weren't going to be evaluated on it." An additional bonus she noted was that they would also receive growth-building feedback. "This is not working well. Why don't you try this? Or I have heard of this."

Rowena wasn't nearly as positive when predicting the success of implementing a professional growth model of supervision for tenured teachers. First, there was the reception of the teachers. While acknowledging that the teachers on her staff want to grow professionally, they don't want someone coming in, "making a decision on whether they are good or bad." So while teachers on her staff often engage in professional growth

activities, they may see a new policy as a threat. “There is a lot of stigma from the word *evaluation*. It is intimidating and threatening right from the get-go” It raises teachers’ defences. In their minds, only teachers experiencing difficulties get evaluated. The passage of time, she hypothesized, would ease this worry. “There’s going to be some trepidation so until you see these kinds of ideas in practice, and witness them going on for a few years, then you’ll feel more comfortable.”

Her second concern was with administrators. She felt that if they weren’t brought onside from the beginning, the policy would have little chance for success. “I believe that it has to start with administration. They have to buy in. If they don’t, their staffs won’t.” As well, the administrator’s leadership style is critical. “The principal can make or break it. It won’t work if they are a dictator or power hungry. It depends on the working relationship you have.”

Rowena expounded a little longer on whom she felt should supervise. While the evaluator had to be someone you can have confidence in and trust, it should not be your best friend who “of course is going to say you’re doing a fabulous job.” As well, it should be someone who “has expertise in that subject area, whether it comes from experience or academic or whatever.” Ultimately, she felt that the supervisor role should be filled with a combination of administrators and teachers. “If you were a teacher, with experience especially, you could offer so much more to the teacher.” Conversely, she envisioned that a school administrator would bring more validity to the process. Furthermore, she felt, they have the time, albeit limited, that teachers don’t have.

The issue of time, as Rowena saw it, was the greatest barrier to successful implementation. With their work loads so great, their number of preparation periods reduced and their class sizes continuing to grow, time has become an even rarer commodity. "And now we are looking at teaching with 30 to 35, 37, 38 kids in your classroom. You don't have time." She recounted a peer teaching program that the district implemented a few years ago. While she found it a great concept, there wasn't the time to go into each others classrooms. In order to make it work the teachers had to relinquish "their prep times which were so invaluable."

She found this conflicted with her values of professionalism. As professionals, she said, we need to grow. As professionals we need to reflect upon change and use feedback to continue to grow. "Otherwise, I think we are going to become stagnant." But she has found this increasingly more difficult to do. "I never get time to reflect on a student's work, let alone be helpful. I mean you are constantly on a treadmill. You don't have reflection time."

Her final comments were on the district's role in implementing policies. How the policy will be brought in, she said, was also important. Quality policy implementation needs sufficient time, resources and ongoing support. She again used the peer teaching program as an illustration. "I think it only went the first year and then the next year the board decided to let it go. It wasn't well organized." While placing much of the blame on the haste with which she perceived it was implemented, she also acknowledged that it coming in on the eve of the restructuring certainly accelerated its doom.

With many programs, she claimed, district training allows “only a few that have been in on all the goings on, bringing it in.” She has found that the information rarely gets completely disseminated down to those who need it the most, the classroom teachers. Neither, though, does she believe that mass professional development days are effective. She recounted the model of “professional problem solving,” that was introduced through district-wide inservices two years ago. While implemented throughout all the schools, to her knowledge, theirs is the only school now using it. “If they could actually come into the school,” doing the training on site, programs would have a far better chance of being delivered as expected. “I think a lot of it is just the money. If we had more money and time.”

Returning to the issue of time she affirmed:

To be successful, whatever they do they are going to have to build in some kind of mechanism for peer coaching or conferencing or individualization of evaluation where you are given a little bit of free time to reflect and do these things.

She held out little chance for its success otherwise. Teachers are just too overburdened.

“I’m to the saturation point. You’re going to get people that are really interested and really want to do well and really want to do things for kids. We’re getting burnt out. We really, really are. And it’s sad.”

I asked if her board would soon be implementing a new tenured teacher evaluation policy. Her response was, “I think they’ve come out with some kind of draft. I don’t know if it is probationary teachers or who it is. Some kind of draft policy.” Perhaps communication is another need.

Concluding Remarks

Three different initial evaluation experiences resulted in three distinctive educational journeys. Negative begot distrust and bitterness, bureaucratic begot disempowerment and positive begot growth-building. The mindscapes they brought to their current realities as teachers were strongly influenced by those who helped to shape their beginnings (see Table 4.1). Their views of themselves, their colleagues and their supervisors all stood in contrast to each other. As well, it was these early experiences that seemed to shape how the teachers defined their roles within their learning communities.

Interestingly, they all shared links that appeared to unify them as colleagues. They saw meaningful feedback as essential for teacher growth; they viewed the concepts of professional growth and professional growth plans as both necessary for the profession and as an authentic method of tenured evaluation; and they were frustrated by the vertical administrative practices conducted by school districts which they perceived to be detrimental to the health of school communities. Notably, they were all led by the same guiding principle: improving student capabilities.

Table 4.1.

Effects of Early Supervision upon Teachers' Current Attitudes and Experiences.**Profile Experiences and Viewpoints**

Early Evaluation Experiences			Present Viewpoints		
<i>Profile Type</i>	<i>Teacher View</i>	<i>Feedback</i>	<i>Level of Collegiality</i>	<i>Prevailing Attitude</i>	<i>Attitudinal Power Barrier to Authentic Evaluation</i>
PATSY <i>Negative</i> 4 voices	a power tool; "a farce"	wanted feedback: got little - judgmental	none	distrustful; under judgment	Most teachers won't want to make the effort
RUPERT <i>Bureaucratic</i> 7 voices	there to fulfill bureaucratic requirements; "worthless"	wanted feedback: got little - meaningless	with a few teachers	cynical; nobody cares	Districts won't want to make the effort - not important to them
ROWENA <i>Meaningful</i> 4 voices	a helpful process; "beneficial"	wanted feedback: got substantial - growth- building	with teachers and school leaders	positive; feels empowered	Teachers won't trust the motives of the district - may feel threatened

CHAPTER FIVE

Dominant Themes

While each of the participant's stories followed one of three distinct journeys, I also found many commonalities in their beliefs and experiences as they recounted their opportunities, their challenges and their successes. Blending these views and accounts with the findings of the research community, the themes of *entrances*, *barriers* and *bridges* to authentic evaluation emerged. By examining the data according to what is going right, what are the difficulties and what could help in surmounting such difficulties, perhaps the path to authentic evaluation might become more accessible.

Entrances

The entrances to authentic tenured evaluation are the opportunities present within the schools, within the educational system and within the teachers themselves. While some are obvious, others are obscured, most often by adverse perceptions that tend to fog the positive.

The importance of identifying and accentuating the positive (what is going right) must be underscored. As teachers, we initiate the educational process by identifying a starting point: what a student can do well without assistance. Beginning with what a student controls, we provide scaffolding or assistance to bring them further along the learning continuum (Bruner, 1985). Whether the problem is how to help an individual teacher or to help a learning organization move along the continuum, authentic learning principles should dictate employing the same theory.

Professionalism

Buried under layers of endless changes, distrust, disempowerment and a top-down educational system, I discovered a teacher professionalism that I was surprised existed. "A commitment to active care . . . for students" and "a self-directed search and struggle for continuous learning" are two of Hargreaves and Goodson's (1996) principles of post-modern professionalism (as cited in Green, 1998, pp. 203-04) that were facets of each teacher interviewed. I had already assumed, by virtue of their graduate work pursuits, that all of the participants engaged in self-directed learning. None were being paid to attend university. Their employer had neither directed them to attend nor had contributed financially toward their educational expenses. And, while it was true that they might indirectly benefit from subsequent salary increases and partially paid educational leave, the voices of the teachers told more.

All but one directly spoke of their obligation and need to grow as a professional. They articulated their frustrations when they were thwarted in their attempts and expressed their satisfactions when they were able to work at more intrinsic levels. Stated one teacher when she was able to work collaboratively. "And you learn! You have three teachers that meet, planning lessons. So you have three heads. Plus you get an idea of what is going on, you know, and it's great." Another, commenting on being evaluated by a top-down style of principal said, "There was no growth from that one. There was absolutely no growth. It was just an exercise in intimidation and you passed or you

didn't."

More striking was their conviction of moral purpose, defined by Fullan (1999) as "making a positive difference in the lives of all citizens" (p. 11). The teachers' commitment to students conspicuously permeated the interviews. It was, as it were, their "bottom line." Considering that the intentional focus of the study was *teachers* needs and concerns and that no interview questions directly mentioned students, I felt this significant.

The need to stay focussed on the bottom line was verbalized by the majority of teachers interviewed. A rural teacher commented: "The idea with all this changing of education is there is supposed to be more benefit to the students, not accountability for paperwork." Another, commenting on the introduction of a new program, reflected both his concern for kids, and ranked their priority within the educational hierarchy. "My fear is for the kids. It is going to be very frustrating for high school teachers, too."

Moral purpose includes wanting what is best for students. Writes Fullan (1993), "The vast majority of change efforts are misconceived because they fail to understand and harness the combined forces of moral purpose and skilled change agency" (p.42). Change without moral purpose is shallow and splintered while moral purpose without change is "stagnate" (p.37). The teachers seem to have it right. The students must come first.

A third feature of professionalism observed was the almost natural gravitation that many of the participants had toward working collegially for the betterment of students. In

only one of the schools did the operational framework truly nourish collegiality. Two others had it to a degree. For the remaining 12 schools, isolational teaching was the fostered norm. Without prompting, 9 of the participants spoke of incidences where they had been able to work beyond their classroom walls. For 2 of the participants, it was working beyond the walls of the school. They both described, somewhat bitterly, their self-imposed need to get together with their colleagues outside of school hours to develop teaching units and materials to better serve their students. Time within the school day, even when requested, was not available for them. "Between the two of us, we kind of got together over the summers - spent all of our time getting these units off." So they did it on their own time. Said the other, "So you know, us three little teachers, like I said, on our own time will be getting together this year".

Teacher Savvy

They could have discussed how they have laboured on their own to develop units and materials. But they didn't. What these teachers intuitively and experientially knew was that isolation was less effective than collaboration. "The greatest evolutionary leaps have come from independent life forms which learned to work together. Commitment to the greater good is crucial" (Goerner, 1998, as cited in Fullan, 1999, p. 10). Stated one teacher, "I'm lucky to have colleagues that work closely together. I know of teachers [in her school] that don't even bother to pass on the information. I can't even imagine that".

Teachers also knew what didn't work. All denounced the preplanned checklist

visit as meaningless for tenured teachers. "That's just a standard checklist. That's no judgement of what you are doing. I mean you have to look a lot of factors." Four did mention some limited benefits for untenured teachers. While a variety of words, including "intimidating," . . . "threatening," . . . "disillusioning," . . . "superficial," . . . "under judgement" . . . "board-mandated," . . . "unnatural" and . . . "nerve-racking," were used, the word of choice for the majority of respondents was "artificial." The following description highlights what most perceived were the limitations of this form of evaluation:

If I know that you're coming in to see me tomorrow, and I know that you've been promoting co-operative learning, I'm going to have a co-operative learning activity all dolled up for tomorrow for you. And it's going to work because I might even tell the youngsters I'm going to give them candy. There's things like that being done. So if you are just going to judge your evaluation on these four or five little lessons that you are going to observe, you're not getting what that teacher's like.

Rosenholtz (1989) agreed with the view of its limiting nature, asserting that "classroom teaching is in many ways only one significant act of the professional" (p. 219). As well, alluding to the potential for deceptiveness, Harris and Monk (1992) wrote, "a single classroom observation provides no guarantee that the teacher exhibits the same level of performance consistently or when the observer is not present (p.164). Duke, Lyon, Raichle, Randall & Russell (1995), in their discussion on the evolution of teacher evaluation, stated that such "teacher evaluation practices rarely contributed to improved teacher performance or greater student learning" (p. 133). As such, the traditional model of evaluation sits outside the paradigm of who they are as professionals. It is no wonder

that they view it as artificial.

Professional Values

Despite the general view held by the participants about the uselessness of tenured evaluation in the province, all 15 stated that it was important for tenured teachers to be evaluated. This finding is supported by an earlier Newfoundland study which determined that many teachers viewed teacher evaluation as “opportunities for the administrator to positively reinforce the work of good teachers and to ‘prod’ those teachers who needed to improve their work in the classroom” (Delaney, 1991). Interestingly, two-thirds of my study’s teachers spoke of a subset of the latter purpose, to “weed out the bad teachers,” with only four commenting on the need for affirmation. Many saw the role of evaluation as a process that improves teaching, for both the competent and the incompetent. Significantly, they articulated that the primary reason was to ensure students were getting a quality education. Teacher worth was a distant second.

Several also called for a differentiated form of evaluation for tenured teachers. With each participant, the concept of professional growth plans, where teachers annually set and then carry out their own professional goals, was discussed. All were receptive to the idea; some were excited at the possibilities. While the perceived advantages ranged from early remediation for teachers having difficulties, to setting a focus for growth, to “making a more collaborative climate,” all participants could articulate benefits.

Despite this, a few doubted professional growth plans would work. Though still

supporting them in theory, one teacher stated, "From my experience in my own school, I know that people will still see that [professional growth plans] as a burden" because they would take more effort than traditional evaluation. Two others voiced their concern that some teachers might take the easy way out by choosing to work on competencies they already controlled.

Five of the participants came to the interview with some previous knowledge of professional growth plans. Their intensity of support correlated directly with the amount of exposure to them. One, in an administrative capacity, had recently experienced professional growth plans first hand, supervising two teachers at her school:

They thought it was the best thing since sliced bread. What it was - these are the things they wanted to do but never felt they had the time to do. But now they had some structure, something they had to do. Sort of you know, "It's part of my evaluation. I got to do it."

Maybe what surprised her the most was the benefits that she herself gained. "I learned a lot in the process because there is interaction and team learning. I don't think that the old process allowed for that." Later she commented on the value of this process. "Say in ten years the Boards change again. New policy disappears. I think that if this carries through for the next ten years as it has started, teachers would be disappointed."

The *entrance* here is that all of the participants, irrespective of their experiences, fully endorsed the concept of professional growth plans. They viewed them as "the more professional, long term" approach to teacher evaluation and could theorize and, in one case, testify about their benefits. They viewed them as important and valuable. And that

was the key. According to Sheldon and Biddle (1998), intrinsic motivation occurs when people engage in tasks they perceive as important and valuable. “What is rewarding gets done . . . and it gets done without close supervision or other controls. The sources of motivation are embedded in the work itself” (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 26).

Authority From the Top

Two documents, working in tangent with each other, served to validate the premise of authentic teacher evaluation in this province. The first was the Newfoundland and Labrador *Provincial Collective Agreement* (1998). It sanctions two tenets of authentic evaluation. One is the acknowledgement that there are two different forms of teacher evaluation, summative and formative. The second is a recognition of the purpose of formative evaluation, “a process of evaluation which occurs to improve the professional performance of the teacher(s)” (p. 10).

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association (NLTA)’s *Act, by-law & code of ethics* (1999) was the second document. Its Code of Ethics’ section describes two principles of teacher-professional growth that they purport all NLTA members should follow:

“(ii) A teacher assists in the professional growth of colleagues through the sharing of ideas and information

(iii) A teacher makes a constant and consistent effort to improve” (p. 31).

While the document does not legally link these two principles to tenured teacher

evaluation, a case could be made for these principles, themselves two key precepts of authentic evaluation, constituting a description for improving “professional performance.”

Most significant is the framework these documents authorize for meaningful tenured teacher evaluation, both from the province and the NLTA. Fullan (1993) wrote that while teachers and individual schools can bring about change on their own and uphold it for short periods of time, it has to be authorized from the top to bring about sustained change. These two documents open up yet another entrance to authentic tenured evaluation.

School Restructuring

As mentioned earlier in this study, the education reforms that took effect in 1998, resulted in the reduction of school districts from 27 to 10. This in turn precipitated the need for new tenured teacher evaluation policy across the province. Furthermore, most districts had either recently adopted or were currently exploring the employment of professional growth plans as a component of their formative evaluation policy. And, while it was true that the methods of development and implementation would greatly affect the success or failure of achieving authentic tenured teacher evaluation, it was indeed a starting point.

Barriers

An ancient principle of war that has been subsequently applied to many other situations is “know thine enemy.” This maxim goes on to explain that it is only by fully knowing your enemies that you can overcome them. Thus, understanding the barriers to meaningful tenured evaluation is the first step in conquering them.

Both the literature and the teachers’ stories were replete with obstacles that pulled in a seemingly endless variety of directions. A closer analysis, however, uncovered similar cores, some fairly obvious and others further buried. By exposing these dominant cores of paucity, it was hoped that the healing process could begin.

Time

One of the more obvious frustrations, mentioned by all but two of the participants and articulated as the greatest obstacle in two of the profiles, was that of time. In this study, two aspects of this seemed to dominate: use of time and lack of it. Within the schools, teachers cited a lack of time as one of the primary barriers to implementing growth-fostering strategies such as collaboration, peer visitations and reflection. Hargreaves (1997) agreed, stating that “time has long been recognized as a serious obstacle to successful school change” (p. 80). Some also questioned where the time was going to come from for administrators to advise, assist and monitor professional growth plans for each of their teachers throughout the year. “Now I’m coming from a large school where the principal has a lot of teachers. I mean he is rushed off his legs all the

time. Time is such a big factor for all of this.”

Coupled with this were the increasing demands they had been experiencing as of late. School restructuring and decreasing enrollments had in turn increased teaching workloads. Both, claimed the teachers, had contributed to increased class sizes and, in the case of the latter, the additional workload that comes with multi-grading. One of the participants described a more extreme example:

Some periods I have grade four math, grade five math, grade six math, grade eight social studies and that creates a bit of a challenge A lot of time is weighed up, especially when I got a family. I don't spend enough time with them. I don't mind doing the work but sometimes your work is not really useful because you got one hour in the classroom and you have to scrape that one hour out between the three or four groups.

Restructuring made its own unique demands on time. The one cited the most by teachers was the seemingly endless reconfiguring of schools which in turn often led to school changes, staff changes and assignment changes. As well as the obvious workload that created, examples were given of collegial relationships that were either ended or carried on over a distance. Stated another participant, “That happened last year. We got split up, the teachers. We went to different schools but I kept in touch with one who I taught with in the high school. He used to teach junior high and now I'm in junior high.”

Implementing new programs was another strain presented. “There's more and more things. You know, there are programs just thrown at you.” Participants told me of their difficulties receiving program support, whether due to so few being inserviced, less than meaningful “one-shot” presentations or the inability to get to district office where the

support was being provided. "I missed one because of a storm and I couldn't get out to it. And once you miss it, that's it."

The crux of the situation was that many teachers were already feeling inundated. Both burnout and cynicism attacked those teachers who found themselves constantly overwhelmed by all the changes. In attempts to consciously do their best for their students by implementing an increasing number of reforms, they soon collapsed under "unsustainable dedication" (Hargreaves, 1997, p. 81). Two of the teachers in the study talked about their attempts at peer coaching. Despite "support in principle" from the school in one case and the district in another, as well as the benefits they realized from the project itself, they found themselves unable to sustain the venture for much longer than a year. One of them commented:

I found that this year it was more difficult to actually find the time to do it. It might have worked better but we just have too much on our plates. And, although it is a worthwhile exercise, we have to make sure we cover the [student learning] outcomes.

Other teachers discussed their difficulties in finding the time to work collegially. Through this came the frustrations they felt in trying to be more effective, in trying to improve their teaching, in trying to grow professionally. In addition to intuition and experience, they knew that the research confirmed that other teachers were the preferred source for ideas. Ironically, so was the research that confirmed that these interactions were few (Fullan, 1991). One of the largest barriers to this, as the teachers had already attested, was time. If the teachers working at the higher end of the motivational hierarchy

could not find the time, what ratio of success would there be for those who are less comfortable at working collaboratively? For example, if teachers were requested to come together to collaborate on something they had only done in isolation in the past, and release time was not given to foster this endeavour, “then the chances of realizing an authentic collaboration effort are greatly diminished” (Johnson, 1998, p. 18).

Time was also a factor in the development and implementation of policy. While in healthy school districts policy development was carried out collaboratively (Rosenholtz, 1989), political, financial and time restraints seemed to force policies to be hastily developed without a lot of input. Remarked one participant:

I think in policy development, if they are going to bring in assessment policy then the emphasis shouldn't be on the rushing to get it out within a year. That has happened a lot with a lot of policies. With all these boards getting together they say, “Lets take the good and the bad from the two districts coming together and then take the policy. Quickly, here you go.” But we really should take our time.

Three of the teachers disparagingly used the term *yes men* in their discussion of policy development in this province. *Yes men* are those perceived who will say *yes* to whatever the Board puts forth while “masquerading” as representatives of the teachers. Duke (1995) referred to this phenomena as “token consulting; contrived congeniality” (p. 186). Others remarked that the hurried pace, the “cowboy manner” of district policy development, was partially due to their anxiety of being viewed by others as too far behind. Development became a product to be delivered and carried out. Such tactics have the potential of disenfranchising the whole educational system (Halstall, 1998). Stated one teacher, “And they can bring in whatever policy. They can bring in new

policies as they see fit but if teachers are not part of it, don't buy into it, the policy is going nowhere."

Buying in takes time. Perhaps this need is even greater when implementing policy. As stated earlier, the shorter the time line from adoption to implementation, the more likely it was to fail (Huberman and Miles, 1984). Policies can fail because teachers do not have the opportunity to bring their meanings to the innovations (Fullan, 1997). As one participant observed, "The key thing is you just can't slap it on the teachers. You've got to give them time to, if you want to use the word, to buy into it." Three of the participants, from three separate districts had recently experienced the implementation of a new tenured teacher evaluation policy. For one, it was a power point presentation. "They said, 'Okay, here's the new way we are taking.' And that was it." For a second it was a document left on the staffroom table and for the third, a "big brown envelope" that arrived in the mail.

A second perspective on the barrier of time was how time is used, whether that be individually, as a school or district-wide. In the case of two of the participants, they reshaped their use of time to align with the perceptions of others. Both teachers told me that they quickly learned to re-jig their preparation routines so that others could see that they were working. "And that is the politics. When I had my job down in Bonavista, I knew right there and then. If Chester Ryan is the principal then that means if I am going to do the work, and even though I am ten minutes from school, it is going to be done at school"

Time to conduct teacher evaluations was another use of time called into question. In order for the learning community to give their tacit approval to school time being consumed with such initiatives, they have to perceive the initiatives as important and valuable. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) argued that teachers rightly viewed that the traditional 100 % staff appraisal schemes constitute an enormous waste of time and evoke a considerable amount of stress. As an annual, ongoing process, the view of professional growth plans being a waste of time is a great possibility. One of the participants witnessed this at his school. The teachers “considered it probably a bigger burden than if they were just going to be evaluated in the traditional manner, two or three times during the year. They were resentful of it.”

The third factor in the use of time was scheduling, both school and district-wide. Hargreaves (1997) referred to this obstacle as becoming “prisoners of time.” He explained that schools, while keeping time parameters right, have now let learning be defined by such schedules rather than the abilities and needs of the students. School time, while arbitrarily set, has become a rigid structure. Bus schedules, distance education schedules, and parental work schedules compounded this rigidity. To break this barrier, freeing time for quality teaching and learning, school schedules must be rethought of as flexible constructs, guided by parameters, rather than traditions.

Isolationism

There were two surfaces of isolationism in Newfoundland and Labrador. One was

physical and the other mental. They both shaped their own barriers.

The physical, economic and political realities of the province were that of a vast, underpopulated, and rugged landscape, battered by out-migration, lower wages and the fishing moratorium. The majority of the population lived close to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, with the greatest concentration living on or near the Avalon Peninsula. The virtual closing down of the fishing industry in the early 1990's decimated the populations of the many fishing communities throughout the province, contributing to a spiral of losses, including services and transportation. To that factor in a climate, not generally well thought of to begin with, that got progressively cooler the further north one travelled and progressively windier the further west one went. That is Newfoundland and Labrador.

Seven of the participants I interviewed lived in what would be described as more isolated communities within the province. Three of them had to use more than one form of transportation to get to St. John's. All but one were content where they were living. "I love the place," stated one. Still, there were difficulties seemingly inherent with their setting.

Limiting the difficulties to quality tenured teacher evaluation, two stood out. The first was the reduced physical contact that teachers in isolated schools had with other teachers and that isolated schools had with their districts. For the latter, the expenses, both of time and money, were greatly increased. Various professional growth initiatives such as subject or grade collaboration, were often impossible both within and between

schools. The ideal, as one participant suggested, of having a program specialist come in on a regular basis to monitor progress, was for many, unfeasible. Another commented on missed inservices due to the ferry not running and, yet another, on policy delivery done by the post office. Fullan (1991) confirmed this, adding that schools and districts farther away often have fewer opportunities to access innovations as well as receive “needed sources of assistance during implementation” (p.76). While much of a district’s staff development resources should be dedicated “to opportunities for teachers to learn from, observe and network with each other” (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996, p. 104), this was a challenge not easily conquered for many of the schools within the province.

A second difficulty identified was with recruiting. Positions in isolated areas were usually more difficult to fill. One of the participants was in the process of moving, not because he disliked his position or the community but because services for his young children were a three hour drive away. He doubted his school board would be able to fill his position.

According to another participant, some areas weren’t evaluating because it was so hard to find teachers. Their fear, she believed, was that they would find something wrong and have to address it:

This year alone we have 75 jobs to fill in our Board. Who’s going to come to our school? They can’t fill them all. They fill them in with bodies. You got a person that can walk off the street with no education background whatsoever and fill in two months for a teacher that went on sick leave. There is no accountability there.

When there is a shortage of teachers, posited Duke (1995), systems are unable to dismiss

marginal teachers and, as such, will not, “have the luxury of being able to enforce high performance standards for new teachers” (p. 186), or seemingly in the case of some areas within our province, standards of any kind.

The second form of isolation revealed was that which was created and perpetrated by the teachers and indeed the educational system itself. This isolation occurred when teachers worked autonomously within their own classrooms, each an individual component interlocked like bricks to create a school. It was not surprising then that Rosenholtz’s (1989) research showed that stuck schools showed little or no attention to school wide goals or initiatives, and were more concerned with the world of the classroom. Commented one of the participants:

There are the unnatural isolators that occur in the teaching profession. You can see it today. I mean there’s teachers that are leaving with 30 years punched who never opened their door, whose classroom is their domain. They don’t interact with other adults during the day. Whose interface is totally with the students. You know, I don’t think we can function well anymore like that. Maybe at one time you could. Teacher’s authority was the law and that was it. But today, no.

Rosenholtz also discovered that teachers in isolated situations engaged in professional learning for only the first two years while teachers in collaborative arrangements experienced ongoing learning. One of the participants, who worked in a school without doors, supported this, saying:

If you’re within four walls with a door, how often do you have to observe someone else’s teaching and confer with them? I always have an ear to what the other teachers are doing. You may say, you know in class before. What were you doing over there in science? That sounded pretty interesting, you know. And then they tell what they did; they just read it in a book or went to a conference or whatever.

Working collaboratively with one's peers is a key component of professional growth. In contrast, Harris & Monk (1992) found that isolationist situations were not conducive to professional growth enhancing initiatives such as team teaching and peer coaching. "Peer review requires a great deal of open-mindedness and trust among colleagues - commodities often lacking in schools" (p. 165).

Another limitation was the untold losses due to isolationist attitudes. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as sovereigns over their classrooms set them up to believe that assistance from others inferred incompetence. Furthermore, they often eschewed advice from others because, as teachers, they felt they knew what was best. They were in charge. They were the professionals. "Less preciousness and self-protectiveness about our own professional status and about our sense of indispensability as educators might also enable us to draw on other technical and human resources to ease the time burdens of teaching" (Hargreaves, 1997, p.85). The walls of isolation served to limit the growth of teachers to what they could do by themselves, bounded by their own resources of time, innovations, expertise, and energy.

Finally, there were the limits that this style of teaching placed on teacher innovations. While teachers were producing numerous small innovations daily, few of them went beyond the individual because of the limited interactions between teachers. Furthermore, concluded Fullan (1991), "when good ideas get initiated by one or more teachers, it requires the support of the others for it to go anywhere " (p. 55).

Isolationism is, unfortunately, not easy to overcome. The isolating physical

attributes of the walls and doors of the individual classrooms were one obstacle. In addition to school architecture, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) found that isolationism was supported by time-tabling and overload and tradition. It brought with it less risk-taking for the teacher and poor student achievement.

A second was the isolationist traits of the teachers. According to Rosenholtz (1989), many teachers were unwilling to shed their isolationist teaching practice in exchange for a more collaborative model and were adamant that they did not suffer professionally from this isolationist stance. This, she felt, was due to it being ingrained into the culture of the teaching profession. Culture is not an easy barrier to dissolve.

Communication

Effective communication, both at the school and district level, is essential to fostering a meaningful evaluation system. This study revealed communication difficulties in several areas.

The first was in providing meaningful feedback to the teachers. Those participants that received specific responses felt validated, encouraged and directed. Commented one participant. "He always left you with something to think about. He also left you with a good feeling and I appreciated that much more than, 'Okay, ya, continue on with what you are doing.'" Commented another, "You need someone to validate what you are doing, to say, okay. This is good. Now why don't you try something along these lines." Teachers' learning opportunities, according to Rosenholtz, came about best when

two conditions were fulfilled. One was providing positive feedback to teachers with the other being resources and assistance.

Unfortunately, a lot of the teachers do not get feedback. Instead, remarked a participant, "Teaching has too much of this sink or swim philosophy. Let's see if they got the parts! If they do, great. If they don't, well maybe they should look elsewhere." Remarked another, "You need feedback but you don't get feedback." Bitterly commented a third, "No one cares how well I teach." Both the teachers and, as a result, the students suffer when feedback is not forthcoming. Rosenholtz found that teacher uncertainty, in large part as a result of no positive feedback, correlated negatively with student gains in math and language arts.

All 15 participants spoke on the need for specific feedback, that which was both affirming and directional. This surprised the NLTA administrative officer that I interviewed. His impressions, based on grievances and other teacher complaints he had worked with, was that teachers liked feedback as long as what the evaluators said was good. When it was negative was when the complaints came in. This, he purported, was because teachers weren't ready or able to take negative criticism. Upon reflection, I realized that neither answer is wrong. The type of feedback the NLTA officer was hearing was likely that which was communicated to teachers in their role as employees of the Board. The type of feedback the teachers I spoke with wanted to hear was in respect to their role as teaching professionals. They wanted that which was authentic. They wanted it to guide their growth.

Symbolic Policy Development

The participants clearly expressed their frustrations with policy development, especially those whose districts had already developed a new teacher evaluation policy. Many did not know if their districts had an existing tenured teacher evaluation policy. Those that knew they had new policies, heard little to nothing about them until they were implemented. The prime source of their frustrations was not being able to communicate their views to the policy makers. Indeed, they felt they should have had a seat at the policy-making table. But that did not happen. The closest to this was one participant who spoke of a teacher who was invited to a workshop at the district office to provide input “after it [the draft] was done.” The teachers viewed it as a joke. Teachers in two other districts made the same comments about the board’s tendency to, at the very most, employ token consulting when developing policy. Articulated one participant, “Policy developed and reassessed should include teachers. And not just representatives because you think they would be a good person, or a yes person. They should be truly representative of staff.”

According to Fullan (1997), putting some teachers on a committee does not work in affecting change in other teachers. They are either seen by the “others” as getting special privileges. They in turn view these “others” as “somewhat resistant” and slow to catch on.

Teachers from two other boards expressed doubts that teachers’ input would make any difference as the agenda had already been set. Discussing whether teacher input

during the development stage would have helped facilitate the implementation, one participant cynically commented, “It would have been better, yes, from a theoretical standpoint but from a practical standpoint I don’t think it would have changed anything.” And it probably wouldn’t have. Said Fullan, “It is easier - more tangible, clear, and satisfying in the short run - to concentrate on *developing* [italics in the original] a new program than to enter the conflict-filled, ambiguous world of seeing what others think of the idea” (p. 112).

Suggested one participant:

Maybe there are aspects that can be delegated to the school. Maybe the Board should have broad, sort of guidelines for how the evaluation happens. But leave the aspects of the policy to be developed at the school site. If there is ownership there, teachers will feel they have a say in how this policy is implemented.

The less ownership they have, the more likely the policy is to fail. Fullan’s (1997) observations were that policies fail because teachers do not have the opportunities to bring their meanings to the innovations. His claim is that dictated policies do not hear the voices of teachers and that “the capacity to bring about change and the capacity to bring about improvement are two different matters” (p. 345).

How effectively a policy is implemented at the school level, contended Johansson and Bredeson (1999), was dependent upon the view of its intent (see Figure 2.1).

Schools, they posited, tended to implement those they perceived as real while at best giving “lip-service” to those they believed were symbolic. Only those policies which were intended to be implemented and were viewed by the learning community as truly

meant to become successful were fully implemented. The participants' conversations verified much of this.

A formative component to teacher evaluation has been included in the *Collective Agreement* since 1983. Yet, when I asked the participants, all of them tenured teachers, only two had experienced formative evaluation during their career. For the remainder, the comments ranged from "I think I was on a list one year but nothing happened" to "I think it happens every three or four years. I've been there for 17." Discussing this with the NLTA officer, I learned that his experiences concurred with my findings. While many districts provide the NLTA with copies of their comprehensive evaluation policies, they were not always implemented to their full extent. According to Johansson and Bredeson, this would be an example of both schools and districts viewing the policy as symbolic, to satisfy political (i.e. the *Provincial Collective Agreement*) needs. Neither was it intended to be implemented nor did it get implemented.

A second example was symbolic policies that schools viewed as real. One of the participants told me about a policy implemented by her school district that included personal goal setting and peer coaching. While she found it wonderful, she also found it difficult to implement due to the lack of time. It only lasted one year. She also told me that she was frustrated with its lack of organization and wasn't surprised when she no longer heard anything about it. "And again, it was brought in but there wasn't much fanfare about it. It was just like a process that went through and then it stopped there." Interestingly, two others from this same district didn't even mention the initiative.

The same can be said for the two teachers mentioned earlier who, from separate districts, were evaluated as tenured teachers. While they both experienced tenured evaluation (albeit only once), other teachers from their districts had never been evaluated. The comment made by one of the evaluated participants was telling: "However there was one administration team who did seem to take the evaluation of tenured teachers a little bit more seriously." She went on to describe her disgust with the experience. She knew the policy was there only in name. Commented Johansson and Bredeson: "In some schools there are professional educators who take the policy charge seriously and believe the policy makers truly want full implementation of this initiative" (p. 59). When this miscommunication occurs they warn, difficulties, frustrations and sometimes detriments to other existing programs due to attempting to implement a policy that is not truly supported from the top, are realized.

The third scenario was when real policies were viewed or treated as symbolic by the learning communities receiving them. "Educators have grown used to policy makers who lose interest or lose track of various initiatives, and there is no point in redesigning their work to conform to a short-lived, symbolic policy gesture" (p. 59). Thus, if teachers, already feeling overburdened, come to understand the new tenured teacher evaluation policy as something the district has to do to satisfy, as one participant cynically said, "our masters at the department," it would likely not get implemented. Indeed, four teachers remarked on the power that they held as teachers to block policy implementation. When teachers were unable to be in control, self-protection mechanisms such as refusing

to participate or not trying were put into effect, thus restoring control (Rosenholtz, 1989). Commented one, “So teachers are not going to be a part of it. We’re just going to throw it out.” Another teacher remarked that in her school, one that has recently received the new policy, teachers are taking a wait and see approach.

As discussed earlier, it is only when both districts and schools view policies as real that they are fully implemented (Johansson and Bredeson). This is best communicated by the involvement of the learning community in the process, the congruity with which the policy matches the learning community, and the supports, both immediately and ongoing, that accompany the policy. In order for change to occur, the school must both “desire the change and be capable of managing it” (Poster, 1999, p. 171).

For the teachers interviewed in this study, involvement in the process, has been, at the most, symbolic. Both Fullan (1993) and Hargreaves (1997) point out that district-wide changes are hard to achieve when mandated and when the learning curves of the individual teachers are neglected. As well, they point out that the policy needs to be compatible with the beliefs of the teachers. One participant in this study, when discussing his districts’s draft policy on the tenured professional growth policy, commented, “There are elements of a checklist in there that which is a bit disappointing.” His beliefs which, likely due to his role as a graduate student, reflected current research, conflicted with those of the policy makers.

The participants’ descriptions of implementation of district tenured teacher

evaluation policy, while admittedly sketchy, indicated little in the way of immediate supports. The two that shared descriptions recounted those staff meeting presentations for me. One told of a brief power point presentation delivered on site by the district office. "They came. They said, 'Okay, here's the new way we are taking.'" He found it disconcerting that the "why" of the policy wasn't shared. "There was no philosophy behind it. You had to read it." Neither did the presentation allow for teacher input. They were told "This is what it is going to be from now on. You had better buy into it because it's here, right." The other explained how the information was delivered by the school administration team. After a short explanation, the document was held up in a staff meeting with the administrator saying, "Here it is. Anyone who wants a copy, let me know."

Rosenholtz (1989), in her observations, noted that moving school districts appointed vast resources and had Board personnel render on-site assistance, whereas stuck schools communicated their intentions using "pull-out" professional development days. Some of the participants in my study directly commented on the need for policy to be clearly communicated to the teachers in order to meet with success. One stated, "But to say to teachers, this is what I want you to do. I think there should be some inservicing on that to explain exactly, give an idea as to what's all about, where we are going and why this is beneficial. Would it be better? I think so." While it was admittedly too early in the process to make any judgements, and the details at hand were conceivably incomplete, without involvement and input from teachers as well as initial and ongoing

support from the district, the likelihood of this policy being discerned as symbolic were quite real.

Distrust

I was surprised at the level of distrust and found its cycle more interwoven than I anticipated: teacher against teacher, teacher against association, association against teacher and teacher against district. Most pronounced was the teachers' distrust of the district. Observed one of the participants, a long time educator, "Teachers have laboured under a top-down, under thumb approach for so long that they're naturally suspicious of any new thing." When questioned, many of the participants stated that their staffs would, at least initially, distrust any new evaluation policy, no matter how authentic and growth-building it would be because it was from the board. Stated one teacher, "People are afraid it would be used negatively." Commented another, "They might want help with growing professionally but they don't want someone coming in and making a decision on whether they are good or bad." Others echoed these participants' comments.

So why was this view so dominant? Other factors aside, perhaps it was because the culture of teacher evaluation in Newfoundland had always been to judge teachers and their teaching. A formative purpose, sitting 17 years in the *Collective Agreement* seems to have affected nothing. When asked why they had never been evaluated as tenured teachers, some remarked that it was because it was perceived that there was nothing wrong. "There has been no rumblings from what I have been doing that has prompted

any external review,” one of the participants satirically stated. Duke (1995) found that too much emphasis on accountability and weeding out of the incompetent teachers can actually do more harm than good to all of the teachers since the atmosphere changes to one of suspicion and distrust. As most professions do not require such forms of accountability, Duke contends that doing so “constitutes a form of institutionalized distrust, one which fails, by almost everyone’s admission, to contribute much to good instruction or improved student achievement” (p. 186). Since accountability has been virtually the only purpose of teacher evaluation in this province, this link to distrust may reasonably be made.

Elements of distrust between the NLTA and teachers were detected both during some of the participant interviews and in the NLTA interview. While one teacher commented positively, the remainder were either non-committal or negative. One felt that the association was too weak to represent teachers. “Toothless” was the word chosen. Another felt their stance was too protectionist, making it difficult for schools and boards to dismiss the incompetent since “No one can pop in and evaluate you.” A third one felt that the government’s view of the “NTA” was that of schizophrenia. “Sometimes you are a professional organization, sometimes you are a union. Sometimes you represent administrators, sometimes you represent teachers.” Despite the divergent views, one remained. All but one did not feel that their perspectives were represented.

Distrust ran both ways. In my interview with the NLTA officer, I explained the concept of professional growth plans. The greatest problem he saw with teachers setting

their own goals was that they may choose something they are already good at so they would not have to grow. Later, when we were discussing whether clinical evaluation treated teachers as professionals, he made the comment, "If teachers are professionals."

His views may not necessarily be incorrect. Perspective likely plays a role here, too. First was his position within the NLTA: working with teachers experiencing difficulties; upholding the *Collective Agreement*. He readily admitted that he didn't often get to hear what was going well in the field. Second were the views of the NLTA that he must represent. One, as he informed me, was that the clinical, checkmark style of evaluation was suitable for both summative and formative needs. Another was the view from the Association, of teachers as *employees*. An NLTA policy document (1999) stated, "For evaluation to be appropriate and meaningful, it should assist teachers, as employees, in their professional growth and re-affirm their competency in their profession." Finally, there was the framework of the NLTA itself. This association, he told me, was structured to work from two separate distinct branches, Teacher Benefits and Professional Development. While he dealt with Teacher Benefits, the rights of the teachers, another department managed their Professional Development, their privileges.

As already alluded to, the root of this distrust may be linked to conflicting perceptions. While the NLTA was working hard to serve and represent their teachers, the values they predominately espoused weren't necessarily those of their teachers. Those participants that I spoke with, while acknowledging the role the NLTA played in protecting teachers against "fairly strident top-down managers who will impose their will

on people,” saw it as a small one. The NLTA’s primary role, they felt, was to lead teachers as professionals. Ironically, the leadership that could be harnessed as a power to fight for authentic teacher evaluation was reined in by misconceptions.

Perhaps the most disheartening form of distrust revealed was teachers against teachers, professionals against professionals. One teacher spoke of the distrust amongst her staff. She bitterly told the tale of teachers who had betrayed her, resulting in the initiation of the summative evaluation process. Less isolated, was the view of “yes men,” those seen as puppets of the board. One teacher even went so far as to say she was reluctant to promote the benefits of professional growth plans with her staff in fear that she would be labelled as a yes man. Four others viewed it as common for committees to be comprised of yes men. Finally there was the same distrust expressed by the NLTA officer of teachers choosing previously achieved goals so that they would not have to go through the effort of professional growth, looking for “loop-holes.”

According to Rosenholtz (1989), trust is created by “lateral” versus “vertical” ties between district, principals and teachers. While there was no easy explanations to account for distrust among the teachers themselves, the top-down system which seemed to have permeated much of the educational system, may indeed have been a causal agent. Both it and the layers of distrust most certainly served as barriers in developing the collaborative environment called for in authentic evaluation.

Deprofessionalization

Deprofessionalization is the process by which more and more of the responsibilities of the professional are replaced with the duties of employees.

“Pragmatic training, reduced discretion over goals and purposes, and an increased dependence on detailed, described learning outcomes” (Green, 1998, p. 201) all contribute to this process. In England, the many educational changes were seen as deprofessionalizing the body of teachers. Such changes included a centrally-controlled curriculum, loss of collective bargaining rights and not recognizing the teachers’ governing body, and teacher competency testing (Davies and Ferguson, 1997). While the exact parallels could not yet be said about the teaching body of Newfoundland and Labrador, some links in terms of implementing meaningful professional evaluation could be made.

First was the process of evaluation. In an attempt to articulate why the clinical approach degrades teachers as professionals, one of the participants compared the roles of a professional and employee in terms of teacher evaluation:

As a professional I think I would expect to not have to adhere too rigidly to a checklist. Then there’s more to that. There is the understanding from whoever’s doing the evaluation that I have a certain latitude to cover the curriculum, respecting my approach as long as they are achieving the results. But if you went to a checklist item, then that puts us little above a factory worker on an assembly line. If they are doing a specific task, you need to judge that task by sitting on the side with a clipboard. Are the widgets in the right place? Teaching isn’t like that. Teaching is a process that changes with each class you have, who you are, what your experiences are. You bring that all in. I think that is what differentiates a professional from a worker.

Researchers concur. Teachers, asserted Harris and Monk (1992), are professionals, not technicians. Technicians are measured according to their results whereas professionals are measured according to “how well they follow what is considered ‘best practice’ in a given circumstance” (p. 198). As well, noted Busher and Saran (1995), clinical evaluation of staff can also reduce the level of trust. By relying on external methods, the notions of professional expertise are downplayed. Deprofessionalism occurs. Rather, posited Duke (1995), professionals should be evaluated against a performance criteria that they themselves set.

Second was the role of the NLTA. In some ways, they have fed the process of deprofessionalization. Both their endorsement of clinical evaluation as the way to evaluate all teachers and the reference to teachers as employees in respect to the responsibilities of professional growth, have taken away from teachers as professionals. Additionally, one participant observed, was the NLTA’s seemingly sanctioned shield-like employment of the *Collective Agreement* by individual teachers. While she agreed with its role being to safeguard teachers from abuse, she regarded it more as one would an insurance policy, something she had but hoped never to need. What she sometimes saw from fellow teachers, was its use as a tool to be wielded. “Teachers that carry the *Collective Agreement* in their back pocket and whip it out at any hint that they have to change or do more work or do anything like that is really disheartening.”

Another contributing factor to deprofessionalization was the predominant choice of one day professional development institutes as a method of improving teachers. Fullan

and Hargreaves, (1996) contend that most professional development becomes something done to teachers, occasionally done with them and rarely done by them. This study supports that view. Remarkd one participant, “We had a guy a couple of years ago come up from the States. You know they closed down every school in the district so we could learn from him. And I maintain that there are a lot of expert teachers among us that we could learn a lot from instead of going outside.” The value of teachers as experts in their fields was ignored. Deprofessionalizing as well, posited Fullan and Hargreaves, was the term inservicing. It’s top-down connotations seemed to assume teachers as empty receptacles that need to be “filled up and fixed up” (p. 17).

Finally, along with how the precepts of a professional growth policy would be delivered to the profession, were concerns over the effects of a dictated evaluation policy. Many of the participants commented on the need for time for the “buy-in” process to occur. As well, they felt, forcing the process would only serve to thwart the collegial atmosphere so necessary in developing meaningful professional growth. Fullan and Hargreaves explain that once a seemingly collaborative technique - such as peer coaching, team teaching, etc., became mandatory, the goal of empowerment was more likely to be defeated. They coined the term “menus, not mandates” in reference to the broader strategy of giving a variety of options so that they would better fit individual teachers own purposes. “Mandating specific kinds of collaboration is not empowering but disempowering” (p. 93).

Bridges

The journey of improved practice is not without obstacles. The bridges are those structures that enable teachers, empowered with opportunity, to bypass and/or overcome the barriers so they may enter, as it were, into the land of the self-actualizing professional. Authentic evaluation would be a norm.

The structures that follow, rest at different levels and have different gate-keepers. While by necessity these bridges are described separately, like us, they would work far better in tandem.

The Re-professionalized Profession

Four key tenets of professionalism stand out: self-directed and on-going learning, collegiality, empowerment, and moral purpose. A reduction in any one would result in deprofessionalism (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996; Green, 1998). Thus, by extension, one may be permitted to assume that re-professionalization would be the restoration of these primary principles.

Fullan (1993) posited that most teachers entered teaching because they wanted to make a difference in the lives of students. Unfortunately, he added, that sense of moral purpose was rarely developed. "Those with a non-existent or limited sense of moral purpose are never called upon to demonstrate their commitment. Those with moral potential, however inchoate, are never developed. Those with a clearer sense of purpose are thwarted" (p. 11). One participant related his initial experience. "I'm telling you, the

kids got the best experience they ever had. I mean, we were energetic, we were focussed, we had no other responsibilities except to the school. We had just come over from Harlow and we did that.” After, he explained how the collegial practices that they had once engaged in to give those students their “best experience” would not, 12 years later in his career, be accepted on his staff. He went on to explain how teachers in his current school would balk at a colleague offering to watch their teaching and then provide feedback. “Years later, I know for a fact if I were even to suggest that to some of the teachers, [they would say] ‘Who the h___ are you?’ and asked where I got off in saying that I am coming in to help this other person.” They would view such suggestions, he felt, as someone who perceived themselves as better than the rest. He admitted, “Now there’s that personnel conflict. Plus, its not me.” No longer did he feel comfortable in engaging in such practices. Quite the change.

One facet of professionalism then, is to consciously develop and nurture that sense of moral purpose, the desire to improve the lives of their students. Teachers, Fullan (1993) explained, need to move their sense of duty beyond the walls of their classroom to a “broader social, public purpose” (p. 11) employing strategies such as collaborative learning. Furthermore, he stated, “When teachers work on personal vision building and see how their commitment to making a difference in the classroom is connected to the wider purpose of education, it gives practical and moral meaning to their profession” (p. 145).

The second principle of professionalism is the empowerment of the learning

community. Teachers need to be given ownership of and control over their teaching and learning. Teacher autonomy, claimed Strain (1990), is a necessity of the education process. "Learning is a morally grounded enterprise, hence the condition of personal and professional autonomy are necessary for learning to take place" (p. 49). Teachers need to believe that they are the ones in control and in charge of their performance (Sheldon & Biddie, 1998). They need, asserted Rosenholtz (1989), to be their own causal agents.

So how can this be effected? Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) (as cited in Green, 1998) defined this characteristic of postmodern professionalism as an "increased opportunity and responsibility to exercise *discretionary judgement* [italics in original] over the issues of teaching curriculum and care that affects one's students" (p. 203). To achieve the delivery of increased responsibility and privileges to the teachers themselves, the power base of the school and, indeed, the district, must be decentralized. The school culture has to change from one of power dictated from the top to a flow of power throughout the learning community. The teachers must be given their voice.

A third tenet of professionalism is self-directed, ongoing learning. In Nias, Southworth and Campbell's 1992 study (as cited in Fullan, 1993) of five successful, schools, they found that the two main forces behind teacher learning were that teaching can always be improved and that professional growth was a never-ending process. As well, each teacher had a personal commitment to their improvement of learning. "Learning was regarded as a means of increasing one's ability, not as a sign of inadequacy" p. 63. More risk-taking emerged due to the more supportive domain. Their

study collaborates Rosenholtz's (1989) research. Teachers in moving schools, she found, believed that as teaching was "inherently difficult," they needed to support each other in continuing to improve practice. This show of support and ongoing feedback in turn gave the teachers more confidence in their craft. They "assumed that improvement in teaching is a collective rather than individual enterprise, and that analysis, evaluation, and experimentation in concert with colleagues are conditions under which teachers improve" (p. 73).

In this sense, a professionalized structure would be one that not only encouraged ongoing learning but embedded it within their culture. Along with learning, feedback would be continuous and spontaneous. A standard checklist administered every four years wouldn't suffice. Nor would it be tolerated. One participant, whose school culture probably came the closest to this ideal, excitedly shared some of her opinions on the professional growth model she had just learned about during the interview, "There is given, not only the opportunity to be inserviced, but the opportunity to try it out in their class. . . . And they're having feedback!"

Furthermore, maintained Rosenholtz, in successful schools there was a link between the norms of continuous, ongoing, career-long learning and that of collaborative practice, the fourth key component of professionalism.. This built more trust with sharing back and forth, seeking advice and assistance as well as offering it, both in and out of the school setting. Teaching, as previously mentioned, was viewed as an inherently difficult challenge where even the best need assistance. As such, the ego was least-threatened and

maximum reciprocal assistance to accomplish shared goals was realized (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989). Teachers worked together to achieve common goals.

Collaboration takes time, trust, tenacity, and transformation from superficial conversations to those more in-depth (Evans-Stout, 1998). According to Leithwood (1999), conditions needed for building and supporting collaborative practice include mutual sharing and respect of ideas and materials, willingness to take risks when trying new practices, and open and honest feedback among colleagues. As well, staff and student successes are celebrated and the focus on the strengths and needs of the students is paramount. Structures to support this included “brief, weekly planning meetings; frequent and often informal problem-solving sessions; flexible and creative timetabling; regularly scheduled professional development time in school; and common preparation periods for teachers who need to work together” (p. 182).

A participant incorporated into the third profile described an example of collaboration in her school:

Once a month we sit down if there is a problem and usually there is something around there that we can address. It works extremely well. It's amazing how effective that can be. And the idea that you're getting together as a staff and using the whole idea of collaboration and everyone is just generating ideas and it's a working together for team learning exercise. It's very effective.

She also described, with some pride, how at each monthly staff meeting:

Teachers take turns sharing with the staff something they know about. It's kind of a voluntary thing. If we know somebody doing something we might ask them to do something specific. If you've been away to a conference you might come back

and say, “Oh, I got this idea I want to do.” Right. They may or may not be an expert but they know something about it and they want to share with the staff something to improve everybody in the school and the teaching and learning of everybody. It goes over really well. It does. Staff meetings are no longer about trivial things.

Unknowingly, the participant, in her descriptions, also incorporated attributes of the other three qualities of professionalism. She detailed ongoing learning, improving teaching to benefit students and the empowerment experienced by the staff as they shared their expertise and worked together to solve problems. This, Fullan (1999) would argue, was no accident. Rather, he believed that the angles of professionalism: moral purpose, ideas and power, must be present to generate the energies necessary for collaboration. Thus, for the structure of professionalism to effectively bridge the barriers of authentic teacher evaluation, all four precepts must be present.

Mindscales of Professionalism

According to Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), teachers, when asked to tell what formative education experiences helped to shape who they are as teachers today, often mentioned their early evaluation experiences. My findings support their claim. The more the teachers were treated as professionals at the beginning of their career, the more professional attributes they maintained. The four teachers voices (blended in the first profile as “Patsy”) all tell of negative evaluation experiences at the beginning of their teaching career. As teachers today, they are distrustful, inward and somewhat bitter. Those seven teachers represented in the second profile (as “Rupert”) were initially

provided minimal, non-specific or superficial feedback, and are today working from a generally frustrated and cynical mindset. The third group of four teachers in the profile (represented as “Rowena”), those who received the most professionalization early on, have emerged as a group functioning, comparative to the other two, at the highest level of professionalism. All are good teachers. All believe in self-improvement in order to deliver the best possible education for their students. Most are working against obstacles set up for them at the beginning of their careers. Their mindscapes have become their own barriers.

Other research upholds this. Senge, in an interview with O’Neil (1995), commented on the loss. “You see, the education field has a huge asset. A large percentage of people enter this profession with a high sense of personal purpose. It is converted into a liability, because within a few years they become extraordinarily cynical” (p. 22). According to Rosenholtz (1989), three situations need to be in place to prevent this asset conversion. “Teacher commitment, a direct function of their professional fulfilment, is determined by three workplace conditions: . . . teacher empowerment . . . learning opportunities . . . and teachers’ psychic rewards” (p. 7), the latter being where teachers are acknowledged for their special abilities and value.

In addition, Bell and Harrison’s (1998) research with graduate students showed that what mattered the most was the quality of the supervision. High quality supervisors were described as ones working along side, jointly setting goals, pushing when necessary, empowering others. Ones that neglected them or made them feel stupid, almost destroyed

them. Finally, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) counselled that helping must be a mutual act. For the most part, they noted, help, when provided in those early years, was only one way, never reciprocal. This too tended to shape the mindscape of later collegial practice - only the inexperienced needed help.

This bridge of early evaluation is one that views new teachers as “potential assets” instead of employees to be trained. Rather than watching, as one participant said, “to see if they got the parts,” new professionals are embraced into the fold and become an integral part of a unit versus an attached segment. The qualities of professionalism are instilled and supported. The mindscapes of professionalism are formed.

Leadership from the Top

Districts that are seen as bridges to meaningful tenured evaluation are those that use their power and resources to support professionalism rather than diffuse it. A platform of meaningful professional growth, appropriate resource use and shared power are all aspects of this.

In this setting, shared power is that of goal sharing, information sharing and policy development. First of all, according to Leithwood, et al. (1999), districts need to have meaningful missions and visions that are clearly articulated to their learning communities. As well, Rosenholtz (1989) found that in moving districts, superintendents involve their principals in goal setting. Goals in these districts focus on student achievement. Teachers in these schools clearly know what are the district’s primary goals.

In contrast, many of this study's participants found their role with their district adversarial. Stated one, "The union on one hand. The suits at the board on the other." Said another, an administrator in a rural area, "Programs are just thrown at you." Rather than a sharing of information, the view was of dumping. Finally a teacher in an urban district contended, "The thing is, there is so much stuff now that's downloaded from the board. From the Department to the Board. And from the board to the principal and onto the teachers."

According to Fullan (1999), "Top down mandates and bottom-up energies need each other" (p. 19). Successful policy must have both the district direction and the school collaboration. Fullan (1997) stated that "It is becoming clearer in the research that complex changes in education require active (top-down or external) initiation but if they are to go anywhere, there must be a good deal of shared control and decision making" (pp. 31-32). Concurred one of the participants:

At least have their [teachers'] views. Teachers will be more comfortable with it because it is like everything. If you throw something at a teacher, whoever, the person's response is going to be negative. If you are left out of something, you are going to have negative feelings toward it.

When developing policy, rather than involving, as one participant cynically stated, "four or five yes men" who will be sure to agree with whatever the district leaders say, it would be better, according to Fullan (1999), to invite differing opinions to the table. It would be better to incorporate the differences early in the process than face them later. "Small groups of self-selected reforms apparently seldom influence their peers" (Elmore,

as cited in Fullan, 1999, p. 23). Rather, Fullan went on, an even larger gap is created which keeps growing. This way you get at the issues of difficulty early when the price is not as much.

“Steer, not row,” was Townsend’s (1995) metaphor for policy implementation. He further posited that, rather than dictated policy, a framework should be developed within which “local educators can stick handle their own way” and that “schools get the internal and external support they need for stability as well as change” (p.201).

Finally, recommended Fullan, for policy development and implementation to work, districts must incorporate the following change precepts within their structure: individual implementors need to work out and bring their own meaning to the change; implementation takes time; conflict and disagreement are necessary for change; people need pressure to invoke change; and change of education culture, not single innovations, must be at the heart of the change. For tenured teacher evaluation, the change has to be more than just replacing the clinical checklist with a goal setting one. It can neither be, as one participant referred, the “latest bandwagon,” nor can it be perceived as such. The view and reality of evaluation has to be one of authenticity where the culture is changed to a district that facilitates meaningful professional growth rather than dictates improvements.

Successful policy also needs to be backed up with adequate resources. This remains true for teacher evaluation. According to Pounder (1998), authentic collaboration, one of the main components of a growth-focussed evaluation system,

requires additional release time from existing responsibilities, and potentially higher start up costs for communication and coordination. As well, she found, there was a strong correlation between the amount of energy expended on communicating and coordinating and the level of collaboration achieved. Primary examples of support included regular times for meeting each other, increased technology and expert assistance. Illustrating this need, one participant stated, "So much policy has been brought in, forced on the teachers and often with no support, especially a policy like teacher evaluation."

When discussing the professional growth model of evaluation, most participants saw time as their greatest need. Attesting to this need were the two teachers who attempted peer coaching. It was the lack of time that prematurely ended their efforts. Others identified time as a barrier to attempting any collaborative practices. "Again, it would be fine if you had time to do it. . . . So to be successful, whatever they do, they're going to have to build in some kind of mechanism: peer coaching or conferencing or . . . where you are given a little bit of free time."

Leadership from top also refers to the style of professional development delivery in the district. First of all, asserted Sarason (1998), there is little evidence that workshops of any quality affect change. Rather, professional development must relate to teacher's own professional growth aims in teaching and learning. They must serve to help teachers to order, balance and alleviate the harmful effects of the increasing demands of the professional with activities that would lend themselves to improvement of conditions. Additionally, stated Fullan (1993), people learn and receive new thinking more through

interactions with each other than through formal presentations and training. Finally, contended Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), professional development needs to be intrinsic to the work of the school instead of operating as unrelated extrinsic workshops. Rather than the traditional district-centralized one day institutes, professional development needs to be school-initiated, school-based, school-led and school-centred with guidance and support from the district.

Many of the participants spoke of the importance of shaping their own professional development. Stated one, "I want to have control over my own professional growth. Personally, I don't want the Board dictating to me." Another explained his feelings on one day district wide inservicing. "The Board comes in, gung ho. Does a workshop." District leadership that serves as a bridge to authentic evaluation has authentic professional development, that which meets the needs of the teachers and their pupils in their own schools.

Leadership at the Centre

The bridge of school-centred leadership is one where professional growth is incorporated into the culture of the school, into the daily practice of teachers. Its tools are trust, empowerment and continually increasing learning opportunities (Bell and Harrison, 1998; Busher & Saran, 1995; Fullan, 1991). Leadership of the principal is at the heart of the structure (Cheng, 1996).

O'Neill (1995) quoted Senge as saying, "The principals I know who have had the

greatest impact tend to see their job as creating an environment where teachers can continually learn” (p. 21). Such an environment is one that concurrently builds trust and empowers its members. An empowered teacher, according to Busher and Saran (1995), is one that both works with his or her colleagues as a member of the school community and of teams and has autonomy for decision-making within certain spheres. It would follow then, they continued, that teachers would feel free to take initiatives that will in turn improve the quality of school teams, their community and thus the overall quality of learning. Staff become highly motivated and committed to their work. The sense of fear that their initiatives will be criticised is removed. Growth, both individually and in concert with the school community, increases.

Several participants discussed their working relationships with their principals. For some, their roles were in opposition. Two explained how they did all of their work at school so that they would be observed working. Another shared evaluation experiences where the principal came looking for mistakes. Their role was to look like they were working hard enough. The converse role of their principals was to prove that they were not. For the most part, these teachers kept their teaching to the world of their classrooms, functioning in isolation from the rest of their colleagues.

Another group of participants saw their work as somewhat independent of the principal’s influence. The principals ran the schools and they led the instruction. Their roles, although amiable, were separate. While small incidences of teacher collaboration were occasionally described, the principal was never mentioned in these accounts. In this

group, the depiction of principals was limited to their workload and evaluation practices. Described one participant: “Actually, he is a good guy. He just pops into the class. He is the hands-on kind of guy. Now he formally evaluated a few teachers this year. He had to. The checklist, that sort of thing.”

A third group saw their roles somewhat intertwined with that of their principals. One participant commented on her school’s expectation that one of the roles of the principal, while not exclusively so, was to give ongoing feedback to help with teacher growth. Another participant explained the leadership role of her principal:

And, well, this was due to the second principal’s initiatives. We got into this cooperative learning strategy, right? And cooperative learning school improvement plan. It was a five year initiative that we took part in. And regards to school improvement, the staff was willing to do it. I think there was some arm twisting by some of the keeners but, generally speaking, it was accepted by the teachers and agreed to by the principal with the district office.

She went on to enthusiastically describe the peer coaching and other collaborative practices that happened in her school as a result of this project. This principal, by initiating a cooperative learning project, with the support of his teachers and favour of his district, created an environment that contributed to the growth of teachers and transformed the culture of the school.

Significant too was the way the teacher explained the initial process. While she gave credit to the principal for instigating the program, the ownership of the teachers was also evident with her later comment that the program, now in the hands of the teachers, was approved by that same principal. As well, the “arm-twisting” to get total staff

involvement was not done in a top-down managerial manner by the principal, but rather collegially, albeit with the help of the “keepers” on staff. According to Ramsey (1999), principals that “allow staff members to participate in making decisions that affect them and their work” (p, 51), encourage top performance. On another level this related to Rosenholtz’s (1989) findings that when teachers helped principals construct school goals and define how best to fulfil them, they would actively implement these shared goals into the school culture.

Principals, by engaging in the interrelated process of teacher empowerment, trust building and professional growth advocacy, have the potential of reshaping school culture. Its new shape, that which stands counter to disempowerment, deprofessionalization and isolative practice, can enable teachers to naturally become immersed in meaningful evaluation.

Leadership from Within

“Neither teacher development nor supervision are things that we can do for teachers, but are things that they must do for themselves” stated Sergiovanni (1995, p. 244). Fullan and Hargreave’s (1996) position is similar. Since teachers are the ones who have to make the changes, they cannot depend on others to make the changes.

Both the primary intent of their position and their semantics are important. The use of *selves* over *self*, *they* over *he*, *teachers* over *teacher*, is a key element. Senge, interviewed in O’Neil (1995) stated “The traditional approach to helping educators learn

had been to develop the skills of the individuals to do their work better. I'm talking about enhancing the collective capacity of people to create and pursue overall visions" (p.21). Individuals can do little as individuals (Fullan, 1999; Rosenholtz, 1989; O'Neil, 1995). Thus, it is teachers working corporately that must bring about authentic tenured evaluation for themselves.

For teachers in Newfoundland, their corporation is the NLTA. Each teacher within the province is a member. Each school staff elects a representative and collectively the NLTA members elect higher levels of representation within the Association. But, as earlier discussed, this voice does not seem to adequately speak for its membership. The NLTA's input into teacher evaluation is, at best, reactive.

Respondents (353 Ontario principals) in a study by Lawton et al.(1995) indicated the need for teachers to be involved in their own professional development and evaluation, "taking a greater part in that process themselves" (p. 304). As well, they advocated for teachers' federations to have additional input into the process.

There is now precedence for this. In 1998, the Government of Alberta announced the release of the *Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy*, the resulting product of the 1996 policy position paper, *An Integrated Framework to Enhance the Quality of Teaching in Alberta*. Both were "created in collaboration with the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Boards Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents, and a representative of the five teacher preparation institutions" (p.1). In reaction to this policy, then Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) president,

Bauni Mackay stated, "I believe the new provincial teacher evaluation policy will improve teacher evaluation practices in Alberta. I am pleased that the policy recognizes that consultation between teachers and school boards is critical to the development of local policies" (Russell, 1998, p. 3).

In contrast, here in Newfoundland each of the ten school districts, in accordance with the *Provincial Collective Agreement* (1998), are, for the most part, singularly developing their own teacher evaluation policies. A marked "cut and paste" similarity with some of the new policies does indicate a degree of sharing of information between the personnel directors. The opportunities for teacher input, however, have been limited.

Section 14.05 of the *Provincial Collective Agreement* reads that "All School Boards shall develop a teacher evaluation policy with opportunity for input from teachers" (p. 11). However, as some participants remarked, too often boards satisfy the requisite input by selecting a few yes men and having occasional meetings. One participant cynically commented:

You ask, "Well is there a committee?" "Oh, yes, there is a committee." "Well, when did they meet last?" "A year and a half ago." Still now, there is all those changes every week or every month so teachers are throwing up their hands. What is the sense of this? This is a waste of time.

Discussions with the participants, along with an examination of the survey data, revealed a limited extent of teacher consultation in developing teacher evaluation policies. Only one teacher knew someone who had participated. The role, she felt, was both token and negative. Indeed, few of the participants (five) even knew if they had an

evaluation policy and those that did had little idea how it had been determined. As boards had complete control over teacher evaluation, how much input they received and from whom, was their choice.

Perhaps most disquieting has been the silence of the NLTA. Unlike their Alberta counterparts, there has been little, if any, involvement, public statements or specific direction to their membership in regards to either district evaluation policy development or meaningful teacher evaluation practices. Yet, according to Rosenholtz (1989), with any policy change that directly affects teachers, teachers must help “policymakers understand the workplace conditions that enhance teachers’ learning opportunities, their psychic rewards, their freedom from uncertainty and their commitment to the profession” (p. 218). Stated one participant:

I mean the thing is, they are supposed to be our professional organization that is leading us. They have the personnel available to know what’s working and what’s not working So you know, in looking at an evaluation and supervision program process, the NTA would be experts for teachers.”

As the elected representatives of the teachers, the NLTA must find its voice. They need to assume a proactive role in tenured teacher evaluation policy development and implementation. That will not be easy. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) suggest that in order to increase teaching effectiveness, we must “fight for access to each other’s ideas, to assume people will improve under these conditions, and not to tolerate those very few who, in the final analysis, fail to respond” (p.61). The opposite role seems to be true for the NLTA. Their fight is often for those teachers experiencing difficulties with their

employers. While certainly not neglected, fewer energies are given to improve teacher effectiveness.

In essence, what is needed is a paradigm shift away from the NLTA as protectionist structure to that of a professional one. In speaking with the participants, their predominant view of the NLTA's role was that of protecting teachers from unfair labour practices and negotiating for extrinsic benefits. Articulated one participant:

I've often felt that maybe in our NLTA we're always focussing on the union aspect too much and if there was a professional association we could look at governing ourselves. We might have a different view of supervision and assessment. But I guess the NLTA are there because, as with any union, to protect the rights of teachers.

For reasons beyond the extent of this research, the culture of the NLTA is that of a union with a limited focus on professional development. The teaching body, both individually and collectively, is shaped by the *Provincial Collective Agreement*. "Teachers that carry the *Collective Agreement* around in their back pocket" were mentioned more than once in the interviews. It is the antithesis of professionalism.

A proactive, professional lead for the NLTA is possible. Fighting for the principles of effective teaching, their power would be fuelled by moral leadership. Rather than the focus of their power being the *Collective Agreement* in the back pocket, it would be the *Code of Ethics* (1999) out in front. Leadership from within. It could be the strongest bridge yet.

Concluding Remarks

The theme categories of entrances, barriers and bridges to authentic teacher evaluation (see Figure 5.1) run like a roller coaster. Through the entrances we rise up with hope. We hold our breaths in anticipation of where our strengths will lead us. We look forward to experiencing the many opportunities.

Too soon we encounter the barriers, those that plummet most of us into disillusionment and cynicism. It is here at this bottom that many stop the ride. Untold others get off.

Some, a very few, are led to bridges. These bridges enable the rider to either avoid the barriers or cross over them. The bridges allow us, move us, compel us to rise to almost limitless heights of professional growth.

For many, sadly, either the barriers are too high or the bridges too weak. For authentic tenured evaluation to become a reality in Newfoundland and Labrador, the former must be debilitated and the latter strengthened.

Entrances, Barriers and Bridges to Authentic Evaluation

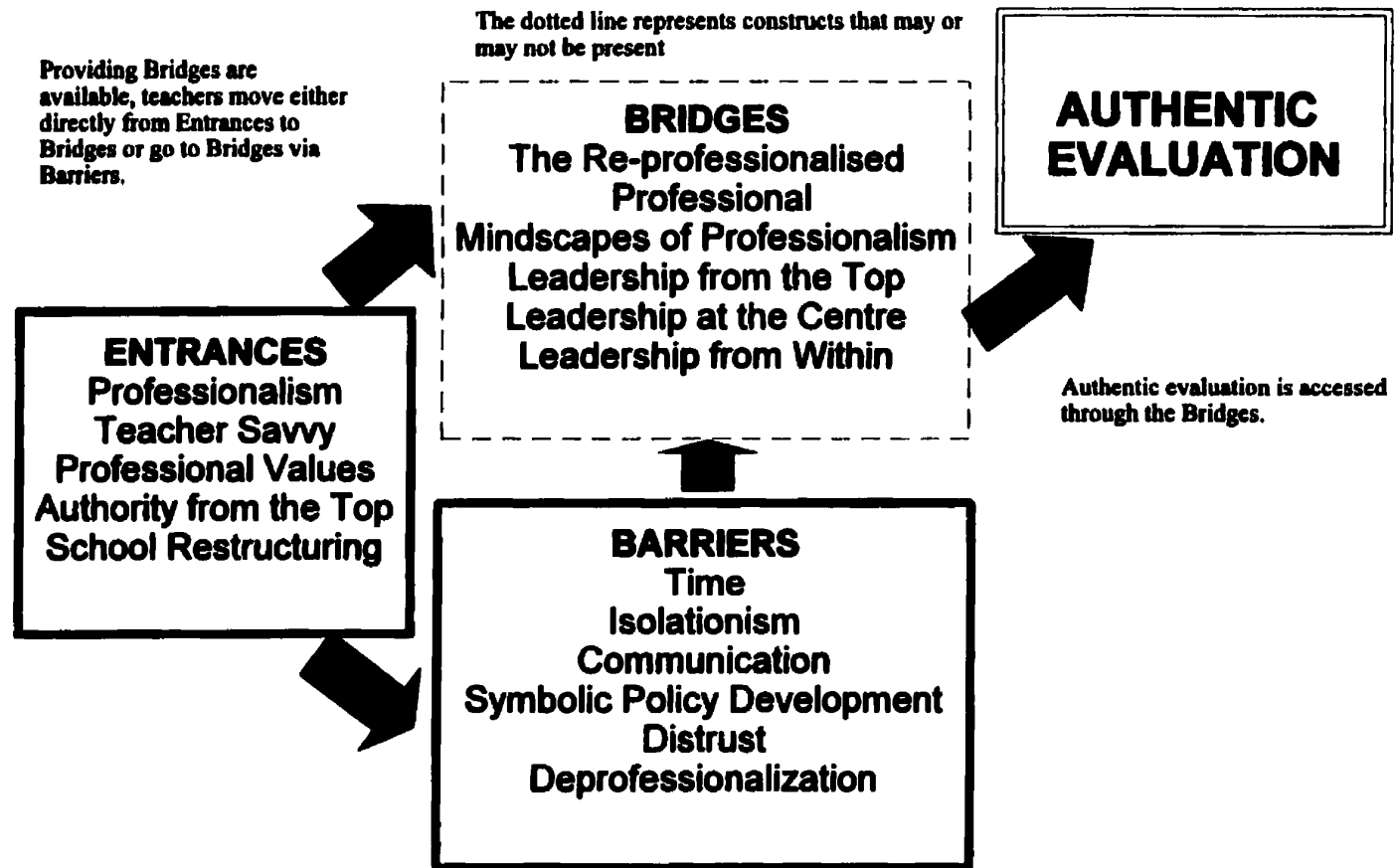


Figure 5.1. The opportunities for authentic evaluation in Newfoundland and Labrador, the obstacles that deter it, and bridges that will help teachers reach it.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary and Implications

Summary of Main Findings

My quest was first to expose the critical need for authentic tenured teacher evaluation and then determine how its elements would best fit within the persona of the Newfoundland and Labrador teacher. I found much more.

Methodology

This qualitative study primarily used the textually-rich data from the interviews of 15 Memorial University of Newfoundland graduate students, all tenured teachers within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, to construct its findings. Eight of the ten school districts were represented. Related documents, observations, interest surveys and data from an interview with a NLTA administrative officer were also used.

Teachers' Views of Teacher Evaluation

For the most part, teachers viewed their evaluation experiences as a waste of time, something that had to be done. While they all wanted specific, constructive feedback, few of them got it. "Oh, you did good" just wasn't good enough. They recognized feedback as a right of a professional and seemed to internalize this neglect as not being perceived as professionals by their employers. Feelings ranged from cynicism to bitterness to deep distrust. While they believed in ongoing professional growth and generally had a strong sense of moral purpose for the primacy of student improvement,

they often felt frustrated and stymied in their efforts.

Those few that were given a lot of constructive, specific feedback early in their teaching careers felt empowered and grew professionally. While they too believed in continuous growth and student-centred visioning, they saw the journey as one shared with colleagues and school leaders. What was modelled for them early on became part of their practice.

All were unified in their view of the “checklist” method of clinical evaluation as a meaningless, artificial, bureaucratic tool for evaluating teachers. At the very most, they felt, it windowed only one aspect of the profession. While they were unanimous in their belief that tenured teachers should be evaluated, they also asserted that the clinical method neither ensured accountability nor contributed to purposes of teacher growth as specified in the *Provincial Collective Agreement* (1998). It did not give a true picture of what it meant to be a teacher. If such were to be the methods of teacher evaluation, “it would be better if they left us alone.”

Teachers viewed the two needs of evaluation to be that of accountability and teacher growth. The emphasis, however, related to their early evaluation experiences. Those who had experienced more growth-enhancing evaluations placed more emphasis on improving teaching while those on the other end of the continuum discerned more of a need to weed out the bad teachers.

How Teachers Felt They Should Be Evaluated

The participants wanted tenured evaluation to be more of a process than a product. They envisioned it as an ongoing, back and forth system of continual improvement and assessment. As well, they perceived it to be a process that would encompass all facets of teaching. Finally, the participants articulated their desire to experience evaluation as a regular aspect of professional practice rather than a series of isolated events that would sit disjunctively beside who they were as teachers. They wanted teacher evaluation to be a meaningful process.

They all agreed that the model of professional growth plans, where teachers chose where as well as how they wish to improve, would best suit their purposes. As professionals, they believed they knew better than anyone else how they could best enhance their practice. Furthermore, since they saw their own improvement as a moral responsibility to their students, they viewed professional growth plans as a process that would both formalize and validate what they were already doing. As well, many felt that such a process would provide them with the growth-building feedback that would affirm and then direct them. They saw it as a process that would empower them as professionals.

There was somewhat of a variety of responses on whom they felt should guide them and who should assist them with their growth plans. This ranged from only the teacher, to teacher and principal, to teacher and an open selection of others, including fellow teachers, school-based “experts” and district personnel. In addition, variations in

growth-fostering strategies included peer coaching, collaborative planning, reflective practice, self-directed learning and group problem-solving.

Interestingly, those that viewed their early evaluation experiences as helpful were more likely to choose the more collegial models of guidance, assistance and strategies. Conversely, those that had more negative experiences also had a more limited and isolated perspective on the supervision process. Likewise there was a slight variance in purposes. While they all saw professional growth plans as a way to improve teaching for the benefit of the students, teachers with the more negative evaluation histories deemed improvement to mean detecting and correcting teaching deficits. Those on the more positive end of the continuum instead viewed improvement as a never-ending process of good teachers continuing to grow.

Teacher Evaluation: Policy Development and Implementation

In 1998, a massive provincial restructuring of the education system resulted in 27 school districts being reduced to 10 new ones. As such, all 10 districts required new policies for every aspect of their command. Included was the need for a new tenured teacher policy.

None of the participants viewed this as an opportunity to help build a more meaningful, relevant policy. Many were unaware of any teacher evaluation policy their districts might hold, either past or present. As such, several thought that new policy would affect little. Some saw it as yet another thing to be downloaded from the board.

Others took the stance that if they didn't like it, they and their colleagues would simply refuse to adopt it. All saw obstacles.

Their views were not unjustified. What with district restructuring as well as shifting populations and lower enrollments due to economic conditions, there had been many changes in recent years. According to the participants, such changes from the district were typically delivered in a top-down manner. Policy was dictated rather than discussed. Any allowed consultation was viewed by the participants as token. Either *yes men* were selected by the board to agree to whatever the policy makers told them or a selected group of teachers were asked to give input on policies already written. Teachers' also shared their frustrations with district policy implementation methods. Communication seemed to flow in only one direction - down. As for supporting resources, be that training, expert assistance, time, or funding, the tap was all but dry. Commented one participant, "Programs are just thrown at you!" Others echoed this frustration.

The participants believed they should be given a significant role in the development and implementation of their district's tenured teacher evaluation policy. They saw it as "their" policy. It was, they felt, a policy that personally touched every teacher. Despite this, they were doubtful that they would be given any real voice. While the teachers wanted a tenured teacher evaluation policy that would benefit them, that would help improve instruction, they perceived a district need to fulfill bureaucratic purposes, to satisfy the requirements of the *Provincial Collective Agreement* and "their

masters at the Department.” At cross-purposes, they could not foresee being given any significant place in the process.

Early indications somewhat validated these beliefs. Teachers from districts beginning to implement new tenured teacher evaluation policy spoke of documents held up at staff meetings, power-point presentations, and thick envelopes that arrived in the mail. One spoke of the Board’s haste due to not wanting to look like they were too far behind. There was no allowance for questioning during their presentation. Another spoke of the symbolic involvement of a limited number of teachers (one per school) after the policy had been written. Despite the fact that all districts within the province were most likely at some stage of development and implementation, negligible consulting was either mentioned or expected by participants.

Dominant Themes

Three major themes, all centring around the need for authentic tenured teacher evaluation, emerged from this research. Entrances, the first theme, identified those starting points that I discovered existed within the layers of the Newfoundland and Labrador education system. Present in the outer layers was the need, the opportunity, for a new tenured evaluation policy due to provincial restructuring. Beside it lay the authority from both the *Provincial Collective Agreement* and the *Act, by-laws & code of ethics* (1999) of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association (NLTA) that sanctioned both the need for teachers to pursue on-going professional growth and the

requirement that the purpose of tenured evaluation policy be to improve teaching practices.

The inner layers were the teachers understandings, beliefs and values. They believed, as professionals, that it was their responsibility to continue to become better at their craft. They also knew that while evaluation was supposed to make them both better teachers and more accountable to those they served, the “I got done” checklist method of teacher evaluation did nothing more than waste everyone’s time. Conversely, they viewed professional growth plans as a method of meeting the truly intended purposes of evaluation. The deepest core discovered was the degree of professionalism rooted within each of the participants. They all wanted to grow professionally. Several spoke of the need to work more collaboratively. Most significant, I felt, was their profound sense of moral purpose. Commitment to students was their top priority.

The second theme addressed the barriers to authentic evaluation. Time was an obstacle mentioned by all of the participants. Two aspects of this were the extra demands on time that come from more meaningful evaluation and the need to use a substantial length of time to develop and implement quality policy. Another barrier was the challenges of isolation, both that of the physical environment and that of ingrained, closed door teaching mindscapes that dominate many of the schools.

Communication, a third barrier, was considered on two levels. The first was the limited one-way information dissemination from districts to schools to teachers. Related was the true and perceived intent of policies as real or symbolic. The second

communication barrier was the lack of specific, growth-enhancing feedback that all claimed they wanted but few got.

The last two were the barriers of distrust and deprofessionalism. The former referred to the layers of distrust that emerged between teachers and the district, school leaders, the NLTA and even other teachers. Deprofessionalism, the final barrier, was perhaps the most deeply-rooted layer. Evidence of a gradual paradigm shift away from the teacher as a professional to teacher as an employee emerged. Indicative of this shift were dictated directives over informed practice, collective agreements over code of ethics and teacher ratings over teacher growth.

The bridges to authentic evaluation was the third theme. Here, through the voices of the participants and supported by the research literature, were the avenues to negating the barriers in order to effect growth-enhancing teacher supervision. The first was the re-professionalization of teachers brought about primarily by fostering the norms of collegiality and empowerment at the school level. Related was the need to build quality, professional supervisory practices into early evaluation experiences so that new teachers became part of a collegial unit rather than individual survivors in the education system.

The remaining bridges focussed on leadership at three different levels. At the district level, the need was for broadly-based policy development and supportive implementation practices. At the school level, the need was for professionalism and professional growth, led by the principal, to be incorporated into the culture of the school and into the daily practices of the teachers. Leadership within, the final bridge, asserted

that it would only be by teachers leading themselves that the wanted changes to tenured evaluation would be made.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. That changes be made within the provincial education structure to allow for key educational stakeholders to be involved in the development of a provincial framework for authentic tenured teacher evaluation.
2. That the NLTA, having been fully informed of current theory and practice, and in the capacity of fully representing teachers and professionalism, be enabled to take a proactive, leadership role in working with school boards and other educational stakeholders in creating the aforementioned framework.
3. That *Professional Growth Plans* be the dominant model of tenured teacher supervision within the province.
4. That, using the guidelines of the provincial framework, schools develop their own tenured evaluation policies, incorporating them within the culture of their learning community.
5. That districts provide their schools with sufficient resources and guidance in order to successfully develop and implement an authentic tenured evaluation policy at the school level.

Suggestions for Further Study

In this study, the participants, by virtue of their enrollment in the summer session graduate program, were both cognizant of current research and shared the values of self-directed professional growth. As well, their attendance in classes and presence in the common graduate areas of campus provided them with access to each other's ideas. It is possible, then, that the participants shared perspectives somewhat inclined to their group. Conversely, due to wide distribution of participants from across the province, practices of individual districts could not be examined. For these reasons, a study paralleling this one in a single district with a more diverse range of teachers would be most valuable. Another suggestion would be to conduct a follow-up study that seeks the perspective of other educational stakeholders such as district administrators and program specialists.

Additionally, at least two districts have already implemented tenured teacher evaluation policies that include the use of professional growth plans. Studying them, with special attention focussed on their methods of development and implementation, would be constructive.

A fourth recommendation for future considerations would be to compare the levels of collegiality and risk-taking between male and female teachers. What I found significant was, despite the number of female participants being lower than their male counterparts, the participant profile that experienced the greatest amount of collaborative practice was composed entirely of women. Are women more likely and willing to work in collegial environments? Are they more collaborative by nature? If it was true, the

implications could be far-reaching.

A final recommendation is to study the structure of the NLTA. Most of the participants in my study indicated that they felt the NLTA did not truly represent them. While they wanted professional leadership, they perceived a status quo protected by a union. Although they did acknowledge their necessary function of safeguarding teachers' rights, they felt the role of the NLTA as a professional organization was lacking. As a previous member of both the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and the Alberta Teachers' Association, I too, noticed the absence. Why is this? What are the historical and political causes of this perspective? Is this truly the view of the majority of teachers? Or should we be governed by two organizations: one that carries the collective agreement in its back pocket and the other that leads by the code of ethics? Such a study may have serious implications for the state of teacher professionalism in this province.

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APPENDIX A

Survey

Dear Education Graduate Student:

I'm looking for some help in a Masters of Education study that I'm presently engaged in. Please take a moment to read the following two paragraphs and then complete the brief survey that follows.

The purpose of the following survey is three-fold: 1) to solicit interview participants 2) to gain further data and 3) to ensure that by everyone filling out and then submitting the survey there is a greater level of participant anonymity.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You have the right to leave any or all of this paper incomplete. Please do not put anything down (eg. name, student number) that would clearly identify you. Confidentiality of all participants will be strictly kept.

Thank you for your time.

Are you a tenured teacher? _____ For how long? _____

What district are you currently employed in? _____

What, if any, experiences have you had being evaluated as a tenured teacher?

What words would you use to describe these experiences?

Any other comments?

Would you consider sharing with me your views and experiences on tenured teacher evaluation during a 40 to 50 minute interview?

____ Yes

____ No

If the answer is yes, please read the information sheet, complete the consent form and return both this sheet and the consent form to me. Please keep the information sheet for reference. I will be contact with you within the next few days to set up our interview. Thank you!

If the answer is no, thank you for your time. In order to ensure confidentiality of the participants, please return both the consent form (unfilled) and this sheet to me.

APPENDIX B

Information for Potential Participants

My name is Jane Morris and I am a candidate in the Masters of Education (Leadership) Program at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting research into the experiences, perceptions and attitudes that tenured Newfoundland and Labrador teachers have about the formative evaluation process and how it relates to their professionalism. This thesis is being supervised by Dr. Jean Brown, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The main part of the study involves interviews with fifteen tenured teachers from across the province. The interviews should take no more than fifty minutes each. Although the intent is have only one interview session per participant, I will reserve the privilege of re-interviewing should emerging data so necessitate. The interviews will be audio taped and subsequently transcribed by myself. Transcripts and research results will be available to participants upon request.

Participation of teachers is strictly on a volunteer basis. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study without prejudice at any time and/or refrain from answering whatever questions they prefer to omit. Additionally, participants have recourse at any time to a resource person who is not directly associated with the study, eg. Dr. Barbara Burnaby, Dean of Education. Confidentiality of all participants in the study will be strictly kept and at no time will individuals or schools be identified. All taped and transcripts of the interviews will be destroyed when the study has been completed.

This letter requests your consent to participate in this study. If you agree to participate, please sign the attached form and return it to me. If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact me at 427-0249 (cell phone) or at 709-466-2829. You may also make further inquiries regarding any aspect of this study by contacting my faculty supervisor, Dr. Jean Brown, at 737-7561. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Morris

Consent Form

I, _____ hereby voluntarily consent to participate in this study investigating experiences, perceptions and attitudes that tenured Newfoundland and Labrador teachers have about the formative evaluation process and how it relates to their professionalism. I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw permission at any time. I also understand that participation in the study is strictly confidential with no individual or school being identified.

Date

Signature

Contact Number(s)

Name

E-mail Address

APPENDIX C

Participant Characteristics

Participant Characteristics							
Participant	Sex	Program	Years of Tenure	District ¹	Role	School type	School Size ²
1	F	Teach & Learn	5	a	teacher	K-6 urban	large
2	M	Teach & Learn	2	b	teacher	K-12 rural	average
3	M	Leadership	13	d	principal (6 yrs)	K-12 rural	small
4	M	Teach & Learn	18	j	teacher	7-9 urban	large
5	M	Leadership	7	h	VP (2 yrs)	10-12 rural	large
6	M	Teach & Learn	7	g	teacher	K-12 rural	small
7	F	Leadership	16	a	teacher	7-9 urban	large
8	M	Leadership	12	f	VP (2 yrs)	7-12 urban	large
9	M	Leadership	9	a	teacher	4-8 urban	large
10	F	Teach & Learn	1	a	teacher	K-6 urban	large
11	F	Teach & Learn	15	b	VP (3 yrs)	K-12 rural	small
12	F	Teach & Learn	6	j	teacher	7-12 rural	average
13	M	Teach & Learn	14	f	teacher	7-9 urban	average
14	M	Leadership	16	j	teacher	K-6 rural	average
15	F	Leadership	12	g	teacher	7-12 urban	large

¹To protect the identity of participants, the districts have randomly been assigned letters a-j.

² Small = less than 120 students; average = 120 - 300 students; large = over 300 students.

APPENDIX D

Guiding Interview Questions: “A Conversation with a Purpose”

1. Informal chat about the participant’s status in graduate school (type of program, where in the program, etc.)
2. How many years have you been teaching? What have you taught?
3. Can you tell me a bit about the school and the position that you are currently in?
4. Where did you first teach?
5. Can you describe for me your first evaluation experiences?
6. Why were you told you were evaluated? Was that true?
7. How did you feel going through the process?
8. How did that experience relate to you as a professional?
9. Did it help you to become a better teacher? If so, how? If not, why not?

Now let’s talk about your experiences as a tenured teacher.

10. Have you ever been evaluated as a tenured teacher?

11. If Yes:

- 11.1. Describe these experiences to me.
- 11.2 Why were you told you were evaluated? Was that true?
- 11.3 How did you feel going through the process?
- 11.4 Did it differ at all from how a probationary teacher would have been evaluated? In which ways?
- 11.5 Should it be different? If so, how?

11.6 How did these experiences relate to you as a professional?

11.7 Did it help you to become a better teacher? If so, how? If not, why not?

12. If No:

12.1 Why were you not evaluated? How do you feel about this?

12.2 Should tenured teachers be evaluated? Why or why not?

12.3 What, if any, significance can you attach as a teacher and as a professional to not being evaluated? How does it reflect upon you as a professional?

12.4 How would being evaluated as a tenured teacher have affected you as a teacher? As a professional?

13. As professionals, how do you feel tenured teachers should be evaluated? Why do you feel this way?

14 Are there responsibilities that come with being a professional that lend themselves to perhaps a higher or differentiated or alternate level of accountability? Explain.

15. Have you always been in _____ school district? To the best of your knowledge, does your board have a tenured teacher evaluation policy?

16. If you were advising your district on the development and implementation of a professional growth plan of evaluation what would you tell them?

17. Would it work: for you? Your school? Your district? Your parents? Explain. What would have to be done to make it happen?

18. Any other comments?



