Formative Supervision's Effects on Trusting Administrator–Teacher Relationships and Teachers' Professional Growth

by

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ABSTRACT

Current teacher evaluation systems (TES) in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade (P–12) American public schools may be impeding the reflection and feedback processes needed for impacting teachers' professional growth and developing trusting, administrator–teacher relationships. The dominant purpose of summative evaluation has been to rate teachers' performance, possibly leading to high-stakes consequences; whereas formative supervision has involved collecting data through informal means such as non-evaluative observations and follow-up administrator–teacher feedback. Formative supervision's purpose has been to provide support and determine resources and professional development for teachers. Despite contrasting purposes, evaluation and supervision have been commonly conflated, further perpetuating the TES's lack of impact on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

To address this problem of practice, a mixed methods action research study was conducted in an Arizona school district to implement a formative supervision intervention involving cycles of frequent informal observations followed by meaningful, administrator–teacher reflective conversations. The researcher partnered with an administrator and four teachers as they explored their construction of meaning about their formative supervision experiences and its effects on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Guided by the researcher's Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework, the study found that educator participants believe formative supervision supports teachers' professional growth and helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations more powerfully impact

teachers' professional growth than do infrequent and announced formal observations. Administrator–teacher reflective conversations involving nondirective, collaborative, caring, and honest approaches to feedback as well as focusing on the teacher's perspectives, reflection, and strengths result in trusting relationships. Due to trusting relationships, teachers feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. The study's findings present notable implications for P–12 school districts' TES and supervision practices as well as for pre-service administrator preparation through university educational leadership programs.

DEDICATION

To my dear family for their unbelievable support throughout the successes and challenges of my doctoral journey. I love you all so much.

To my husband, Pierre who has dedicated his invaluable time, energy, and resources to make this achievement possible. We have been partners in everything from the beginning. I hope I can now give back more than I have been able to during my doctoral studies.

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Sylvie was in her third year as a first grade teacher at her school. It was almost 6:00 p.m. on an early spring evening, but she was still in her classroom preparing for her formal observation the next morning. She felt her lesson and the classroom environment had to be perfect because this would be the second of two formal observations for her summative evaluation this year. After Sylvie's fall observation, her evaluation had been rated as 'effective' overall, but she was hoping for 'highly effective' this time, setting the stage for next year when she'd no longer be 'probationary' and would now have only one annual formal observation. Not that Sylvie wouldn't mind more observations—she had a good relationship with her principal and would love to have more informal visits for the principal to see and give frequent feedback on Sylvie's teaching and students' learning—but formal observations were different. She always stressed over them a bit and would gladly welcome one less a year—or maybe even no formal observations at all.

Last week, Sylvie and the principal had met for the pre-observation conference where Sylvie had her lesson plan ready for discussion. She'd also completed a form asking questions about her lesson in relation to the district's observation framework as well as a self-evaluation also based on the framework. Sylvie had rated herself as highly effective in most of the 20+ areas, as she had carefully considered each of the detailed rubrics and reflected on her ongoing teaching. But the principal would need to see everything in one 45-minute lesson, so Sylvie ensured all key attributes were crammed into one lesson when normally she'd spread these out depending on the learning objective levels, whether the content was new to students, and more. Tomorrow's lesson would start with the whole class and student partners answering higher order thinking questions; then break into one session of a small reading group and the rest of the class at differentiated centers; and ending back as a whole group with students self-assessing their learning based on a rubric the class had created last week. Sylvie didn't normally plan all such aspects for one lesson, but she believed featuring all would demonstrate she was worthy of a highly effective rating. The only thing that could prevent this was not meeting the student assessment goals in May. At 30% of her entire evaluation, not meeting could bring her highly effective rating down to effective. Sylvie truly felt she was deserving of more. But what she really wanted was no rating defining her worth, and instead, a more authentic way to validate her strengths and know how she could improve.

National Context

Teacher evaluation has existed in United States public education since the 1700s colonial period and more formally, since the early 1900s, initially in the form of observation-based rating scales measuring the quality of desired teaching traits and behaviors (Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2018; Lavigne & Good, 2014; Marzano et al., 2011;

Tracy, 1995). Additional aspects of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade (P–12) teacher evaluation systems (TES) were developed throughout the 20th century (Derrington, 2018; Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2018; Hazi, 2018; Ingle & Lindle, 2018; Lavigne & Good, 2014; Ponticell et al., 2018). For example, school administrators using student assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to determine the awarding of merit or performance pay emerged in the 1920s (Lavigne & Good, 2014).

The present-day state of TES has been based primarily on recent American public school reform movements and is actually a reemergence of failed ideas of the past. As Lavigne and Good (2014) noted, "many of today's solutions such as improving teachers through the examination of students' standardized test scores and the observation of classroom practice, are repeating, at great cost, the failures of the past" (p. vii). Current teacher evaluation practices including ratings-driven, teacher observation instruments; student assessment outcome models; high-stakes consequences; and the conflation of supervision and evaluation, may be impeding the reflection and feedback processes needed for impacting teachers' professional growth. Espinoza (2020) has expressed:

> It is lamentable that, even in the world of academia, few would question the following statement: "Most teachers receive the most important feedback about their professional growth via an annual, summative evaluation by a supervisor," (unless we were to sink even lower and add that teachers receive their most important professional feedback via their students' standardized test scores). (p. 89)

TES may also be interfering with the development of trusting, teacher–evaluator relationships, particularly regarding the well-established practice of conflating evaluation with formative supervision. To productively consider possible solutions to this problem of practice, it is important to review the potentially concerning aspects of the American public-school TES.

Classroom Observation-Based Teacher Evaluation Models

The primary model of evaluating teacher performance involves formal classroom observations, usually taking place only one to two times per year, a frequency that does not provide a fair and complete picture of a teacher's daily instruction for the evaluator, usually a school administrator such as the principal, to comprehensively assess (Baeder, 2018a; Berliner, 2018; Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016; Malloy, 2020; Marshall, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Berliner (2018) has aptly described the complex teaching profession and how a single lesson can be considerably affected by professional and personal complications:

> Teachers, to be effective, must constantly monitor and change their behavior: they must adapt to subtle clues about changes in the instructional milieu. On the other hand, unsystematic variation, giving us wobbly and unstable variables to examine, commonly occurs. This is because of the myriad subtle but powerful factors that make teaching so complex. Observations of life in classrooms are affected by the place a class is in during a particular unit of instruction (beginning, middle, or end of the unit); the observations are affected by the mood of the classroom on a particular day; observations are affected by events in the personal life of the teacher; they are affected by the time of day and the time of year; they are affected by who is absent and who is present on the day of observation; they are affected by whether the teacher has a sick baby at home, or a spouse who is drinking, and so forth. Even the weather affects what is observed! (p. 15)

The typical infrequency of formal observations for evaluations may not involve sufficient ongoing feedback from administrators to impact teachers' growth, nor might the infrequency allow administrators to truly know what is going on in the classroom and what might be the teachers' needs they can support (Berliner, 2018; Hill & Grossman, 2013; Malloy, 2020; Marshall, 2013; Sloat, 2015).

Yet the evaluation process has been found to take substantial time for administrators to implement and can additionally encroach on the time they could have to engage in informal observations and provide frequent, meaningful feedback to teachers

(Baeder, 2018b; Canelake, 2012; Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Malloy, 2020; Marshall, 2013; McGhee, 2020; Range et al., 2011; Sloat, 2015). Even the time needed for more formative practices may be hindered due to school administrators' complex roles (Range et al., 2011; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004). "Principals face a heavy and varied workload… encompassing an enormous range of tasks and responsibilities…principals are ultimately responsible for everything on campus" (Baeder, 2018b, p. 68). Sebastian et al. (2018) have concurred:

> The work of school principals has become increasingly complex. Principals must spread their time over many responsibilities and must work with a wide array of stakeholders…Recent changes in teacher evaluation policies…appear to assume that principals have sufficient capacity to add substantial responsibilities to what they already do. (p. 48)

Such school administrator responsibilities include management of human resources, finances, facilities, and student services; parent and public relations (Horng et al., 2010; Sebastian et al., 2018); student interactions and discipline (Horng et al., 2010); and crucial instructional leadership aspects such as curriculum coordination, program development and evaluation, facilitating professional development, and monitoring student progress, in addition to teacher supervision and evaluation (Grissom et al., 2013; Hallinger, 2005; Horng et al., 2010). There may also be a symbolic aspect to administrators' roles where they are expected by staff and the community to be involved in every school project and event even when their presence is not actually needed, possibly making it difficult for administrators to feel comfortable delegating certain tasks or roles to others without administrators' involvement (Baeder, 2018b).

A factor contributing to the possibly time-intensive aspects of implementing formal observations for evaluations is that they are most commonly measured when

evaluators employ commercially developed, professional-standards-based observation instruments, protocols, or frameworks, with the majority of states currently mandating their use (Close et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2020; Wieczorek et al., 2022). Such frameworks can be considered comprehensive, objective, and evidence-based; and can be viewed as a substantial improvement from the basic, vague, and high-inference observation checklists of the past (Baeder, 2018b; Canelake, 2012; Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Hallinger et al., 2014; Neumerski et al., 2018; Sloat, 2015; Zepeda, 2017). However, the observation frameworks' extensiveness may also result in too many teaching attributes for teachers and administrators to narrow down to provide meaningful feedback, reflection, focus, differentiation, and professional development (Hill & Grossman, 2013; Sullivan, 2016; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Sullivan and Glanz described a likely scenario for a teacher receiving their supervisor's completed observation:

> The supervisor fills out a rubric that does not differ much from the old checklists or short narratives or a combination of both. The result for the teacher is the same: He or she scans the form in relief and files it, or reacts in disbelief to the areas requiring attention. The postobservation conference may provide valuable feedback, but the form itself is of limited value. Too many areas are observed simultaneously. The teacher becomes frustrated because he or she cannot focus on multiple areas effectively at the same time. (p. 115)

As an example, the 2013 version of Charlotte Danielson's *The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument* includes four domains each with five to six components, totaling 22 components on which to evaluate teachers. Each component features a rubric of "critical attributes" to consider for each of the teacher performance levels—1: *unsatisfactory*, 2: *basic*, 3: *proficient*, and 4: *distinguished*. In a given component, there could be two to eight or an average of 3.5 to 4.8 critical attributes to consider for each performance level. This totals 76 to 106 critical attributes for evaluators to appraise for

every teacher's summative evaluation. Even narrowing down the critical attributes to those featured in the two domains, "The Classroom Environment" and "Instruction" that can be actively observed in a formal observation, yields 38 to 53 critical attributes to watch for during one formal observation of typically only 30 to 60 minutes. Multiplying these factors by the reasonable school-wide average of 30 teachers evaluated during a one- to two-month cycle, indicates an evaluator must keep in mind 300 component totals comprised of 1,140 to 1,590 critical attributes totals for all teachers' formal observations; and 660 total components encompassing 2,280 to 3,180 critical attributes for a series of the entire school's teachers' one-time summative evaluations.

Simultaneously while observation frameworks offer an overwhelming number of teacher performance elements and attributes for consideration, frameworks may also not feature enough attributes to apply well to teachers of all grade levels, subjects, and specialized areas such as special education (Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Dudek et al., 2023; Hill & Grossman, 2013; Jones et al., 2022; Sloat, 2015). Hill and Grossman (2013) have noted, "Most of the observation protocols selected in new teacher evaluation systems are generic with respect to content area and are designed to be used with all teachers—from kindergarten through calculus" (p. 373). Dudek et al. (2023) have remarked:

> In terms of teacher evaluation policy, reliance on a single classroom observational assessment ("one-size-fits all") may be an effective solution from an economics-labor perspective, but there is strong potential to harm teachers that do not fit the mold. Specifically, this includes teachers of lower grade levels, special education settings, and specials subject areas (e.g., speech, physical education, art, music, vocational schools) where effective instruction may look markedly different than the classroom observational assessment employed by a district. (p. 380)

Many observation frameworks are instructional-theory focused (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016; Dudek et al., 2023; Hazi, 2018), as in the constructivist learning theory focus of the Danielson (2013) framework. Glickman et al. (2018) provided examples of overarching beliefs a school or district might value that would influence their student goals and views of effective teaching. For example, "If the goal is social development, then effective teaching might consist of structuring cooperative learning and community-building activities" (p. 95). Glickman et al. expressed further:

> In the final analysis, what constitutes instructional improvement and successful teaching can be defined only within the context of particular educational beliefs, instructional goals, local learning environments, and individual students. This means that the search for a single instructional model—effective for all learning content, students, and situations—is futile. (p. 95)

If a school or district embraces a particular instructional approach or theory guiding their views of what constitutes effective teaching, the school or district may be able to adopt an aligned observation framework; however, if the state requires a specific instrument, schools and districts have no choice in the matter (Wieczorek et al., 2022).

Another aspect of formal observation rubrics, performance labels and ratings such as *ineffective*, *developing*, *effective*, and *highly effective* on a 1–4 scale, may provide administrators and teachers with a more defined picture of teachers' performance than the labels of the past such as *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory* backed by "little evidence to justify such a rating" (Neumerski et al., 2018, p. 281), but such loaded titles may actually curb teachers' growth and motivation (Close et al., 2020; Malloy, 2020; McGhee, 2020; Mette et al., 2020; O'Leary, 2020; Pallas, 2023; Wieczorek et al., 2018). Emphasizing ratings and labels can cause teachers to focus on collecting performance rubric points (Wieczorek et al., 2018) or react with high emotion (Anderson et al., 2019; Pallas, 2023)

instead of using their evaluation results holistically and sensibly to reflect on their professional growth and student learning. O'Leary (2020) has noted:

> Terms such as 'outstanding' and 'inadequate' are value laden terms, which carry with them potentially far reaching consequences for teachers and students. They have a longevity to them that belies the snapshot judgement on which they are invariably based…[Using ratings] as an outcome of observations…has had a restrictive and often negative impact on teachers' professional identities and their notions of self. (p. 53)

However, a teacher's poor or even acceptable classroom performance rating is not the only factor leading to their final evaluation outcome. Student performance measured by formal assessments also play a substantial role.

Student Outcome-Based Teacher Evaluation Models

Despite research suggesting standards-based observation frameworks measure student learning just as well as student achievement tests do (Papay, 2012) and teachers' influence on student test scores has been minimal (American Statistical Association, 2014; Berliner, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2015; Good, 2014), models using students' assessment scores to determine teaching effectiveness as part of teachers' evaluations are currently employed in most states (Close et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2020; Wieczorek et al., 2022) with requirements to apply student test scores to 20%–50% of teachers' evaluation scores (Wieczorek et al., 2022). Student learning objectives (SLOs) and value-added models (VAMs) have been the most common methods (Close et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2020; Wieczorek et al., 2022).

SLOs involve teachers developing "concrete, annual learning targets for their students, typically on some assessment chosen at the classroom, school, or district level" (Atteberry & LaCour, 2021, p. 1). The learning objectives often apply to students' growth from pre-tests to post-tests (Lin et al., 2020). Students' state standards-based assessments

might be used; and some states require this for tested grade levels and subject areas, but it is also possible for districts, schools, and teachers to use their own district-wide assessments or teacher-created tests. Therefore, with SLOs, it is possible for teachers of every role, regardless of grade level or subject area, to select or create an assessment and set SLOs (Atteberry & LaCour, 2021; Lin et al., 2020). Teachers might also set goals using a split model where they set individual goals for each student in their classes; a banded model involving "tiered levels of expectations for students" (Lin et al., 2020, p. 3); and a class-wide model where all students' results are under the same goal.

VAMs are "complex regression models" (Amrein-Beardsley et al., 2023, p. 4) employing students' multiple academic achievement test score histories to predict their scores, growth, or lack of growth on their current tests. Score and growth predictions in turn "estimate the specific contributions of individual teachers (often referred to as 'teacher effects') to observed gains (or losses) on those tests" (p. 4). Unlike SLOs that can be set by teachers, VAMs are typically commercially-developed models and use students' state test scores (Amrein-Beardsley et al., 2023; Berliner, 2014; Collins & Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Papay, 2012).

Whether using a single, pre/post, or historical series of tests, applying students' assessment outcomes to teachers' evaluations has been a controversial practice for several reasons. State standards-based tests used in VAMs and potentially with SLOs generally only measure achievement of students in particular grade levels and for what are considered the core subjects—English language arts and math (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Atteberry & LaCour, 2021). Consequently, models using standardized tests apply only to about 20–30% of teachers (Atteberry & LaCour, 2021) and do not apply to a

majority of teachers, for example, early elementary and social studies teachers (Baker et al., 2010; Braun, 2015; Papay, 2012). Students' state tests are usually administered one to two months before school ends, so any student learning afterward is not accounted for and with scores potentially coming in after school ends, administrators may have to wait to complete teachers' final evaluations (Braun, 2015; Papay, 2012). This is also too late for teachers to use the results as meaningful feedback, compounding the problem of VAM results possibly being confusing and unhelpful to teachers and administrators (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Collins, 2014; Papay, 2012). SLOs may have more potential to inform teacher instruction at a more opportune time, but teachers may not be well-trained on setting appropriate SLOs and teachers could be tempted to "set low targets" (Atteberry & LaCour, 2021, p. 1) due to teacher evaluations' high-stakes consequences such as performance pay. According to Atteberry and LaCour, the purpose of SLOs is achieved only if teachers have the skills and motivation to set challenging yet attainable goals for their students.

Further, although it is well-established that teachers have the power to positively affect their students' lives and learning as there would be no purpose to education if not, attributing student test performance entirely to teacher effects is concerning (Baker et al., 2010; Berliner, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2015; Good, 2014; Kennedy 2010). Berliner (2014) has asserted, "Effects on achievement may actually depend on the interactions among many variables" (p. 3) such as class composition, curricula and resources, students' prior education experiences, student motivation, peer relationships, leadership, and school climate; and factors outside of schools' control as in families' socioeconomic status and mobility rates (Baker et al., 2010; Berliner, 2014; Braun, 2015; Everson et al.,

2013; Kennedy, 2010). The American Statistical Association (2014) has stated, "Most VAM studies find that teachers account for about 1% to 14% of the variability in test scores, and that the majority of opportunities for quality improvement are found in the system-level conditions" (p. 1). Amrein-Beardsley (2006) has remarked:

> Test scores, in addition to their imperfections in measuring students' cognitive and higher-order thinking skills, cannot capture all that it means to be an effective teacher. Test scores cannot capture things like whether a teacher is caring, motivating, engaging, demanding, or has high expectations. (p. 2)

In addition, teacher effects on student test performance are not very stable year to year given that teachers' student characteristics are not consistent year to year (Baker et al., 2010; Berliner, 2014; Braun, 2015; Good, 2014).

VAMs proponents assume students are randomly assigned to classes every year (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2015; Everson et al., 2013; Paufler & Amrein-Beardsley, 2014). Paufler and Amrein-Beardsley found this not to be the general case in 1,265 Arizona elementary schools where class assignments were not randomized. Class assignment considerations included students' academic levels, behavior, genders, language levels, potential teacher–student compatibility, learning styles, and specific needs such as special education and gifted eligibilities. Principals, usually in collaboration with their teachers and other staff, used this information to configure either homogenous, balanced heterogenous classes, or cluster groupings. Frequently, parent requests for student placement were honored based on factors such as peer relationships and learning styles. Paufler and Amrein-Beardsley reported that despite random class assignment methods' possibly positive effects on VAM estimates, the majority of principals saw random approaches as "nonsensical…it would be inappropriate and even

harmful to students because this would not be in the children's best educational and developmental interests" (p. 351).

However, whether through VAMs or SLOs, evaluating teachers via student test scores may cause teachers to be concerned about teaching students with varied needs, low-performing, or even high-performing students (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Baker et al., 2010; Collins, 2014; Papay, 2012). With most state tests measuring student performance on grade-level standards, above grade-level students' potential to achieve even more highly on state tests may not be factored into VAMs. Also, high level students may reach the "ceiling" of their score possibilities and have no way to show further growth (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Baker et al., 2010; Collins, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2015; Papay, 2012). Teachers' evaluation results have even been influenced by past VAM scores of students they no longer teach (Ballou & Springer, 2015; Baker et al., 2010; Papay, 2012) and other students they have never taught (Baker et al., 2010; Everson et al., 2013; Papay 2012). Everson et al. have explained further:

> Value-added models create estimates of teacher effectiveness that are relative to all other teachers at the school, district, or state levels. These comparisons are a misguided venture, as they essentially hold the teacher responsible for how they are estimated to teach students they never encounter. (p. 350)

This practice can lead to "reduced cooperation among teachers when they are pitted competitively against each other, or the potential for favored teachers to be assigned students perceived to have higher potential to make gains" (p. 352). Competition has included teachers working to get the "best" roster of students in the school (Collins, 2014).

Moreover, applying student test scores to teachers' evaluations has led to many teachers and administrators cheating, focusing on teaching specific test items (i.e.,

"teaching to the test"), or at least reducing their curricula to only the tested academic standards or subjects (Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Ballou & Springer, 2015; Baker et al., 2010; Collins, 2014; Papay, 2012). Additionally, when observation-based, teacher performance outcomes and student assessment outcomes have been combined to compose teachers' final evaluation scores, if the two have not aligned, many principals have artificially inflated teachers' observation scores to protect teachers whom they believed to be effective; or deflated scores if they have been told by superiors that teachers' scores are higher than allowable (Amrein-Beardsley & Geiger, 2019). The high-stake consequences of TES may be the primary reasons educators have taken these desperate actions, as wrongful termination has been a very real threat to teachers due to student assessment-based models. An example is of the approximately 200 teachers nonrenewed in the Houston Independent School District in spring 2011, more than half were terminated at least partly due to their VAM results (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012; Collins, 2014).

High-Stakes Consequences

Termination or nonrenewal and other teacher evaluation outcomes such as promotion and tenure, and merit or performance pay are considered high-stakes consequences (Lavigne, 2014; Lavigne & Good, 2014; Mette et al., 2017; Popham, 2013; Range et al., 2011; Zepeda, 2017). Particularly when tied to student assessment outcomes, high-stakes consequences of evaluations have not been shown to be motivating; rather they have been perceived as threatening, creating anxiety and negatively impacting teachers' self-worth (Anderson et al., 2019; Canelake, 2012;

Glickman et al., 2018; Lavigne, 2014; Lavigne & Good, 2014; Range et al., 2011; Wieczorek et al., 2018; Yuan et al., 2013). Lavigne (2014) has noted:

> Teachers may experience greater stress [than they already do in a high-stress job] from their evaluations being high-stakes, particularly if they feel such evaluations are unfair or unjust. Even teachers who feel confident in their teaching, particularly if they perceive no significant differences between teachers terminated and those offered continued employment or tenure, may experience an increase in stress because they may perceive themselves at equal risk of termination. (p. 19)

Wieczorek et al. (2018) have similarly observed:

> When faced with the possibility of ratings, labels, and consequences, teachers and principals place their careers first, and school goals, student learning, and all other purposes of schooling a distant second. It does not matter if these consequences and threats are perceived or real. (p. 589)

Even if teachers may not be strongly fearing termination, ratings and high-stakes consequences may still make teachers afraid to share issues with administrators and seek their help (Glickman et al., 2018; Popham, 2013). Glickman et al. have remarked:

> The possibility of a bad performance rating is always lurking in the background. It is human nature to avoid being totally open with an evaluator about problems one is experiencing when the evaluation might lead to a poor performance rating—and possible termination. (p. 291)

Perhaps unavoidably, a necessary purpose of teacher evaluations is to remove low-performing teachers (Berliner, 2018; Glickman et al., 2018; Hallinger et al., 2014; Lavigne, 2014; Nolan & Hoover, 2011), but this should not be the primary thought in teachers' and evaluators' minds regarding evaluation. Instead, generally, most teachers require a TES that allows them to grow as professionals and positively affect student learning (Berliner, 2018; Fullan, 2016; Mette et al., 2020; Nolan & Hoover, 2011). Education researcher, Dr. David Berliner (2018) has speculated about the true percentage of teachers who could be considered "bad", which he has defined as "one who will hurt

the children they teach" (p. 4). As an expert witness in a 2014 California court case regarding maintaining P–12 teacher tenure, when asked by the judge for his estimate of the percentage of "bad" teachers in the U.S., Berliner guessed 1–3%. During the four years afterward, Berliner posed the same query "to hundreds of school administrators, school board members, and teachers" (p. 4), framed as follows:

> By "bad" I do not mean a teacher that is too strict or too permissive for your taste; or one that is using phonics while you believe in whole language, or vice versa; and I also don't mean a teacher that is temporarily having a bad time because of a divorce or illness; and I don't mean a teacher that isn't as sure of themselves in mathematics or science as we might want them to be. By a bad teacher I mean one who will hurt the children they teach. They will do this either by significantly retarding their progress, because the teacher has inadequate knowledge of what they teach; or they use methods, or hold attitudes that are harmful to some, or all of the children; or they have another job or difficult home life and cannot allocate the time needed to plan their classes adequately, nor muster the energy required to put in a proper days' work in a job that requires energy, empathy and continuous attention. (pp. 4–5)

From his multiple informal surveys, Berliner found the average estimate to be 3%. Meanwhile, Charlotte Danielson, "the developer of the most popular instrument for observing and evaluating teachers" (Berliner, 2018, p. 5) has estimated the percentage of teachers rated by her framework as "unsatisfactory" and in need of remediation to be 6% (Danielson, 2016). Fullan (2016) has estimated 5% for the percentage of teachers who should be terminated and has stated regarding teacher evaluations:

> There is no easy solution to this, but the answer is not what I would call the "scorched earth" strategy in which you implicate 100% of the teachers in evaluations that don't work in an attempt to get at the 5% of teachers who should not remain in the profession. The area of resolution—and that will still be difficult to come by—is to take a primarily growth and collaborative approach (that itself may cause ineffective teachers to leave) in exchange for a bargained, more streamlined process for dealing with highly ineffective teachers. (p. 234)

Even Danielson (2016) has proposed teachers not needing remediation should instead be supported by a system that does not rate them and rather, focuses on enhancing their strengths through professional development.

Whether the accurate percentage of poor teachers is three, five, or six percent, or whether the percentage indicates teachers who are harmful to children or those only in need of concentrated support with the potential to improve, this implies 94–97% of teachers nationwide have not needed termination or even only intensive remediation. Instead, teachers could have benefited from formative processes focused on their strengths, purposeful growth, and professional development. Therefore, the two decades-long efforts of the federal and state governments to make and enforce evaluation policies with the aim to terminate supposedly low-performing teachers and administrators in the name of increasing student academic achievement, has been entirely unwarranted.

Two Decades of United States TES Legislation and Policy-Making

For the past two decades and particularly the past ten years, the main levers of power regarding TES in the U.S. have been the federal and state governments, respectively. The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) signed into law in 2002 strengthened the school accountability movement and established "highly qualified teacher" requirements based on teachers' degrees and licensing tests (Amrein-Beardsley, 2006), but the law did not establish TES requirements (Lavigne & Good, 2014).

However, both the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top (RttT) funding incentive initiative of 2010 and NCLB waivers issued to states between 2011 and 2014 led to considerable changes in states' TES over which public school governing boards, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders had little input or control. These

changes included requirements for particular evaluation instruments or models to be employed to assess teacher performance; for including student assessment outcomes as part of teachers' evaluation results; and for using teacher rating labels. RttT's requirements also placed a greater emphasis on high-stakes consequences such as teacher nonrenewal (Collins & Amrein-Beardsley, 2014; Lavigne, 2014). Popham (2013) pointed out RttT also included requirements for using evaluation systems "for continual improvement of instruction" (p. 20) and providing teachers with "feedback for professional development" (p. 20), both formative purposes and therefore further perpetuating the common practice of conflating formative and summative evaluation.

Amrein-Beardsley (2014) characterized RttT and past national education accountability initiatives (e.g., 1983's *A Nation at Risk*) as following the faulty Measure and Punish (M&P) Theory of Change:

> The M&P Theory of change suggests that by holding districts, schools, teachers, and students accountable for meeting higher standards, as measured by student performance on high-stakes tests, administrators will supervise America's public schools better, teachers will teach better, and as a result students will learn more, particularly in America's lowest performing schools. (p. xiv)

Despite RttT's estimated total cost of $15–20 billion, its "teacher evaluation reforms had no discernable effect on student achievement in math or ELA [English language arts]" (Bleiberg et al., 2021, p. 3) based on the Stanford Education Data Archive 2009–2018 census linking state standardized tests to student "performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress" (p. 10). TES reforms also did not affect rates in high school graduation and enrollment in college based on the American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample between 2008 and 2019 (Bleiberg et al., 2021).

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) passed in 2015 and replaced NCLB with the intention of returning state- and district-level control including TES model development and implementation, but very little since then has actually changed across the nation. High-stakes consequences have continued to prevail. Many states still have required particular teacher evaluation instruments or models and rating labels; and student outcome measurement requirements have become less prevalent, but are still being employed (Close et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2020, Wieczorek et al., 2022). Close et al. (2020) have referred to VAMs' continued employment in states' TES as a "legacy" (p. 20). Mette et al. (2020) have expressed the concern that "the use of student outcomes, the percentage…tied to teacher ratings, and the use of growth models points to the continuation of NCLB era practices even in the new ESSA era" (p. 122). Past, federally-required TES components have remained in states' systems despite the changes that have given more power to the states with respect to teacher evaluation.

As an example, the Arizona state legislature still requires student assessment outcomes as a portion of teachers' evaluation results, but did reduce the previous 33–50% requirement to 20–33% in 2019 with the passage of SB1071 (Arizona Senate Bill 1071, 2019). As a result, Arizona districts and their teachers have gained some control because district administrators, with input from teachers, and with a final vote from the district's governing board can choose the lowest percentage of 20%, but districts cannot opt out of this overall requirement. Further, Arizona no longer requires using particular teacher observation instruments or even alignment to the Arizona State Board of Education's previously adopted Professional Teaching Standards (n.d.) or the Arizona Department of Education's previous Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness (2018).

Thus, districts now have more authority to make changes regarding evaluation instruments, but based on anecdotal evidence, Arizona districts generally seem to be continuing with what they already had in place and are not making changes.

In all cases, administrators and teachers possess very little power with regard to rules and guidelines for TES. Notably, administrators have been able to exercise some control with respect to how they approach evaluations under the state's or district's guidelines. Moreover, perceptions of TES can be moderated by the trusting relationships principals build with teachers. Teachers can also demonstrate some power over the evaluation process in how they prepare for and respond to evaluations and whether they use the results to foster their professional growth; however, teachers may not perceive it in this way. State- and/or district-mandated guidelines and teachers' relationships with their principals may be leading to teachers' fear, frustration, or apathy regarding evaluations. Hence, problems with respect to TES may have arisen because the TES does not provide teachers with meaningful, genuine processes for professional growth and teacher–evaluator collaboration.

Conflation of Supervision and Evaluation

Although both teacher supervision and evaluation are key aspects of an administrator's role as the instructional leader or "lead learner" (Fullan, 2016) of the school, formative teacher supervision processes may have more potential than TES for promoting teacher professional growth and collaborative teacher–supervisor relationships (Fullan, 2016; Glickman et al., 2018; McGhee, 2020; Mette et al., 2017; Ponticell et al., 2018; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Instructional or formative supervision has been viewed as ongoing, formative processes where teachers' supervisors, usually principals, gather data

and interact with teachers through informal means such as frequent, non-evaluative observations and follow-up supervisor–teacher feedback. The purpose of formative supervision has been to provide support as well as determine resources and professional development that facilitate teachers' professional growth and positively affect student learning (Glickman et al., 2018; Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009; Hallinger et al., 2014; Mette et al., 2017; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Popham, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017).

In contrast, the dominant purpose of summative evaluation has been to rate teachers' performance, possibly leading to decisions about teachers' continued employment or merit pay (Hazi, 2022; Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009; Hallinger et al., 2014; Lavigne, 2014; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Popham, 2013; Range et al., 2011; Zepeda, 2017), therefore causing many teachers to view evaluations as threatening (Lavigne, 2014; McGhee, 2020; Pallas, 2023). Despite these contrasting purposes, supervision and evaluation have been commonly conflated (McGhee, 2020; Mette et al., 2020; Range et al., 2011; Reid, 2019; Wieczorek et al., 2018). Indeed, many teachers and administrators view the two practices as synonymous (Mette et al., 2017; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004), possibly caused by the same observation protocol and process being used simultaneously for both formative and summative purposes (Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Sullivan, 2016; Wieczorek et al., 2018). School administrators commonly make short, informal visits to classrooms throughout the school year and use the data they collect, in addition to data from teachers' officially evaluative formal observations, to apply to teachers' overall evaluation results guided by the belief that the possibly one or two observations required by the TES are not enough (Reid,

2019). Neumerski et al. (2018) have noted concerns that this practice could impact trusting administrator–teacher relationships, as teachers may begin to believe anytime the administrator pops into their classrooms, the observation will be counted toward their evaluations. Such informal visits might be called “classroom walkthroughs”, however, the popular three to five-minute observation method developed by Downey et al. (2004) was not intended to be evaluative. Although walkthroughs’ brevity has been questioned (Glanz, 2024; Glickman et al., 2018; Zepeda, 2017), the walkthrough process as created meets the criteria for formative supervision instead of evaluation.

Another way evaluation and supervision have been conflated is through the common, long-time practice of TES involving clinical supervision practices (Marzano et al., 2011; Mette et al., 2020). Clinical supervision is a formative, collegial process between supervisors and teachers, first developed by Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969) featuring three to five sequenced steps such as a goal-setting conference, pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference with feedback and data analysis. However, over time the process was borrowed for the evaluation process, with evaluators sometimes even adding on summative evaluation conferences later after the post-observation conferences (Marzano et al., 2011; Mette et al., 2020). Perhaps a reason is as Hazi (2022) has indicated—through union bargaining, the pre-conference became a key component of the evaluation process as a way for “teachers to protect themselves from the principal’s unannounced visits” (p. 52). Whatever the story, at least the main three steps of pre-conference/observation/post-conference have become a staple of the teacher evaluation process. Marzano et al. (2011) have remarked:

> The five phases of the clinical supervision process were intended to be the vehicle to disclose effective instructional practices. However, over time, the five phases

> became an end in themselves. In some cases, the rich, trusting dialogue envisioned by Goldhammer was reduced to a ritualistic set of steps to be followed…Goldhammer's vision of supervision as a collegial, inquiry-driven quest for more effective instructional practices quickly disappeared. The five phases of the clinical model, absent the rich dialogue proposed by Goldhammer, became the de facto structure for the evaluation of teachers—clearly a purpose for which it was not intended. (pp. 19–20)

Since evaluation is frequently framed by legal requirements and all of its steps are in the hands of the administrator, "this places principals [i.e., administrators] in a hierarchal position over teachers" (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004, p. 52) instead of having a trusting, collegial relationship where teachers are self-directed toward professional growth and the administrator facilitates and encourages teachers' self-reflection, as in formative supervision. Ponticell and Zepeda have explained this problem further in their on-target description of the teacher evaluation process:

> The principal determines the time, nature, and extent of supervision and evaluation. The principal observes, monitors, and checks the teacher. The principal informs the teacher regarding what needs to be changed or improved. The principal determines if improvement has occurred or progress has been made. The principal judges the effectiveness of a teacher's performance and assigns a performance rating. The teacher is subordinate to the principal. The teacher performs the show when required to do so by the principal, listens to the principal's judgment of the teacher's effectiveness, accepts the principal's judgment, and implements the principal's recommendations for change. (p. 53)

Based on their diverse purposes, approaches, and outcomes, combining evaluation and its problematic components with supervision seems to have had the adverse effect of compromising trusting administrator–teacher relationships (Glickman et al., 2018; McGhee, 2020; Mette et al., 2017; Neumerski et al., 2018; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Range et al., 2011; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004; Popham, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Nolan and Hoover (2011) have supported the separation of supervision and evaluation, seeing them as distinct functions with different purposes, motivations, scopes, and involving contrasting

types of administrator–teacher relationships. They have proposed the "same individual can carry out both functions effectively, as long as the processes are different. If the procedures for supervision and evaluation are not noticeably different, teachers will always see any individual who carries out both roles as an evaluator" (p. 12). Glickman et al. (2018) have similarly asserted regarding supervision and evaluation:

> Since they have entirely different purposes, they need to be kept separate…If separated, can the two systems coexist? Yes, but only if the purposes of both systems are clearly defined, the systems are perceived by teachers as distinct, and the integrity of both systems is protected. (p. 291)

Suggestions for separating evaluation and supervision have included the same administrator engaging in each process during different times of the year, such as one in the fall and the other in the spring; or having two different roles take care of each process, for example, a principal evaluates while an assistant principal implements formative supervision (Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Popham, 2013). However, Glickman et al. have acknowledged there may be factors preventing such ideas. Zepeda (2017) has argued, "The reality is that school leadership teams are just not big enough to have one person engage in formative support and then another school leader having to repeat the work necessary to render a summative assessment" (p. 38). Instead, Zepeda has claimed it is possible for one leader to serve in both roles as an evaluator and supervisor and that there are "many intersections between supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development" (p. 38) where all three relate to teachers' growth and development, only in different ways.

As an experienced education practitioner who views myself as a lifelong learner, I respect education scholars' ideas about working with supervision and evaluation so they can coexist; and I do accept the reality that teacher evaluation is a necessary practice and

my state's requirements regarding TES are not likely to change anytime soon. However, my aim is to find a way that helps administrators—in many cases, only one administrator in a school—to focus on supervision and keep it separate from evaluation. There must be an approach where the two coexist but not conflate; a system that supports teachers' reflection and administrator–teacher feedback to promote teachers' professional growth and trust-building in administrator–teacher relationships.

Local Context

As a P–12 educator for the past 26 years, including 15 as a school principal, I have had extensive experience as an evaluated teacher and most recently, as an evaluator. With the majority of my experience taking place in the U.S. and specifically the state of Arizona, I have firsthand knowledge of most of the developments in state and national TES during the past two decades. During my entire career in three different school systems, I have experienced a variety of TES and supervision practices.

Experiences as an Evaluated Teacher

As an elementary teacher for six and a half years from 1998 to 2004 in an Arizona P–12 school district, I was evaluated using two summative instruments. From 1998 to 2001, I was evaluated using a form that called for bulleted lists of areas of strength and improvement needs. Beginning in the 2001–2002 school year, I was evaluated with a standards-based document with proficiency labels for each standard, though I did not know whether this was a district-created tool or a commercially developed instrument that was also implemented by other schools and districts. Particularly as a novice teacher, I recalled appreciating the simplicity of the former tool because my principal was at liberty to choose the areas she saw as strengths and needs, and teachers were not

"branded" with labels. The latter standards-based instrument did afford less freedom as compared with the previous tool, but it also provided a coherent framework for teacher effectiveness and in my opinion, was general enough to apply to any P–12 teacher. Nevertheless, other than the broad statements describing each overall proficiency level, there were no rubric-type criteria explaining the expectations for each standard and level. Further, with the tool having only three proficiency levels of *proficient*, *developing*, and *unsatisfactory*, if a teacher was deemed proficient in all standards, there was no higher level for aspiration with respect to professional growth.

As required by Arizona during my teaching career, my district's principals evaluated probationary teachers (less than three years in the district) twice per year and continuing teachers (three years or more) annually. As was common for evaluations, the district employed a clinical supervision-based process consisting of a pre-observation conference, formal observation, and post-observation/summative evaluation conference. Because the main purpose of the formal observation was to determine contract renewal, I remembered feeling nervous about these annual or biannual "events", viewing them as separate from my principal's informal classroom observations and ongoing feedback. Therefore, I spent considerable time preparing for formal observations and although I followed my principal's pre-conference reminder to "just teach what you would normally teach", I still tried to feature every aspect of my daily planning and teaching to demonstrate all my capabilities.

When reflecting on my past teaching career, I have realized that it was not my evaluations that best promoted my meaningful professional growth. Instead, I was motivated by district-provided professional development, teacher team collaboration, and

the genuine effort my principal made to mentor and build relationships with her teachers including me. My principal inspired me to become an administrator, and it was my aspiration to emulate her sincere relationship-building and mentoring of teachers that has been with me to this day.

Initial Experiences as an Evaluator

I began my administrative career in 2004, continuing in my district as a district-wide school improvement specialist from 2004 to 2005 and an assistant principal at one of the other elementary schools for most of 2005–2006. In April 2006, I returned to my original elementary school, now as its principal. During the entirety of my principalship up to my last year in the district in 2010–2011, the district continued to follow Arizona's evaluation timeline requirements, use the clinical supervision process as part of evaluations, allow for informal classroom observations at the principal's discretion, and implement the same standards-based summative evaluation instrument I had experienced in my last three years as a teacher. Moreover, likely influenced by the federal, NCLB-led accountability movement, but not yet as a result of any specific state or federal requirements, the district revised its proficiency labels to align with Arizona's student assessment labels of *exceeds*, *meets*, *approaches*, and *falls far below* accompanied by a rating scale of 0–3 but still without any rubric-type criteria. My role as an evaluator began with using these procedures and observation/evaluation instrument.

I recalled my own principal's model as a supervisor and instructional leader as I learned my new role as a principal. There was much to learn and experience regarding many aspects including teacher supervision and evaluation, and I grew tremendously as a leader in my last five years with the district from 2006 to 2011. I found our district's

revised evaluation instrument to be improved due to the addition of a fourth level that gave effective teachers a higher level for which to aim. Moreover, I continued to appreciate the tool's universal application to all teachers, but I also found it difficult to fairly determine teachers' levels without any criteria for each standard. Sometimes, the instrument led to subjectivity rather than objectivity, and both the teachers and I struggled at times to demonstrate clear evidence of teachers' performance levels for each standard. I took the evaluation process seriously, following it dutifully and even experiencing the rare but difficult case of working with low-performing teachers on development or improvement plans, sometimes resulting in contract nonrenewal. Notably, I also observed the process's superficiality and lack of influence on the higher-performing teachers. I knew formative practices such as facilitating professional development and teacher collaboration as well as conducting informal observations or classroom walkthroughs provided more authentic means of analyzing and promoting teachers' professional growth. Nevertheless, I was hindered by the counterproductive aspects of the teacher evaluation process and myriad of other time-intensive duties as the school's sole administrator. I served as the school's instructional leader in many other ways such as organizing and facilitating professional development, but I struggled to fit in time to conduct regular informal observations.

I did not even conceive of combining the outcomes of formative teacher supervision with teachers' summative evaluation results until the 2010–2011 school year, my last year in the district. To meet federal and state accountability-based pressures, while trying to authentically influence teachers' professional growth and student learning, I co-designed and implemented a comprehensive, electronic walkthrough tool. I used it

for frequent classroom visits and afterward, provided teachers with specific, timely feedback in the form of checklists, graphs, narratives, and conference discussions. I found this formative process led to productive conversations with teachers, providing data to inform classroom instruction, professional development, and goal-setting. However, because I also utilized this formative data to contribute to teachers' summative evaluations, I believe the process resulted in unintended, negative consequences. Specifically, formative observations and time-consuming documentation were conflated with evaluation and caused substantial stress to the teachers and me. The outcome was that the evaluation process became even more ineffective than it had been as a process separate from formative teacher supervision.

Recent Experience as an Evaluator

During my three years overseas as a secondary principal from 2011 to 2014, I missed the advent of the United States' and Arizona's RttT and NCLB waiver-initiated TES changes such as requirements for particular observation instruments and student assessment outcome models. However, when I returned to the U.S. and Arizona during the 2014–2015 school year, federal and state legislations' effects on TES were at their height. As a principal in my new district, I was introduced to measuring 33% of teachers' effectiveness based on student assessment results (Arizona's standardized test whenever applicable) and 67% through a state-required, commercially produced, observation framework with standards and rubrics. Further, as it had continued to be common, my district conflated the clinical supervision process with teacher evaluation and required detailed forms accompanying each step. In addition to teachers' annual or biannual formal observations; unannounced, informal observations contributing to teachers'

summative evaluation results were held at the principal's discretion, but they were expected because any administrator understood the value of frequent informal observations and providing teachers with feedback.

During my seven years in this district from 2014 to 2021, I followed the required teacher evaluation policies and procedures and gained new valuable experiences with regard to teacher evaluations. I was particularly enthused about the detailed rubrics describing each standard under multiple teaching domains, allowing me to be more objective in evaluating teachers and remark on and ask for more specific evidence of teachers' effectiveness. Even so, teachers and I were concerned about whether the evaluation instrument could be applied in a sound way to all grade levels, subject areas, and special education. Despite these concerns, we were thankful that classroom performance as measured by observation instruments accounted for the majority of teachers' overall evaluation, because the requirement for 33% or even 20% of a teacher's evaluation tied to student assessment outcomes was discouraging. Notably, we regularly used formative and summative student assessment data to inform instruction and student interventions, but to equate teachers' effectiveness with one-time test scores was something entirely different.

Most importantly, during my last seven years as a principal, I worked to build trusting and sincere relationships with my teachers and engage them in collaborative and reflective discussions about teaching practices and students' learning. My focus was to empower teachers to make instructional decisions and actively participate in shared, school-wide decision-making. I regularly sought their input and used this information to determine the resources and professional development that would facilitate teachers'

professional growth and positively affect student learning. I continued to find it difficult to manage time for frequent informal observations, but I engaged in instructional supervision in other ways through professional learning communities and my ongoing collaboration with teachers on curriculum alignment. Through these efforts and my own substantial growth as an instructional leader, I realized the negative effect of the current TES as compared to the potentially positive effect of ongoing formative supervision practices was even more serious than I had thought.

The discrepancy between teachers' positive, relaxed attitudes toward informal classroom visits and how they approached formal observations for evaluations was apparent. One common approach I observed among teachers was producing a *dog and pony show*, an expression defined as "an often elaborate public relations or sales presentation" by Merriam-Webster.com (n.d.), for teachers' one-time formal observations. In other words, teachers were not teaching the content or using the approaches they normally used. Other teachers demonstrated conservativeness in their approaches, hesitating to take risks during formal observations despite their comfort in risk-taking during their daily instruction. I also supervised and evaluated teachers who unreasonably feared or found discomfort with formal observations and expressed happiness when the observations were "over with." Additionally, I frequently saw teachers not taking their formal evaluations seriously, viewing them as something separate from their daily teaching and intrinsic goals to improve student learning. In this view, evaluations existed for the sole purpose of terminating low-performing teachers and these teachers felt that they did not need to stress over possible employment contract

nonrenewal. This perception defeated what should be the primary purpose of teacher evaluation: to improve one's practice, and thereby, positively affect student learning.

The Current Situation

Currently as a district administrator back in my original school district, I am no longer positioned as a teacher evaluator. However, as an experienced educational leader known and respected by multiple administrative colleagues and educators with whom I have developed positive relationships over the years, I have been situated since fall 2022 as a participant-observer researcher for a small, P–12 Arizona school district where I formerly worked, now supporting its administrators with its implementation of teacher supervision. The district consists of three schools, one each at the P–5 elementary, 6–8 middle, and 9–12 high school levels. Each school is headed by one principal and one or two additional administrators. The elementary and middle school each have one dean of students while the high school has two supplementary administrators—an assistant principal and athletic director/dean of students.

The district employs approximately 71 teachers across the three schools serving 1,153 students. The student population is comprised of about 60% Caucasian students, 24% Native Americans, 11% Hispanic students, 3% African Americans, less than 2% Asian students, and less than 1% of students whose race is considered as "other" or "unclassified." Of all students, 56% qualify for free and reduced meals. Table 1 on the following page features district teacher experience data indicating the number of teachers within each range of both in-district and total years of teaching experience.

Table 1

Teacher Experience Data

	< 1	**1–2**	**3–5**	**6–10**	**> 10**
In-district	17	25	9	8	12
Total teaching	7	13	6	18	27

More than half of the teachers are new to the district with two years or less of experience, while almost half of teachers have six or more years of total teaching experience.

The district's teacher evaluation handbook describes the district's state requirement-aligned TES including timelines, processes, documents, and the formal observation framework. Each school year begins with a conference held within the first five weeks of the school year where each school's evaluators review the handbook with teachers. This first conference can take place individually with each teacher, in small groups of teachers, or via an entire staff meeting. Next, within the first eight full weeks of the school year, an evaluator meets with each teacher individually for a fall conference where the teacher shares their first teaching performance-focused self-reflection aligned to the district's adopted observation framework, Charlotte Danielson's (2013) *The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument* and using the state-required performance levels of 1–*ineffective*, 2–*developing*, 3–*effective*, and 4–*highly effective.* The teacher also shares their ideas for student assessment growth goals in the form of SLOs and together, the teacher and evaluator finalize the goals. The two may also set general dates for formal observations.

Prior to the first formal observation, the evaluator and teacher may meet for a separate pre-observation conference, but this can also be combined with the fall conference. The district defines "probationary" teachers as those who have been

employed by the district for less than three years. At least two formal observations are required for probationary teachers and must be at least 60 days apart. After the first three years, teachers are defined as "continuing" and the two-observation requirement may be waived if the continuing teacher has been rated *effective* or *highly effective* overall per their first formal observation. In essence, most continuing teachers have only one formal observation per year unless they have been rated as *ineffective* or *developing*; or if the teacher requests a second observation.

Probationary teachers are required to have two summative evaluations per school year, the first one by December 15 and the second by March 15. Continuing teachers are evaluated at least once by April 15. Each formal observation must be followed by a post-observation conference within ten school days after the observation and teachers must receive written documentation of their evaluations in the form of Danielson-based formal observation records through an electronic system within five days afterward. Additionally, teachers complete self-reflection forms in the winter and spring. Before 2023, the district's teachers also had to complete formal observation planning sheets and post-observation reflection sheets, but their documentation requirements have since been reduced.

Teachers' summative evaluations result from both formal observation ratings per the Danielson (2013) framework (80%) and from teachers' SLOs (20%). Teachers' overall observation framework ratings stem from set criteria. For example, for a teacher to receive an overall rating of 4–*highly effective*, they must have at least seven *highly effective* marks and no *ineffective* or *developing* marks among the 23 total possible.

Regarding formative supervision practices, the district's administrators usually conduct classroom walkthroughs of about three to five minutes each, sometimes recording observation data on brief checklists related to the Danielson Framework (2013) and through notes and/or emails to the teachers. Administrators and teachers sometimes meet face-to-face for formative feedback. Informal observation data may or may not figure into teachers' evaluation results, but the district allow through its policies to do informal observations or additional formal observations at the administrator's discretion. Although the district's administrators have already had informal observation and feedback processes in place, they have been open to change and trying something new through my action research with them.

Intervention—A Brief Introduction

P–12 education practitioner, Craig Randall's (2020) Trust-Based Observations (TBO) is a formative teacher supervision approach that may have the potential to transcend the traditional evaluation structure involving pre-conferences, formal observations, and post-conferences as well as the possibly too-short classroom walkthrough method. TBO involves frequent, unannounced, twenty-minute classroom observations followed up by immediate, ten to twenty-minute reflective conversations with teachers. In Randall's original 2020 model, if an administrator were to fully implement the TBO cycle structure with an entire teaching staff, they would conduct "twenty-four purposeful observation-related teacher interactions per week" (Randall, 2020, p. 19) with typically three observations on Mondays; three observations and three reflective conversations on Tuesdays–Thursdays; and three reflective conversations on Fridays. This would allow the principal to interact with 12 teachers per week, therefore

reaching a small staff of 24 teachers every other week (Randall, 2020). Since then, Randall has adjusted this goal to observing and reflecting with each teacher once every three to four weeks. He has found this frequency still builds trust with teachers and positively affects their growth (Burke, 2023). In accordance with Randall's trust-building model, the principal's first three sets of each teacher's observations and reflective conversations focus on teachers' observed strengths and the principal does not yet offer suggestions. That begins with the fourth set of observations and reflective conversations (Randall, 2020).

TBO's formative supervision approach and separate non-pedagogical-focused evaluation procedures are guided by the overall concept of building trust with teachers. Randall asserted, "Teachers grow when they trust, when they feel safe and supported, especially during these inherently vulnerable conferences [reflective conversations]. They feel empowered, and they embrace suggestions, resulting in risk taking and innovative new practice" (p. 104). After I read Randall's book, *Trust-Based Observations: Maximizing Teaching and Learning Growth*, I believed that continuous cycles of 20-minute observations followed by reflective conversations may provide the avenue for principals and teachers to engage in dialogue and reflection on effective instructional practices and student learning, asking questions of and listening intently to each other as described by Bryk and Schneider (2002) for building trusting relationships. I felt I may have found an effective intervention to address the problem of practice of TES impeding teachers' professional growth and trusting, teacher–evaluator relationships.

Action Research Cycle 1

I began my cycles of action research by collaborating with one school administrator in my participating district to implement a modified version of TBO in fall 2022. The intervention began with a one-day, six-hour, in-person workshop using a slide presentation; interactive, collaborative activities and discussions; and supporting materials I created based on Randall's book. I also provided a copy of his book to the study participant. My workshop served as a comprehensive introduction of the TBO approach to facilitate the administrator implementing key TBO aspects with one teacher over a period of four weeks. A critical part of the workshop involved my collaborating with the study participant and a second school administrator workshop participant to determine which aspects of the Trust-Based Observation/Reflection Form (Randall, 2020) would possibly be used for this beginning intervention. As Randall has permitted, the form may be modified. In addition, the participant and I met for one virtual follow-up meeting.

Both post-intervention survey and interview results demonstrated the school administrator supported the following beliefs: focusing on sharing teachers' observed strengths while giving them feedback and building trusting relationships with them positively affects their professional growth; formative supervision is beneficial to teachers and contributes to their professional growth; and devoting more quality time to formative supervision processes than to evaluation processes would be beneficial to teachers. The participant's responses also showed she valued reflective conversations. The participant did perceive the many duties of a school administrator such as addressing

student discipline as a barrier to being able to implement formative supervision with a staff of 25 to 30 teachers.

Based on the Cycle 1 administrator's view that it would be better to start implementation with more teachers as soon as school starts instead of mid-year, I determined the next step should be to conduct a Cycle 2 the following fall 2023 with professional development beginning before school starting and trying to implement a longer research cycle of six weeks instead of four.

Action Research Cycle 2

Cycle 2 action research did take place in fall 2023 for a period of six weeks with the Cycle 1 school administrator returning and two more administrators joining the study. Before implementing TBO, I gave an in-person workshop to the two new participants and met with the returning participant for a virtual review meeting. As with Cycle 1, we collaborated on a modified version of the TBO form.

The returning administrator participant implemented the process with three teachers and the new administrator participants did so with one teacher each. A new aspect to Cycle 2 was my use of formative interviews with the experienced administrator and her three participating teachers. I met with each of them individually two times before conducting the final interviews. I also did post-intervention interviews with the other two administrator participants and six-point Likert scaled post-intervention surveys with five out of the six total participants. The formative interview process leading up to the final assessments yielded rich conversations and helped me to deeply understand participants' perspectives.

Based on six total interview participants (three administrators and three teachers) and five total survey participants (the same three administrators and two of the teachers), results demonstrated both administrator and teacher participants believed devoting more time to formative supervision processes than to evaluation processes would be beneficial to teachers and could contribute to teachers' professional growth. They also agreed with the concept of formative supervision processes helping to build trusting relationships between administrators and teachers; and that such trusting relationships positively affect teachers' professional growth. One teacher remarked in the post-intervention interview:

> I think it [formative supervision] would build trust and with that trust would come improvement. Always if you feel trust, then you don't mind admitting your weaknesses, then asking for help. But if you feel threatened or uncomfortable, then you're going to hide those weaknesses and not ask for help.

All participants agreed or strongly agreed that unannounced informal observations provide a more authentic picture of teaching and student learning than do scheduled formal observations. In one of the first formative interviews, a teacher explained about her perceived differences between formal and informal observations:

> I'm a very high stress person and so when I know that at 9:00 someone's coming into my room to watch me, then I stutter, I make mistakes, I leave things out. And when I'm teaching and somebody just sort of pops in and sits down, I'm already sort of in my flow and I'm not waiting till 9:00 on the dot to start. I kind of look, see them come in, and I just keep going. I like that better. I guess I've always disliked having a formal observation. I would have to have my lesson plan typed up, all my activities ready, sit down with my supervisor, they'd go through everything I was doing. Then we'd pick a day, they'd come in and watch me. It just seemed very high stress for me. Whereas doing it this way, they're coming in and out of my room and they're getting snapshots of how I'm teaching and I would much rather prefer that than have it almost like I prepared just for this one observation rather than this is just how I teach on a daily basis.

Further, participants viewed the frequency of informal observations as important. One administrator remarked in response to an open-ended survey item, "The most beneficial

aspect is that the teacher will be so used to the frequent visits that they can be themselves and admin can really see what life is like in that classroom as opposed to a show." A teacher similarly expressed:

> Spending more time in classrooms is vital to building positive relationships with teachers. It also allows administrators the opportunity to defend teachers when parents raise concerns. It also allows administrators to assist with behavior issues they wouldn't see otherwise. Having frequent non-evaluative observations allows the teacher and administrator to begin to feel comfortable seeing each other, more often while being observed. The teacher is in a natural flow of teaching and does not need to worry about being observed. It just happens.

Participants also saw follow-up reflective conversations as valuable. One administrator saw reflective conversations as facilitating "great conversations that are genuine and authentic." Another administrator stated through the survey, "When an administrator can engage in the reflective conversations with teachers it can really show the teacher their strengths and help them to feel confident in their teaching abilities. Teachers might also take more risks because of this."

However, both teacher and administrator participants viewed lack of time, lack of support staff, and the many duties of administrators, especially addressing student discipline as factors inhibiting the effective implementation of formative supervision. One administrator responded through an open-ended survey item, "When short staffed it makes it harder to have those follow up conversations and frequent classroom observations."

Conducting the Cycle 2 study truly helped me to develop my dissertation study in a number of ways. One was my successful use of formative interviews that I will explain further in Chapter 3. Trying the formative interview process confirmed for me this would be a valuable approach to implement in my dissertation study. Another fruitful outcome

of my study was learning more about the limitations to formative supervision that participants perceived. I used this information to plan my intervention professional development for the dissertation study. Last, although it was still just a beginning, all Cycle 2 study participants' perspectives confirmed the problems involved with the TES and that formative supervision and the specific TBO approach were worthy of continued pursuit as we proceeded with the dissertation study in January to May 2024.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of my mixed methods action research dissertation study was to support administrators and teachers as they implemented aspects of the formative teacher supervision process of TBO following a three-day, interactive workshop for administrators that I provided. As study participants implemented the formative supervision intervention including cycles of informal observations and reflective conversations, I regularly followed up with participants through discussions and formative interviews. The purpose was to support administrators and teachers, partnering with them to explore their construction of meaning about their formative supervision experiences and its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships and teachers' professional growth. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?
- RQ2: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers' professional growth?
- RQ3: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?

- RQ4: How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY & PRACTITIONER KNOWLEDGE INFORMING THE STUDY

To explore the possibilities for focusing on formative supervision and its potential impacts on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships, I engaged in a review of relevant literature and research related to my work. I reviewed literature centered on formative supervision and trusting administrator–teacher relationships, developed a formative supervision conceptual framework, and applied my review to Randall's (2020) Trust-Based Observations process.

Notable Approaches to Formative Supervision

Through my review of the extensive formative supervision literature, I discovered two notable approaches to formative supervision profoundly informing my study: clinical supervision and developmental supervision. My prior knowledge of clinical supervision had been limited to only its popular application within the teacher evaluation process. I was struck by clinical supervision's relevance to my study. I previously had no idea of its importance. My other discovery was developmental supervision, a framework describing with precision my perspectives of formative supervision processes that may positively affect teachers' professional growth and the building of trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Clinical Supervision

Clinical supervision was a pivotal human relations-based approach to teacher supervision first developed in the mid-1950s and gaining substantial prominence from the late 1960s onward (Derrington, 2018; Glanz, 2018; Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009;

Ingle & Lindle, 2018; Marzano et al., 2011; Ponticell et al., 2018). In the mid-1950s, Harvard Master of Arts in Teaching professor, Dr. Morris Cogan and his colleagues including Drs. Robert Goldhammer and Robert H. Anderson, began to create a new approach to supervising student teachers in response to the professors' realization their current methods were not successful in developing and supporting effective teachers (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer et al., 1980). Sullivan (1980) noted, "It was, in contrast to other supervisory efforts, designed as a professional response to a specific problem" (p. 5). Clinical supervision continued to evolve and apply outside of pre-service teacher education as Cogan and his team worked with in-service educators in team-teaching projects (Goldhammer et al., 1980).

Cogan called the approach *clinical supervision* because it involved supervisors directly and frequently observing student teachers in the context of the classroom "clinic" and providing ongoing in-class support as well as collaborative conversations through face-to-face, pre- and post-observation conferences with the purpose of improving instruction (Cogan, 1973; Garman, 1982; Goldhammer et al., 1980). The term *clinical* was generally perceived by educators to be negative. "It suggests cold, formal, uniform, and cut-and-dried procedures that leave out the personal elements of human contact" (Goldhammer et al., 1980, p. 4). In actuality, clinical supervision had everything to do with human relationships and open conversations geared toward supporting teachers and their students. Hazi and Arredondo Ruckinski (2009) saw clinical supervision as a key movement that advanced "the perception of supervision from that of an 'evaluative function' to that of a 'helping function'" (p. 4) to support teachers' development.

In the late 1960s, Cogan and Goldhammer continued refinements to clinical supervision through their work with new colleagues and doctoral candidates at the University of Pittsburgh (Cogan, 1973; Garman et al., 1987; Goldhammer et al., 1980). Both Cogan and Goldhammer published texts titled *Clinical Supervision*, Goldhammer's in 1969 posthumously after his 1968 death and Cogan's in 1973. Clinical supervision started to be adopted by more university teacher education programs and became more well-known in the field of in-service education (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer et al., 1980). In the early 1980s, the updating and republishing of Goldhammer's 1969 text by Robert J. Krajewski and Robert H. Anderson contributed to clinical supervision's prominence in P–12 education (Goldhammer et al., 1980).

Both Cogan's and the dual editions of Goldhammer's texts detailed clinical supervision's sequence, the "cycle of supervision." Although Cogan's model featured eight phases and Goldhammer et al.'s sequence involved five stages, the two models were not conflicting (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer et al., 1980). Both models emphasized the importance of establishing the teacher–supervisor relationship with Cogan's featuring this step as the first phase of the process and Goldhammer's as an antecedent to the five-stage cycle. Key in both models was the pre-observation conference that may have involved lesson planning and observation strategy, observation rehearsal, and most importantly, an opportunity to set both parties at ease, share expectations, and further develop a trusting supervisor–teacher relationship. The observation then followed where the supervisor may have used a variety of observation strategies with a focus on the teacher's behavior. Following the observation was the post-observation conference where the teacher and supervisor discussed their observation analyses, shared feedback and

self-reflection, determined instructional changes and how to help the teacher, and planned the next cycle. In Cogan's model, before meeting for the post-observation conference, the teacher and supervisor would analyze and prepare alone if the teacher was new to clinical supervision. Once the teacher became more comfortable, analysis and planning the conference strategy could be done together. The phases/stages were interdependent, but adaptions to any of the phases/stages could be made depending on developments in the supervisor–teacher relationship and the teacher's needs (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer et al., 1980).

Clinical supervision was a notable departure from past instructional supervision approaches in a number of ways. Clinical supervision introduced an "emphasis on analysis rather than inspection and its presentation of a model rather than the smorgasbord of lists, charts, tables, and examples which so often occur[ed] in supervision literature" (Sullivan, 1980, p. 6). Although previous efforts were already beginning to embrace the concept of building positive, collegial teacher–supervisor relationships, the equal worth and professionalism of both teachers and supervisors, and the essentiality of frequent, meaningful teacher–supervisor interactions; no approach had been entirely built on these premises as was clinical supervision (Derrington, 2018; Glanz, 2018; Sullivan, 1980; Tracy, 1995). In clinical supervision, the teacher and supervisor were equal partners and colleagues, both with valuable ideas to make changes to instruction based on their analyses (Cogan, 1973; Garman, 1982; Goldhammer et al., 1980; Sullivan, 1980). Further, clinical supervisors believed in differentiated feedback (Derrington, 2018) and that instructional improvement would come only through "direct feedback to a teacher on aspects of his or her teaching that are of concern to that teacher (rather than items on an

evaluation form or items that are pet concerns of the supervisor only)" (Reavis, 1976). Ponticell et al. (2018) noted, clinical supervision's "pre-conference, observation, post-conference, and process reflection cycle became foundational to supervision" (p. 252), providing a structure as well as a conceptual framework (Garman, 1982) that could be implemented with various approaches to formative supervision.

Developmental Supervision

University of Georgia professor and past principal, Carl Glickman (1981) published an innovative book in which he introduced developmental supervision, an adult learning-focused, differentiated approach where "in taking account teachers' *level of commitment* and their *level of abstract thinking*, the supervisor can use a criteria for selecting the most appropriate supervisory orientation" (p. xi). During the 1980's, Glickman's original model consisted of the Supervisory Behavior Continuum spanning three orientations or approaches: directive, collaborative, and nondirective (Glickman, 1981; Garman et al., 1987). Each approach was associated with behaviors a supervisor would select for helping a teacher improve their instruction based on the supervisor "identifying the common level of teacher thinking about classroom practice" (Garman et al., 1987, p. 156). A supervisor might have determined the teacher's developmental level based on data collected through the clinical supervision process involving pre-conferences and observations. Then supervisors' actions including approaches to post-conferences would align to the teacher's level (Glickman, 1981).

For example, regarding a teacher who demonstrated authentic caring for their students and willingness to do whatever was needed to impact their learning and benefit the school, but struggled with classroom management, a supervisor may have analyzed

the teacher as being "high on level of commitment but low on level of abstraction" (Glickman, 1981, p. 54). The most appropriate approach for the supervisor to take would be collaborative, involving behaviors such as listening and collaboratively problem solving (Glickman, 1981). Further, for any teacher, the post-conference should focus on sharing observation descriptions before interpretations as well as culminate with a supervisor–teacher agreement of what would help the teacher in the future (Garman et al., 1987). The developmental supervision approach was not intended to label teachers or be evaluative, only to assist the supervisor in deciding the most appropriate approach to facilitate a teacher's self-reflection and decision-making autonomy (Espinoza, 2020).

Glickman believed in clinical supervision's importance and that it could be a structure for implementing developmental supervision and "helping teachers to think about and plan instructional improvement" (Garman et al., 1987, p. 156), but he also voiced some concerns about clinical supervision:

> I think the idea that we can train people in pre-observation, observation, analysis and critique, and in post-conferencing, and then suppose that they can run around and do all of those cycles with every teacher and make a big difference in the structure of the school is misleading. I think that clinical supervision, or what I call *direct assistance to the teacher*, has to be done in relationship to other tasks that go on in the school…clinical supervision used by itself is a way of isolating teachers from each other…[it] has to be related to staff development…to curriculum development…to program evaluation, and to action research. (p. 155)

Glickman also expressed concerns about the clinical supervision process being used for teacher evaluation as well as the popularity of observation instruments such as teacher and student behavior checklists for interaction analysis or classroom seating charts used for marking on/off-task student behaviors. He was disturbed by such instruments driving the pre-conference whose focus would end up being the supervisor informing the teacher

which instrument they would be using. Then the observation itself was essentially driven by the instrument (Garman et al., 1987) as it had been with evaluation systems.

When not conflated with evaluation, developmental supervision seems to be a compelling approach, facilitating teachers' growth and the building of trusting administrator–teacher relationships. The developmental supervision approach appears to align to a formative supervision framework involving frequent informal observations and administrator–teacher reflective conversations.

Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework

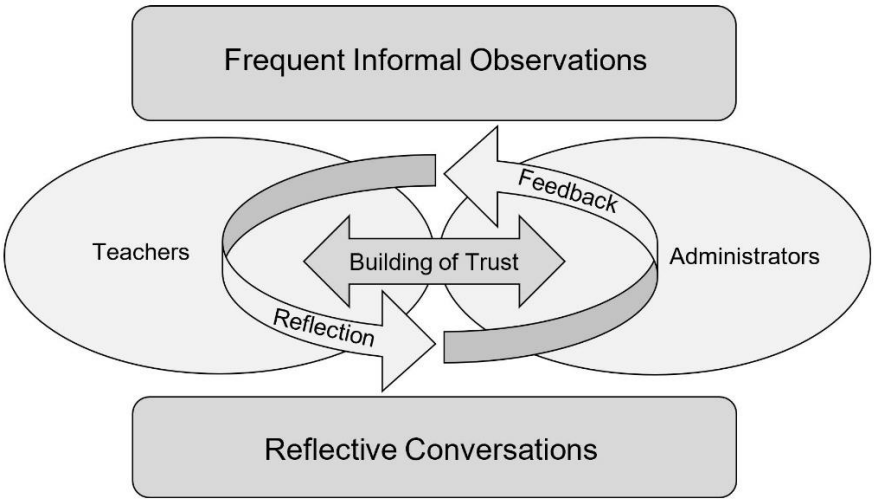
This dissertation study will be guided by a conceptual framework I have developed based on the teacher supervision literature. Teacher supervision can also be referred to as instructional or formative supervision (Glickman et al., 2018; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). To emphasize its formative nature as opposed to an evaluative approach, I will hereon identify the approach as formative supervision unless the literature emphasizes another related phrase.

The formative supervision conceptual framework features two key components—frequent informal observations implemented by the supervising administrator and follow-up reflective conversations between the administrator and teacher. Feedback and reflection from both parties are vital to the process. Through the formative supervision practices of frequent informal observations and reflective conversations emphasizing teachers' strengths, administrators and teachers build trust. Trusting relationships with administrators support teachers in affirming their strengths; expressing their own reflections on strengths and needs; being open to feedback focused on growth and

improvement; and being willing to take risks in instruction to positively affect student learning. The formative supervision conceptual framework is visualized through Figure 1: *Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework*. Each aspect will be described and supported by supervision literature. Following this section, literature supporting the importance of trusting administrator–teacher relationships in the formative supervision process will be explored.

Figure 1

Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework



Integrating Developmental and Solution-Focused Supervision

Stark et al. (2017) proposed a framework integrating the concepts and structures of developmental supervision (Glickman et al., 2014) and solution-focused supervision (Thomas, 2013) of which key aspects will inform the overarching concept of my own formative supervision conceptual framework.

Developmental Supervision

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, Glickman (1981) began developing the formative approach of developmental supervision in the 1980s. By at least the early

2000s, he had refined the supervisory behavior continuum to reflect four rather than three approaches by splitting the directive approach into two—directive control and directive informational; and continuing with the collaborative and nondirective approaches (Glickman et al., 2001). He and his colleagues had also conceived the concept of "SuperVision" to describe the "*collegial school*—characterized by purposeful adult interactions about improving schoolwide teaching and learning" (Glickman et al., 2018, p. 6) and the "common vision of what teaching and learning can and should be, developed collaboratively by formally designated supervisors, teachers, and other members of the school community" (p. 8). They proposed five principles:

> This view of supervision includes all of the following:
> 1. A collegial rather than a hierarchical relationship between teachers and formally designated supervisors
> 2. Supervision as the province of teachers as well as formally designated supervisors
> 3. A focus on teacher growth rather than teacher compliance
> 4. Facilitation of teachers collaborating with each other in instructional improvement efforts
> 5. Teacher involvement in ongoing reflective inquiry. (p. 7)

Although I clearly perceive and value all five of these principles as a whole forming Glickman et al.'s inspiring view of "SuperVision" in which, for example, teachers collaborate in shared decision-making for the learning community; within the scope of my study, I will need to center on the aspects involving teacher–supervisor (school administrator) relationships and specifically their reflection and feedback processes impacting teachers' professional growth as part of formative, instructional supervision. School administrators such as principals play a notable role in developing teachers' professional growth (Blase & Blase, 2000) and that is where I am focusing my research.

Stark et al.'s (2017) framework used elements from the 2014 ninth edition of Glickman et al.'s text, *SuperVision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach* to inform their integration of developmental supervision and solution-focused supervision. Glickman et al. (2014) described how a supervisor differentiates their supervisory approach for each teacher—"The teacher's levels of adult development, expertise, and commitment as well as responsibility for solving the problem and urgency of the situation all need to be considered when choosing…[from the] four supervisory approaches" (p. 151). McGhee and Stark (2018) explained further, "the supervisor should consider the urgency of the situation and the teacher's development, expertise and commitment" (p. 728). The approaches or supervisory behaviors span a continuum beginning with directive control that maximizes the supervisor's responsibility to provide supports for the teacher; and ending with nondirective that maximizes the teacher's responsibility toward improvement (Glickman et al., 2018).

The directive control stance is at the beginning of the continuum. Both the directive control and directive informational approaches involve "high supervisor responsibility and low teacher responsibility" (Glickman et al., 2018, p. 106) where the supervisor serves as the main instructional expert. Stark et al. (2017) explained regarding directive control:

> Directive control should be used as a last resort, only in short term, crisis situations, or when the teacher is functioning at a low level…[and]…many teachers will never pass through this phase, as they bring an acceptable level of professional judgment and problem-solving behaviors to the job from Day 1. Others will dip into this section of the continuum only periodically given a particular and temporary situation. (p. 229)

Although the directive control approach may give one the impression of supervisors being authoritative, manipulative, and engaged in conflict, it "is assertive but not

adversarial" (Glickman, 2018, p. 131). Teachers who may have minimal teaching experience, a smaller repertoire of instructional strategies, and/or for whatever reason, low commitment to their practice, could need supervision using a directive informational approach, "in which the administrator may offer alternative solutions for the teacher to consider in improving his or her instruction" (Stark et al., 2017, p. 220) and use behaviors such as directing, standardizing, and reinforcing (Glickman et al., 2018). With the collaborative stance, teachers and supervisors are partners whose responsibility is equal (Glickman et al., 2018). The collaborative approach is recommended when a supervisor is not sure which level best reflects the teacher's skills and commitment, or when it is evident a teacher is not quite ready for a nondirective approach and would benefit from a supervisor who "seeks to understand and verify the teacher's perceptions and encourages him or her to come up with own solutions" (Stark et al., 2017, p. 221). Collaborative supervisory behaviors include presenting, problem solving, and negotiating (Glickman et al., 2018). At the end of the continuum, administrators using the nondirective stance is the goal for every teacher where teachers are "discovering their own capacities for instructional improvement" (p. 106). "Teachers functioning at the highest levels of commitment, development, and skill are poised for nondirective supervision" (Stark et al., 2017, p. 221). At this level, supervisors focus on listening to the teacher with support, stimulating teacher self-reflection, and encouraging teachers to make their own decisions regarding how to improve. Nondirective supervisory behaviors include listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting (Glickman et al., 2018).

Solution-Focused Supervision

Stark et al. (2017) have proposed integrating developmental supervision with solution-focused supervision (SFS) to conceive solution-focused teacher supervision and have used this framework in their educational leadership graduate program at Texas Christian University (McGhee & Stark, 2018; 2021). The concept of SFS (Thomas, 2013) originated from the family therapy approach, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) in which therapists help clients deconstruct their complaints and facilitate the clients realizing they may already know the solutions (De Shazer et al., 1986). SFBT and its adaptation, SFS have been used by school counselors, social workers, and coaches to help improve student behavior and positive student–teacher relationships (Stark et al., 2017). In Thomas's (2013) SFS, a counselor as supervisor views supervisees as being well-intentioned and holding experiences worthy of respect. "Unlike medical models, the focus is on what is going well rather than what is going wrong" (Stark et al., 2017, p. 222). In the same vein, solution-focused teacher supervision implemented with teachers by a school administrator aims to affirm teachers' expertise and strengths, facilitate teachers' problem-solving through "nonjudgmental but supportive dialogue" (p. 217), encourage teachers' self-autonomy, and build trusting, administrator–teacher relationships.

Solution-Focused Teacher Supervision

Stark et al.'s (2017) solution-focused teacher supervision (SFTS) serves as the "intersection of developmental supervision and SFS" (p. 219). Stark et al. have explained how the two approaches share commonalities:

> In both approaches, supervisors begin by considering the individual's concerns, needs, and commitments. The process is aimed at excavating areas of concern to

> the teacher and is driven by these concerns—not from the administrator's diagnosis of what needs to be fixed. In fact, unless the teacher is in a crisis situation (typically an issue of student safety, which would trigger a shift to the "directive control,"…), the administrator would be expected to bracket his or her own concerns to work instead with the concerns of the teacher toward an end of facilitating a process in which existing strengths are analyzed and scaffolded into new successes/strategies…supervisors allow for disagreement and give the supervisee as much control, decision-making, and responsibility as possible.

When infusing SFS's administrator–teacher interaction strategies into the overall developmental approach, four shared principles emerge regarding formative teacher supervision:

1. Teachers hold the locus of control in problem-solving for their instructional practice because they and not the administrators are the ones who make decisions daily in their classrooms.
2. "…although some teachers may lack the expertise to successfully problem-solve, they can be supported through structured processes that empower them to participate as reflective actions in a facilitated process" (p. 223).
3. Such processes should be productive and not make teachers feel threatened.
4. Since these processes can still cause both administrators and teachers discomfort and create cognitive dissonance, administrators may need help learning supportive language for interactions with teachers. SFS offers possible language and questioning approaches that administrators may use.

Developmental supervision and SFS are also distinct in that the developmental supervisor considers a teacher's experience, skills, and commitment or situation to select a supervisory approach among four possibilities; whereas solution-focused supervisors "presume expertise even in beginner teachers and work from a nondirective stance as much as possible…[and they]…must adapt their techniques to the needs of the individual

supervisee, but endeavor to give the supervisee as much control (and responsibility) as possible" (p. 223). Therefore, the nondirective stance is the usual approach employed through the integration of developmental supervision and SFTS (Stark et al., 2017). Sullivan and Glanz (2013) have also supported the view of focusing on the collaborative and nondirective approaches to formative supervision:

> We agree that "different folks need different strokes" and that varying school circumstances call for a range of approaches; however, *we believe that meaningful learning is dependent on the learner's involvement in constructing that knowledge and so there is no need for the directive control approach.* Many supervisors over the years have used this approach, many continue to follow it…Nonetheless, we think that the collaborative and self-directed [i.e., nondirective] models are the most effective, with the occasional application of a modified directive informational approach. (p. 42)

Later in this chapter, each of the developmental/SFTS-integrated supervisory approaches will be further detailed with respect to administrators' feedback strategies through reflective conversations.

Frequent Informal Observations

Formative supervision takes place in ongoing cycles (Baeder, 2018a; Cogan, 1973; Glickman et al., 2014; Goldhammer, 1969; Goldhammer et al., 1980; Marshall, 2013; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Stark et al., 2017; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). As discussed previously, in the clinical supervision model, the first step in the cycle is the pre-observation conference to establish the teacher–supervisor relationship and possibly collaboratively plan a lesson to be observed (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer, 1969; Goldhammer et al., 1980). I agree with the importance of developing trusting teacher–supervisor relationships, as this idea serves as a major premise in my formative supervision conceptual framework. I also believe in administrators meeting with teachers to make them aware of the formative supervision process, answer their questions, and

collaborate on shared expectations. However, I feel both of these key processes can come through one or more initial faculty meetings and through the formative supervision cycles themselves. A scheduled pre-conference before every observation is not necessary. Therefore, in my formative supervision conceptual framework, an unannounced, informal observation starts the first cycle with each teacher.

Unannounced Observations

Truly informal observations are unannounced to give administrators more accurate reflections of teachers' instructional practices, formative assessment approaches, classroom management, and relationships with students than it would be through announced observations (Baeder, 2018a; Campbell, 2013; Downey et al., 2004; Marshall, 2013; Popham, 2013). Unannounced observations provide data to better support administrators' authentic teacher feedback (Marshall, 2013). However, there is also room for teachers purposefully inviting administrators for informal observations to see student presentations, special class or group projects in action, or new strategies teachers may be trying (Zepeda, 2017).

Length and Frequency of Observations

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the brief classroom walkthrough method has become prominent in P–12 education. Although walkthroughs can be informal and not tied to evaluations, their shortness and lack of depth may not allow for the administrator–teacher reflective conversations needed to impact teachers' professional growth (Glanz, 2024; Glickman et al., 2018; Zepeda, 2017). Regarding the Downey et al., (2004) three- to five-minute classroom walkthrough method, Zepeda (2017) remarked:

> Although that method will certainly get supervision out of the main office, the egg-timer approach to classroom observation of this duration is a "blitz" in which

> the observation's brevity minimizes data collection. Whether it is the principal alone or as a member of a group, it is preferable to conduct fewer but longer informal observations on a daily basis to connect with teachers and derive a more accurate sense of the classroom activities observed. (p. 155)

Instead of short walkthroughs, Zepeda has recommended usually 15 to 20-minute informal observations while Glatthorn (1997) suggested five to ten minutes and Baeder (2018a) and Marshall (2013) have both proposed five- to 15-minute observations are sufficient for providing enough information for follow-up conversations with teachers. In Campbell's (2013) dissertation study with ten administrators and 37 teachers implementing Marshall's approach of frequent "mini-observations" during a school year-long pilot program, administrator participants indicated ten- to 15-minute observations "provided the right amount of time to understand the teaching and learning happening in the classroom" (p. 90). Further, administrators and teachers perceived the mini-observations' length and frequency as supporting trusting administrator–teacher relationships and teachers' comfort levels for trying new approaches and risk-taking.

Variance in times of day for informal observations is also important because "what occurs in the morning is much different from what occurs in the afternoon" (Zepeda, 2017, p. 159). Over the course of the school year, administrators should frequently observe different parts of lessons (beginnings, middles, and ends), different subjects a given teacher teaches, and on varied days of the week for each teacher (Marshall, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Glatthorn (1997) recommended taking about an hour per day for informal observations. This would allow for at least 20 teacher observations per week. Zepeda advised, "conduct only as many observations a day as you [administrators] can follow up with teachers either on the same day or very next day. Teachers need and deserve some type of immediate feedback" (p. 159). As a principal who developed and

implemented the concept of mini-observations, Marshall (2013) found that doing more than five per day affected his accurate memory of classroom occurrences and the quality of his feedback to teachers.

However, as evidenced by my own experience, anecdotal evidence from multiple other administrators, and Cycle 1 and 2 research, finding the time to observe teachers frequently and for appropriate lengths of time can be a challenge. Baeder (n.d.) asserted, "Instructional leaders who want to get into classrooms will never 'find' the time. It's essential to **make** time—and protect it from some (but not all) interruptions" (para. 1). As a principal, doctoral researcher, and now prominent instructional leadership consultant, Baeder has found conducting three informal observations of five- to 15 minutes each per day to be manageable; thereby allowing for two-week cycles where every teacher among a staff of thirty can be observed. For a larger teaching staff and if a school has only one administrator, a two-week cycle may not be possible, but a goal of three observations per day still allows for sufficient quality time in classrooms. Further, a greater frequency of observations may be necessary for teachers needing greater support (Baeder, 2018a). Making the time can involve planning for more than three time slots "adjacent to [when administrators will] already be out of the office" (Baeder, n.d., para. 8), but not scheduling these in a solid block to account for possible interruptions and allow for getting into varied grade-level/subject area classrooms at different times of the day. Baeder has advised schedule flexibility where the time slots are not set for specific teachers and not unrealistically viewed as uninterruptable. Similarly, Marshall (2013) has said:

> It was most efficient to fit in my brief visits between other errands and expeditions around the school. *(I'm up on the third floor, so let me see Joyce, and maybe I'll*

> *have time to see Alan, too, before the fifth-grade team meeting.)* Sometimes I was successful in blocking out a whole period for classroom visits, but that amount of time rarely went by without something else coming up. Mostly I squeezed my visits into the nooks and crannies of each day. (p. 51)

Instead of letting interruptions control an administrator's day, Baeder (n.d.) has recommended administrators work with their office and other applicable staff to agree on guidelines for when and how to interrupt. For example, criteria for five categories could be determined: "Interrupt" for urgencies and emergencies requiring the administrator's expeditious attention; "Consult" for issues the administrator should know about immediately to decide if an interruption to the observation schedule is warranted; "Inform" for issues appropriate for the administrator to be aware of once they are available; "Document" for matters that can be handled by the office/other staff but should be documented for the administrator; and "Handle" for incidents staff can handle without the need to inform the administrator (para. 22).

Observations for Every Teacher

Zepeda (2017) has suggested administrators ensure every teacher have the opportunity to reap the benefits of regular informal observations and feedback from their supervisors. Further, administrators' observations among teachers should be relatively equal and not target only particular types of teachers such as those who are struggling, who are new to teaching, or who teach state-tested core subject areas and grade levels.

Keeping track of informal observations is recommended so administrators can ensure they are consistently visiting all teachers' classrooms and tapping into different times of the day and week (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; Zepeda, 2017).

Observable Teaching Practices

Zepeda (2017) has advocated for administrators and teachers coming to an agreement on what are considered observable teaching practices during a classroom observation. Through a collaborative process, administrators and teachers should determine relevant strategies observable in "an academically challenging environment [and] discuss what each one of these strategies look like: What would the teacher be doing or saying? What would students be doing?" (p. 99). Through the process, the group would condense their list to a practical number such as six or seven and revise the wording of each so there is consensual understanding of the expectations for informal observations. Further, the administrator/teacher team would periodically revisit the list and make changes based on collective agreement (Zepeda, 2017).

A school's administrators and teachers may have agreed on what is observable in the classroom, but that does not necessarily entail the administrator coming in with a "predetermined focus whereby teachers know how to teach to the hot spot of the observer" (Zepeda, 2017, p. 159). Zepeda has advised administrators look for a sole focus in alignment with what is happening in the classroom, especially since the observation may be only 15 to 20 minutes. Having one focus may also allow for more depth of discussion in follow-up discussions (Zepeda, 2017).

Baeder (2018a) also suggested administrators and teachers develop shared expectations of informal observations as a type of instructional framework, not to be confused with an actual formal observation tool with ratings. He stated:

> When the instructional framework takes on the role of defining effective practice, the instructional leader can step out of the role of judge and into a more collegial role. When the framework becomes like a third participant in the conversation

> between teacher and instructional leader, the discussion can become less focused on evaluation and more focused on evidence-based insights. (pp. 21–22)

Administrators should also be open-minded, focusing on "the essential question of whether the lesson accomplishes what the *teacher* intends" (p. 19) and look for evidence of what that might entail, keeping in mind teachers having a voice in deciding on what they would like feedback.

Using Observation Instruments

When not tied to evaluations with ratings, using classroom observation instruments can be valuable tools for administrators to facilitate enhancing teachers' cognizance of their use of instructional strategies, student responses to those strategies, and teacher–student interactions. Further, organized, observational data can aid in more effective, administrator–teacher reflective dialogue in discussions following observations. In their book, *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning*, Sullivan and Glanz (2013) shared forty-two, practical observation tools and techniques they have implemented themselves as educators and researchers. Examples include charts for marking frequencies of teacher verbal behaviors and student responses, teacher–student verbal interaction diagrams, diverse learner strategies checklists, content-specific tools, and open-ended narrative guidelines. Administrators might select a particular one depending on the situation and purpose of a classroom visit. Sullivan and Glanz advised that administrators can, and even collaboratively with teachers, create their own and there are many other observation instruments from a variety of sources including the internet. However, they also recommended administrators examine such instruments cautiously because "most of the general sites dedicated to observational tools are oriented toward multifocal, monitoring, and evaluation purposes" (p. 58). Similarly, Baeder (2018a)

advised, “Not everything that characterizes effective practice will be visible in a single lesson, so we must resist the tendency to turn overall *evaluation* criteria into *observation* criteria” (p. 21). Moreover, Marshall (2013) has recommended focus and simplicity in observational tools:

> Trying to keep track of items on detailed instruments or rubrics makes it much more difficult to be a thoughtful and perceptive observer. The more detailed and elaborate the checklist, the more consumed the principal is with recording data, the less perceptive at observing what’s going on, the more superficial the observations, and the less seriously the teacher will take the feedback. (p. 70)

Informal observation records can be as simple as factual notes to guide follow-up conversations between administrators and teachers (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Marshall has recommended written notes not be given to the teacher before meeting with the administrator for feedback. Teachers are less “likely to think the principal’s mind is made up” (p. 77) and administrators can still make changes based on the administrator–teacher conversation.

Avoiding Observational Ratings

Rubrics with distinct criteria and levels can also be valuable tools for both administrators and teachers analyzing teachers’ strengths and needs and pinpointing areas of improvement as part of formative supervision (Zepeda, 2017). However, associating teachers’ classroom performance with ratings may cause teachers to experience the same anxiety or drive to categorize that they may do with evaluations (Marshall, 2013). In addition, the evidence collected from each single observation is not fairly sufficient to evaluate teachers using a comprehensive framework (Baeder, 2018a), so ratings should be avoided.

Focusing on Teachers' Strengths

During classroom observations, if administrators look for instructional strategies and other practices that engage students and contribute to a positive learning environment, and then provide feedback to teachers focused on these strengths, teachers are more likely to reflect more effectively, continue to use successful practices, and be willing to take risks (Blase & Blase, 2004; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Zepeda, 2017). "Above all else, classroom observations should not be viewed as a means to find fault with teaching" (Zepeda, 2017, p. 155). Zepeda has suggested:

> Look for victories rather than failures, and applaud them. Work to create an ethos of sharing. Teachers who are especially adept at a strategy or technique need time and opportunities for sharing their expertise with others. For example, a certain amount of time at weekly or monthly faculty meetings could be set aside for teachers to share insights or techniques with one another. (pp. 159–160)

A focus on teachers' strengths is key for follow-up reflective conversations with teachers (Blase & Blase, 2004; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Stark et al., 2017; Zepeda, 2017).

Reflective Conversations

Following an informal observation, the administrator would meet with the teacher for a reflective conversation. I am using the term "reflective conversation" rather than the more well-known title of "post-observation conference" for two reasons. One is to disassociate the formative supervision process from the teacher evaluation process. Although the clinical supervision cycle of pre-conference/observation/post-conference was originally intended to be frequent, formative, and involve the opportunity for administrators and teachers to reflect together and build relationships (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer, 1969), the cycle has now become synonymous with the evaluation cycle occurring usually only once or twice annually (Marzano et al., 2011; Mette et al., 2020).

Through my educational practice and review of the literature, I have found the conflation of supervision and evaluation to be a problem. The problem may be further perpetuated if evaluation terminology is used in the formative supervision process. The second reason for using the term "reflective conversation" is that it more aptly describes the administrator–teacher conversation following the informal observation. During a reflective conversation, there is a natural flow of conversation turn-taking with both administrator and teacher sharing reflections and feedback, asking and answering reflective questions, and listening intently to each other. The administrator does not simply present their data and interpretations from the observation, then let the teacher finally speak. The foci of the reflective conversation are the teacher's insights, with the administrator doing most of the listening, helping the teacher to feel safe to share reflections, and offering their support.

Downey et al. (2004) have used the term "reflective conversation" to characterize the administrator–teacher "collaborative, reflective dialogue" (p. 9) following a classroom walkthrough. Although Goldsberry and Nolan (1982, as cited in Nolan and Huber, 1989) named the teacher–supervisor conversation a "reflective conference" rather than a "reflective conversation", they described precisely three aspects of my vision of a reflective conversation—"a foundation built on the teacher's [intents]…shared control of the conference [and]…reflection guided by the supervisor who functions as a guide while the teacher functions as decision maker" (p. 133). The following paragraphs and sections on reflection and feedback will further explain the nature of the reflective conversation.

Although following an informal observation with feedback through a note or email to teachers is common among administrators, sharing feedback through a

face-to-face, reflective conversation between the administrator and teacher allows for more depth in feedback and reflection (Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). That is not to say the administrator would not have some type of form to record notes about observations and collaboratively add on reflective conversation notes with the teacher during and not before the actual reflective conversation, but the administrator and teacher coming together for in-person dialogue is key (Glickman et al., 2018; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Downey et al., (2004) have noted:

> Leave few notes, except for the novice/apprentice teacher or an observed "Herculean effort" on the part of a teacher. Notes are a one-way type of communication. They are adult-child communications—*bosslike*. You (the boss) *tell* the teachers (the employees) what you think about their work. This is hierarchical in nature, and, if we are not careful, reinforces the boss-employee relationship rather than encouraging the collaborative interaction we desire. It is a dependency-inducing strategy…Our approach is to move teachers to self-affirmation and…away from needing our approval. (p. 46)

Marshall (2013) concurred:

> Written feedback almost always ends up being a one-way street from principal to teacher (few teachers take the time to respond to written notes or checklists). Without dialogue and active reflection on the teacher's part, it's much less likely that adult learning will take place. (p. 65)

Through face-to-face reflective conversations, administrators and teachers can employ active listening and nonverbal techniques such as nodding and smiling; and be able to clarify misunderstandings and be clear about their feelings (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Environmental factors such as a "barrier-free space, e.g., desk not used as blocker" (p. 40) between the administrator and teacher allow for improved interaction. Further, Marshall (2013) has suggested follow-up conversations ideally take place in the teacher's classroom "when students aren't around" (p. 72) and not in the administrator's office:

> Being on the teacher's turf changes the power dynamic. In fact, it's a significant gesture for the principal to take the time to seek out teachers in their classrooms

> for feedback chats. There's the…advantage [of] seeing student work, curriculum artifacts, and other reminders of what was happening during the mini-observation…That doesn't mean the principal's office is always inappropriate…But for a great many teachers, being summoned to "the office" triggers an irrational fear from their days as students. (p. 72)

It is also suggested reflective conversations take place in a timely manner after an observation such as the same or following day (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; O'Leary, 2020; Zepeda, 2017). Zepeda has remarked, "just like students, teachers respond to immediate feedback" (p. 157). Campbell (2013) found teachers appreciated timely feedback, giving them the "opportunity to change their practice much more quickly" (p. 102). Before engaging in a reflective conversation with the teacher, the administrator should ask for permission with a non-pressuring question such as, "Do you have a minute to talk, or would later be a better time?" (Baeder, 2018a, p. 128). If the current moment does not work for the teacher, the administrator should confer with the teacher on scheduling an optimal date and time.

Another contributor to setting teachers at ease and allowing for meaningful, reflective dialogue would involve the administrator asking the teacher to first share observation reflections before sharing their own observation feedback (Glickman et al., 2018) by opening with a question such as, "What were you doing to help students learn?" (Randall, 2020, p. 48). Nolan and Hoover (2011) have remarked, "If the supervisor lays out personal perceptions and analysis concerning what the teacher did and might do differently, the teacher has no choice but to *react*. The spirit of trust is violated" (p. 44). In contrast, after the teacher is the first to reflect, the administrator could share observation data without interpretation so that instead, the teacher and administrator would interpret the data together through their natural dialogue (Glickman et al., 2018).

Through reflective conversations following informal observations, administrators and teachers can engage in dialogue about their reflections of the observations, serving as "a complementary experience wherein both teacher and principal [i.e., administrator] acknowledge and use their collective expertise" (Blase & Blase, 2004, p. 102). Within my formative supervision conceptual framework, reflective conversations provide the avenues for administrators and teachers to engage in both reflection and feedback to impact teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Reflection

Through reflection, teachers can use self-questioning about their teaching and students' learning, consider the impact of their instruction, and think about possible changes they could have made or could make to their instruction (Blase & Blase, 2004; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Ponticell et al., 2018). Reflection is vital for learning and improvement. However, the "fast lane" characteristics of teachers' daily experiences can make it difficult and leave little time for deep reflection as York-Barr et al. (2001) have described:

> It is not unusual for teachers to put aside carefully constructed lessons due to unanticipated circumstances or responses. It is also not unusual for those same lessons to become fragmented as a result of the constant coming to and going from classrooms by students and staff. Educators routinely must juggle multiple tasks, process information on many levels, and make on-the-spot decisions to meet the changing needs and demands in the teaching environment…Reflective practice cannot be done in the fast lane. Although much of educational practice occurs in the fast lane, educators must find or create a rest area along the roadside to reflect on past practices and to determine appropriate adjustments for future practice. (p. 2)

York-Barr et al. called the "rest area" a "deliberate pause" (p. 6) where teachers consciously take the time for reflection and keep an open mind to the different possibilities they may contemplate or hear from others such as their supervisors. Ideally,

teachers' thought processes lead to "deeper understanding and insights" (p. 8) that then result in action.

Schön (1983) developed two concepts for professional reflection in his model of reflective practice—reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action entails two ideas: 1) the broader idea of one reflecting in a specific, active context such as their job; and 2) reflecting on what one is doing at the same time as doing it (Ghaye, 2011). It could be considered "thinking on your feet" and "learning by doing" (Schön, 1983, p. 54), improvisation (Ghaye, 2011), or how York-Barr et al. described teachers making "on-the-spot decisions" (p. 2). Though likely to be brief, reflection-in-action should not be considered lightly. Schön (1992) viewed the process as "getting in touch with the understandings we form spontaneously in the midst of action. It is central to the work of criticism, coaching, learning, and teaching" (p. 126). Reflection-in-action can also refer to the "process of reframing, experimenting, acting, and reappraising in the midst of the problem situation" (Nolan & Huber, 1989, pp. 127–128) or the problem-solving actions teachers may engage in while teaching.

Reflection-on-action does not take place in the moment but rather after an event such as one or two days later and possibly outside of the event's setting. Reflection-on-action or reflection-on-practice "essentially involves looking back and going over things again" (Ghaye, 2011, p. 7) and would meet York-Barr et al.'s (2001) idea of taking a "deliberate pause" (p. 6) for reflection "on one's actions and thoughts… after the practice is completed" (Killion & Todnem, 1991, p. 15). The process can also refer to deeply reflecting any time on a past, notable event (Ghaye, 2011).

Killion and Todnem (1991) developed a third reflection process,

reflection-for-action which they described as "the desired outcome of" (p. 15) Schön's (1983) concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. They perceived the purpose of reflection as to not only reflect as one is engaged in action or to think back on past actions, but "to guide future action" (p. 15). They stated, "Reflection, then, is a process that encompasses all time designations, past, present, and future simultaneously" (p. 15). Killion and Todnem explained their reflection model as it applies to teaching:

> First a teacher plans to act. Then through reflection-in-action, the teacher observes the action as it transpires, almost as if placing herself outside the action itself. From this perspective, the teacher creates meaning, in understanding the dynamics of the cause/effect relationship that occurs between her actions and the students' responses to her behaviors. Engaging in reflection-on-action and reflection-for-action, the teacher analyzes events and draws conclusions that give her insight into future decision points. (p. 15).

Ghaye (2011) has also viewed reflection-for-action to be essential to teachers' reflection processes. It is reflection with purpose, for making plans to act on what the teacher learned. Reflection leads to teachers' professional growth.

York-Barr et al. (2001) have posited teachers and other educators finding ways that work for them to create a time and place for individual reflection. Reflection time could be put on the calendar or coincide with a supportive action such as taking a walk right after work. Reflection can involve self-talk or activities such as journaling or mapping. To engage in more productive self-reflection, educators should increase their awareness of biases and work to understand other perspectives. One self-question could be, "What are some other ways of thinking about this?" (p. 45). Also important is to learn to trust one's own voice. "We can fall into routine ways of doing things. We can also become accustomed to others telling us directly or implying indirectly what we should do" (p. 46). Ghaye (2011) has proposed a similar idea of asking oneself positive

reflective questions rather than focusing more on deficits, i.e., "what went wrong rather than went right" (p. 9) when considering making improvements:

> Deficit-based questions lead to deficit-based conversations, which in turn lead to deficit-based patterns of action…By asking ourselves positive questions, we may bring forth future action of far greater promise… [They] invite a different kind of conversation—one that brings with it the opportunity for positive action… [Reflective practice] is about identifying and playing to your strengths. (pp. 9–10)

Teachers using Ghaye's strengths-based approach to reflection makes sense in a formative supervision approach where administrators also focus on teachers' strengths during informal observations and administrator–teacher reflective conversations.

Moreover, Schön (1988) believed both teaching and supervision to be reflective processes. He perceived instructional supervision as being "*any* activity that supports, guides, or encourages teachers in their reflective teaching" (p. 19) coming from varied programs or roles including the school administrator. "Through advice, criticism, description, demonstration, and questioning, one person [as a coach] helps another learn to practice reflective teaching in the context of the doing" (p. 19). Therefore, in addition to teachers reflecting-in/on-action as individuals, administrators can facilitate teacher reflection through reflective conversations. Administrator–teacher reflective conversations can be the medium to meet Nolan and Huber's (1989) supervision aims of "(1) Engaging the teacher in the process of reflective behavior while (2) fostering critical inquiry into the process of teaching and learning, thereby (3) increasing the teacher's understanding of teaching practice and (4) broadening and deepening the [teacher's] repertoire" (p. 128). In their study of over 800 teachers, Blase and Blase (2004) found school administrators' behaviors of observing in classrooms, dialoguing with teachers, giving praise, and making suggestions to strongly effect teachers' reflection capacities.

Effective administrators' dialogic processes included questioning, encouraging, and providing feedback.

Feedback

Stark et al. (2017) have proposed the solutions-focused teacher supervision (SFTS) model integrating developmental supervision (Glickman et al., 2014; 2018) with solution-focused supervision (Thomas, 2013). The SFTS model views the nondirective stance as the regular approach to formative supervision, and therefore, the nondirective stance guides strategies for providing feedback during reflective conversations. Dialogue is focused on the teacher's perspectives of their strengths and needs, not the administrator's diagnoses. "Questions are asked using the teacher's words, coming from a position of curiosity with the intention of better understanding the teacher's experience without evaluating it. In this manner, the teacher is given the responsibility for deciding what is important to discuss" (Stark et al., 2017, p. 224). Teachers are the experts who reflect and problem-solve with the administrator's facilitation.

Sharing feedback through the nondirective approach involves the supervisory behaviors of listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting (Glickman et al., 2018). Since the teacher is the first to share their reflection of the observation which may include self-critique to problem-solve, the administrator's primary role is to listen with concentration and support, showing this by maintaining eye contact, making nonverbal indications such as nodding, and verbal utterances such as, "mm-hmm" (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al. 2017; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). If administrators "listen without judgment and with empathy" (York-Barr et al., 2001, p. 25), they are more likely to understand teachers' intentions and experiences as well as make better connections.

Administrators might ask clarification questions to better understand teachers' insights, but should take care not to give suggestions, share their observation data or interpretations, or make assumptions about teachers' meanings (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al. 2017). Similarly, Baeder (2018a) has suggested asking teachers genuine questions about the context of what was observed. Doing so may answer much of what the administrator was wondering about and may deter them from providing critique they had in mind. Baeder has explained further:

> Too often instructional leaders jump straight to their suggestions for improvement and don't give teachers a chance to explain what they've already done and what they plan to do next. This leads to wasted effort and reduced trust. When instructional leaders make suggestions without seeking context, they imply that teachers need to be told what to do and simply comply, rather than think for themselves. (p. 111)

Baeder's explanation is clearly aligned with the nondirective approach where teachers start the conversation with their reflections, administrators listen intently and may ask clarifying questions, and administrators do not yet share their observation data or give critiquing feedback and suggestions.

Encouraging is another key nondirective behavior. Per Glickman et al. (2018), encouraging involves the administrator demonstrating "willingness to listen further" (p. 163) through noninfluential yet affirming comments such as "I'm following you" (p. 163). In Stark et al.'s (2017) model, the administrator expresses encouragement also by giving genuine compliments using three types—direct, indirect, and self (Berg & Dejong, 2005). Stark et al. (2017) have explained how the compliment types can apply to SFTS:

> Direct compliments are sincere observations about the teacher's strengths made by the administrator ("I'm impressed with your dedication to keeping up with the latest innovations in your content area"), and indirect compliments reveal the views of others ("I bet your students appreciate the fun and supportive environment you've created in your classroom"). Self-compliments are questions

> asked in a way that put the teacher in the position of describing his or her successes…By emphasizing what the teacher is already doing well, the administrator supports the teacher and encourages him or her not only to expand on what he or she was saying but also to build upon his or her established strengths. (pp. 225–226)

If administrators give encouragement through authentic compliments or praise, teachers are more likely to be reflective, take risks, and continue to implement effective teaching strategies (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004). Encouragement can also come through administrators asking questions beginning with the word "how" (Stark et al., 2017), such as relating something the teacher may be concerned about to "How have you had success with this in the past?"

Through verbally reflecting, the administrator might share their understandings of the teacher's perspectives by paraphrasing, summarizing, and using phrases such as, "I think you're saying…" (Glickman et al., 2018, p. 163), without offering suggestions. Stark et. Al (2017) have advised, "SF administrators are careful to echo the teacher's keywords as much as possible" (p. 226) because using one's own words could alter the teacher's meaning and make them believe the administrator does not truly understand.

Although nondirective is the preferred stance in SFTS, the collaborative approach may also be used with its similar supervisory behaviors of listening, clarifying, and reflecting. What distinguishes collaborative from nondirective is its use of the presenting behavior in which administrators share their perceptions and offer feedback after teachers have shared their perspectives (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017). Glickman et al. (2018) have advised phrasing feedback as an "I see" statement such as "I see the situation in this way" (p. 153). Stark et al. (2017) have proposed the "hedging" strategy from Rudes et al.'s (1997) work where supervisors are tentative with their comments,

beginning with phrases such as “I wonder…” and “Suppose you…” (Stark et al., 2017, p. 226). Blase and Blase (2000) have shown making “purposeful, appropriate, and nonthreatening” (p. 133) suggestions support teachers in their reflection and risk-taking. Ghaye (2011) has recommended not phrasing feedback or reflective questions with a deficit focus. Instead, he has asserted:

> The best feedback is about being positive and…being useful…to help those involved to reframe the current situation in such a way that it conveys a sense of positivity. It is feedback that liberates and energizes us to make a different, or even greater, effort to improve the current situation. It is also feedback that presents current limitations and constraints as exciting challenges. (p. 9)

The collaborative approach to developmental supervision might also involve problem solving and negotiating where through discussion, the administrator assists the teacher with brainstorming solutions and making action plans (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017).

No matter the developmental supervision approach used, Glickman et al. (2018) have asserted that administrators share descriptions of their observational data before offering interpretations:

> Remember that if the goal of supervision is to enhance teachers’ thought and commitment about improving classroom (and school) practice, observations should be used as a base of information to create an instructional dialogue between supervisor and teacher. Using description first when talking to a teacher about his or her classroom creates an instructional dialogue. Providing interpretation and evaluative statements first ushers in defensiveness, combativeness, or resentment in the teacher and stifles discussion. (p. 195)

Baeder (2018a) has also seen how descriptive, low-inference evidence from an observation can be the foundation for productive administrator–teacher dialogue. Observation notes can be shared during a reflective conversation to guide this dialogue. O’Leary (2020) has advised, “Focus on what you saw in the session rather than an

impressionistic interpretation of what you think was happening" (p. 62). Administrators should share their observations with accuracy and objectivity, using language that is aligned to expected observable practices (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017).

After a teacher shares reflections, administrators possibly share observational evidence, and if through the natural flow of the conversation, administrators offer their interpretations as feedback, it can be more effective if administrators focus on a small number of areas they observed. Zepeda (2017) has stated:

> In an attempt to be helpful, some supervisors fall into the trap of overwhelming the teacher with too much information. Beginning supervisors, in particular, may seek to establish their credibility by offering a laundry list of observations based on their view of the lesson. But supervision is not about the supervisor; supervision is about the teacher and the learning opportunity that data and feedback from an observation can provide. (p. 256)

Additionally, Baeder (2018a) has recommended administrators embrace teachers asking for feedback on specific areas of their teaching. Unless there is something else urgent the administrator needs to address, they should focus on the areas identified by the teacher. Through the reflective conversation where the teacher is at the center, the teacher should be the one doing most of the talking and will be likely to share areas on which they would like feedback.

Ponticell et al. (2018) have proposed administrators using the nondirective stance with teachers as the most likely approach leading to teachers' authentic reflection:

> The teacher is encouraged and validated in describing his/her perceptions and feelings about a situation or experience. The supervisor does not offer an opinion but concentrates on helping the teacher to dig for information, clarify, and test his/her assumptions. The supervisor becomes a sounding board for the teacher's explanations, exploration of possible solutions and potential consequences, identification of actions to take, and commitment to a decision and criteria for success. (p. 259)

Further, using a nondirective stance (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017) in reflective conversations where the teacher's reflection and perspective are central may have the potential to building more trusting administrator–teacher relationships than would traditional modes of administrator–to–teacher feedback used in typical evaluation post-conferences.

Trusting Administrator–Teacher Relationships

Trusting administrator–teacher relationships are imperative in a formative supervision process that promotes teachers' professional growth (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2004; Glickman et al., 2018; McGhee, 2020; Mette et al., 2017; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004; Zepeda, 2017). Trusting another person or a circumstance entails an acceptance of risk-taking and vulnerability without fear of harm or threat (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Therefore, regarding school administrators and teachers, "when the principal [i.e., administrator] is perceived as trustworthy, teachers are willing to take the risks inherent in innovative and creative efforts to address learner need, important especially in the face of great challenge" (Forsyth et al., 2011, p. 167). In addition, trusting relationships with administrators help teachers "to be open about both their successes and challenges in the classroom" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 267) and a lack of trust could make teachers "guarded and more likely to engage in self-protective behaviors that may impair the sense of professional community in a school" (p. 267). Notably, two research-based perspectives of trust in schools stand out with respect to formative supervision—Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) work on faculty trust and Bryk and Schneider's (2002) conception of relational trust.

Faculty Trust

Ohio State University researchers, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) conceived a "conceptual formulation of [school] faculty trust" (p. 184) based on their substantial review of trust literature from a variety of disciplines including sociology and economics. Surfacing from their review of over 150 articles were the concept of "willingness to risk" and five "faces of trust"—benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. Due to the concept of trust's "multi-faceted complexity" (p. 186), Hoy and Tschannen-Moran selected the term "face" or "facet" to represent the trust concepts that emerged from their literature review. Moreover, their review yielded 16 distinct definitions for trust with all but one being multi-faceted. From their work, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran developed their own multi-faceted definition of trust incorporating the five facets: "an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (p. 189). Although their multi-faceted definition of trust applied to both individuals and collective groups, the researchers' interest centered on the collective's (i.e., the school faculty's) trust in referents such as the principal, fellow teachers, parents, and students. "The importance of each of the facets depends on the referent of trust (who is being trusted) and the nature of the interdependence between the parties" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2000, p. 558). Thus, the researchers developed and tested a trust scale to empirically measure school faculties' facets of trust in other referents in multiple studies over time (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003).

Facets of Trust

Through their initial study, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) found benevolence to be the most prominent facet of trust in the literature. Benevolence or having good intentions can refer to the actions a supervisor may take toward an employee such as "showing consideration and sensitivity for employees' needs and interests, acting in a way that protects employees' rights, and refraining from exploiting others for the benefit of personal interests" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 571). "For principals to earn the trust of their teachers, they must demonstrate genuine care for teachers, students, and parents alike" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 259). Benevolence can also describe the feeling of "confidence that one's well-being or something one cares about will be protected by the trusted person or group" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, p. 187).

Working with benevolence to promote trust is the facet of reliability where one party can be confident the other will consistently take beneficial action (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Reliable administrators follow through with their decisions and can be counted on to "come through in a difficult situation" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 263). Reliability from administrators helps teachers to be more confident in their own decisions and actions.

However, reliable benevolence may not be sufficient to develop trusting relationships; competence or the skills to meet one's role expectations are also essential (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Such skills include "setting high standards, pressing for results, solving problems, resolving conflicts, working hard, and setting an example" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 262). Competent administrators consistently

interact with teachers, both individually and faculty-wide to support instructional improvement and student learning.

Another face of trust is honesty which "speaks to a person's character, integrity, and authenticity" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 558). An honest person makes truthful statements depicting accurate descriptions of events. With respect to administrator–teacher relationships, administrators must exhibit honesty "in their interactions with teachers…When teachers begin to perceive a discrepancy between their principal's words and actions, suspicion is the likely result" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 260). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis have noted further about the importance of school administrators' or principals' honesty:

> The revelation of dishonest behavior may be more damaging to trust than lapses in other facets because it is read as an indictment of the person's character. Once a principal has been caught in a lie and the faculty has lost faith in the word of their principal, it will be hard for them to earn or regain trust because language is an essential tool leaders must use to lead and inspire people. (p. 260)

Honesty, integrity, and authenticity also apply to administrators admitting and taking responsibility for mistakes, keeping their promises, not being "too guarded in what they are willing to reveal about themselves" (p. 260), not using manipulation, and not playing favorites among the staff.

Openness is the last of the five facets of trust. Exhibiting openness involves not withholding pertinent information as well as making others feel assured that confidential information will not be used or shared inappropriately (Hoy & Tschannen, 1999). Administrators demonstrate openness when they "exchange thoughts and ideas freely with teachers" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 261). This concept includes providing timely feedback and involving teachers in school-wide decision-making.

Relational Trust

The theory of relational trust was developed by sociologists and educational researchers, Bryk and Schneider (2002) during their 1990s longitudinal research study of Chicago Public Schools' education reform efforts in more than 400 elementary schools. Guided by literature regarding trust and social interaction from a variety of fields, they created "a grounded theory of social trust in school communities" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 12) applying to social exchanges occurring between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, teachers and parents, teachers and principals, and principals and parents. Relational trust among individuals in these dyadic roles is maintained and further developed through mutual understanding of others' role obligations and expectations; and by individuals consistently fulfilling their role obligations in good conscience. When parties' behaviors or motivations are perceived by others to be in conflict with these expectations, relational trust wanes (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Further, Bryk and Schneider (2003) maintained,

> an interrelated set of mutual dependencies are embedded within the social exchanges in any school community [that] create a sense of mutual vulnerability for all individuals involved. Consequently, deliberate action taken by any party to reduce this sense of vulnerability in others—to make them feel safe and secure—builds trust across the community. (p. 41)

Bryk and Schneider (2003) asserted that relational trust between members of a school community was vital for successful school improvement.

Lenses of Discernment

According to Bryk and Schneider's (2002) relational trust theory, there are four lenses through which school community members view and analyze others' behavior to maintain and develop relational trust: respect, competence, personal regard for others,

and integrity. Respect in the school setting entails school community members recognizing individuals' important roles in students' education as well as the dependencies among roles. Respectful and genuine social exchanges involve parties listening intently to each other, demonstrating they value individuals' ideas and realizing that working together cooperatively is essential for effective education of students. School community members also discern others' behaviors through their judgments of individuals' competence in meeting their respective roles' expectations (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; 2003). Bryk and Schneider (2003) placed less importance on these perceptions' influence on relational trust because standardized competence criteria have been difficult to establish, but they noted, "instances of negligence or incompetence, if allowed to persist, undermine trust" (p. 42). Further, relational trust is strengthened when individuals take actions that demonstrate personal regard for others such as principals communicating genuine caring regarding teachers' personal life issues (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; 2003). The last lens of discernment emphasized by Bryk and Schneider is personal integrity. For example, teachers and other school community members trust principals who remain true to their word, are guided by a moral-ethical perspective, and demonstrate commitment to students' education and welfare (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; 2003).

Relational Trust's Effects on Organizational Conditions

Through their longitudinal study spanning nearly a decade, Bryk and Schneider (2002) found a strong correlation between high trust levels and academic improvement in schools. High-trust schools were three times more likely to improve in reading and mathematics, whereas the likelihood of improvement in low-trust schools was only one in

seven. Bryk and Schneider also found correlations between improvements in organizational conditions and high relational trust. The researchers acknowledged that other factors such as student composition and teacher background could have affected school improvement, so they conducted more refined analyses in which they controlled these variables and still found a strong correlation between relational trust levels and school improvement. Based on their study findings, Bryk and Schneider posited relational trust in school communities affected school improvement by fostering organizational conditions facilitating individuals' abilities to implement improvement efforts rather than affecting student learning directly. These conditions include reduction of educators' feelings of vulnerability toward new tasks accompanying school reform; facilitation of collaborative problem-solving; providing clear, shared expectations for the professional community; and development of educators' strong commitment to the mission, vision, and culture of the school community.

Applications of Faculty and Relational Trust to Formative Supervision

Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of faculty trust and Bryk and Schneider's (2002) lenses of discernment share similarities and both can apply to key components of formative supervision. Table 2 on the following page depicts these potential interrelationships.

Table 2

Applications of Faculty and Relational Trust to Formative Supervision

Facets of Trust	Lenses of Discernment	Formative Supervision Components
Benevolence	Personal regard for others	Informal observations for every teacher (Zepeda, 2017) Teachers feel secure in risk-taking and making mistakes (Blase & Blase, 2004; Forsyth et al., 2011) Teachers feel secure asking for administrators' feedback and support (Baeder, 2018a) Focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2004; Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Huber, 1989; Stark et al., 2017)
Reliability		Informal observations for every teacher (Zepeda, 2017) Frequent and timely informal observations and reflective conversations (Baeder, 2018a; Glickman et al., 2018; Marshall, 2013; Zepeda, 2017) Teachers can rely on administrators' "willingness to listen" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, p. 187)
Competence	Competence	Unannounced informal observations (Baeder, 2018a; Campbell, 2013; Downey et al., 2004; Marshall, 2013) Strengths-based reflection and feedback (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2014; 2018; Zepeda, 2017) "Principals and teachers depend upon one another to accomplish the teaching and learning goals of the school" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003, p. 184)
Honesty	Integrity	Observation data are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013)
Openness	Respect	Administrators ask teachers' permission to meet for reflective conferences (Baeder, 2018a) Face-to-face reflective conversations in the teacher's classroom with the administrator and teacher sitting side-by-side (Glickman et al., 2018; Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017) Administrators' nondirective stance: listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017)

Not only do Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of faculty trust and Bryk and Schneider's (2002) lenses of discernment distinctly apply to my formative supervision framework, but their concepts also seem to be aligned with the specific formative supervision approach of Randall's (2020) Trust-Based Observations.

Intervention

A formative supervision intervention that has been directly tied to trust is Craig Randall's (2020) process, Trust-Based Observations (TBO). TBO was developed to involve longer and more frequent observations followed up by immediate, meaningful reflective conversations with teachers guided by the overall concept of building trust with teachers. The TBO approach to formative supervision entails cycles of informal observations followed by reflective conversations, providing a practical pattern of actions and effective routine. TBO's cyclical nature is in line with other formative supervision approaches (Baeder, 2018a; Cogan, 1973; Glickman et al., 2014; Goldhammer, 1969; Goldhammer et al., 1980; Marshall, 2013; Stark et al., 2017; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Randall (2020) has advised administrators implement a cycle with each teacher once every three to four weeks (Burke, 2023), following a structure where an unannounced, 20-minute observation is followed by a ten to 20-minute reflective conversation the following day. Immediate reflective conversations are crucial to the process, so it is not likely an administrator would conduct any observations the last day of the school week only to wait for doing the follow-up reflective conversation the following Monday (Randall, 2020). Teachers should not have to wait over the weekend for feedback (Zepeda, 2017). Based on this premise, a typical TBO schedule might feature two observations each day Monday–Thursday and two reflective conversations

each day Tuesday–Friday. Therefore, Mondays and Fridays would each involve two administrator–teacher interactions and Tuesdays–Thursdays would entail four interactions per day. Randall (2020) has reflected from his experience, “Knowing that this time spent with teachers leads to genuine improvement in teaching and learning, it is the most productive eight to ten hours per week a principal can spend” (p. 20).

The TBO cycle does not involve pre-conferences or reflective conversations prior to observations as they are informal and unannounced, but Randall (2020) has developed a strategy for introducing TBO to teachers before starting implementation. He has recommended holding a teacher meeting where the administrator explains that TBO is “a continuous cycle of short observations and reflective conversations focused on strengths, and eventually, supported risk taking to benefit teaching and learning growth. The process is not about the ‘out to getcha’ mindset that many teachers have experienced” (p. 182) with the evaluation process or even other forms of instructional supervision such as classroom walkthroughs. Following a discussion of the concepts and purposes behind TBO, administrators would explain its features and structure. They would share the Trust-Based Observations/Reflection Form (Randall, 2020; 2023a) and talk about its reflective questions, observational instrument aspects, and “functionality as a growth resource tool” (p. 182). Randall has emphasized to administrators, “Let teachers know that if you see them trying something new, even if it doesn’t go well, they can expect nothing but support for taking chances” (p. 182). After this introduction, the teachers could meet in small groups to “process the information” (p. 182) and the administrator could answer their questions. Randall has remarked, “Often the best answer to questions is that, with time, teachers will feel the difference and really enjoy the new model” (p.

182). Although Randall has suggestions for the TBO introduction, approaches to conducting the meeting and possibly establishing TBO slowly through multiple meetings or a pilot program is at the administrator's discretion based on the initiatives and needs of the school.

Informal Observations

Trust-based observations are unannounced to serve two purposes: 1) presenting a more real picture of teachers' day-to-day teaching and 2) allowing for accountability. Randall (2020) has noticed, "It's surprising how many teachers say they like knowing that observations are unannounced…it helps them ensure that they stay on top of their teaching game knowing that a visit is coming but not knowing when" (p. 21). Trust-based observations' informal nature also comes through their frequency and durations. By visiting every teacher at least once every three to four weeks for 20 minutes each, administrators will be able to collect sufficient observation data to support meaningful reflective conversations with teachers as described by Glickman et al. (2018) and Zepeda (2017). Randall (2020) has remarked, "Twenty minutes has proven enough time to gain a picture of the class while also interviewing students" (p. 23), a key aspect of the trust-based observation to perceive "whether students are learning" (p. 45). The specific amount of 20 minutes is also not too long to hinder the administrator's manageability. Further, observation regularity facilitates administrators speaking from a knowledgeable standpoint when parents raise concerns about the teacher or classroom.

Observations' frequencies and durations should be relatively equal for every teacher (Randall, 2020; Zepeda, 2017). Randall has asserted:

> By observing all teachers equally—which doesn't mean that teachers on improvement plans aren't observed more often—principals send a valuable

> message about the importance of "lifelong learning" as it relates to observation; it's for everyone. By observing all teachers equally every year, observers maintain accountability and knowledge of teaching and learning in every class and have the opportunity to continually help support the growth of all teachers, even expert and part-time teachers. (p. 23)

Additionally, equal frequency and duration is fair, developing a learning community "more conducive to cooperation and collegiality" (p. 23) and providing the administrator with rich information to promote growth of all teachers school-wide.

Observation Form

Both administrators' observation evidence and administrator–teacher reflective conversation outcomes are recorded using the Trust-Based Observations/Reflection Form (Randall, 2020; 2023a). The form in a variety of interactive, electronic document formats is freely available by emailing Randall via his website, https://trustbased.com. As a past principal, Randall (2020) did not use an observation form but rather note-taking with scripting. In his work supporting fellow administrators with formative supervision, the idea of using a commercial, standard-based instrument or creating a similar comprehensive rubric came up. However, Randall realized "using a rubric with pedagogy lists meant grading or rating teachers, which would interfere with the reflective growth conversations. Teachers wouldn't trust as much and therefore wouldn't be as open or willing to try new things" (p. 40). Over time, the current TBO form was developed and Randall was cautious to include only nine pedagogical practices, (e.g., Classroom and Student Behavior Management) as evidence for observers to watch for and potentially record. However, administrators can make revisions to the form. Randall has stated:

> Feel free to use the form in its entirety or to modify parts to suit your own beliefs, which might place a higher priority on some pedagogy areas that the TBO form doesn't address…[But] make sure the form is manageable in length. Don't add… instead, swap something out to keep [it] to ten or fewer categories. (p. 45–46)

Whether using Randall's form as developed or a modified version, when visiting classrooms, the administrator looks for and records evidence of the teacher's strengths using the electronic form on the administrator's laptop. A strengths-based approach has been strongly supported in the supervision literature (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2014; 2018; McGhee & Stark, 2018; 2021; Stark et al., 2017; Zepeda, 2017). Randall (2020) has advised to administrators, "What do you find yourself noticing? What draws your attention? It matters. Write it down" (p. 52). However, administrators do not record any recommended growth areas or interpretations, only descriptive evidence of the observation as recommended in the literature (Baeder, 2018a; Glickman et al., 2018; O'Leary, 2020; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). If applicable, the administrator might temporarily note on the form and then move elsewhere any potential growth areas or concerns, but these are not documented on the TBO form or shared with the teacher in writing (Randall, 2020).

The TBO form includes multiple fields, some drop-down menus, and links called "Toolbox Possibilities" that give strategy explanations and ideas compiled by Randall (2020) and his colleagues. There are no rubrics or ratings. One form area example is the "Learning Target" that lists possible ways a learning target can be made evident to students during instruction such as "Reviewed at the end of class" (Randall, 2023a). To note any of these as observed, the administrator simply marks an X next to the example. Missing Xs or other blank fields are no cause for alarm or even "a sure sign of a growth area for a teacher" (Randall, 2020, p. 58). Blanks simply indicate the particular practice was not observed during the lesson. The practice may not have been appropriate for the lesson's content and/or the point of the lesson (e.g., beginning, middle, or end) or day of

the week when the administrator observed. A collection of evidence of teachers' strategies will develop over time through multiple observations, providing areas of growth for the teacher and administrator to consider. Randall has cautioned:

> Principals can easily be tempted to write about the absence of some area of practice. Don't! It means nothing in isolation, and, depending on the area, it might not mean anything negative because a teacher may be so strong in so many other areas that it makes up for whatever this particular absence is. (p. 52)

The goal of the TBO form at the end of one observation is to have recorded all evidence of strengths that were observed within the 20 minutes in order to guide the reflective conversation between the administrator and the teacher.

Reflective Conversations

The TBO form shared with the teacher during the reflective conversation serves as the only written report of an informal observation (Randall, 2020). Like Marshall (2013), Sullivan and Glanz (2013), and Zepeda (2017), Randall has recommended administrators not leave feedback notes or send emails after an observation:

> Sometimes, administrators feel they can save time by e-mailing feedback instead of meeting with teachers directly. Avoid this temptation at all costs. Always meet with teachers…TBO is built on the premise that teachers take risks when they have safe, trusting relationships with their principals. E-mailing feedback erodes trust rapidly. Teachers read feedback, and because there is no tone conveyed in the messages, they worry and wonder, creating fear and destroying trust. Any time that is saved by this act of e-mailing feedback interferes with the growth of teaching and is therefore not worth the time. (p. 31)

The Trust-Based Observations/Reflection Form (Randall, 2020; 2023a) is titled appropriately because not only does it serve as the administrators' descriptive record of the observation, the form facilitates the structure and content of the reflective conversation with the four main reflective questions featured at the top of the form and through its dual purposes of a record for both administrators' observation evidence and

administrator–teacher reflective conversation outcomes. The document starts as only the administrator's but finishes as an administrator–teacher collaborative record of observations and reflections.

Randall's (2020) TBO cyclical structure involves the reflective conversation taking place for ten to 20 minutes in duration on the next day after an informal observation. The concept of immediate conversations is recommended among supervision researchers (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; O'Leary, 2020; Zepeda, 2017). Since reflective conversations follow on the next day after informal observations, reflective conversations are just as frequent. Randall (2020) has said this frequency facilitates administrators' support teachers' risk-taking. "When teachers try new strategies, they want—and it is important for them to receive—coaching feedback on the progress of their new initiative so that tweaks or adjustments can be made if necessary" (p. 22). Also to support teachers' risk-taking and to build trust, the administrator's first three cycles of each teacher's observations and reflective conversations focus on teachers' observed strengths and the administrator does not yet offer suggestions until after the fourth cycle. Randall (2020) has asserted to administrators, "By your focusing only on strengths and not offering suggestions, the first three visits build trust as teachers realize you're not out to get them" (p. 103). This approach is aligned to developmental supervision's nondirective stance that values the teacher as the reflective expert (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017).

Meeting for face-to-face reflective conversations is essential in the TBO process as recommended in the formative supervision literature (Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). In the TBO approach, administrators do not schedule the

reflective conversations with teachers. Instead, the administrator looks at both their and the teacher's schedules for the day following the observation and considers times to try, most likely during the teacher's planning period, but also possibly before or after school. In TBO, reflective conversations are the priority, so an administrator would be sure to figure out how to fit in a teacher's follow-up meeting before scheduling times for more teacher observations.

At the appropriate time for the reflective conversation, the administrator brings their laptop to the teacher's classroom—the teacher's domain rather than the administrator's office (Randall, 2020). Randall has expressed, "Whether you're 7, 17, or 37, getting called to the principal's office feels like getting called to the principal's office" (Burke, 2023, 9:25). Also, Randall has found when the reflective conversation takes place "in their [the teacher's] space, being in their space will trigger more memories about the lesson the day before and will make the conversation more rich" (Randall, 2023b, 45:29). Then the administrator asks permission to meet. Randall (2020) has noted:

> There are times when teachers might be in the middle of something they have to get done before the next class, so extending this courtesy demonstrates respect for them and their time, a courtesy that builds relationship. Rare is the time when teachers don't engage in the conversation right then. (p. 99)

If the teacher declines, the administrator can email and ask for other dates and times that work for the teacher. If the reflective conversation has not happened past more than two days, the administrator offers two options—either still finding a time to meet "or waiting until the next round of observations. Teachers appreciate that their principal is giving them the choice, providing at a minimum another opportunity to build relationship" (p. 25). When the reflective conversation does happen, the administrator sits beside the teacher. Not only does this avoid creating a physical and perhaps a relationship barrier as

sitting across from each other at a desk might (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013), it also allows for collaboration and the teacher to "see everything typed as it's being typed [in the form]. This layer of transparency adds a layer of comfort to the conversation that builds trust" (Randall, 2020, p. 100). Table 3 includes the steps of the reflective conversation and how the process is aligned to the supervision and trust literature.

Table 3

TBO Reflective Conversation Steps

Step (Randall, 2020)	**Alignment to Literature**
1. Admin asks first reflective question, "What were you doing to help students learn?" (p. 89), opening the conversation for teacher to be the first to share reflections. This is a must per Randall. Admin listens attentively and with empathy, curiosity, patience, and presence; using nonverbal/verbal cues, paraphrasing, reflecting, clarifying, and summarizing. Admin also types teacher's "answers as accurately as possible" (p. 100) then reads back what was written. 2. Admin asks three more reflective questions: "If you had the opportunity to re-teach the lesson, what if anything, might you have done differently?" (per the 2023 form; revised since 2020) "Question of the year, a yearly schoolwide question connected to an annual professional development growth area" (p. 91) "What progress have you made on your Action Research Big Goal?" (p. 91) As with the first question, admin listens attentively, types responses, and clarifies after each answer.	Admins' nondirective stance: listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting; Reflective questions are nonthreatening (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017) Focused on teacher's perspective and reflection (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2004; Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Huber, 1989; Stark et al., 2017) Apply to trust facets: benevolence, personal regard for others, reliability, openness, respect (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) (Within the scope of my study, we will not be implementing the Question of the Year or Action Research Big Goal elements.)
3. Admin shares the evidence of strengths they observed as recorded in the form, beginning each statement with "I noticed…" (p. 123) Teachers are welcome to respond at any time through the natural flow of conversation.	Strengths-based reflection and feedback (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2014; 2018; Zepeda, 2017) Observation data are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013)

Step (Randall, 2020)	Alignment to Literature
	Apply to trust facets: benevolence, personal regard for others, reliability, competence, honesty (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999)
4. Admin offers suggestions (only after the first three visits and then "when…ready and…feel the teacher is ready for growth" (p. 100). Admin also asks permission: e.g., "I have a suggestion on differentiation. Can I share it with you?" (Randall, 2023b, 55:03). May involve discussing possible supports such as coaching or professional development.	Admin does not offer suggestions until after teacher has shared reflections and administrator has shared descriptive observation data (applies the nondirective stance of Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017)
5. Admin asks the final reflective question, "Is there anything you would like me to add about this visit that I might not have captured? Is there anything specific you would like me to look for on the next visit?" (per the 2023 form; revised since 2020) Admin adds to the form depending on the teacher's answer.	Admins' nondirective stance: listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting (Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017)
6. Admin and teacher check through the form a final time. Admin makes sure teachers is "okay with everything written on the form" (p. 100) Admin emails a copy of the completed form to teacher while still in the classroom.	Focused on teacher's perspective and reflection (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2004; Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Huber, 1989; Stark et al., 2017) Strengths-based reflection and feedback (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2014; 2018; Zepeda, 2017) Observation data are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013) Apply to trust facets: benevolence, personal regard for others, reliability, competence, honesty, openness, respect (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999)

As reflected in Table 3, Randall (2020) believes administrators asking questions and listening as key to building trust with teachers. He has remarked, "Beginning conversations by asking questions provides observers with the opportunity to listen first,

a crucial component in learning about teachers and building relationships" (p. 103). In addition to being aligned to the aforementioned trust literature, administrators' actions during reflective conversations are supported by the trust research of renowned social worker and research professor, Brené Brown (2018). She has remarked, "Trust is in fact earned in the smallest of moments. It is earned not through heroic deeds, or even highly visible actions, but through paying attention, listening, and gestures of genuine care and connection" (p. 32). In her book, *Dare to Lead*, Brown told the story of using a marble jar analogy to help her then third-grade daughter overcome a loss-of-trust experience involving a classroom rewards marble jar at school:

> We trust the people who have earned marbles over time in our life. Whenever someone supports you, or is kind…you put marbles in the jar. When people are mean…marbles come out. We look for people who, over time, put marbles in…until you look up one day and they're holding a full jar…Those are the folks you trust with information that's important to you. (p. 31).

Randall has used Brown's analogy to explain the way administrators' actions through reflective conversations build trust with teachers. "It's like putting a marble at a time into the jar and trying to fill that jar so that the more trust they [teachers] have, the more they're willing to take a risk" (Burke, 2023, 11:01). Randall has described these reflective conversation actions each as marbles in the trust jar: meeting in the teacher's room; sitting beside the teacher; showing transparency by viewing the TBO form together; how administrators "don't start by telling [but] start by asking" (12:29) and "demonstrating active listening" (13:17); being open to the teacher sharing instructional successes that occurred outside of the 20-minute observation; adding to the form by typing what the teacher expresses; and asking teachers "if there's anything else that they'd like to share" (13:22). Regarding the reflective question, "If you had the opportunity to re-teach the

lesson, what if anything, might you have done differently?", Randall has advised how administrators might approach it:

> We say, look, teaching's really hard and I've seen a bunch of lessons where over the 20 minutes, I wouldn't recommend you do anything differently, so if that's the case, please tell us that. Don't feel obligated because I'm your boss to have to manufacture something. And we think by saying that, that's a trust marble in the jar as well. (13:33)

The powerful actions of asking reflective questions, actively listening, and being open to teachers sharing what they believe to be important can be considered "a handful of marbles" (12:39) in the trust jar.

Time Prioritization Strategies

Randall (2020) has also devised strategies for scheduling, making time for TBO, and keeping documents organized. One time prioritization strategy involves administrators starting each day by creating their classroom visit schedule. "Knowing which blocks of time are most likely to be spent in class allows principals to better organize the rest of the day" (p. 30). Also, utilizing time windows of 20 minutes throughout the day can be ideal for informal observations. Similar to the experiences and ideas of Marshall (2013) and Baeder (n.d.), Randall (2020) has advised not scheduling observations through blocks of time. He has found these blocks get frequently interrupted despite administrators setting them as "sacred times" (p. 29). Blocks of time also conflict with "the goals of seeing teachers in the beginning, middle, and end of class and in each course that a teacher teaches…Prescheduled blocks don't always allow for the freedom necessary to do all of these visits" (p. 29). For some non-observation tasks, administrators can employ a "Take Five" strategy by using the "numerous tiny increments of available time in the five-minute range" (p. 31) to take care of simple tasks on their to-do lists.

"Answer an e-mail. Start a draft of a letter. Pop in on a teacher to answer question. Using these increments buys you time" (p. 31). Further, like Baeder (n.d), Randall (2020) has proposed working with office administrative assistants to answer applicable emails, complete appropriate tasks for the administrator, and serve as the "gatekeepers of emergencies" (p. 30). If administrators "instruct faculty to contact administrative assistants with urgent problems…the assistants will judge the urgency and almost always protect the principal's time" (p. 30). Administrative assistants can also schedule all of the administrator's meetings (Randall, 2020) and try to make most meetings on Mondays and Fridays when there are less informal observations and reflective conversations (Randall, 2023b).

Additional TBO Components

One additional component of TBO includes a "teaching and learning alignment" (p. 35) process conducted once per semester where the administrator and teacher spend the last five minutes of a reflective conversation to discuss and analyze alignment among the observed lesson's learning targets, unit plans, and summative assessments. Finally, Randall has developed ideas for how to implement teacher evaluation without conflating it with the TBO process. His system involves eliminating evaluating pedagogy and only evaluating and teachers self-assessing "traditional indicators of workplace success for any job: planning and preparation, collegiality and communication, and professionalism" (p. 154) as well as evidence of teachers exhibiting growth mindsets (Dweck, 2016).

Researcher Endorsements for TBO

Although there have been no research studies specifically on TBO, the supervision and trust research supporting TBO have been interwoven throughout this

section of Chapter 2. In addition, TBO has been endorsed by several education researchers. Prominent researchers who have focused on educational leadership, professional growth, systemic change, and trusting relationships including John Hattie, Michael Fullan, and Carol Dweck have endorsed Craig Randall's TBO approach and book as featured on Randall's website (Randall, n.d.). Hattie remarked, "*Trust-Based Observations* starts where it matters, establishing trust, building on strengths, focusing on the impact of teachers on the learning lives of students, showing how to have open conversations about learning, and demonstrating collective teacher efficacy in action" (Randall, n.d., "TBO Endorsements" section). Further, Fullan noted Randall's book "shows us what a culture of trust is and provides many ideas for putting TBO into practice" ("TBO Endorsements" section) and Dweck stated, "Craig's book has many deeply insightful and compelling ideas. And indeed research shows that when students trust that educators believe in them and their development, their learning can be significantly enhanced" ("TBO Endorsements" section). Moreover, British education researcher, Matthew O'Leary who has focused his work on teacher observation systems, stated that Randall's book "puts forward a compelling case for engaging with observation as a supportive tool for teacher learning and provides a framework for educators to apply this" ("TBO Endorsements" section). In addition to being endorsed by these education researchers, the Trust-Based Observation approach has demonstrated cohesive alignment to best practices from the formative supervision literature, appearing to be a notable intervention for my problem of practice regarding teacher evaluation systems' lack of impact on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Chapter 3

METHOD

For the past three years, I have been engaging in action research with my participating school district. Action research involves identifying problems of practice in one's profession and actively investigating and implementing innovations or interventions in one's own setting to aid in resolving the problems of practice. Action research commonly takes place through numerous cycles of research as the practitioner tries varied interventions or makes improvements and refinements to their interventions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Mertler, 2020). With respect to K-12 education specifically, educators can engage in the action research process to conduct research that, unlike traditional educational research is not generalized from the actual environmental setting (Butin, 2010). As an experienced P–12 education practitioner, I have identified a problem of practice and found an intervention. I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to collaborate with other practitioners in a supportive school district to try this intervention, adjust the action plan, and try again. In January–May 2024, I had the chance to continue my cycles of research with my dissertation study, using the information learned through the previous two cycles to make an enhanced plan of action.

Mixed Methods Action Research

I employed mixed methods action research (MMAR) through my Cycle 1 and 2 studies and continued with this third cycle dissertation study. In mixed methods studies, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Gay et al., 2012; Ivankova, 2015). Gay et al. have explained the purpose of mixed methods as "build(ing) on the synergy and strength that exists between

quantitative and qualitative research methods to understand a phenomenon more fully than is possible using either quantitative or qualitative methods alone" (p. 481). I viewed this purpose as exactly describing my research aims. I believed using a qualitative approach was crucial to my understanding of how my research participants were experiencing the intervention and how it was impacting their practice. How could I experience their process when I could not be in the district daily and I was not implementing the intervention myself? Since I was not trying the formative supervision intervention myself as a principal with teachers; and it was not appropriate for me to join in with the participants' reflective conversations, qualitative data collection through multiple formative interviews (Charmaz, 2014) was a way for me to see how the process was impacting them formatively, just as the instructional supervision process itself is formative. Such an approach was also more active, collaborative, and participatory which seemed appropriate in my role as a participant-observer (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Gay et al., 2012), a mentor, and a colleague, but not as a practitioner directly situated within the district.

Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014) have explained, "Constructivism has been defined as a theory of learning, as a theory of knowing, and more recently, as a paradigm guiding contemporary social science research…a view of human beings as actively constructing knowledge" (p. 183). I believed I was the human being in this scenario, the researcher who was actively and socially constructing my knowledge about participants' perceptions and the impact of my intervention as I regularly interacted with them and employed applicable research methodology. My participants were also the human beings constructing meaning of their experiences. Kivynja and Kuyini (2017) have remarked

regarding constructivist research, “Every effort is made to try to understand the viewpoint of the subject being observed, rather than the viewpoint of the observer” (p. 33). I believed the closest I could come to understanding the participants’ viewpoints and how they were experiencing the intervention when I was not on-site with them was by interacting with them frequently through virtual interviews and using constructivist approaches to analyze interview transcripts. Moreover, a formative approach to interviews was needed for knowing how I could support the participants in their intervention implementation. Formative interviews fulfilled this need and built up to a post-intervention interview. Collecting only quantitative data through a post-intervention survey would have not been enough to glean authentic understandings of participants’ experiences.

Meanwhile, however, quantitative data collection allowed for perceiving concrete information that was not otherwise possible. By developing and administering a quantitative, post-intervention survey, I could collect data on pre-conceived constructs that emerged from the literature and my Cycle 1 and 2 studies. I could employ descriptive and inferential statistics that provided numerical data about specific constructs, participant groups, and pre- and post-test comparisons. For example, I could discern potential differences in perceptions among teachers of varied experience levels and based on their roles of teaching different grades levels or subjects. At the same time, qualitative data collection could capture these constructs as codes and themes while still allowing me as the researcher to remain open to new themes that could present themselves. Qualitative and quantitative approaches complement each other. Such rich and powerful information can be acquired through mixed methods research.

An additional aspect of my mixed methods design was the manner in which qualitative and quantitative data were integrated (Ivankova, 2015). My study seemed to resemble both sequential and concurrent mixed methods designs because it began with a mainly quantitative pre-intervention survey, continued with formative interviews collecting qualitative data, and then culminated with a post-intervention survey and interviews. The design appeared to be sequential in that there were different approaches to the beginning, middle, and end; but the concurrent aspect came into play with the end where both types of data were collected concurrently. However, I hesitated to deem my study specifically as either concurrent or sequential, as the different phases did not necessarily directly inform the next. The formative interviews informed the entire process as well as the final interview at the study's end, but the quantitative post-intervention survey had already been developed. Its content did not change based on the progressive formative interview outcomes. I believed I did not need to settle on a mixed methods study type, as the most important factors were that my design was fitting my study's purpose and was aligned to my research questions. I believed an MMAR approach met these criteria.

Setting

The dissertation cycle action research took place in a small, P–12 Arizona school district in one of the district's three schools during the spring 2024 semester between January and May. The district's three schools included a K–5 elementary school with a separate preschool campus, a grades 6–8 middle school, and the high school serving grades 9–12. At the time of the study, each school was led by one principal with teaching staff sizes ranging from approximately 12 to a little over 30 teachers. Additionally, there

were deans of students at the elementary and middle schools and two other administrators at the high school—an assistant principal and athletic director/dean of students. Among the district's 71 teachers, more than 50% were new to the district with two years or less of experience, while just under 50% had six or more years of total teaching experience. The district had been serving 1,153 students, 60% of which were Caucasian, 24% Native American, 11% Hispanic, 3% African American, less than 2% Asian, and there was less than 1% of students whose race is considered as other or unclassified. In addition, 56% of the student population qualified for free and reduced meals.

Participants

The study intervention began with a three-day, in-person workshop. Workshop participants included the district superintendent, all three schools' principals, and the elementary school's dean of students. The four school administrators ranged in years of school administration experience from an administrator with less than two years as an administrator but with previous extensive instructional coaching experience, to a more veteran administrator with more than 12 years of experience as a school leader. Although experience among the administrators varied, all but one had worked for the district for less than three years. The one experienced district employee had previously served the district as a teacher for four years. There were both males and females among the administrative team.

For the actual third dissertation cycle study, the administrator who had participated in both the Cycle 1 and 2 studies returned as a participant. I collaborated with her to also recruit teacher participants for the study. Multiple teachers and possibly the entire teaching staff of 12 teachers with varied backgrounds of experience and roles were

potential receivers of the administrators' cycles of TBO observations and reflective conversations, but teachers would have only been considered participants in my study if they were recruited, gave signed consent, and participated in my mixed methods data collection involving pre- and post-intervention surveys, formative interviews, and the post-intervention interview. The administrator participant and I initially recruited seven of her teachers with four continuing from the study's beginning to end, including one teacher who returned as a participant from my Cycle 2 study. Such a small sample of five total participants can be considered a limitation. However, working closely with few participants or even participating in research oneself as a practitioner are typical aspects of action research (Ivankova, 2015; Mertler, 2020).

All five of the study participants were female and had worked in education for six or more years. Two of them had also worked for the district for six or more years while the other three participants had worked for the district five years or less. Among the study participants, two had served in their current roles for between three to five years. The other three participants had served in their current roles for two years or less. Although I collected survey and interview data that would indicate each teacher participant's grade levels and subjects taught, I will not be reporting on this information as doing so may make the participants too easily identifiable and possibly violate their confidentiality. In Chapter 4 where I am reporting the study results, I am using the following pseudonyms: Principal Nora and the four teachers: Delphine, Janette, Kayla, and Penny.

Role of the Researcher

My role as an action researcher best identified as a participant-observer (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Gay et al., 2012) because I am an experienced, education

practitioner who provided on-site, interactive professional development and follow-up support to the administrator participant as she implemented the formative supervision intervention; and conducted virtual interviews with and administered surveys to the study participants.

However, my role might not have been considered as the usual action researcher role because I did not implement the formative supervision intervention myself. I also had prior leadership experience in the district but I was not a current employee, so my role brought a possibly unique, insider/outsider perspective that could perhaps be both opportune and disadvantageous. Having worked for the district for seven years in the recent past, I had built relationships with many of the employees who continued to work for the district. I was the former supervisor of one of the Cycle 2 administrator participants, as well as the previous supervisor of at least ten of the district's current teachers. Additionally, I know well many of the other teachers in the district and I am well-known in the community. As I implemented the study, I was cognizant of my potential biases regarding my knowledge of and relationships with the district staff. I needed to keep in mind the possible participant responses to my research that could have emerged and affected the process, such as the participants either answering survey/interview questions in inaccurate ways in an effort to please me; or not being sufficiently candid due to unsureness of how to reconcile that I may have been the teacher's past supervisor, but now they had a new supervisor who was also a participant in my study.

Nevertheless, my dual role as an insider/outsider could have also been proven advantageous with respect to the particular content of my study. I was an action

researcher, but since I was not myself implementing the intervention of observing in classrooms and engaging in administrator–teacher reflective conversations, I may have been able to avoid the conflicts that could have arisen if I were the teachers' current supervisor.

Intervention

Continuing from the Cycle 1 and 2 studies, aspects of Randall's (2020) formative supervision approach, Trust-Based Observations (TBO) served as the intervention for my dissertation study beginning in January 2024 and finishing in May 2024. Before beginning the intervention and the study, I emailed the potential administrator participants in late October 2023 to schedule the intervention workshop for January 24–26, 2024. In early January 2024, I ordered copies of Craig Randall's (2020) book, *Trust-Based Observations: Maximizing Teaching and Learning Growth* for the administrators who did not already have copies through my Cycle 1–2 studies. Then I emailed the administrators on January 15 with instructions about reading the introduction and Chapters 1–3 (30 pages) of the TBO book, the study consent letter if they did decide to join the study, and the pre-intervention survey link to complete before the workshop. The emailed information and their readings provided them with a starting background of the process and allowed more time for next steps at my workshop.

Workshop

I presented and facilitated the three-day, in-person workshop at one of the district's schools on January 24–26, 2024. The workshop was very interactive with collaborative group activities, discussion, and practice, providing administrators with the tools I believed they needed to actually implement formative supervision and specifically,

TBO in their schools. The second day involved administrator participants practicing the TBO informal observation approach in pairs by visiting actual classrooms in action. The teachers volunteered to be observed and were given no specific information about the TBO approach. The last day of the workshop included the administrator pairs role-playing with each other reflective conversations using the actual observation data they collected from their informal visits. However, the TBO observation information had no role in my study or was part of my data collection. I did not keep any of the data they collected and the activities served only as authentic practices of the TBO observation and reflective conversation process; hence, the exercises were simply part of the administrators' professional development. Furthermore, I did not collect data of any kind during the workshop. I was very focused on interacting authentically with the participants and ensuring they left with the strategies needed to begin TBO implementation. I did take a few notes to guide myself as I was providing the workshop. Soon after the workshop, I wrote analytic memos (Charmaz, 2008; 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Roulston, 2010) about my experiences, as this was a start to my "writing and reflecting on the research process and analytic decision-making, and documenting the development of interpretations throughout a study" (Roulston, 2010). However, no notes were used for the purpose of contributing to study data for analysis and interpretation.

A key component of the workshop was reviewing and practicing using Randall's (2020; 2023) Trust-Based Observations/Reflection Form (see Appendix A). Although the form has been developed and revised over the past few years with intention and backed by Randall's experiences, he has been open and has encouraged practitioners to alter the form to fit their needs. However, he has advised not including more than ten pedagogy

areas on the form (Randall, 2020). With this advice and encouragement as well as fitting with the idea of piloting a new intervention, in Cycles 1 and 2, I collaborated with the administrator participants to modify the form and narrow the questions asked and the evidence areas on which to focus. We maintained two of the five teacher reflection questions: "What were you doing to help students learn?" (p. 108), "If you had the opportunity to re-teach the entire lesson, what if anything, might you have done differently?" (p. 108), and "Is there anything specific you would like me to look for on the next visit? Or anything you would like me to add about this visit?" (p. 108). We also retained the observation form's evidence areas of lesson learning target, rapport and relationship between teachers and students, classroom/behavior management, working memory, and interviewing students during lesson observations. Although collaborating on these decisions was a valuable, participatory exercise; for the dissertation cycle, I wanted to come to the workshop prepared with the modified form so that we did not spend workshop time on revising the form but instead, discussing and training on how to actually use it. With my Cycle 1 and 2 one-day workshops, I was only able to give an overview of each of the form's evidence areas and encourage the administrators to read the book to learn more. For my dissertation study, I wanted to devote more time in the three-day workshop to help participants glean more in-depth understandings of each evidence area we would be using. Although I approached all three research cycles with small implementation steps and trying key aspects of TBO, I really hoped the dissertation cycle participants would have the opportunity to experience TBO more fully, particularly with the use of the form, one of TBO's key factors that differentiates it from other formative supervision approaches.

In addition to the three Cycle 2 administrator participants having already given their input on form modifications, to gain even more confirmation of their perspectives as well as the three teacher participants' perspectives, I had included on my Cycle 2 post-intervention survey an item where they ranked the TBO evidence areas from one to 12. Survey results indicated the following evidence areas as most highly ranked, so I included these on the modified form the administrators would use and focused on them for training and discussion in my three-day workshop: learning target, student interview, teacher/student rapport and relationship, classroom and student behavior management, and specific differentiation/adaptive practice. In the case where a non-Cycle 2 administrator would have joined the study, they could have still had the option to make modifications for implementing TBO in their own school. If the administrator had selected areas I had not focused on in the three-day workshop, I would have been able to meet virtually one-on-one with the administrator to go over those areas in more depth.

Teacher Participant Recruitment

During the weeks of January 29 and February 5, Principal Nora met with her faculty and groups of teachers to provide an overview of the research study and to recruit teacher participants. I was not involved in this process as it was essential Nora be able to talk with her staff in trusting and collaborative ways without my potential "outsider" interference. Although my workshop had included ideas for introducing formative supervision and the specific TBO approach to teachers, I do not know exactly how Nora presented it to her teachers. However, I do know she reviewed my study consent letters with potential participants, seven teachers initially signed them, and Nora emailed them

to me as PDF documents. Principal Nora also shared the TBO form with the teacher participants. They then took the pre-intervention survey starting the week of February 12.

Cycles Observation and Reflective Conversations

Starting with the week of February 19, Principal Nora began her first cycles of observations and reflective conversations for the study. I designed a schedule to help her prioritize her time, provide ample practice, allow for an optimal number of teachers to benefit from a maximal number of cycles, and ensure there were several teachers who had experienced at least three cycles so that Nora could try the TBO approach of waiting until the fourth cycle to offer suggestions to teachers regarding their instructional practice. I had initially created a potential schedule for all administrators based on them possibly recruiting nine teachers each. Once I confirmed there were seven teacher participants with Nora, I revised the schedule to help her maximize her time with her seven teacher participants. Later the number of teacher participants decreased to four and I left any revisions to the plan to Nora.

To be clear, the schedule did not entail Principal Nora setting specific dates and times for her informal observations. It was simply a tool to help her organize her visits to benefit her practice, teachers' opportunities, and my study's aims. My goal was to assist any administrator participants with their time management and organization of the process, as this was a concern from administrators that emerged during the first two cycles of research. Therefore, I provided Nora with a color-coded, "user-friendly" copy of the table in multiple electronic document formats. Each teacher group listed during a designated week would ideally have an individual TBO observation followed by a reflective conversation the next day. Teachers would possibly be aware of how many

times we were hoping they would be visited and would have an idea of most likely being visited during a particular week as they would begin to perceive a pattern, but teachers, and for that matter, Principal Nora would not yet know specific dates and times. In accordance with the TBO model, observations would remain unannounced and Nora would try to visit teachers during different times of the day.

Intervention Support

Two times for teachers and one time for Principal Nora within the nine-week intervention implementation period, I conducted individual formative interviews with each study participant via Zoom. Nora's formative interview was followed by an unrecorded support session for collaborative purposes, unbound by the structure of a formal interview and its predetermined questions. During the support session, I considered the information she shared during the recorded interview, asked her more about any concerns she brought up, and together, we collaboratively troubleshot issues and brainstormed ideas. I referred back to concepts and strategies from our workshop and sections of the TBO book. If needed, I was ready to research further into any issues, put together usable information, and email back a few days later. This did not prove to be necessary. I also encouraged her to confer with her district colleagues and superintendent, as others may have better ideas coming from a place of knowledge as a current member of the actual school community. I was also open to Nora scheduling additional support sessions if she would like. I had hoped to have a second interview and follow-up support session with Nora to serve as continuous professional development regarding the TBO intervention, but this was not possible due to time factors. However, Nora and I did keep

in touch through periodic emails and one phone call in April before her post-intervention interview in late May.

After my March support session and April phone call with Principal Nora, I wrote analytic memos (Charmaz, 2008; 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Roulston, 2010), but the session and phone call were not recorded and no information resulting from the sessions were included in the study's data collection and analyses. It was possible that Principal Nora would have referred to the support session during interviews, such as expressing how an idea did or did not work, actions she took, how teachers responded, and how the actions generally applied to open-ended questions I asked, but anything emerging as such was due to the participant's choice and likely through the natural flow of our interview conversation. If surfacing in an interview, such dialogue became part of the qualitative data collection and my results.

All of these intervention actions and procedures between January and September 2024 are portrayed in the Table 4 timeline.

Table 4

Study Timeline and Procedures

Time frame	Actions	Procedures
January 15-23	Administered pre-intervention survey to administrator participants Administrator participants read Chapters 1–3 of TBO book (30 pages)	• Emailed pre-survey link to administrator participants • Emailed administrator participants instructions for reading TBO book and a one-page "Think-About Sheet" to guide participants' readings
January 24-26	On-site workshop	• Conducted workshop
Weeks of January 29 & February 5	Administrator held teacher meetings about study	• (As appropriate for administrator and teachers) • Confirmed teacher participants

Time frame	Actions	Procedures
Week of February 12	Administered pre-intervention survey to teacher participants	• Emailed pre-survey link to teacher participants
Weeks of February 19 & 26	Administrator began intervention implementation	• Conducted pre-survey preliminary quantitative analysis
Week of March 4	First formative 1:1 virtual interview with administrator participant	• Conducted interview • After interview, continued meeting for support session
Week of March 11	No intervention implementation due to district's spring break	• Watched administrator interview recording • Took analytic notes
Weeks of March 18 & 25	First formative 1:1 virtual interviews with teacher participants	• Conducted interviews
Weeks of April 1 & 8	Intervention implementation continued	• Watched teacher interview recordings • Took analytic notes
Week of April 15	Second formative 1:1 virtual interviews with teacher participants	• Conducted interviews
Weeks of April 22 & 29	Intervention implementation continued and finished	• Watched teacher interview recordings • Took analytic notes
May–June	Administered post-intervention survey to all participants Post-intervention interviews with all participants	• Emailed pre-survey link to participants • Conducted interviews • Transcribed all interviews
July–September	Analyzed data	• Conducted quantitative analysis • Conducted qualitative analysis

Data Collection

As evident in Table 4, data collection began with a pre-intervention survey given to administrators before the January 24–26 workshop and to teacher participants during the week of February 12. During the third week of intervention implementation, I conducted a formative interview with Principal Nora via Zoom. Two weeks later, I conducted the first round of formative interviews with the teacher participants via Zoom.

Four to five weeks afterward during the week of April 15 (the seventh week of intervention implementation), I conducted the second round of formative interviews with the teachers via Zoom. The last points of data collection took place sometime between early May and early June with all participants completing post-intervention surveys and individual post-intervention interviews. Study measures applied to each research question as displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Research Questions and Measures

Research Questions	**Measures**
RQ1: How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?	Qualitative: • Formative interviews • Post-intervention interview
RQ2: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers' professional growth?	Quantitative & Qualitative: • Pre- and Post-Intervention surveys • Formative interviews • Post-intervention interview
RQ3: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?	Quantitative & Qualitative: • Pre- and Post-Intervention surveys • Formative interviews • Post-intervention interview
RQ4: How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?	Qualitative: • Formative interviews • Post-intervention interview

Surveys

To collect quantitative data to answer RQ2 and RQ3, I developed pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. Through both research questions, I was seeking participants' perceptions regarding formative supervision's effects, therefore, surveying participants was a constructive way to "identify [participants'] important beliefs and attitudes" (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 385). Since my surveys were administered at

particular points in time and not for a longitudinal study, the survey design I used was a cross-sectional questionnaire examining participants' attitudes (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Through my pre- and post-surveys, I was able to collect participants' "opinions in a short period of time" (Ivankova, 2015, p. 160) at the beginning and end of my study.

I created the pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys using Qualtrics software and emailed the participants the links so the surveys could be completed as electronic questionnaires at participants' convenience within the appropriate timelines. The pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys were identical save for their timings and purposes of administration (See Appendix B).

Following an item for participants to give their consent, the survey included demographic items to glean respondents' roles with the district as an administrator or teacher; years of experience in P–12 education, with the district, and in respondents' current roles; and if respondents were teachers, there was an item regarding grade levels and subjects taught. Following the demographics items were 53 total six-point Likert scale items intended to measure quantitative constructs as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6

Pre- and Post-Intervention Survey Quantitative Constructs

RQ	No. of Items	Constructs	No. of Items
RQ2: Teachers' professional growth	38	Aspects of Informal Observations Aspects of Reflective Conversations Aspects of Formal Observations Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences	6 13 6 13
RQ3: Trusting administrator–teacher relationships	15	Trust (With respect to overall formative supervision, informal observations, and reflective conversations)	15

The Likert scale's range of answers included 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, and 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. The survey also had seven open-ended, qualitative items, each time asking the respondent to "Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item(s) [numbers]." These items followed the groups of the Likert-scale items to give respondents the option to explain their answers for each particular item group.

Survey item language and the constructs were developed from the formative supervision literature; trust in schools literature, namely Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999); and the themes I identified in my Cycle 2 study analysis. The items associated with RQ2 measured participants' perceptions of whether the constructs, or aspects of formative supervision, supported teachers' professional growth. For example:

- Aspects of Informal Observations: unannounced, frequent, yield descriptive records with no ratings or interpretations
- Aspects of Reflective Conversations: face-to-face, in teacher's classroom, open with reflective questions so the teacher shares reflections first

Two other constructs, Aspects of Formal Observations and Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences were related to the formative supervision constructs as counters to the formative supervision aspects. My intention was to seek participants' perceptions of whether teacher evaluation aspects supported teachers' professional growth. In addition, the RQ3 items measured whether formative supervision aspects help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Although the RQ3 survey items measured only one construct: trust, and Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of trust were not directly measured by the survey, I still considered the facets when wording

the survey items. Examples of formative supervision aspects that facilitate developing trust are the following:

- Benevolence: a focus on the teacher's perspective and the teacher's reflection
- Reliability: informal observations are frequent and timely
- Competence: reflective conversations focus on teachers' strengths
- Honesty: reflective conversations involve administrators sharing descriptive observation evidence without ratings
- Openness: reflective conversations involve administrators listening intently to teachers, asking them clarifying questions, and providing encouragement

The aforementioned RQ2 constructs and the facets of trust were also included as *a priori* or pre-conceived categories for the qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview transcripts.

Formative interviews

To collect qualitative data to answer all four research questions, I conducted formative and post-intervention interviews. Interviewing my participants one-on-one allowed them to "best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 218). Interviewing my participants met an important purpose of my study to try "to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 3). Brinkmann and Kvale have explained further the value of research interviews:

> The research interview is based on the conversations of daily life and is a professional conversation: it is an inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee. An interview is

> literally an inter-view, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest. (p. 4)

Without interviewing my participants to collect qualitative data, I would not have been able to truly understand their perspectives and live their experiences through them. I was a participant-observer in my study, not directly implementing the formative supervision intervention or physically experiencing it with the participants daily or even once on the school campus. Qualitative interviews were vital for my meaningful data collection.

A key aspect of my study was its use of multiple formative interviews (Charmaz, 2014). There was one formative interview with Principal Nora two weeks after the intervention started. The first teacher interviews were after four to five weeks of intervention implementation and the second, four to five weeks later. This totaled one formative interview with Principal Nora and two formative interviews with each teacher. Interviews were conducted individually through Zoom and recorded. Before starting each interview, I reminded participants of their rights regarding research participation and asked permission to record the interview. There were two formative interview documents included in the appendices. See Appendix C for both sets of interview questions.

Interviews were semistructured with open-ended questions and potential follow-up probes (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Morse, 2012; Roulston, 2010). Reviewing the recordings and taking analytic notes on the first and second formative interviews informed my thinking about possible themes to be aware of in each subsequent interview, assisting with my follow-up questions should particular themes reemerge in participants' responses or among different participants.

Post-intervention interviews

At the end of the nine-week intervention, I individually interviewed all participants through Zoom. As with the formative interviews, the post-intervention interviews were recorded after asking participants' permission. Appendix C features the post-intervention interview questions. Also like the formative interviews, post-intervention interviews were semistructured with open-ended questions and potential follow-up probes (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Morse, 2012; Roulston, 2010).

Data Analysis Plan

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis were used to answer RQ2 and RQ3. To answer RQ1 and RQ4, I conducted qualitative analysis only, exploring participants' overall experiences with formative supervision as well as administrators' use of formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust. Quantitative constructs and qualitative *a priori* categories applied to research questions as displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

Research Questions and Constructs & A Priori Categories

RQs	Constructs & A Priori Categories	
RQ1: How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?	Reflection: • Reflection-in-action • Reflection-on-action • Reflection-for-action (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1983)	Feedback: • Listening • Clarifying • Encouraging • Reflecting • Presenting (Glickman, 1981; Glickman et al., 2018)
	• Time • Aspects of Informal Observations • Aspects of Reflective Conversations • Aspects of Formal Observations • Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences	

RQs	Constructs & A Priori Categories
RQ2: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers' professional growth?	• Aspects of Informal Observations • Aspects of Reflective Conversations • Aspects of Formal Observations • Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences
RQ3: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?	• Trust
RQ4: How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?	Facets of trust • Benevolence • Reliability • Competence • Honesty • Openness (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999)

Quantitative analysis

I imported survey data from Qualtrics to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software in order to analyze quantitative data. I used SPSS to run item response frequencies and descriptive statistics including the range, minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each construct. Descriptive statistics were generated for the entire group of participants as well as pertaining to the participants' number of years they had been employed by the school district and the number of years they had served in their current roles.

Further, the differences in perceptions between two groups at a time were analyzed using independent sample *t*-tests for the following pairs of sub-groups:

- 0–5 years (n = 3) and 6 or more years (n = 2) of employment with the district
- 0–2 years (n = 2) and 3–5 years (n = 3) serving in their current roles.

The independent sample *t*-tests were run separately for each pair of groups with respect to both the pre-intervention survey and the post-intervention survey. In addition, I ran *t*-tests of dependent means to compare the results of the pre-intervention survey and the post-intervention survey and determine if there was a statistically significant change in participants' perceptions from the pre- to post-surveys (Salkind & Shaw, 2020).

Although I collected data regarding participants' numbers of years in education, I did not analyze these data because all participants indicated they had six or more years in education. There would not be any differences between these statistics and those for the entire group as the two groups were one and the same. I also did not analyze data regarding teacher participants' grade levels and subjects taught. The small sample of all four teachers were from the same school. Reporting their grade levels and subjects could have made the participants too easily identifiable and possibly violate their confidentiality. Finally, although I analyzed data with respect to participants' roles as administrators or teachers, I decided it would not be appropriate to report these analyses as there was only one administrator participant's data to compare to a group of four teachers' data.

Qualitative analysis

To prepare for qualitative analysis, I first transcribed the interview recordings using the Transcribe feature of Microsoft Word 365. Next, I edited the resulting documents by listening to the appropriate recordings and pausing when necessary. Before beginning qualitative analysis, I read and listened to each transcribed interview a final time. Participants' answers to the open-ended post-intervention survey questions were also prepared for analysis. I mainly used HyperResearch software for qualitative analysis,

but time to time I employed manual practices by printing lists of codes on paper and using color-coding and other symbolic schemes. I kept track of my ideas and actions by writing analytic memos (Charmaz, 2008; 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Roulston, 2010).

Qualitative analysis involved inductive reasoning (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Ivankova, 2015; Roulston, 2010). I had developed 23 pre-conceived categories, five of which were also quantitative constructs, based on the literature supporting my formative supervision conceptual framework and the outcomes of my previous cycles of research, but I was open also to other categories emerging. I did not pre-conceptualize any actual codes. Those emerged entirely through inductive coding (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Ivankova, 2015; Roulston, 2010; Saldaña, 2013). Most codes fit my *a priori* categories, but others led to my temporarily creating new categories. The new categories did end up being temporary because they did not yield any prevailing themes relevant to the study. Still, I remained cognizant of my potential biases and aimed "not to force data into pre-formulated coding schemes" (Roulston, 2010, p. 152). I intended to stay "open to varied explanations and/or understandings of the data" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 155) as it was my participants, and not me who experienced and reflected on the intervention. In my view, using pre-conceptualized codes would not help me to understand how participants were constructing their understandings of their experiences. Saldaña (2013) has remarked, "Qualitative codes are essence-capturing and essential elements of the research story that, when clustered together according to similarity and regularity (a pattern), they actively facilitate the development of categories and thus analysis of their connections" (p. 8). As codes were developed and revised during two cycles of coding and one transition

between the two cycles, a codebook developed (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Ivankova, 2015). The codebook featured my pre-conceived categories, but there were no *a priori* codes.

Earlier in this chapter, I already defined my pre-conceptualized categories for RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4. Now in Table 8, I have defined additional qualitative categories for RQ1 regarding participants' experiences with formative supervision.

Table 8

A Priori Categories for Research Question 1's Qualitative Analysis

A Priori Categories	**Descriptions**
Time	Any participant response related to time. For example, administrators' management and prioritization of time to implement formative supervision; time factors that may hinder formative supervision; time-related ideas that have helped; and teachers' perspectives of their own time management and administrators' time management for formative supervision
Reflection: (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1983)	Participants' references to the following:
Reflection-in-action	Reflecting on their practice while engaged in the practice. For example, teachers adjusting their instruction while in the process of instructing.
Reflection-on-action	Reflecting on their practice after a particular event such as a lesson, or reflecting on past practice further back in time. Participants may describe their individual reflection or the reflection they engage in through reflective conversations.
Reflection-for-action	Their reflections on plans of action for continuing effective practices and improving their practice. Such references may be related to individual ideas or those generated through reflective conversations.

A Priori Categories	Descriptions
Feedback: (Glickman, 1981; Glickman et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017)	Both administrators' and teachers' references to nondirective and collaborative feedback practices administrators engage in during reflective conversations as follows:
Listening	With concentration and support, showing by making eye contact, nonverbal indications, and verbal utterances.
Clarifying	Without giving suggestions or interpretations, sharing observation data, or making assumptions, asking clarification questions to better understand teachers' insights.
Encouraging	Showing "willingness to listen further" (Glickman et al., 2018, p. 163) through noninfluential yet affirming comments. Giving genuine compliments, whether direct, indirect, or self. Asking "how" questions relating to something successful the teacher has done in the past.
Reflecting	Sharing their understandings of the teacher's perspectives by paraphrasing and summarizing by echoing the teacher's words without offering suggestions.
Presenting	Using supportive, nonthreatening phrasing when sharing perceptions and offering feedback after teachers have shared their perspectives.

Qualitative analysis began with initial or open coding. Charmaz (2008) has stated, "Initial or open coding requires a close reading and interrogation of the data" (p. 163). Although I do not claim to having employed a grounded theory approach, there was some level of "simultaneous data collection and analysis" (p. 163) through my use of formative interviews. After each interview, I reviewed the recording and took analytic notes, starting to consider coding ideas and even themes. When I later conducted qualitative analysis, I only analyzed the first two sets of formative interview transcripts, performed a transition round, and did a second round of coding before analyzing the post-intervention interview transcripts. For the first cycle of post-intervention data, I used the coding

scheme from my second cycle of the formative interview analysis. Last, I did a final round of coding on all interview data.

For my first cycle of coding of the formative interview data, I used an eclectic approach using descriptive and values approaches (Saldaña, 2013). My codes were at times line-by-line but also formed through groups of participants' sentences. I included the descriptive approach for participants' descriptions of their experiences such as informal observations being 20–25 minutes long. I also used the values approach, labeling many statements with "A" for attitudes because I felt this concept was aligned with my research questions where I was seeking participants' perceptions. I also labeled the attitudes with "AA" if the code came from the administrator, "AT" if from teachers, and "AAT" if from both the administrator and teachers. Most codes took the form of phrases or statements, often using the *in vivo* strategy, participants' own words (Saldaña, 2013) and sometimes using gerunds as recommended in the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2008; 2014). I used only a few one- or two-word topics for some of the descriptive codes. In most cases, I wanted to try to explain participants' responses within the codes (Charmaz, 2008). Initial coding of the first two sets of formative interview data yielded 195 codes.

Then I worked on transition steps before doing another round of coding. I used a modified version of the "Tabletop Categories" approach (Saldaña, 2013). I exported HyperResearch code frequency statistics to Excel, then printed the sheets. I highlighted the codes in different categories by color, utilized some symbols, and made notes. This process included checking for and abandoning little-used codes, combining codes, and confirming my categorizing (Saldaña, 2013). Wherever I analyzed alignment to my *a*

priori categories, I grouped codes into those categories. Otherwise, I contemplated and created other categories (Roulston, 2010; Saldaña, 2013) that later proved to be temporary, but I did seriously consider each of these few codes before regrouping or abandoning them.

After the transition stage, the number of codes decreased to 132 codes. I used these to do a first round of coding on the post-intervention interview data and finished with 156 codes. Most of the 156 codes were now worded in more of a summary-type phrase rather than *in vivo*. I even created some phrases matching the wording of my survey statements.

Finally, I did a last cycle of coding on all interview data using an axial coding approach, finalizing the categorizing, merging similar codes and doing some renaming and eliminating. I technically eliminated all codes with only one or a few instances in the interview transcripts. I still kept these eliminated codes in mind to maintain a full picture of my results, but I considered only 58 remaining codes for developing themes.

Throughout the qualitative analysis process, I added to my analytic memos (Charmaz, 2008; 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Roulston, 2010), documenting my ideas and changes and creating tables, maps, and other graphics to enhance my critical thinking. Coding was a multi-cyclical process (Saldaña, 2013) involving continual refinement as I attempted to answer my research questions.

Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness

I piloted my initially 55-item, pre-/post-intervention survey with a convenient sample of ten participants—three administrators and seven teachers in December 2023. Using SPSS, I performed Cronbach's alpha to calculate the internal consistency

reliability of the survey, to determine how consistently each item score was related to the total test scores (Salkind & Shaw, 2020). Cronbach's alpha for most of my constructs resulted in values within the acceptable range. For example, for the survey items related to the construct of Aspects of Informal Observations, Cronbach's alpha calculated as 0.645.

However, prior to piloting the survey, I had planned to use Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) individual facets of trust as constructs for RQ3. Through my pilot survey results, I found Cronbach's alpha for the individual facets of trust varied from unacceptable to acceptable; and since there were only three items per each facet construct, I decided instead to consider all trust-related items under one construct of trust. Cronbach's alpha for the overall construct of trust calculated at 0.684, within the acceptable range. I still kept the different facets in mind as I analyzed the actual dissertation study survey results and interview outcomes.

Piloting my 55-item survey and calculating Cronbach's alpha also led to my eliminating two survey items, decreasing the total number of items to 53. One eliminated item was under the construct of Aspects of Reflective Conversations related to scheduling reflective conversations. Once eliminating this item, the Cronbach's alpha for the construct of Aspects of Reflective Conversations increased from 0.423 to 0.838. I thought perhaps the survey participants were not sure about the idea of an administrator not scheduling a reflective conversation but instead, going to the teacher's classroom at an expected available time and asking permission. Participants' thoughts on this were very different than their overall views of reflective conversation aspects. These perceptions were something I would have been interested in comparing pre- and post-intervention. I

still kept the idea of unannounced reflective conversations in mind as I conducted my interviews and performed qualitative analysis. As I had eliminated one item from the construct of Aspects of Reflective Conversations, in order to match the number of items for Aspects of Formal Observation Post-conferences that I had wanted to relate to Aspects of Reflective conversations, I also eliminated the Aspects of Formal Observation Post-conferences item about scheduling.

In addition, the Cronbach's alpha results for the constructs related to summative evaluation, Aspects of Formal Observations and Aspects of Post-conferences were very high at 0.936 and 0.952, respectively. I understood that could indicate items under those constructs were repetitive. However, since I knew my items were about different aspects (e.g., that formal observations are announced is not the same thing as being only one to two times per year), I believed my items were not repetitive. I felt the results showed consistency in survey participants' overall beliefs about formal observations and post-observation conferences.

Finally, I did not do Cronbach's alpha for the entire survey because the formative supervision/trust items and the summative evaluation items were intended to be looked at differently, but I did do Cronbach's alpha for each of these broad areas. Formative supervision/trust (34 items) increased from 0.775 to 0.838 after I eliminated the reflective conversation scheduling item; and summative evaluation (19 items) calculated at 0.963.

Regarding qualitative data trustworthiness, I pretested most of my interview questions as recommended by Morse (2012). Most of my dissertation study interview questions were already successfully used in my Cycle 2 study with six different

participants, both administrators and teachers, so the questions were tested for comprehensibility and the ability to guide authentic discussion.

An additional support for my qualitative data's trustworthiness was using member checks (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Gay et al., 2012; Ivankova, 2015; Roulston, 2010). In early October 2024, I met individually with two of my teacher participants to share my qualitative themes and assertions, seeking their input on how well my themes aligned to their perspectives.

Finally, the use of mixed methods and the multiple qualitative data collection procedures of formative interviews, post-intervention interviews, and qualitative items on the pre- and post-intervention surveys allowed for the triangulation of data which helped to verify the reliability and validity of my quantitative data and trustworthiness of my qualitative data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Gay et al., 2012; Ivankova, 2015).

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The purpose of this mixed methods action research study was to support and partner with one administrator and four teachers as they explored their construction of meaning about their formative supervision experiences and its effects on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships. I collected both quantitative and qualitative data through pre- and post-intervention surveys, formative interviews, and post-intervention interviews with the participants to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?
- RQ2: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers' professional growth?
- RQ3: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?
- RQ4: How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?

In this chapter, I will present the quantitative and qualitative study results and analyses as they pertain to each research question.

RQ1: Participants' Formative Supervision Experiences

The first research question was "How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?" answered through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data.

A priori categories for qualitative analysis of RQ1 included "time" as well other categories displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

RQ1 Categories

Overarching Category	Specific Categories
Aspects of Formative Supervision	• Aspects of Informal Observations • Aspects of Reflective Conversations
Aspects of Evaluation	• Aspects of Formal Observations • Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences
Reflection (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1983)	• Reflection-in-action • Reflection-on-action • Reflection-for-action
Feedback (Glickman, 1981; Glickman et al., 2018)	• Listening • Clarifying • Encouraging • Reflecting • Presenting

The purpose of RQ1 was to explore study participants' construction of meaning about their formative supervision experiences, how they were experiencing the

intervention, and how it was impacting their practice. As a participant-observer who could not be in the district daily or implement the intervention myself, conducting formative interviews to glean participants' understandings of their experiences was essential.

As I coded participants' interview responses during qualitative analysis, many of their responses were coded as both descriptions of their formative supervision experiences (RQ1) as well as perceptions about formative supervision's connections to teachers' professional growth (RQ2) and trusting administrator–teacher relationships (RQ3). There was also some double-coding of statements relating to both participants' overall formative supervision experiences (RQ1) and how the administrator used formative supervision to build trust (RQ4). In essence, one line from a participant may have given me data contributing to answering RQ1 as well as other research questions.

During the coding process, I did find participants rarely brought up formal observations and post-conferences for summative evaluations unless it was to compare to formative supervision practices or to bring up time barriers related to evaluation processes. As a result, I abandoned the few codes about participants' summative evaluation experiences and will be discussing the time barriers later in this section. I will share any other notable insights about the formal processes later in this chapter as they pertain to supporting teachers' professional growth.

In the case of answering RQ1 regarding aspects of formative supervision, I focused on participants' descriptions of their experiences. How did they describe what happened during the intervention? For example, about how long were their informal observations and how soon afterward did the administrator and teachers meet for

reflective conversations? As I share this information, it will not be so much about identifying themes or extensively quoting participants' rich dialogue about their experiences, but more about an overview of the participants' formative supervision experiences during the intervention. Themes and more of participants' dialogue will be shared later in this chapter as I present the results of the other three research questions. I did identify and will share some themes under the categories of reflection, feedback, and time. Overall, the analyses of participants' stories and perspectives under all four research questions present participants' full experiences of the formative supervision intervention.

Aspects of Informal Observations

Principal Nora began implementing unannounced and frequent informal observations from the beginning of the 2023–2024 school year, even before my dissertation study intervention officially began in February 2024. Further, even before implementing my Cycle 1 study intervention with one teacher in fall 2022, Nora had reported strong agreement with the values and rationales of formative supervision and TBO. The following school year, 2023–2024 began with Nora increasing the frequency of her classroom walkthroughs and adding longer informal observations with all of her teachers and not only with the three teachers who participated in my Cycle 2 study from August to October 2023. Therefore, when the dissertation study intervention began in February 2024, Nora had already established a process of unannounced and frequent walkthroughs and longer informal observations. As I interviewed teacher participants during my dissertation study, even with three of the four teachers being new to my study cycles, many of their discussions were guided by this perspective of having experienced the intervention since the beginning of the school year and not only between February

and May 2024. As I now share information about participants' experiences with specific aspects of informal observations, some of the information includes participants' formative supervision experiences since the beginning of the 2023–2024 school year.

Unannounced, Frequent, and Timely Observations

Principal Nora's informal observations truly met the definition of informal as they were unannounced. However, teachers also sometimes invited her for informal observations. As Nora described, she might be in the hallway interacting with staff and students or starting to make rounds of brief walkthroughs, maybe not yet intending to visit particular teachers, but then, "They pulled me in!" Whether unannounced or invited, teachers' interview responses showed they appreciated Nora's frequent informal observations. When comparing informal to scheduled, formal observations, Kayla said, "I do prefer the informal pop-ins."

Penny described her thoughts similarly and touched on trusting administrator–teacher relationships, "It's scary, but once your supervisor becomes more colleague than boss, I feel like that's what opens the conversation. At least, that's what did it for me." Then I asked Penny, "What does it take for it to be more colleague than boss?" and she replied:

> Them being visible in your classroom, not [just] the administrator that comes into your classroom twice a year…Your whole career depends on those two, right? And so…with my supervisor here piloting your [intervention], they're in all the time. And you have conversations all the time and so, you become that—it becomes more equal rather than, "Here's my administrator…They hold my career in their hand."…With my administrators now…they have that title, but I don't feel like they hold that title over me like I have had other administrators be…I hope [TBO] catches on. I do. I like it.

From participants' responses, it seemed Principal Nora would do brief classroom walkthroughs nearly every day, reaching each teacher at least one to two times per week

and these would sometimes turn into longer observations. She also purposely did longer informal observations that would happen at least every other week per teacher. Observation lengths varied from two to 10-minute walkthroughs to longer observations of 15–25 minutes. Nora remarked she actually found 20-minute informal observations to be "more doable than me sitting in there in a whole…50 plus minutes" as she would for formal observations. She also visited teachers at different times of the day. Nora's unannounced, frequent, 20-minute observations aligned with the TBO approach and her additional short walkthroughs added to her formative supervision practices.

Observable Teaching Practices and Descriptive Observation Records

During 15 to 25-minute informal observations, Principal Nora focused on approximately five observable teaching practices or evidence areas of the TBO form—learning target, student interview, teacher/student rapport and relationship, classroom and student behavior management, and specific differentiation/adaptive practice. However, due to time barriers, she did not directly use the form during the dissertation study. Based on teacher participants' interview responses, it was evident all of these observable teaching practices were regularly "looked for" during informal observations, but Nora would ask teachers about the evidence areas and verbally share her feedback regarding the evidence areas during reflective conversations without written documentation. Nora had not been using any kind of form for her walkthroughs and informal observations, not even one based on the evaluation tool, and she expressed truly wanting to use the TBO form as she believed it would help teachers to be more reflective, but time barriers interfered during the dissertation study. This will be explained later in this Chapter 4 section.

Although the intervention did not involve using the TBO form directly, Nora did share it with the teachers who used it as a reflection tool and found its "toolbox possibilities" to be greatly helpful. Also, when I asked teachers about what they would think of the TBO form as an informal observation tool as is its main intention, they liked that idea and appreciated that the form had no ratings. Kayla remarked:

> Sometimes my mind goes so fast after the verbal [reflective conversation]. I sort of forget things until I'm like, "Oh, wait, she said this" and so it would help to have maybe something written down with just a little bit of check marks here and there that…I can refer back to if needed.

It was also evident from teacher participants' interview responses that despite not receiving written feedback using the TBO form, the evidence areas "looked for" were prominent in teachers' minds and reflections. The evidence areas that most stood out to them were learning target and student interview. Penny said during her first formative interview, "I love the fact that [administrators] can walk in and ask the kids…'What's happening?' and the kids…look at the board…[and] recite the objective." Both Penny and Delphine shared how emphasizing learning targets and students answering Principal Nora's questions about the learning targets show her that teachers are doing their jobs. Penny reiterated in her post-intervention interview:

> I'm not doing my job if the kids don't know what they're doing…I love that they can look up at the board and read the objective. Like, what you learning today? "Um, I might not know, but it's up on the board!"

Nora's student interviews during informal observations did not only show students knew where the learning target was posted and that they could recite it. Students were also able to actually discuss their learning as Delphine explained, "If they're learning and they can discuss their learning and give her an idea, then I'm doing my job. And then [Nora] knows that I'm reaching them."

Aspects of Reflective Conversations

Clearly connected to administrators' informal observations are the follow-up reflective conversations between administrators and teachers. As Principal Nora did with informal observations, she began improved implementation of her reflective conversations from the beginning of the 2023–2024 school year.

Frequent and Timely Reflective Conversations

There were times when various time-related factors would prevent being able to meet for follow-up reflective conversations, but for the most part, meaningful reflective conversations were able to take place within one to two days after informal observations. Reflective conversations between Principal Nora and her teachers were usually about 10–15 minutes. These unscheduled, face-to-face conversations were highly valued by both parties. Having reflective conversations that were unscheduled, frequent, and timely aligned with the TBO approach.

Locations and Seating Arrangements of Reflective Conversations

Before the dissertation study, Principal Nora met with teachers for reflective conversations sometimes in her office and sometimes in teachers' classrooms when students were not around. However, due to time and situational constraints, Nora and teachers would sometimes end up reflecting and sharing feedback together as a "walk and talk." During the dissertation study, this happened less as Nora made a concerted effort to meet more often in teachers' classrooms. Reflective conversations would still sometimes take place in her office or when Nora was on duty because as she explained, "They come find me and say, how did the lesson go? Because I have some…that will actually come and seek me out."

Janette confirmed this:

> I'll run over into that building and pick up my copies or whatever it is I'm doing. And I'll stick my head in the office…just to check for a second and sometimes I'll say, "Hey, what do you think? What we were doing yesterday, wasn't that cool?" Or she'll say, "Hey, I wanted to talk to you about…what you guys are doing…"

Generally, reflective conversations could take place in any of these settings as Nora and teachers have developed relationships where it is natural for them to talk about her informal observations and reflect together. However, Nora has realized sitting down together with her laptop would be essential for more meaningful, uninterrupted conversations and using the TBO form, especially that she would be adding to the form based on the teachers' input.

Seating arrangements also matter for effectively using the TBO form and building trust during reflective conversations. Later in this chapter, I will report on teachers' views about seating arrangements building trust, but regarding teachers' actual experiences with this, a variety of seating arrangements occurred while they met with Principal Nora for reflective conversations. If they met in Nora's office, it would often be across from each other at her desk because the teacher would be the one to stop by and ask to talk about the informal observation. Rather than move to the conference room or walk back to the teacher's classroom, it was natural for the teacher to sit across from Nora when she was already at her desk. If Nora came to the teacher's classroom, it might even result in her sitting across from the teacher while the teacher was already at her desk. Sitting side-by-side at a table also happened. Sometimes Nora and the teacher would be standing in the middle of the classroom talking. Again, to use the TBO form effectively and follow TBO's approach, sitting side-by-side where both parties can see the laptop with the form would be most appropriate. Teachers did not experience this yet but when I asked a few

teachers about it, the concept did make sense to them regarding the need for both administrators and teachers to see the form on a laptop. Janette also made the connection of trusting relationships sitting side-by-side that I will share later in this chapter.

Reflection

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified two themes regarding reflection:

- **Teachers reflect with the administrator during reflective conversations, collaborating on instructional changes and professional development needed.**
- **Teachers regularly engage in all types of reflection including in-action, on-action, and for-action.**

Administrator–Teacher Reflection During Reflective Conversations

Despite not yet using the TBO reflection form, Principal Nora and her teachers have established the foundations and relationships allowing for meaningful reflective conversations where both the teacher and administrator reflect and then collaborate on possible instructional changes and professional development supports. When teachers have the opportunity to share their reflections first, as Delphine remarked, "You give people a chance to express themselves. To have a voice."

Administrator–teacher reflective conversations included teachers sharing their reflection-in-action moments and actions from observed lessons; both parties engaging in reflection-on-action and collaborating on making adjustments for future lessons; and discussing more long-term, reflection-for-action ideas such as professional development and future goals. Delphine explained, "[Principal Nora] always encourages [me] …to

reflect back and see, where am I now? Where do I want to go? Where do I want to bring my children, my students?"

Teachers' Ongoing Reflection Processes

Further, teachers continually engage in reflection by themselves including in-action, on-action, and for-action. Janette explained how she reflects in all three ways:

> I reflect a lot…I think about things a lot…depending on what has happened or not happened. And who it's happened to or with…It depends on the group of kids and specifically a couple of the kids…There's thirty different people…in the room and not everything is going to be perfect for everybody, obviously, but I like to try and think about it before I do it. How can I differentiate it to accommodate… whoever needs something…needs it done a little bit differently? And then afterwards…was I successful with that or could I have done it…better? Or maybe I shouldn't do it this way. Maybe I shouldn't do this one again. I should find a different kind of lesson or activity or whatever it is we're trying to do. I do that a lot because I don't want to waste my time or theirs. And I want to, I mean, ultimately, I want them to walk away learning something out of it.

Delphine summarized the importance of teachers' ongoing reflection and remaining open to always learning:

> It's always a learning curve. Which is good, which is your goal, because if you don't have a learning curve then I always think that there's something not quite accurate because nothing is perfect in this profession. So, you always turn… there's always nicks and turns.

Teachers did not talk extensively about the specific processes they might use for reflection, such as writing in a journal or filling up multiple sticky notes in their lesson plans, but it was evident from their responses as they talked about reflective conversations, self-reflection, and administrator feedback that reflection is crucial for their professional growth and a process in which they continually engage.

Feedback

When coding participants' interview insights about feedback, I used Glickman et al.'s (2018) developmental supervision nondirective and collaborative approaches of

listening, clarifying, encouraging, reflecting, and presenting as categories. My aim was to find out about participants' experiences with the administrator using the approaches during reflective conversations or even in general. Through my qualitative analysis, I did identify an overarching theme: **The administrator consistently uses nondirective and collaborative approaches when reflecting with teachers and providing feedback.** It was evident from participants' interview responses that Principal Nora used all five approaches of listening, clarifying, encouraging, reflecting, and presenting. However, I will highlight presenting because participants discussed this approach with the most detail. I speculated about why teachers would talk about presenting more extensively than the other approaches and surmised based on teachers' interview insights, they have found presenting to be more noticeable than any of the other approaches. Presenting may be very different than their experiences with past supervisors or past evaluation processes where the emphasis is often the negative, the feedback about what teachers are doing wrong and how to fix it. The presenting approach of using supportive, nonthreatening phrasing when offering feedback can be quite a contrast from these negative yet common experiences.

Presenting

Principal Nora used the collaborative approach of presenting by using supportive, nonthreatening phrasing when sharing her perceptions and offering feedback to teachers. Whenever Kayla has shared any type of reflection, whether she feels, "I didn't do this right or this is upsetting or this is going well", she has found Nora's feedback to be "extremely supportive." Nora, in turn, has found teachers "always…open to feedback…

open to help." Perhaps it is Nora's positive and supportive approach that helps teachers be more open to feedback and help. Janette explained:

> [Nora] believes in what she's doing and she likes to build…that trust in those relationships and establish…professional discussion as well. I mean, you can be joking with her and she can switch gears into school things, school business very easily. And…even if she's telling you something you maybe don't want to hear, she's got a gift for being able to do it in a way that doesn't make you feel stupid… And I think that…means a lot because we've all worked around or with people that genuinely like to let you know that they believe they are the smartest person in the room!

Penny said similarly while comparing Principal Nora to past administrators:

> I've had administrators where there is no relationship other than they're your evaluator. And you know, especially in a right-to-work state…if you goof, you could be out the door. So, you're always very, very careful. It's a high level of stress. I like that my supervisor walks in, is comfortable enough to say, "Hey, this is happening…Have you considered this?"

Penny also explained:

> [Nora's] like, this is a really good idea, but I don't see that having…that much of a positive impact. What if you tried this? And you know, she's right…and I don't mind…I don't know everything and you don't know what you don't know until all of a sudden you don't know it! And so, I like feedback…I like to know what I'm doing right, but I also, I'm not four, so I don't need a pat on the back.

During her first formative interview, Delphine described how Nora's presenting approach does not actually tell teachers what to do:

> [Nora asks,] "Is there an area that you want to push forward or you see that…you want to make changes in?" So, it's not exactly her just telling you what you should do and not do. It's more like…"Where and how can I help you with your growth in an area that you want to see?"…My admin is always very supportive…. "What else can I do for you to help you grow?" Because you grow, the children will grow.

During the post-intervention interview, Delphine compared Nora's positive and supportive approach to how teachers should give feedback to students:

> Getting a lot of positive and acknowledgement from the admin, positive feedback [makes teachers feel more comfortable]…The same way we do with the

> children…If it's positive, they feel more inclined to be receptive about the recommendations and the ideas. [But not] if it's negative all the time…in a negative way, like, "you're not doing this…you should do this."

Delphine explained that instead, Nora uses supportive language such as, "I recommend maybe you should try this instead of that…Maybe somebody knows it [and] could teach you how…or help you with this area?…Instead of saying…you should know that by now. Because you don't say that to the kids." Delphine also said regarding teachers accepting feedback, "You may disagree with your admin…but it does not necessarily mean that it's wrong. It's just to think of it more…Maybe I need to twist it to make it into a positive…How is that going to help me?" Thoughts such as Delphine's show how feedback and reflection can be connected.

Time

In addition to sharing their formative supervision intervention experiences with informal observations, reflective conversations, reflection, and feedback, participants were also open to talking about factors that can take time away from the formative supervision processes. Administrators' jobs encompass many demands. As several participants remarked, administrators "wear a lot of hats." As a result, I identified a broad theme: **The many competing demands of administrators' jobs can hinder the consistent implementation of formative supervision.** Principal Nora humorously gave a few examples during her formative interview: "Throw in a fire drill, throw in a lockdown! Principals' meetings, Site Council. You name it, just throw it in there! Oh, oh yeah, and I have lunch duty for an hour." Such basic but important events and situations can take time away from administrators being able to get into classrooms and meet with

teachers afterward for reflective conversations. Some events and situations can also take time away from teachers actually teaching.

During the post-intervention interviews, I asked participants more about what they saw as the greatest limitations to implementing formative supervision consistently and effectively and if they had ideas for how to address these issues and make more time. Penny answered:

> Things that happened at school. [Nora] came in a couple of times one week and then she's like, "Hey, let's meet…at your planning time on Friday." And I'm like, "OK", but then I had to be [a substitute] teacher, so that didn't work. She's like, "OK, let's go for Monday." Well, then I had to be [a substitute for a different] teacher. And so, you know, it just kind of got put off and then she's like, "Let's walk and talk!"…In a small district with few people…it's just the way it happens!

So, I asked, "Do you believe there's anything that would…help those kinds of situations or that would help her to implement it?" Penny promptly replied, "Cloning!" We both laughed. I then asked, "OK, good one! Anything realistic?" Penny surmised:

> No! Not really, I mean, because…things happen, you know? As an educator…a lot of what we do is fly by the seat of your pants! You know, you can plan to the moon and the fire alarm goes off. The power goes out. The internet goes down. There's a lockdown. There's a shelter-in-place because there's 17 javelina on campus! Like, there's so many things! We actually had that, like, four days in a row!

In my discussion with Janette, she answered:

> Sometimes there's stuff happening with the students that, you know, supersedes what may need to be spoken to with the teacher. Especially if, say, I had that [informal] observation two days ago, but I knew that we had a student that…had a crisis on campus. I don't expect [Principal Nora] to say, wait a minute…I have to go talk to [Ms. Janette], I'll be right back…There's always behaviors and… there's tons and tons of other meetings that are required. So, I think sometimes that kind of—it's not minutiae, it's not minutiae at all. But those are things… they're priorities, and sometimes they're last-minute priorities.

When I asked Janette about possible resolutions, she replied similarly as Penny:

> I don't know…Don't do [informal observations] during the full moon weeks, I guess! It's, I don't know. That's hard because there's just things that bubble up sometimes that you can't control. I mean, I guess just doing scheduling…Well, I guess it depends on if you want to do [reflective conversations] scheduled. Like, if [Nora] came in [my classroom] today and then sent me an email in the morning that said, "Hey, will you stop by on your prep?" And…I go on my prep there, but it's because she's at the health office waiting for an ambulance to come [for a student]. I mean…that happens…It's not regular, but it's enough where, you know…you just deal with it.

In summary, participants most commonly mentioned the following as time barriers hindering formative supervision: student supervision duties, safety drills and emergencies, meetings, staff absences and shortages, and student discipline. However, based on Nora's interviews, investigating and addressing student discipline issues has now taken less time and there are less problems than there were earlier in the school year when she participated in my Cycle 2 study.

The aforementioned time barriers appeared to frequently prevent or at least slow down consistently implementing informal observations and reflective conversations. Still, I found three other hindrances that based on my analyses of the interview data, most substantially affected Principal Nora's smooth application of the TBO approach to formative supervision. During my dissertation study from February–May 2024, state testing and teacher evaluation processes were two of these obstacles taking away the time needed for her to prepare and practice using the TBO reflection form and meet with teachers for more meaningful reflective conversations. The third barrier was events beyond Nora's and district administration's control requiring both the school's dean of students and Nora to frequently help at another district school and at the district office.

State testing began in March after spring break. Not only did this take much of teachers' instructional time when an administrator could visit and observe, state testing also hindered Nora's time for informal observations and reflective conversations as she served as the test coordinator for her site. She and her dean also had to help at another district school with state testing. State testing took place during the latter half of March and most of April as Kayla described:

> Gosh, it seemed like it was never-ending! We just had so much testing for three weeks! And then it was like the kids that didn't come…I mean, we had very great numbers…I think almost every grade but one had 100% students tested…It just felt never-ending. Made it hard. [Administrators] always had to be…pulling someone or getting someone to make it up.

Interestingly, state testing interfered with the time needed for meaningful formative supervision while also being an ongoing barrier to authentic practices for teacher evaluation since students' standardized test scores serve frequently as teacher evaluation measures.

Also interesting was how teacher evaluations emerged as a time-related barrier to Principal Nora engaging in formative supervision. March–April included district deadlines for completing teachers' summative evaluations. As in the past, Nora found the required processes and documentation for teacher evaluations to be considerably time-consuming. She already did not support conflating teacher evaluation with formative supervision, but she especially did not want to venture into conflation during my dissertation study. Consequently, much of the time Nora would have liked to devote to informal observations and reflective conversations instead went to formal observations, post-observation conferences, and all of the steps and documentation required for both her teachers and herself.

Finally, Principal Nora and her dean of students had to spend an extensive amount of time at another district school and for Nora, also at the district office to assist with vital needs due to events beyond Nora's and district administration's control. Nora and the dean had to spend much time away from their school, impacting the time she could have been doing informal observations and reflective conversations at her own school. Thanks to Nora's trustworthy teachers backed by her effective organizational skills and the healthy school climate Nora had developed, her school was able to run smoothly in her absence.

Summary of RQ1 Qualitative Analysis

Despite time-related barriers, Principal Nora and her teachers were able to experience the positive impact of unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations and reflective conversations. Nora increased informal observation lengths and increasingly met with teachers in their classrooms. Although Nora did not directly use the TBO reflection form, she focused on five observable teaching practices during her observations and engaged in reflection with teachers and provided nondirective and collaborative feedback during reflective conversations. Teachers had exposure to the TBO form and to the concept of sitting side-by-side to collaborate on the form during reflective conversations. Now after summarizing participants' experiences, it is time to consider their perceptions of formative supervision's effects on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

RQ2: Formative Supervision's Effects on Teachers' Professional Growth

My second research question was "How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers'

professional growth?" RQ2 was answered through both quantitative analysis of pre- and post-survey results and qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data.

In my analyses, I used the following categories as both quantitative constructs and qualitative pre-conceived categories as they pertained to participants' perceived effects on teachers' professional growth:

Aspects of Formative Supervision

- Aspects of Informal Observations
- Aspects of Reflective Conversations

Aspects of Evaluation

- Aspects of Formal Observations
- Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences

Five study participants completed both the pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. The two survey types were identical save for their timings and purposes of administration (See Appendix B). The surveys' Likert scale range of answers included 6 = *Strongly Agree,* 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree,* 2 = *Disagree,* and 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. There were 53 total six-point Likert scale items and seven open-ended, free response items serving as opportunities for participants to "share any reasons or insights regarding" their survey answers.

The 19 six-point Likert scale items associated with RQ2 measured participants' perceptions of whether the constructs, or Aspects of Formative Supervision, supported teachers' professional growth. Two other constructs, Aspects of Formal Observations and Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences were related to the formative supervision constructs as counters to the formative supervision aspects. In the case of the

two evaluation-related constructs, my intention was to seek participants' perceptions of whether teacher evaluation aspects supported teachers' professional growth.

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Table 10 displays pre- and post-survey descriptive statistics for each construct pertaining to participants' perceptions of formative supervision and evaluation supporting teachers' professional growth.

Table 10

Survey Descriptive Statistics by Professional Growth Construct (n = 5)

	Pre-Intervention					Post-Intervention				
Constructs	Range	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*	Range	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*
Aspects of Informal Observations	1.33	4.00	5.33	4.83	0.50	1.17	4.67	5.83	5.17	0.49
Aspects of Reflective Conversations	0.92	4.62	5.54	4.98	0.35	0.62	4.54	5.15	4.98	0.26
Aspects of Formal Observations	0.83	4.33	5.17	4.53	0.36	3.17	2.33	5.50	4.47	1.24
Aspects of Post-Conferences	0.92	4.38	5.31	4.88	0.41	1.54	3.92	5.46	4.71	0.62

As shown in Table 10, mean scores for all four constructs on both the pre- and post-surveys were high, ranging from 4.53 (*slightly agree*) to 5.17 (*agree*). This suggests participants agreed both before and after the intervention that aspects of informal observations, reflective conversations, formal observations, and post-conferences support teachers' professional growth.

Although participants already reported some level of agreement pre-intervention, the mean score for the construct of Aspects of Informal Observations increased from 4.83 to 5.17 post-intervention. This suggests that after the intervention, participants more strongly agreed aspects of informal observations supported teachers' professional growth.

The mean score for Aspects of Reflective Conversations remained the same from pre- to post-intervention at 4.98, suggesting there was little to no change after the intervention in participants' perceptions regarding aspects of reflective conversations supporting teachers' professional growth.

The mean score for Aspects of Formal Observations decreased from 4.53 to 4.47 post-intervention and the mean score for Aspects of Post-Conferences also decreased from 4.88 to 4.71 post-intervention. This suggests participants less strongly agreed after the intervention with these summative evaluation aspects supporting teachers' professional growth.

Standard deviations for three out of the four constructs on both the pre- and post-surveys ranged from 0.26 to 0.62 and show there was very little variation among the five participants' perceptions. The construct of Aspects of Formal Observations was an exception with a standard deviation of 1.24. This indicates there was more variation among levels of agreement for this construct than any other construct, suggesting participants' beliefs about aspects of formal observations supporting teachers' professional growth vary.

I also ran *t*-tests of dependent means to determine if there was a statistically significant change in perceptions after the intervention. With a difference in pre- and post-survey means of 0.34 and statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, Aspects of Informal Observations was the only construct for which there was a statistically significant change in perceptions after the intervention. This indicates that after the intervention, participants agreed more strongly with aspects of informal observations

supporting teachers' professional growth. For all other aspects, changes in perceptions from pre- to post-intervention were not statistically significant.

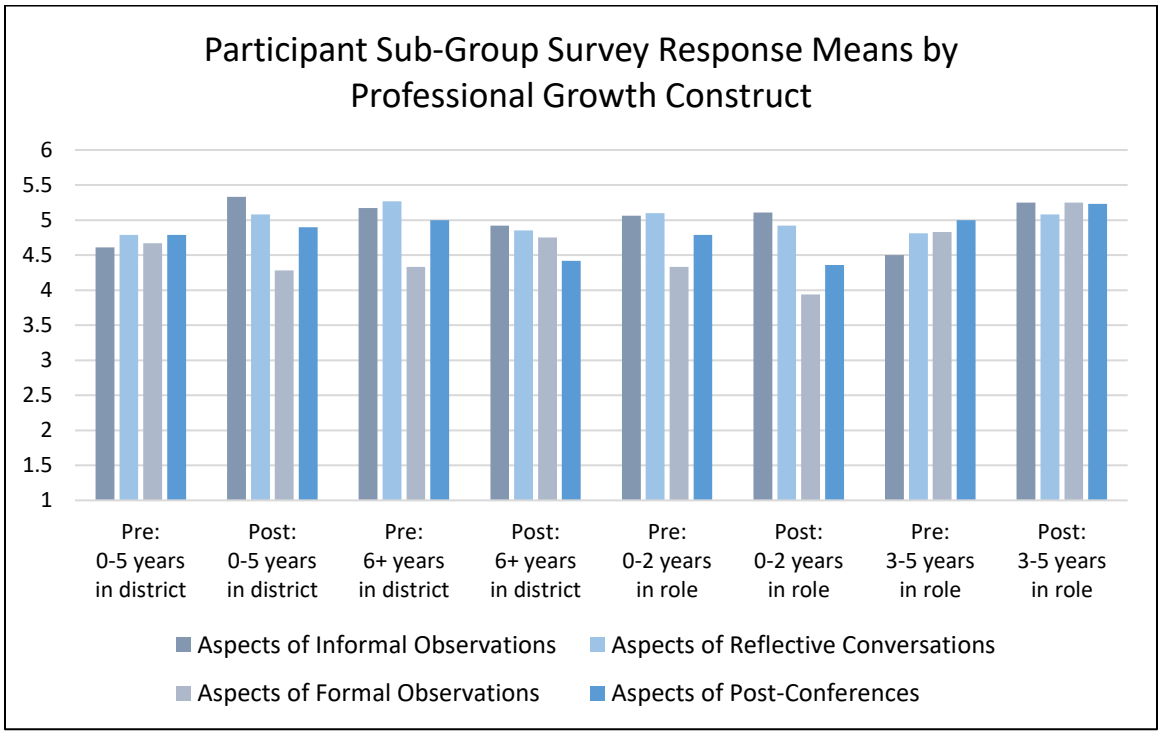
Additionally, I ran descriptive statistics, namely the means as well as independent sample *t*-tests for the following pairs of sub-groups:

- 0–5 years (n = 3) and 6 or more years (n = 2) of employment with the district
- 0–2 years (n = 2) and 3–5 years (n = 3) serving in their current roles.

Figure 2 depicts the mean scores on a scale of 1 to 6 for each sub-group on the pre- and post-surveys by professional growth construct.

Figure 2

Participant Sub-Group Survey Response Means by Professional Growth Construct



As shown in Figure 2, the mean scores in most cases were high, suggesting sub-groups of participants generally agreed both before and after the intervention that aspects of informal observations, reflective conversations, formal observations, and

post-conferences support teachers' professional growth. However, the post-survey mean score for Aspects of Formal Observations for the sub-group of participants with two or less years in their roles was below the 4.0 slight agreement level at 3.94 (*slightly disagree*). This suggests participants who were newer to their roles in the district tended to slightly disagree aspects of formal observations support teachers' professional growth.

Perceptions of the pair of sub-groups of participants with "five or less years of district experience" and "six or more years of district experience" differed slightly more so than the other sub-group. Regarding the formative supervision aspects of informal observations and reflective conversations, while mean scores of participants with less district experience increased, the mean scores of participants with more district experience decreased from pre- to post-survey. Similarly, regarding the summative evaluation aspects of formal observations and post-conferences, while mean scores of participants with less district experience decreased, the mean scores of participants with more district experience increased from pre- to post-survey. Further, based on an independent sample *t*-test, the difference between the two subgroups' means pertaining to reflective conversations was statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. These differences suggest the perceptions of participants with less district experience were more affected after the intervention than the perceptions of participants with more district experience.

Perceptions of the second pair of sub-groups, participants with "two or less years of experience in their current roles" and "three to five years of experience in their current roles", showed a similar pattern as the first sub-group where most of their perceptions did not mirror each other's from pre- to post-survey. However, for one construct, Aspects of

Informal Observations, the pair of sub-groups' perceptions aligned with increased mean scores from pre- to post-survey. These data suggest the perceptions of participants with less experience in their current roles were generally slightly more affected after the intervention than the perceptions of participants with more experience in their current roles. In the case of Aspects of Informal observations, both sub-groups believed more strongly that aspects of informal observations support teachers' professional growth. However, with respect to independent sample *t*-tests for the second pairs of sub-groups, for all constructs on the post-survey, differences in perceptions were not statistically significant.

Summary

Descriptive statistics of pre- and post-survey results suggest participants agreed both before and after the intervention that aspects of informal observations, reflective conversations, formal observations, and post-conferences support teachers' professional growth. Post-intervention, levels of agreement increased among participants regarding aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth; generally remained the same regarding reflective conversations supporting teachers' professional growth; and decreased regarding both aspects of formal observations and post-conferences supporting teachers' professional growth. Pairs of sub-groups pertaining to participants' years of experience in the district and in their current roles generally differed in changes in perceptions post-intervention. Differences in perceptions with respect to participants' years of experience in the district for reflective conversations were statistically significant. However, changes in perceptions for all participants and all sub-groups were not statistically significant except for the increase in all participants'

agreement regarding aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth.

Now having an overview of RQ2 results using descriptive and inferential statistics, I will report on frequencies and qualitative analysis for each of the constructs or aspects of formative supervision and summative evaluation.

Aspects of Informal Observations' Effects on Teachers' Professional Growth

The pre- and post-intervention surveys each included six items where participants indicated their levels of agreement regarding aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth. There was also one open-ended, free response item where survey respondents could "share any reasons or insights regarding" their answers. In addition, through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified a theme describing participants' views of aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth.

Quantitative Analysis

For pre-/post-survey items 5-1 to 5-6, participants were asked to respond using the Likert scale to the statement, "I believe the following aspects of **non-evaluative, informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth," answering for each of the six aspects listed in Table 11 on the following page. The table also displays the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 11

Survey Response Frequencies: Aspects of Informal Observations (n = 5)

Aspects of Informal Observations	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Unannounced	1	2	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No shorter or longer than 15-20 minutes each	0	1	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frequent (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)	0	2	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Every teacher is observed relatively equally in length & frequency	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
No more than 9 observable teaching practices relative to what is taking place in classroom are "looked for"	0	1	4	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Observation records are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The results displayed in Table 11 demonstrate no participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "I believe the following aspects of **non-evaluative, informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth," for any of the informal observation aspects on both the pre- and post-surveys. Additionally, from pre-intervention to post-intervention, the number of participants who strongly agreed with aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth increased by at least one for each of the six aspects.

Further, all five of the post-survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed the following aspects of informal observations support teachers' professional growth:

- Unannounced
- No shorter or longer than 15–20 minutes each
- Frequent (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)
- Observation records are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations

One teacher remarked through her free response pre-survey item regarding her perceived authenticity and fairness of unannounced informal observations:

> I believe unannounced observations give districts and supervisors a true look at educators' daily work. Unannounced visits are fairer across the board. It's important to see what a typical class environment is like—most [announced/scheduled] observations go over the top.

The teacher's comment suggests unannounced informal observations will support teachers' professional growth by giving administrators an authentic and fair picture of each teachers' strengths and areas of need, aiding administrators in deciding how to encourage and support teachers.

The administrator summarized her views on frequent informal observations through her post-survey free response: "I believe the more visible and present that I am in the classrooms the better when it comes to supporting teachers." It appears the administrator believes that frequency of informal observations allows her to more effectively support teachers and their professional growth.

For one of the remaining two aspects, "No more than 9 observable teaching practices relative to what is taking place in the classroom are 'looked for'", one participant's perception changed from slightly disagreeing on the pre-survey to strongly agreeing on the post-survey. This resulted in all five post-survey respondents either

slightly agreeing, agreeing, or strongly agreeing with the statement. Thus, all five participants believe if administrators look for no more than nine observable teaching practices while doing informal observations, teachers' professional growth will be supported more so than it would be if administrators try to observe more than nine observable teaching practices.

There was only one informal observation aspect on which one teacher slightly disagreed regarding supporting teachers' professional growth—"Every teacher is observed relatively equally in length and frequency." This teacher's reasoning is unknown. However, through the free response post-survey item, a different teacher offered an explanation of her agreement with observations for every teacher supporting teachers' professional growth: "It is important that all teachers in the building are being observed the same amount of times to ensure the validity of the observation process." This teacher's statement suggests administrators observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency is more valid and authentic than observing some teachers more or less than others.

Qualitative Analysis

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified a theme describing participants' views about key aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth: **Unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations support teachers' professional growth.**

Unannounced. Study participants expressed views showing they believe unannounced informal observations support teachers' professional growth in that unannounced observations give administrators authentic pictures of teachers' daily

instruction and provide more accurate information so administrators can better support teachers professional growth through reflective conversations and feedback. Principal Nora said, "Over time, my presence is probably giving me more of that informal data then…that scheduled data [from formal observations for evaluations], which we know sometimes can be different than it is if it was informal." Penny agreed and explained as if speaking to administrators other than her own supervisor, "If you really want to know what goes on…you need to come in. You need to come in different classes multiple times a day and my current supervisor is one of the few…that have ever implemented anything like that." Penny also described her experiences with a past supervisor's unannounced informal observations that Penny had requested and how these impacted her professional growth:

> Years ago, I went to my principal and said, "Can you just do a drive-by [instead of scheduling the observation]?" And she goes, "But if you don't know when I'm coming, then everything has to be ready all the time!"…[It] made me a way better teacher and so I appreciate it. And I also appreciate not knowing because then…I don't feel like I have to pretend to be something I'm not.

Janette expressed similar ideas: "I believe…that really the way you want to observe somebody is to come in and find them in their natural habitat." Kayla stated, "I think it's good for [administrators] to come in unannounced and get snapshots of what's going on in your room." Penny, Janette, and Kayla all stressed the importance of administrators knowing what's really going on in classrooms and supporting teachers to teach authentically.

In addition to Penny mentioning administrators doing unannounced informal observations at different times of the day and for different classes for each teacher, Delphine also emphasized the importance of this approach to support teachers'

professional growth so administrators would have a more complete picture of teachers' instruction:

> I call it the anatomy of a lesson. [It] has as a flow to it. What you begin with is from what you left off on yesterday. So, [administrators] should be able to come in anytime and see and say, "OK, this is the beginning. She's at the middle part…the heart of the lesson. And then they're going towards the end, which is an evaluation of the lesson." So, it's important to see anytime any flow of the lesson.

Delphine's concept of administrators doing unannounced observations to ensure seeing every possible part of "the anatomy of a lesson" adds to the other teachers' ideas about authentic and fair, unannounced observations supporting teachers' professional growth.

Although participants prefer unannounced informal observations, interview results showed teachers do also like to invite administrators to visit informally. Janette explained, "A lot of times, if I know I've got something coming up, I'll say [to the administrator], 'Hey, we're going to be doing this particular activity on Thursday'…I do like to invite them when I know I'm doing something funny or good." This perspective suggests teachers consider their invitations for administrators' classroom visits as opportunities to also authentically and fairly observe their instruction. The teachers are empowered and eager for administrators to see their effective practices in action.

Frequent and Timely. Through formative and post-intervention interviews, study participants indicated they believe frequent and timely informal observations support teachers' professional growth. Kayla described how frequent informal observations help her to do her best and support her professional growth:

> The more that [the administrator is] in there, the more we'll be expecting it…I think that if you are knowing that people are going to be stopping in your room and you're going to…have frequent conversations about what you're doing, you're going to be consciously trying to be showing your best and making sure that your classroom is always doing what it's supposed to be doing and running smoothly.

Janette explained how frequent informal observations give her the opportunity to show her strengths and find out her administrator's perspective of positive points she may not have realized through her own reflection:

> I like being caught, caught being good, I guess, if you want to put it that way. It's kind of…like you're caught doing what you should be doing, or doing something that's even better than maybe what you thought you should be doing.

Frequent informal observations allow administrators to perceive teachers' strengths as well as areas of need and find ways to help teachers as Janette further described:

> [As an administrator,] you know how your staff are doing. You know what they're doing. I mean, not necessarily every second of the day. But you know who your performers are. You know who might need help…Because you know who's good at some things, you might be able to make connections…I'm struggling with something and…my supervisor knows that [other teacher] is really good at it. So, she's going to maybe ask me and [other teacher] to get together and work on something…Now I have a better relationship with that teacher…Now I know I have somebody [in addition to the administrator] that is willing to help me, did help me, and is somebody I could go to in the future.

Janette's insights also alluded to the value of collaborating with and having the support of other teachers. Administrators who visit classrooms frequently know more about their teachers so they can facilitate this mentoring and professional development to support teachers' professional growth.

Regarding how often and for how long administrators should visit each teacher's classroom for informal observations in order to best support teachers' professional growth, participants mainly indicated administrators should observe each teacher for 15–20 minutes at least twice a month. In addition, participants were supportive of administrators conducting brief walk-throughs for each teacher at least one to two times per week to be visible around the school and regularly check in with staff and students.

Principal Nora remarked, “The teachers do appreciate that I’m always in the hallways or in and out of the classrooms and just having conversations.”

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Both quantitative and qualitative results showed that participants believe in the importance of informal observations being unannounced, frequent, and timely in order to most impact teachers’ professional growth. Participants perceive unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations as authentic and fair opportunities to show strengths and areas of need, leading to administrators having the information needed to support teachers’ professional growth.

In addition, survey results showed that participants agreed or strongly agreed that descriptive observation records with no ratings or interpretations support teachers’ professional growth, but I did not identify this belief as a theme aimed at informal observations. I instead perceived it as a theme more related to aspects of reflective conversations where administrators and teachers use observation records to guide their dialogue and reflection.

Aspects of Reflective Conversations’ Effects on Teachers’ Professional Growth

The pre- and post-intervention surveys each included 13 items where participants indicated their levels of agreement regarding aspects of reflective conversations supporting teachers’ professional growth. There was also one open-ended, free response item where survey respondents could “share any reasons or insights regarding” their answers. In addition, through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified a theme describing participants’ views of aspects of reflective conversations supporting teachers’ professional growth.

Quantitative Analysis

For pre-/post-survey items 13-1 to 13-13, participants were asked to respond using the Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* to the statement, "I believe the following aspects of administrator–teacher **reflective conversations** following **informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth," answering for each of the 13 aspects listed in Table 12. The table on the following page also displays the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 12

Survey Response Frequencies: Aspects of Reflective Conversations (n = 5)

Aspects of Reflective Conversations	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Within at least 1-2 days after informal observation	1	1	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
About 10-20 minutes in duration	0	0	4	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
As frequent as informal observations (at least every 3-4 weeks for each teacher)	0	0	4	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Every teacher has the opportunity for a reflective conversation relatively equal in duration & frequency	1	2	3	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through a note or e-mail	1	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Takes place in the teacher's classroom when students are not there	0	1	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Teacher & admin sit side-by-side for reflective dialogue & collaboratively completing written observation reflection form admin started during observation	1	1	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Admin opens by asking a reflective question & teacher shares reflections first	1	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she was doing during observed lesson to help students learn	1	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she might have done differently to re-teach the lesson	1	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin shares descriptive evidence of teacher's strengths he/she noticed during observation	1	2	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin offers suggestions only after first three observations, but willingly & supportively responds to teacher's request for suggestions	0	0	4	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Admin adds to observation reflection form based on teacher's input & checks form with teacher before emailing it to the teacher	0	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

The results depicted in Table 12 demonstrate no participants strongly disagreed with the statement, "I believe the following aspects of administrator–teacher **reflective conversations** following **informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth," for any of the reflective conversation aspects on both the pre- and post-surveys. Noteworthy is all five post-survey respondents indicating agreement or strong agreement for the following seven aspects supporting teachers' professional growth:

- About 10–20 minutes in duration
- As frequent as informal observations (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)
- The administrator offers suggestions only after the first three observations, but willingly and supportively responds to the teacher's request for suggestions
- Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through a note or e-mail
- The teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she was doing during the observation lesson to help students learn
- The teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she might have done differently to re-teach the lesson
- The administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths he/she noticed during the observation

From pre-intervention to post-intervention, the number of participants who strongly agreed with aspects of reflective conversations supporting teachers' professional growth increased by one to two each for the last seven aforementioned aspects as well as two others:

- Every teacher has the opportunity for a reflective conversation relatively equal in duration and frequency
- Takes place in the teacher's classroom when students are not there

For one of these aspects, "Every teacher has the opportunity for a reflective conversation relatively equally in duration and frequency", one participant's perception changed from slightly agreeing on the pre-survey to strongly agreeing on the post-survey, resulting in four out of five participants either agreeing or strongly agreeing. For the aspect, "The administrator offers suggestions only after the first three observations, but willingly and supportively responds to the teacher's request for suggestions", another participant's perception changed from slightly disagreeing to agreeing.

Three other aspects included levels of slight agreement to strong agreement with no one disagreeing:

- Within at least 1–2 days after informal observations
- Takes place in the teacher's classroom when students are not there
- The administrator opens by asking a reflective question and the teacher shares reflections first

Regarding the reflective conversation approach of the administrator opening "by asking a reflective question and the teacher shares reflections first," the administrator noted in her free response survey item, "I prefer having the teachers share out first but if they are struggling to share then I will provide probing questions. This usually helps and gets the conversation going."

One teacher's views changed from agreement on the pre-survey to disagreement on the post-survey pertaining to reflective conversations occurring "in the teacher's

classroom when students are not there" and involving the teacher and administrator sitting "side-by-side for reflective dialogue and collaboratively completing a written observation reflection form the administrator started during the observation." This teacher explained her perspective via the free response item:

> I don't think it matters where the meeting takes place. I also don't feel like the teacher and administrator need to be seated in a specific format every time. They should be able to discuss the reflections standing or sitting.

In contrast, the other four study participants either agreed or strongly agreed with the idea of meeting in the teacher's classroom and sitting side-by-side as supportive of teachers' professional growth.

One final outlier for reasons unknown came from a teacher's change from agreement to disagreement with the final step of a reflective conversation, "The administrator adds to the observation reflection form based on the teacher's input and checks the form with the teacher before e-mailing it to the teacher." All other participants agreed with the idea of teachers having input on the observation reflection form.

Qualitative Analysis

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified a theme describing participants' views about key aspects of informal observations supporting teachers' professional growth: **Frequent and timely reflective conversations using descriptive observation records with no ratings support teachers' professional growth.**

Frequent and Timely. Study participants' perceptions included the concept of frequent and timely reflective conversations following informal observations as supporting teachers' professional growth. Related to her thoughts about informal

observations leading to administrators knowing teachers' areas of need, Janette described her reflective conversations with her administrator and collaboration with the administrator as well as fellow teachers as the most effective type of professional development:

> I think it's iron sharpens iron…People that are working at higher levels than me have shown…a capacity hopefully for leadership and excellence in their profession already. So, I always like to find out what they're doing and how they're doing things…Or if they like…the way I'm doing things…I think it's a great way…for professional development…I like learning from other teachers way more than I like learning from people who have gone to college but never taught in a classroom…I've logged well into the thousands of hours of professional development and I can spot a stinker a mile away! [Professional development with colleagues] makes a huge difference.

Further, participants believed reflective conversations should take place within one to two days after informal observations to truly support teachers' professional growth as Delphine explained, "If you hold off too long, it's forgotten. Then…so many other things happened…after that point. It might not be as relevant or effective if an admin waits too long." Janette agreed:

> I think you got 24 hours up from a working day…I think it's more effective if you're doing it while it's still fresh in everybody's mind…I'd want to know… right away, because otherwise I might be like, "Wait, what did I do? I'm not sure what you're talking about. That was like, six days ago."

Penny said similarly:

> I'd have to say within a couple of days. I mean…it generally can't be right afterwards because there's always too many things going on…You've been a principal, you know what it's like. But I would say, at least within a couple of days.

Principal Nora agreed with her teachers' perspectives:

> Having those immediate conversations are a lot more meaningful than they are being scheduled…If you can do it right away and help them be reflective in that moment versus later…It's too hard to be reflective when we've moved on…So, the sooner the better.

Ratings-Free Observation Records. Although the administrator did not yet use the TBO reflection form or any other written tool for informal observations and reflective conversations, participants agreed administrators using a descriptive observation record with no ratings or interpretations would support teachers' professional growth. Kayla explained her views regarding the TBO form, "It's perfect. [For example, with the learning target evidence], it's just an X whether you did it, they saw it and then no X…if it wasn't happening at that time…I think the form…works well for the purpose." Then I asked Kayla what she thought about the form not having ratings. She replied:

> I think that's fine…I mean, you're going to get the ratings when you have your formal sit-down and you have to do the ratings and your reflection of yourself three times a year [as part of the evaluation process]. So, we probably don't need ratings every single time [administrators] come into the room.

I followed with the question, "Do you think you need ratings at all?" Kayla responded, "I don't." and said further:

> They don't bother me so much. I guess it's more so either you're doing the job or you're not doing the job and you're doing it effectively or you're not. So, I know if I'm doing it well, based on the way my students understand. And so, it doesn't bother me if [ratings are] there or not.

Principal Nora expressed how she believes teachers do not want ratings and how she does not value them as well:

> To me, I'm like, ratings are a rating, you know? I mean, I don't think a teacher wants to see a rating…They just want to know…"What was it that I was doing?" [Whereas] "Was I…a 1 or was I a 2?"…that doesn't give them any input whatsoever…If anything, it will probably check them out. They'll be like, "Whatever!" But if you can just have a conversation about what you saw, versus, "I saw you as…you're slightly proficient in this area, but you looked proficient in this area." It doesn't sound right. But if you can talk to them just using…simple conversation-type… you-and-me words than speaking like an evaluator…"Let's talk about what you saw"…I don't like rating skills anyway. So, just by…having [teachers] talk first and then me…I have more fun with that than just, you know, clicking something and evaluating them…There's no value to that. I'm not a

> number! I'm a person!…Our kids too. I don't see them as a number. I mean, I know all of my students by their first name. And [the superintendent] is very pleased to know that I know every student's name. He's like, "How did you do that?" Because we're small! I can see them in classes, I can greet them at the gate or wherever and I'm like, "Hey!" Or "High five!" And you got to do that too with your own staff. That's the nice thing about working in [the town]. It's small enough that you're not just seen as a number.

Instead of valuing arbitrary ratings, Principal Nora values and respects her teachers and students as people, realizing authentic professional growth comes from administrators and teachers reflecting on actual teaching practices and their effects on students' learning.

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Both quantitative and qualitative results showed that participants view frequent and timely reflective conversations using descriptive observation records with no ratings as supporting teachers' professional growth. Participants see reflective conversations as authentic forms of professional development and collaboration.

Other aspects of reflective conversations were described by participants as supporting teachers' professional growth, but I perceived many of these better connecting to how formative supervision helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships and will highlight these perspectives later in this chapter.

Aspects of Formal Observations' Effects on Teachers' Professional Growth

The 19 six-point Likert scale survey items measuring the evaluation constructs, Aspects of Formal Observations and Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences served as counters to the 19 formative supervision items. There were also two open-ended, free response items where survey respondents could "share any reasons or insights regarding" their answers. My intention was to seek participants' perceptions of whether teacher evaluation aspects supported teachers' professional growth. I believed

participants' evaluation item responses would not have as strong agreement as for the formative supervision item responses, but I did not think participants' responses would necessarily suggest strong disagreement. I developed the survey with acknowledgement in my mind that not all evaluation aspects may be considered negative, especially when implemented by administrators who have built positive, trusting relationships with their teachers.

During the interviews, I did not ask any questions about teachers' perceptions of formal observations or post-conferences. However, I was open to any evaluation-related insights participants may have shared and was ready to perform qualitative analysis of their responses. Through qualitative analysis, I did identify a theme describing participants' views about formal observations supporting teachers' professional growth.

Quantitative Analysis

Regarding formal observations for evaluations, pre-/post-survey participants were asked to respond to items 11-1 to 11-6 using the Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* to the statement, "I believe the following aspects of **formal observations** for **summative evaluations** support teachers' professional growth," answering for each of the six aspects listed in Table 13 on the following page that also features the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 13

Survey Response Frequencies: Aspects of Formal Observations (n = 5)

Aspects of Formal Observations	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Announced (scheduled by admin & teacher)	0	0	1	3	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
At least 30 minutes & up to an hour each	0	0	4	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
No more than 1-2 times per year	1	1	1	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Probationary &/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/ developing observed more often than continuing &/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective	1	2	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
All observable teaching practices on evaluation form (typically 30-50) are "looked for"	0	1	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
Observation records include interpretative written feedback & ratings	0	1	4	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0

As I expected, Table 13's results show there were more levels of agreement than disagreement among the five survey respondents regarding formal observation aspects supporting teachers' professional growth. However, there was less strong agreement and more slight agreement among the participants than there were for the six informal observation aspects. Also, whereas with informal observation, there were no participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement for any of the informal observation aspects on both the pre- and post-surveys; for formal observation, there was disagreement among five out of the six aspects. The only formal observation aspect with

no levels of disagreement on both the pre- and post-surveys was "Probationary and/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/developing are observed more often than continuing and/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective", suggesting participants believe less experienced and/or struggling teachers should be formally observed more often than experienced and/or adept teachers to support their professional growth.

Regarding announced/scheduled formal observations supporting teachers' professional growth, one teacher expressed through the free response pre-survey item, "Having scheduled observations puts pressure on the teacher and students. The teacher is more likely to be prepared for the lesson and less likely to be teaching naturally." Post-intervention, the teacher's views changed slightly, still feeling announced observations cause pressure, but seeing both formal and informal observations as opportunities with the time needed to build administrator–teacher relationships:

> I feel that announced observations also benefit teachers, however there may be more pressure to be perfect due to the infrequent administrator visits. It is good to have a mix between both formal and informal observations to build a relationship. The scheduled visits lock in a time for the teacher and admin to talk without interruptions.

However, regarding announced/scheduled formal observations, as well as pertaining to the formal observation aspect of "all observable teaching practices on the evaluation form (typically 30–50) are 'looked for'", another teacher stated on the post-survey:

> 30–50 practices seems like a lot. I'd love to know that list prior to planning for a summative. Honestly I think that's where the informal observation is better—you get what you get, instead of a dog and pony show.

One of the administrator's free response post-survey items explained regarding formal observations for summative evaluations, "I inform each of my teachers that I am open to

either announced or unannounced observations. [The] majority of my teachers prefer announced [formal] observations."

The post-survey item regarding "all observable teaching practices on the evaluation form (typically 30–50) are 'looked for'" supporting teachers' professional growth received the most varied of responses with one answer each for *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Slightly Agree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*. The reason for such varied answers is not known, although as previously mentioned, one teacher who slightly agreed with the concept said, "30–50 practices seems like a lot." Varied levels of agreement among participants could indicate acceptance of what is required by a state-mandated, standards-based observation framework and it does not hurt teachers' professional growth; the realization that administrators looking for 30–50 practices is unwieldy whether required or not and does impede with teachers' professional growth; or the belief that a large number of practices presents a comprehensive view of teachers' and students' actions in the classroom and therefore more fully supports teachers' professional growth than would focusing on less observable teaching practices for a formal evaluation.

Overall, participants saw aspects of formal observations as generally supporting teachers' professional growth. However, it is important to reiterate there was less strong agreement and more slight agreement and varied levels of disagreement among the participants regarding formal observations supporting teacher's professional growth than there was in the case of the six informal observation aspects. This suggests the participants generally view informal observations more favorably than they do formal observations. Participants appear to believe informal observations rather than formal observations more effectively support teachers' professional growth.

Qualitative Analysis

As previously stated, my open-ended interview questions did not include those about formal observations for summative evaluations. However, participants did bring up formal observations' connections to teachers' professional growth, mainly by comparing formal observations to informal observations. Through qualitative analysis of participants' few yet rich responses regarding formal observations, I did identify a theme describing their views: **Infrequent and announced formal observations for evaluations do not support teachers' professional growth as powerfully as do informal observations as part of formative supervision.**

When discussing formal observations, two teachers used the term, "dog and pony" to describe formal observations' inauthenticity and limited impact on teachers' professional growth. Penny even used "dog and pony" as a verb: "If you tell me you're going to come in, you're going to observe during…this class…I can dog and pony for anybody." Janette said, "I can put together a heck of a dog and pony show for you, but it doesn't necessarily reflect what I do the next day." She explained further how formal observations work:

> Most of the time, all the time, actually, for the formal assessments, it's been…scheduled…You know when [the administrator is] coming…I'm given the time to plan specifically for that observation and you know, of course I do. We all do. And then when she's here, I know she's got a list of things she's looking for based on…whatever qualities…that she's given as a supervisor to look for, but also based on things that I've said about myself, how I view myself as an educator in terms of my abilities, what level of expertise I believe I've achieved in the classroom. So, I think she's looking for all of those things. And then, I know she's just taking a lot of notes, looking to see where I land in the various domains, for domains that we have, because I've also been asked to rate myself in those domains too. And of course…there's a pre-conference and then there's a post-conference that goes with that. And then the written observations and where she has also felt that I have fallen within the rating system. That's what I see and feel and that's basically what's been happening over the years.

Janette later compared her views on informal observations versus formal observations:

> I like the concept of not doing formal evaluations and just…come in and visit, if it's two minutes or if it's the whole class. But…you don't have to tell me you're coming…I like the informal so much better. I think you learn more.

Janette's comment represents the participants' views that informal observations rather than formal observations more effectively support teachers' professional growth.

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Pre- and post-intervention surveys gave participants the opportunity to indicate their levels of agreement of formal observations supporting teachers' professional growth. Quantitative results suggested participants generally believe aspects of formal observations support teachers' professional growth, but not at the same levels as do informal observations as part of formative supervision. Qualitative results corroborated participants' perceptions of formal observations for evaluations.

Aspects of Post-Conferences' Effects on Teachers' Professional Growth

The second aspect of teacher evaluations serving as a survey construct was Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences. As previously mentioned, during the interviews, I did not ask any questions about teachers' perceptions of post-conferences. However, I was open to any evaluation-related insights participants may have shared and was ready to perform qualitative analysis of their responses. Nevertheless, I did not end up identifying a theme describing participants' views about post-conferences supporting teachers' professional growth.

Quantitative Analysis

For pre-/post-survey items 15-1 to 15-13, participants were asked to respond using the Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* to the statement,

"I believe the following aspects of **post-conferences** following **formal observations** for **summative evaluations** support teachers' professional growth," answering for each of the 13 aspects listed in Table 14. This table on the following page also features the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 14

Survey Response Frequencies: Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences (n = 5)

Aspects of Formal Observation Post-Conferences	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Within at least 10 school days after the formal observation	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
About 30-45 minutes in duration	1	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
As frequent as formal observations (no more than 1-2 times per year)	1	1	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Probationary &/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/ developing have post-observation conferences more often than continuing &/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective	2	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through an e-mailed evaluation form or through an electronic evaluation system	2	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Takes place in the admin's office	0	0	1	2	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Teacher & admin sit across from each other or side-by-side depending on admin's preferences, the nature of the office furniture, &/or how the admin & teacher view documents together	0	1	5	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Admin or teacher may speak first depending on admin's approach	0	0	5	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin shares evaluation form with all practices rated	1	1	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin gives feedback including strengths & areas for growth	2	1	3	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teacher shares required documents such as a self-assessment form, observation reflection form, &/or evidence portfolio	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teacher talks about his/her reflections of observed lesson & evaluation ratings including strengths & areas for growth	2	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin does not make any changes to evaluation form & both admin & teacher sign it. Teacher receives signed copy.	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1

The results depicted in Table 14 demonstrate all five post-survey respondents slightly agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed eight out of the 13 aspects of post-observation conferences support teachers' professional growth. Interestingly, participants generally viewed post-observation conferences' effects on teachers' professional growth more favorably than they did regarding actual formal observations. However, participants did not indicate as strong agreement with post-observation conference aspects supporting teachers' professional growth as they did regarding how reflective conversations following informal observations support teachers' professional growth.

Having no explanations from the participants through the free response item regarding no levels of disagreement for eight of the 13 post-observation conference aspects, I grouped the aspects according to what I believed as a participant-observer could be the reasons behind participants' beliefs about the aspects supporting teachers' professional growth as seen in Table 15.

Table 15

Possible Reasons for Participants' Beliefs About Post-Observation Conference Aspects

Shares Positive Aspects With Reflective Conversations	**Aligned to Beliefs About Formal Observation Aspects**	**May Have Become Accepted as "Status Quo"**
Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through an e-mailed evaluation form or through an electronic evaluation system	As frequent as formal observations (no more than 1–2 times per year)	The administrator shares the evaluation form with all practices rated
The administrator or teacher may speak first depending on the admin's approach	Probationary and/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/developing have post-observation conferences more often than continuing and/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective	The teacher shares required documents such as a self-assessment form, observation reflection form, and/or evidence portfolio
The admin gives feedback including strengths and areas for growth		
The teacher talks about his/her reflections of the observed lesson and evaluation ratings including strengths and areas for growth		

I can see four of the post-observation conference aspects share some positive aspects with reflective conversations following informal observations. Administrators meeting with teachers for post-observation conferences where they meet face-to-face for dialogue; the teacher could have the opportunity to speak first; and both the administrator and teacher talk about the teachers' strengths and areas for growth do mirror reflective conversations in these aspects. I can understand although most post-observation conferences take place only one to two times per year, teachers may still value these aspects of post-observation conferences and may perceive them as supporting their professional growth, especially if the administrator takes a strengths-based approach and has developed a trusting relationship with the teacher. Further, participants' views on other aspects of post-observation conferences may align to their views about formal observations. If participants generally believed one to two times per year is the ideal frequency of formal observations to support teachers' professional growth, then one to two times per year is the appropriate number of post-conferences following those formal observations. Similarly, if participants felt probationary and/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/developing should be formally observed more often than continuing and/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective, then those teachers would also have post-observation conferences more frequently. Finally, I grouped two aspects as those participants may have accepted as "status quo" because both administrators and teachers may have become very used to meeting their respective summative evaluation obligations—administrators completing and sharing evaluation forms with ratings and teachers completing and sharing their required documents such as self-assessment forms, observation reflection forms, and evidence portfolios. Although required and possibly

time-consuming, teachers might also view such documents and processes as contributing toward their professional growth, especially if they get to collaborate on these documents and processes with a trusted supervisor.

Some participants indicated disagreement with the other five aspects of post-observation conferences supporting teachers' professional growth. One example is the teacher who had felt it did not matter where reflective conversations took place, expressed similar views regarding post-observation conferences: "Feedback should come at any time and should not have to be scheduled. It should not matter if it is done in the teacher's classroom or in the administrator's office." Another example is how participants indicated varied levels of disagreement with the aspect of "The administrator does not make any changes to the evaluation form and both the administrator and teacher sign it. The teacher receives a signed copy." Via a free response post-survey item, one teacher said, "Changes should be allowed if there was a mistake or misunderstanding." Another teacher explained:

> In order for growth and trusting relationships to be built, the final form should have teacher input added to the form before signing it. The teacher should be able to take the feedback as a way to improve or grow, without feeling they are being penalized for not being perfect.

This teacher's comment suggestions teachers having input on formal observation and evaluation documents during a summative post-conference helps to build trust and supports teachers' professional growth.

Qualitative Analysis

Participants' quantitative survey responses provided valuable insights regarding their perceptions of formal observation post-conferences supporting teachers' professional growth. However, during the interviews, post-conferences were not

discussed sufficiently enough for me to identify a theme about their connections to professional growth. Therefore, participants' perceptions of formal observation post-conferences supporting teachers' professional growth has only been answered through quantitative analysis.

Summary of Quantitative Analysis

Considering all of the quantitative data regarding formal observation post-conferences supporting teachers' professional growth, I can surmise teachers generally value this additional time with their supervisor, even if a post-conference is more formal than a reflective conversation following an informal observation. I believe this shows the administrator has built trusting relationships with her teachers through formative supervision that help formal observation post-conferences to closely mirror her trust-based approaches in reflective conversations.

RQ3: Formative Supervision's Effects on Trusting Administrator–Teacher Relationships

In addition to considering participants' perceptions of formative supervision's effects on teachers' professional growth, I was also interested in participants' perceptions of formative supervision's effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Therefore, my third research question was "How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?" As with the second research question, RQ3 was answered through both quantitative analysis of pre- and post-survey results and qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data.

"Trust" served as an overall quantitative construct measured by the

pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. Although Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of trust—benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness—did not serve as constructs or qualitative pre-conceptualized categories, I did use them to word my survey questions and kept them in mind as I conducted qualitative analysis.

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Table 16 displays pre- and post-survey descriptive statistics for each construct pertaining to participants' perceptions of formative supervision's effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Table 16

Survey Descriptive Statistics by Trust Construct

	Pre-Intervention					Post-Intervention				
	Range	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*	Range	Min	Max	Mean	*SD*
All participants (n = 5)	0.80	4.47	5.27	4.88	0.29	0.73	4.60	5.33	5.09	0.32
Participants with 0–5 years in district (n = 3)	0.80	4.47	5.27	4.84	0.40	0.07	5.27	5.33	5.31	0.04
Participants with 6+ years in district (n = 2)	0.13	4.87	5.00	4.93	0.09	0.33	4.60	4.93	4.77	0.24
Participants with 0–2 years in current role (n = 3)	0.20	4.80	5.00	4.89	0.10	0.73	4.60	5.33	4.96	0.37
Participants with 3–5 years in current role (n = 2)	0.80	4.47	5.27	4.87	0.57	0.07	5.27	5.33	5.30	0.05

As shown in Table 16, mean scores for all participants and pairs of sub-groups on both the pre- and post-surveys were high, ranging from 4.77 (*slightly agree*) to 5.31 (*agree*). This suggests participants agreed both before and after the intervention that general formative supervision, informal observations, and reflective conversations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Further, the mean scores for all participants and pairs of sub-groups increased from pre- to post-intervention except for participants with six or more years of district experience where there was a slight decrease from 4.93 (*slightly agree*) to 4.77 (*slightly agree*). This suggests that after the intervention, participants with six or more years of district experience less strongly agreed that general formative supervision, informal observations, and reflective conversations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Standard deviations for all participants and pairs of sub-groups on both the pre- and post-surveys ranged from 0.04 to 0.57 and show there was very little variation among the five participants' and sub-groups' perceptions.

I also ran *t*-tests of dependent means to determine if there was a statistically significant change in perceptions after the intervention. For the construct of "trust" for all participants, changes in perceptions from pre- to post-intervention were not statistically significant.

Additionally, I ran independent sample *t*-tests for the two pairs of sub-groups. For the construct of "trust" on the post-survey, differences in perceptions among the "years in current role" sub-groups were not statistically significant but the differences among the "years in district" sub-groups were statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. This suggests the perceptions of participants with less district experience were more affected after the intervention than the perceptions of participants with more district experience.

Summary

Descriptive statistics of pre- and post-survey results show all participants and pairs of sub-groups agreed both before and after the intervention that general formative supervision, informal observations, and reflective conversations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Post-intervention, levels of agreement generally increased among participants regarding general formative supervision, informal observations, and reflective conversations helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Differences in perceptions with respect to participants' years of experience in the district for reflective conversations were statistically significant. However, changes in perceptions for all participants and all sub-groups were not statistically significant.

Now having an overview of RQ3 results using descriptive and inferential statistics, I will report on frequencies and qualitative analysis in two parts for the "trust" construct:

- Formative supervision and informal observations
- Reflective conversations

Formative Supervision and Informal Observations' Effects on Trust

The pre- and post-intervention surveys each included six items where participants indicated their levels of agreement regarding statements about general formative supervision's and informal observations' effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Three items were regarding formative supervision in general and the other three items pertained to informal observations specifically. There were also two open-ended, free response items where survey respondents could "share any reasons or insights regarding" their answers. In addition, through qualitative analysis of formative

and post-intervention interview data, I identified themes describing participants' views about formative supervision's and informal observations' effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Quantitative Analysis

For pre-/post-survey items 1 to 3 and 7 to 9, participants were asked to respond using the Likert scale to six statements about overall formative supervision and informal observations. Table 17 on the following page displays the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 17

Survey Response Frequencies: Trust–Overall FS and IO Items (n = 5)

Trust–Overall Formative Supervision & Informal Observation Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Formative supervision focused on the teacher's perspective & reflection helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.	2	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in risk taking and making mistakes.	1	4	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in asking for administrators' feedback & support.	2	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrators implementing unannounced informal observations shows they have confidence in teachers' instructional practices.	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrators' frequent and timely informal observations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.	1	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrators informally observing every teacher relatively equally in length & frequency facilitates trusting administrator–teacher relationships.	1	2	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

The results displayed in Table 17 demonstrate no participants slightly disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with any of the six statements on both the pre- and post-surveys. From pre-intervention to post-intervention, the number of participants who strongly agreed increased by one to three for each of the six statements.

All participants either agreed or strongly agreed with the concepts of formative supervision being "focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships" as well as "Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in asking for administrators' feedback and support." One teacher expressed through a free response post-survey item, "I am a believer in discussion and reflection. And I believe my admin should be aware of and supportive of my avenues in class. This is how all of that happens." Another teacher said, "Personally, I feel I can more relate to my administrative evaluator because I trust her to be honest with me in terms of feedback." The two teachers' comments suggest formative supervision builds trust, allowing teachers to feel safe in sharing and discussing their reflections with and seeking feedback from their administrators.

There was also only agreement or strong agreement for the statement, "Administrators' frequent and timely informal observations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships." One teacher remarked on the post-survey:

> At the beginning of the school year I was a bit nervous at having my administrative evaluator in my classroom so often. But by the end of the year I have become so comfortable with my admin in my class, it's almost as if they aren't [even] there. I feel as though we now have a more partner-like relationship. There is much more trust and zero fear.

Regarding the idea of "administrators informally observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency" facilitating trusting relationships, four out of five

participants agreed or strongly agreed and the fifth participant slightly agreed. The administrator remarked via a free response item, “Word spreads when an administrator has been in your classroom and for how long. So, with that being said informal observations need to be equal in length.” Her comment suggests she believes fairness and equal opportunity among teachers builds trust.

Strongest agreement showed for the statement, “Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in risk taking and making mistakes.” The administrator summarized her perspectives through a free response post-survey item, “Formative supervision if done right can help build trust between the administrator and the teacher.” Based on participants’ perspectives, formative supervision “done right” includes focusing on teachers’ perspectives and reflections and implementing frequent and timely informal observations of equal length for every teacher.

Qualitative Analysis

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified two themes describing participants’ views:

- **Formative supervision focused on the teacher’s perspective and reflection helps teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators’ feedback and support.**
- **Administrators’ unannounced informal observations relatively equal in length and frequency help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.**

***Formative Supervision’s Security*.** Study participants expressed views showing they believe formative supervision focused on the teacher’s perspective and reflection

helps teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. Janette explained:

> In a situation where it's somebody that needs help…most of the time, if we're struggling in the classroom, we know it…You know it and sometimes pride keeps us from asking. But if you're in a scenario where you know [the administrator has] been in the room and she got to see something happening and then the next day when…I get to talk to her…I'll…go, "All right! This is what I'm dealing with in class. I'm just not sure how to overcome this", now she knows first-hand what I may have been talking about.

Janette also compared her feelings about her current supervisor's formative supervision practices to how she felt in the past about a previous supervisor's approach:

> I feel like [formative supervision] has built a relationship of trust and maybe…that's the goal, but it really helps me trust her…I had a [previous] supervisor I did not trust. And it makes all the difference in the world, because then when they walk in, you just feel like they're looking to gotcha!…I don't feel like that [with my current supervisor].

Similarly, Penny explained her trusting relationship with her current supervisor and then compared it to her experiences with a past supervisor:

> I'm…not quite sure how to say this, but it's more of a friendship [with my current supervisor]. And no, we don't go to dinner together or anything like that. That's not what I mean. But the relationship has become more of a friendship, and therefore, if there is…constructive criticism, it's like your friend is telling you, "Hey, you might want to…look over here [where a student is not engaged in the lesson]."…The relationship has become different. I don't feel like I have to perform. I feel like, if she likes something, she can tell me. If not, she can tell me that too…I'm not devastated anymore…because it's become frequent enough… And friendship is the only word I can think of.

Then I asked Penny, "Would you say it's a trusting relationship?" and she replied, explaining how she feels secure in asking her current supervisor for feedback and support:

> Well yeah, because you trust friends. It's along the lines of a partnership, but better than a partnership…The trust between myself and my supervisor has grown to the point where I feel like I can go with a real problem. And they can point out a real problem without there being any kind of offense.

I followed with another question, “And before, when you said—you used the word, ‘devastated’. What kind of situations? What do you mean by that? Your past supervisor relationships?” Penny answered:

> Yeah…Years ago, I was teaching in a school and our principal was a harsh man… For your observation…he’d come in and he’d, you know, do his thing and then he’d write this thing up and then you’d go in [for the post-conference] and he’s like, “Well, this 6th grade teacher’s doing this. Why aren’t you? This 6th grade teacher’s doing that. Why aren’t you? This…teacher’s test scores are here. Why aren’t yours there?” Yeah, I mean, he was brutal! He’s like, “You’re a good teacher, but you’re not great.” [laughed] OK! Oh, he was—he was bad! But he wasn’t bad to everybody. He had real favorites. And I wasn’t one of them! And so, it was tough. And so, I really appreciate supervisors that spend time to get to know you and to get to know your teaching style and get to know your class. I also feel like the supervisors that do that, like [a different past supervisor], I felt like he was in my class enough that when I had a couple of problems with parents, he was right there and right on my side. And I feel the same with my current supervisor, like that person has been in my class enough, enough times of the day of the week, different times, different day, different classes to know exactly what I’m like. And so, if a parent comes at me, that supervisor’s like, “Hmm, been in that class, that’s not happening!”…That’s that friendship. Somebody that has your back-type thing that I’m talking about.

In her post-intervention interview, Penny shared more of her thoughts about formative supervision and her relationship with her current supervisor:

> There’s enough confidence with both of us that I can address my concerns with her, which is new for me…With an administrator, there’s always that hierarchy. And I think for her, just to be able to come in and say “I’m here” and then she just, you know, does her thing. And then we have a conversation about it. It doesn’t matter if we’re walking down the hallway or she comes to my class…It’s become just natural and normal. So, I don’t feel like it’s an observation anymore.

Principal Nora has also seen how her formative supervision approaches help to develop two-way, trusting administrator–teacher relationships:

> With the observation process, I think whether it’s [formative supervision] or any evaluation process, I think…the trust piece in the relationship-building is much-needed in order for the teacher to feel valued…I always say I’m your cheerleader, your biggest fan…I’m here to help you and make things better in your classroom and try to find all different things to help support your classroom resources and just kind of build their toolbox, too. So, I think by my approach, I

> just say, "Hey, I'm just another teacher here helping you and…I'm always your co-teacher" when I'm walking in the classroom. So, don't look at me just because I have the title of principal means it's…I'm going to be coming in and just giving all these negative comments. Some [teachers] have had so much negativity, I think, or things said to them that everything was just kind of like, "Eh, well, how is this person going to be when we have a conversation?" and they're just kind of, "Oh, all right. She's pretty relaxed…[She] comes in very, we're just having a conversation."…You guys are judging me all the time or evaluating me, you know. I am open to hearing what you have to say. So, it's a two-way street.

Participants' rich interview discussions have made evident their beliefs about formative supervision helping teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support.

Unannounced Informal Observations. Through formative and post-intervention interviews, study participants indicated they believe unannounced informal observations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Principal Nora shared her thoughts about her approach to unannounced informal observations:

> I go in unannounced…because it doesn't only just keep the teachers knowing that I'm always readily available. If anything, it helps the students know. They know that I'm always there…I think it's more so where the teachers appreciate when I come in because I kind of come in like a—I'm quiet—but I'm kind of like that co-teacher. And I just kind of join in with whatever the teacher is doing and I try to model what I expect…So, if anything, they kind of like it when I'm that extra set of eyes, there to support [students'] learning. And they like to involve me… while they're teaching…They're like, "Hey, [Principal Nora], why don't you come over here and…participate in what we're doing right now?" I just kind of chime in and have some fun with it. Makes it very informal.

Further, Nora has found teachers to become more comfortable with her unannounced, frequent informal observations:

> I know one of my [teachers]…she's always just like, "Oh my gosh, she's coming! You know, she's coming!"…It made her feel more relaxed…when it was just unannounced. And then she got used to it. Once they get used to it, then they're fine. But you got to do it on a regular basis in order for them to feel comfortable with it.

Teachers have also described their comfort and confidence with the administrator's informal observations as in Janette's explanation of her feelings:

> My first couple of years, I would have probably been terrified to have somebody walking in at any given moment, thinking I had to have everything perfect at all times. But now, I really feel like I think that should be the norm. I just feel like…to me, that says that you've got the confidence to perform your job and if you know if someone walks in and you're doing something that maybe they didn't expect you'd be doing at the time, I can always justify…how or what I'm doing is appropriate at that moment of time and sometimes even if it's not…100% directly related to a standard I need to be teaching. Sometimes you…need to address other parts of the student and…what they need. And if sometimes what they need is a few minutes of, you know, being silly or a few minutes of me telling a story that's unrelated—it's kind of like when a comedian opens their act. All of that stuff is important, too…because you're building relationships. So, I think even if I'm not…spouting off about a standard when they walk in, if [administrators] can see that I'm being constructive and building relationships and working positively with my students, I think that's a…sign of a good educator as well. And I want them to see that.

Then I asked Janette, "So, you said that it means that you're more confident in yourself. What do you think having unannounced observations means about the confidence that your supervisors have in you? Do you think there's any connection to that?" She responded:

> Oh, absolutely. I mean, I would hope that they know…with any of us on campus…obviously it's their right and privilege to be able to walk in at any given moment and they do. But I think that…they know I'm confident enough to be OK with that. And I think that they would hope and expect that…the staff would be confident enough in that as well. If [administrators] walked in and I fell apart, or if they walked in and I froze or, you know, got nervous and all that, I think…that would almost be, well, I guess it's not a bad thing because maybe that would say, "All right, I think we need to spend some time together. And let's talk about how to get past that stage of anxiety," because maybe it is somebody that's new to their job or maybe there's something else going on, I don't know. But…I think that almost is an invitation to the supervisor to say, "OK, let's talk." Even if it's not directly related to a standard, but just…maybe if that's what they see when they walk in, they're going to want to make sure that that's not what's going on every day. I mean, we all have our weird days where something might be off, but if that's a consistent thing where you see that the person is anxious and upset, then you know that's a bigger problem to look at too, but that's a good way to find out.

Nora and Janette have explained how administrators using unannounced informal observations shows their confidence in teachers and also gives administrators opportunities to provide teachers with support, thereby helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Frequent Informal Observations. Connected to the idea of building trust through unannounced observations is the concept that informal observations should be frequent in order to build trust. Penny explained her thoughts during her first formative interview by comparing informal observations to formal observations for evaluation:

> A lot of times when you are in an evaluative situation, [administrators] only come in when they evaluate you or they only come in when they're having to watch something. And so, it's like this heightened state of anxiety. With [informal observations with my current supervisors], there's no anxiety. Supervisors are in here so often that…even the kids…just continue what they're doing, as opposed to, "Oh, somebody's here!"

Then in her second formative interview, Penny described how she was feeling since her supervisor had increased the frequency of informal observations since the school year began:

> I feel way more comfortable…with my supervisor in class now than I did even…a year ago…She's…in so often. And that, I think, makes a huge difference for me…I don't know what other people think, but for me, that makes a difference. Because [administrators] become…part of the environment as opposed to the gold statue in the corner!

Finally, during the post-intervention interview, Penny stated regarding frequent informal observations' effects on her trusting relationship with her supervisor:

> I like that it's been long enough for the year that it doesn't bother me. I don't stop and ask her if she needs anything…I move on with what I'm doing. I don't stop and [say], "Do you need me?"…There's none of that because I already know she's popping through to observe whatever I'm doing and then she's going to give me feedback. And then if I have concerns, I can give her feedback…I can ask questions that maybe I wouldn't ask before because I would be afraid.

Penny also explained how administrators visiting classrooms at different times of the day helps to build trust:

> It creates the trustworthy relationship…When you are comfortable with someone, trusting them is easier. When you trust someone, hearing feedback—positive, negative, neutral—is easier. When you know that somebody cares about you, cares about what you do, how you do it, enough that they are not seeing you once or twice a year. They're seeing you on a daily or weekly basis at all different times of the day because we all know…your first period class, you have crickets in there! Your last period class, you have monkeys in there right before lunch! Everybody's "hangry", right? Later in the afternoon, they're hungry again, because it's been 2 1/2 hours since they've eaten!

Penny's humorous account illustrates the importance of administrators doing frequent informal observations in each teacher's classroom at different times of the day. Getting a full perspective instead of only "part of the story" further builds trust.

Observations for Every Teacher. During the post-intervention interviews, I asked participants about their thoughts on administrators observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency, no matter the subject teachers teach or whether the teacher is new or experienced. Participants' answers demonstrated they believed this concept was important for administrators building trust with teachers. Penny responded, "I think that if you know that everybody else has the same expectations as you do, then everybody's on a level playing field." Kayla replied:

> If it's only the new teachers, or if it's only teachers that [administrators] have concerns about…it gives the teacher who's not being visited the thought that they can do whatever they want. And makes the other teachers…like…"Well, what did I do wrong? Why are they in my room?" So, if they're just popping into everybody's room, then it's no big deal. It's just what they do instead of it being a negative.

Delphine expressed similarly:

> That's so important to create that sense of equity or sense of, you're not just selecting a group and dismissing another group. Not that you're doing it purposely, but it would make them think that you are. Because [teaching] is a very

> human nature-type of profession. People don't realize it. "Oh, you just teach the subject!" The subject is the easiest part of teaching. It's getting along with the family, it's…getting along with the kids…I think that's important to have that established, that unity.

With her answer, Janette also explained how an administrator could still reflect with a struggling teacher even if the administrator was not necessarily observing the teacher more often than others:

> Actually, I do think it's probably good to be equal in the distribution of the visits because that's a "damned if you do, damned if you don't." If you go more often to someone, they may feel like they are inferior for some reason. If you don't go as many times, or if you go less…on the other end of it, go way less, then that may imply you don't care, you don't like me…you know what I mean?…It kind of depends on the teacher's priority. All things being equal, I think it should be equal. And then…if in that informal… you as the admin see something that doesn't sit well with you…as a supervisor and as that person's boss that…maybe needs to be addressed, then you schedule something with them…where you don't have kids in the room. And then you can just kind of…talk about it…then.

Participants' comments show they perceive administrators observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency as helping to build trust. Participants view this approach as fair with expectations clearly set.

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Both quantitative and qualitative results show participants believe overall formative supervision focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection helps teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. Both quantitative and qualitative results also demonstrate participants view unannounced informal observations relatively equal in length and frequency as helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Reflective Conversations' Effects on Trust

The pre- and post-intervention surveys each included nine items where participants indicated their levels of agreement regarding aspects of reflective conversations' helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. There was also an open-ended, free response item where survey respondents could "share any reasons or insights regarding" their answers.

In addition, through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified themes describing participants' views of reflective conversations helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Quantitative Analysis

For pre-/post-survey items 17-1 to 17-9, participants were asked to respond using the Likert scale to the statement, "I believe the following aspects of administrator–teacher **reflective conversations** following **informal observations through formative supervision** help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships," answering for each of the nine aspects of reflective conversations listed in Table 18. The table on the following page also displays the frequencies of survey participants' responses.

Table 18

Survey Response Frequencies: Trust–Reflective Conversations Items (n = 5)

Trust–Overall Formative Supervision & Informal Observation Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Within at least 1–2 days after the informal observation (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)	0	1	4	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Administrators ask permission to meet	0	0	3	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
Face-to-face, in the teacher's classroom, with the admin & teacher sitting side-by-side	0	1	4	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Teachers have the opportunity to share reflections of their strengths	0	2	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths they noticed during the observation	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin shares descriptive observation evidence without ratings	0	1	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths before sharing interpretations	1	2	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin waits to offer suggestions until after the first three observations	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	2	1	1	0	0
Administrators listen intently to teachers, ask them clarifying questions to help teachers reflect, & provide encouragement	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The results displayed in Table 18 demonstrate four out of the five survey respondents slightly agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with all aspects of reflective conversations helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. No participants strongly disagreed with the statement for any of the reflective conversation aspects on both the pre- and post-surveys. From pre-intervention to post-intervention, the number of participants who strongly agreed increased by at least one each for seven out of the nine aspects.

All participants either agreed or strongly agreed with five aspects of reflective conversations as helping to build trust including the approaches of teachers sharing reflections of their strengths; administrators listening intently, asking clarifying questions, and providing encouragement; administrators sharing descriptive evidence of teacher's strengths; and administrators doing so before sharing their interpretations. All participants also either agreed or strongly agreed with the aspect of administrators sharing "descriptive evidence without ratings." Noteworthy is that one participant changed her perception from *Slightly Agree* pre-intervention to *Agree* post-intervention.

"Administrators ask permission to meet" and "The administrator waits to offer suggestions until after the first three observations" were two aspects where there was more disagreement than agreement on the post-survey. For both aspects, three out of the five participants either slightly disagreed or disagreed on these approaches helping to build trust. However, the three respondents were not the exact same ones for each aspect. I believe the variety of levels of disagreement and agreement for the two aspects may be based on teachers not fully experiencing the two aspects as part of the study. When the study began in February, the administrator had already begun establishing trusting

relationships with her teacher through her frequent positive interactions and consistent informal observations since the beginning of the school year. Therefore, she may have not found it necessary to ask teachers for permission to meet as the teachers appeared to be ready to talk any time during the school day when they were not teaching. As one of the teachers stated via a free response post-survey item, "Feedback should come at any time." Also, whereas the administrator agreed on the post-survey about waiting "to offer suggestions until after the first three observations," by the time the study began in February, the teachers were probably used to and open to receiving her suggestions. The study timeline was not completely conducive to trying this aspect of TBO after trusting relationships and the expectations of back-and-forth reflection and feedback had already been established.

Qualitative Analysis

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified a theme describing participants' views: **Frequent reflective conversations focused on teachers' perspectives and strengths help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.**

Focusing on Teachers' Perspectives and Strengths. Teachers expressed views showing how they appreciated being able to share reflections of their strengths and how the administrator focused on their strengths during reflective conversations. Janette said regarding strengths-focused conversations with her administrator:

> With that kind of feedback…it's giving me the confidence to be able to just do what I want. That kind of feedback has given me—it tells me that, "Oh, you liked what I did then? All right, I'm going to go even further next time." I like that.

Penny expressed appreciation that when focusing on strengths, Principal Nora did not necessarily have to make suggestions about improvements if none were needed. Penny liked how Nora has often told her, "Keep doing you!" Penny explained further:

> I'm lucky my supervisor is super positive. I've worked with supervisors that aren't. But I wonder if those that weren't, if we had the same idea, where you pop in, you have…[an] informal conversation…It can be a conversation walking down the hallway. It can be…sitting in a classroom, sitting in an office, sitting at lunch, and it becomes commonplace and normal like a partner. And I wonder if with those other observers, if it would have been less distressing to either or both of us.

Delphine talked about how the strengths highlighted by her administrator in a reflective conversation would help her reflect on how to use her strengths to improve other areas:

> What I hope to learn out of the conversation is that the strength that I demonstrated or have can help my weaknesses…That's what I really want to know. OK, I'm good at doing this and that. But how can I use that to help? You know, [it's the] same with the kids…What's your strength and how can you use that to help you try to understand something else?…How…can I approach it to do something else? How would that line up and support myself that way?

Delphine also discussed how teachers and administrators can learn from each other through reflective conversations by first focusing on the teacher's perspective:

> I think that admin is trying to learn also from me. To see what I was thinking…because it's two-way learning. It's not one-way communication… When [I]…start talking first…she's learning about me as a person…as a teacher. Am I thinking about my craft of teaching?…Because they could give you the textbook analogy of…do this, do that. But in other ways, if she sees what I'm doing, "Oh, that's a good idea." Maybe then…they add onto your ideas.

Administrators focusing on teachers' strengths during reflective conversations increases teachers' confidence, helping them to be open to improving areas of need and helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Seating Arrangements for Reflective Conversations. Through my qualitative analysis, I did not identify a theme regarding how administrators and teachers might sit

together to most effectively build trust because very few participants brought up this concept. However, Janette's comments about reflective conversation seating arrangements did stand out as a compelling explanation of why an administrator and a teacher sitting at an angle or side-by-side rather than across from each other at a desk helps to developing trusting relationships:

> I used to work for [a past supervisor/employer] and I learned early on from him to sit either at that 45° angle, or to sit on the same side with them just because it… increases the comfort level and it takes away that…"I am in charge of this meeting." I guess there's times when you do want to do that, but I like being on the same side. You can neutralize some of that stuff, and so even as the—I don't want to use the word inferior—but I mean, I'm not in charge of that room. But when she calls a meeting, I like it when she doesn't have to be…sitting on the throne to talk to me, so to speak…[Sitting side-by-side is] treating you like an adult and it's treating you like a professional. And even when it's something that they maybe, "We need to talk about this," or to explain this better to me, or "I know that this is the way you thought it was going to happen, but this is the way it needs to go instead, and this is why it's so"; it comes so much easier when you feel like your concerns and your ideas are being taken seriously as professional.

Janette's explanation not only illustrates how administrators and teachers sitting side-by-side builds trust but how it also helps both parties to be more open to the different types of conversations that may take place, including difficult ones.

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Both quantitative and qualitative results demonstrate participants believe frequent reflective conversations focused on teachers' perspectives and strengths help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Although participants did not bring up specific steps of the reflective conversation process during their interviews, several steps tie directly to the concept of focusing on teachers' perspectives and strengths: teachers have the opportunity to share reflections of their strengths; the administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths they noticed during the observation; and

the administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths before sharing interpretations. Other trust-building aspects of reflective conversations came up as part of my qualitative analysis of participants' experiences with feedback as described under RQ1 as well as regarding the next research question focused on how the administrator used formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

RQ4: How the Administrator Builds Trusting Administrator–Teacher Relationships

My fourth and final research question asked, "How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?" I answered RQ4 solely through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data and used Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of trust as pre-conceptualized categories.

As only one administrator participated in my study, all themes and details of the results will be referring specifically to Principal Nora and how she uses formative supervision to build trusting relationships with her teachers.

Qualitative Analysis

Through qualitative analysis of formative and post-intervention interview data, I identified seven themes describing how Principal Nora uses formative supervision to build trusting relationships with her teachers. Each theme aligns with one of Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) facets of trust:

- **The administrator uses formative supervision to show she truly cares about teachers. (*benevolence*)**

- **The administrator uses formative supervision to show teachers they can count on her to consistently take actions to benefit staff and students. (*reliability*)**
- **The administrator consistently interacts with teachers and students through formative supervision. (*competence*)**
- **Through formative supervision, the administrator and teachers show confidence in each other's *competence*.**
- **The administrator shows *honesty* in her reflective conversations with teachers.**
- **The administrator shows *openness* in her reflective conversations with teachers.**
- **The administrator actively involves teachers in collaboration and decision-making. (*openness*)**

True Caring for Teachers

Principal Nora demonstrates benevolence toward her teachers through her focus on teachers' perspectives, reflections, strengths, and needs. Nora further develops her trusting relationships with teachers through the formative supervision practices of frequent informal observations followed by reflective conversations where she listens to teachers with true caring, asks clarifying questions, shares evidence of their strengths, and presents feedback in supportive ways. Kayla explained how she knew Nora and the dean of students were listening to her perspectives and reflections:

> I guess the responses and do they do anything about what you're discussing with them? If you're struggling with something, do they do anything to help? Or is it just, "OK."…But I definitely think I've been heard…Anytime I've needed either one of them, they have been supportive, they've been there.

Principal Nora even applies her trusting formative supervision approaches to how she implements teacher evaluations. Delphine said regarding what Nora would tell her before formal observations, “She encourages teachers and I think she encourages me. [She says,] ‘Just teach the way you teach. Make believe I’m not there.’” Nora also explained her approach to formal observations and evaluations, showing her true caring and value for teachers:

> We always want to be able to…through every evaluation process, we want it to be meaningful and we want to be able to build relationships so that, your teachers, whoever it is that you’re evaluating, know that you are invested in them and that you’re taking your time to help them. Because [during] my years of being a teacher being evaluated, it didn’t seem like I was valued. It was just more of, “Hey, what about you fill it out and I’ll sign it?” And it was like, “No!” I’ve always told myself, that is never going to happen on my clock!

Further, the benevolence Nora shows through her formative supervision and evaluation practices carries over to other aspects of her role. Even during reflective conversations, Nora and her teachers talk about their personal interests, joke and banter, and genuinely enjoy their time together as Nora remarked, “We end up having other conversations about many other things.” She also said, “I can pop in the PLCs [professional learning communities] and we can laugh and talk and just have fun.” These anecdotes depict how Nora uses formative supervision in benevolent ways to show she truly cares about teachers.

Actions Benefiting Staff and Students

Teachers’ interview responses showed that they believe they can count on Principal Nora to take beneficial action for both staff and students. First, teachers can rely on Nora to be at school as she described:

> I think, my overall presence, they know I'm always here. I'm never absent unless I'm at a Cardinals game at the beginning of the year! But other than that, I mean, I'm always here. And they always can trust that I'm here.

Even more important, Principal Nora demonstrates reliability through her frequent and timely informal observations and follow-up reflective conversations as she explained, "I think my staff…we've been able to develop a really…good relationship of trust…I go in. I want to see engagement. I want to see kids…having fun and learning and…they're so used to me by now." Teachers can rely on Nora to consistently visit their classrooms and provide meaningful follow-up feedback.

The trust built through the formative supervision practices of frequent and timely informal observations and follow-up reflective conversations helps teachers to feel more comfortable in seeking Nora's advice and collaboration for problem-solving together. She explained, "I just kind of hear what they have to say and problem solve through…all those things. They trust me enough to say, 'Hey, what can we do to fix this or do that?'" The examples Nora has shared are evidence of how she reliably uses formative supervision, leading to teachers knowing they can count on her to take beneficial action for both staff and students.

Consistent Interaction

Principal Nora's frequent and timely informal observations also portray her competence. She consistently interacts with teachers and students to support instructional improvement and student learning. Delphine described how she does not mind and even warmly welcomes Nora's frequent informal observations and other interactions with staff and students:

> It's her job and she should see what's going on…[Administrators] should see what's going on in their classrooms. I don't believe that admin should be behind

> their office 24/7. No, they should be out on campus, getting to know…all the children by name, who they are. Understand and welcoming new students…so the children know who…that principal is…Yeah, that's important.

As described by Principal Nora earlier in this chapter while talking about not seeing teachers or students as simply numbers, she does know every student at her school by name!

Penny also shared in her first formative interview how she appreciates Nora's consistent interaction with staff and students throughout the school:

> She's just one of those people that is all over the campus all the time. I don't know how else to say it. She is everywhere all the time. Like, she doesn't sit anywhere…She is moving and I'm glad of that.

Penny added onto her thoughts during her post-intervention interview:

> I know that my supervisor is super comfortable coming in my class. It's kind of nice to have the supervisors at our school comfortable enough that they can come in and sit down and just do what they need to do and watch and participate, sometimes even participate with kids and ask questions which I like.

Penny then summarized her ideas through the lens of an administrator:

> I feel like you get to know [teachers and students]. You learn their quirks, their personalities, and that can only be beneficial to everybody…And also when you go in a lot and it's informal, you're not seen as the evaluator.

Participants' insights illustrate how as a competent administrator, Nora consistently interacts with teachers and students through formative supervision.

Confidence in Competence

The concept of competence also came through participants' insights about the administrator's and teachers' mutual confidence in each other's competence. Janette said of her administrators, "They trust us to do our jobs and…they know I'm doing it because they're in and out all the time." Additionally, Principal Nora remarked about teachers:

> They know they work hard for the students and…they work hard for me. Because they know how much, how hard I'm working for them. And I think that's just, you know, thank you! I get a little like, "But I think we all work hard for each other!"…We have a lot of things going on and we all have to juggle a lot. And there's times where they see that I'm overwhelmed and…they say like, what do they call me? Their Madam Secretary because I do things with grace and I'm always smiling and laughing.

It was evident from Nora's and teachers' interview responses that using formative supervision helps to build mutual confidence in each other's competence.

Honesty in Reflective Conversations

During Principal Nora's reflective conversations and other interactions with teachers, she shows honesty. Kayla said regarding feedback during reflective conversations with Nora and the dean of students, "I want honest feedback. And so, I trust that since it's coming from both of them and we talk so frequently…I trust what they're saying is accurate."

Delphine explained how Nora's honesty also shows caring for her teachers:

> If they're honest about what they saw, what they suggest, then they'd let it be known that…"You do care about me."…You're saying, "Hey, I saw this, this went really well. I recommend that this, you can do this."…And it's not criticizing you…You don't feel criticized, so that's where that trust and that respect develops…OK, she's giving me advice. She's not criticizing in a negative way. It's positive feedback. Maybe I should do something better….Maybe…I saw that kid doodling and I ignored him because I know he's having a hard day…So, it depends. It depends on your relationship, how you build it up, where you can say things to support each other without feeling that you're being put down.

Delphine also speculated what it would be like if she could not trust her supervisor and how administrators and teachers model honesty to students:

> If I can't trust my supervisor, I would respect her as a professional, but then I would not seek out her with any issues or…just avoid that…[If] the trust is not there, I don't know where it'd go to…If you try to say something confidential…is it traveling somewhere where it shouldn't be? …That's a difficult position…to be in…to make sure that you have that trust and that your faculty trusts you…I believe what you're saying affects your job, affects everybody else, [and] affects

> the environment that you're working in…Our teaching environment, it's very crucial because that's what you're trying to establish and model with the students…I always tell [students], "If I tell you I'm going to do something, I will do it. Whether you're unhappy or happy with it, I'll follow through." And that's what we want them to do. And I try to tell them…just tell me the truth. And then we can work it out…And that would be the same if they were adults.

Additionally, Principal Nora talked about the natural flow of her reflective conversations with teachers and how teachers can also feel safe in being honest:

> They're just as natural as if, how my staff and I talk already…It's not anything new for us because…they're so used to me being in their classrooms anyways… [We] have conversations where they can be very…transparent with me and candid. And they know I don't take things personally.

Penny summarized:

> Everybody does better when they're comfortable. Everybody is more honest when they're comfortable. Everybody can say what they feel. They can take in… criticism from somebody who loves you better than you could take criticism from the lady in the store. So that comfort level makes a difference.

Participants' stories shared through the interviews have elaborated on how Nora shows honesty in her reflective conversations with teachers.

Openness in Reflective Conversations

In addition to honesty, Principal Nora shows openness in her reflective conversations and other interactions with teachers. Kayla explained how Nora has an open door and demonstrates openness in her conversations with teachers:

> I feel that it's important that that your administrator has an open door and then I don't have to like, set up an appointment to meet with her because her door is always open and if I walk by and just kind of look, it's like, "Oh, come on in. What do you need?" And so that makes it easier to be able to approach her, whether it's regarding my observation or just her being in my room, or just concerns I have with my own teaching. And so, I don't feel when I know that there's going to be a formal observation, I'm not as stressed out as I would have been at the beginning of the year…I haven't taught [this grade level] before. She's going to think I don't know what I'm doing. And I never got that feeling where when I was confused on certain things of what to do, she was very positive in this is where you can go for this help.

Delphine also expressed her appreciation for Principal Nora's open dialogue and openness to letting teachers vent:

> Having that conversation and having that open dialogue means so much to teachers…As an admin, never dismiss a teacher's—not complaint but—cry for help in any way…It can be not that important to you, but for them, it's important. So just acknowledge it because they know, "Oh, she's listening or he's listening to me!" Don't [say], "Oh, don't worry about that!"…even though it may be very simple…Because sometimes you just need to vent.

In her second formative interview, Delphine added onto her ideas about how administrators can show openness:

> It's having them not negate whatever you're feeling…No matter how ridiculous it may sound to them, but sometimes teachers need to be heard. You know, we tend to complain. Let them, you know, get it out. And then if it's not something urgent or they may feel better, but [do] not dismiss them. Don't dismiss the slightest thing. Because for that person, it might be really important. And it just needs some sounding board. So, you have to develop it…Everybody has to develop their own relationship with their admin because you have to develop it to fulfill your own needs. I might not be as needy as another teacher for something…I might not need that…[You] can't assume…because what doesn't bother me may bother somebody else. So, it's just all respect and trusting. Everybody's different, so admin has to wear a lot of hats.

Penny discussed how Nora's openness through her formative supervision approaches has led to developing a partnership with her administrator instead of a hierarchical relationship:

> I hope there are others that bring [formative supervision] to the table because man, how nice is it to have a partnership with your superior! Not just, I'm the low man on the totem pole. You're the high man on the totem pole…Hierarchy is important, but to be able to have a person in the authority or supervisory position that is your partner, I think makes it so that people grow more.

Based on participants' explanations, it is evident Nora shows openness in her reflective conversations with teachers, thereby using formative supervision to build trust.

Collaboration and Decision-making

The final theme identified through my qualitative analysis entails the administrator being open by actively involving teachers in collaboration and decision-making. Janette said about Principal Nora:

> She's very collaborative and makes you feel like what you're sharing is of value…She'll say, "Oh, hey, I was thinking about doing something like this. What do you think about that?" And then…the conversation can build from there. There's a lot of productive, educational discussion.

Nora also described her collaborative discussions with teachers:

> [Teachers are] always trying to find ways to how can we make things better. Well, this is what we do. I find ways and find solutions and we work through it and we go about our day. So, I think…we have built this great…collaboration of sorts where we can work through a problem and find solutions together. It's not just me saying this is what you need to do. I offer suggestions, and it's like a team consensus. It's just not my way or their way. It's like a "let's meet in the middle" and figure out how we can make it better.

Nora also summarized:

> I'm just here driving this ship and we're all just, we're all here in it together, so I shouldn't be the one planning everything. We should all be doing this together. Because I need their buy-in too.

Nora's and teachers' insights show that she actively involves teachers in collaboration and decision-making, a key approach to building trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Summary of Results

Through my qualitative analysis, I identified 17 themes including six themes under RQ2 and RQ3 that were corroborated by my quantitative analysis. I further analyzed the 17 themes, combining them and forming four comprehensive assertions featured in Table 19. Next, I will begin Chapter 5 by discussing the assertions and how they apply to my Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework and the literature centered on formative supervision and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Table 19

Themes and Assertions

Themes	Assertions
RQ2 – Quantitative & Qualitative: Unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations support teachers' professional growth. Frequent and timely reflective conversations using descriptive observation records with no ratings support teachers' professional growth. Infrequent and announced formal observations for evaluations do not support teachers' professional growth as powerfully as do informal observations as part of formative supervision. **RQ3 – Quantitative & Qualitative:** Administrators' unannounced informal observations relatively equal in length and frequency help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. **RQ4 – Qualitative:** Reliability: The administrator uses formative supervision to show teachers they can count on her to consistently take actions to benefit staff and students. Competence: The administrator consistently interacts with teachers and students through formative supervision.	Formative supervision involving unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations followed by reflective conversations for every teacher support teacher's professional growth and help to build trusting administrator-teacher relationships.

Themes	Assertions
RQ1 – Qualitative: Teachers regularly engage in all types of reflection including in-action, on-action, and for-action. **RQ3 – Quantitative & Qualitative:** Formative supervision focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection helps teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. Frequent reflective conversations focused on teachers' perspectives and strengths help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.	Reflective conversations focused on the teacher's perspective, reflection, and strengths help teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support.
RQ1 – Qualitative: Teachers reflect with the administrator during reflective conversations, collaborating on instructional changes and professional development needed. The administrator consistently uses nondirective and collaborative approaches when reflecting with teachers and providing feedback. **RQ4 – Qualitative:** Benevolence: The administrator uses formative supervision to show she truly cares about teachers. Competence: Through formative supervision, the administrator and teachers show confidence in each other's competence. Honesty: The administrator shows honesty in her reflective conversations with teachers. Openness: The administrator shows openness in her reflective conversations with teachers. The administrator actively involves teachers in collaboration and decision-making.	Reflective conversations involving nondirective, collaborative, caring, honest, and open approaches to administrator feedback help to build trusting administrator-teacher relationships.
RQ1 – Qualitative: The many competing demands of administrators' jobs can hinder the consistent implementation of formative supervision.	The many competing demands of administrators' jobs can hinder the consistent implementation of formative supervision.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

For the past three years, I have been engaging in action research with my participating school district, partnering with administrators and teachers from Cycle 1 in the fall of 2021 to the final dissertation cycle in spring of 2024. I served as a participant-observer, supporting and collaborating with study participants as they implemented a formative supervision process focused on aspects of Randall's (2020) TBO approach. The final dissertation study answered the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do administrators and teachers describe their experiences with formative supervision?
- RQ2: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on teachers' professional growth?
- RQ3: How do administrators and teachers participating in a formative supervision intervention perceive its effects on trusting administrator–teacher relationships?
- RQ4: How do administrators use formative supervision to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships with respect to the facets of trust including (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, and (e) openness?

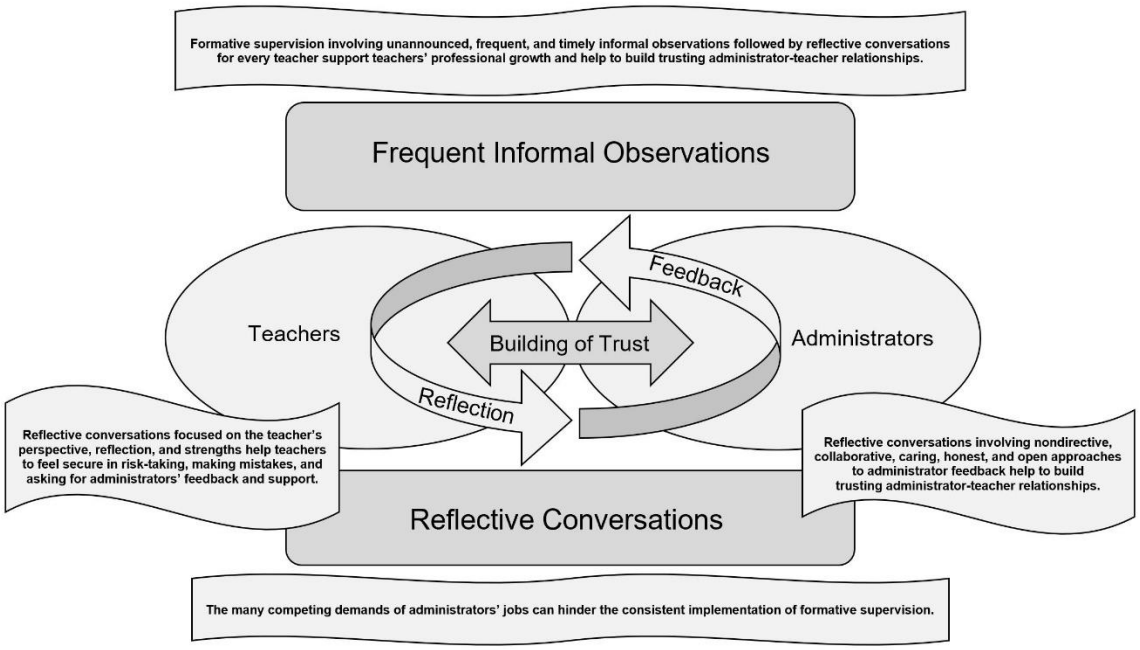
In this final chapter, I will discuss the dissertation study findings, explaining how my assertions pertain to my Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework and the literature centered on formative supervision and trusting administrator–teacher relationships. I will also discuss study limitations, implications for practice and future research, and my personal lessons learned. I will conclude with my final thoughts of the study's implications for P–12 educators' practice and formative supervision's impact.

Discussion of Findings Pertaining to the Conceptual Framework and Literature

In Chapter 4, I presented my quantitative and qualitative data analyses leading to 17 themes and four comprehensive assertions. The four assertions and their connections to my Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework are featured in Figure 3. I will now discuss each assertion in detail and how they pertain to each component of the framework as well as the relevant formative supervision and trust literature.

Figure 3

Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework with Study Assertions



Professional Growth and Trusting Relationships

My first assertion is that **formative supervision involving unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations followed by reflective conversations for every teacher support teacher's professional growth and help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships**. First, I will focus on participants' views regarding

informal observations, and second, I will elaborate on their views with respect to reflective conversations.

Informal Observations

My study results showed administrators and teachers believe cycles of unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations support teachers' professional growth and help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. As has been suggested in the literature, if observations are unannounced, administrators will have truer and fairer pictures of teachers' instructional strengths and needs and will be better poised to support teachers' professional growth (Baeder, 2018a; Campbell, 2013; Downey et al., 2004; Marshall, 2013; Popham, 2013).

In addition, as observation cycles become more frequent, the more information administrators will have to better support teachers' professional growth (Baeder, 2018a; Cogan, 1973; Glickman et al., 2014; Goldhammer, 1969; Goldhammer et al., 1980; Marshall, 2013; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Stark et al., 2017; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Also, administrators demonstrate the facet of trust of reliability (Hoy and Tschannen-Moran, 1999) through their consistently frequent informal observations and visibility throughout the school. Further, while administrators and teachers still value short classroom walkthroughs à la Downey et al.'s (2004) approach, longer observations of about 15–20 minutes offer administrators more complete pictures of teachers' instruction, leading to more effectively supporting teachers' professional growth (Baeder, 2018a; Campbell, 2013; Marshall, 2013; Zepeda, 2017) and building trusting administrator–teacher relationships (Campbell, 2013).

Last, according to my study participants and formative supervision literature, administrators observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency at different times of the day and week allows for more valid and authentic data for administrators and equal opportunities for teachers to help impact their professional growth and build trusting administrator–teacher relationships (Zepeda, 2017).

If informal observations are both frequent and optimal in length for every teacher, administrators demonstrate the facet of trust of competence (Hoy and Tschannen-Moran, 1999) due to their consistent interactions with all teachers and students. Notably, unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations for every teacher are key in the TBO approach to formative supervision (Randall, 2020).

Reflective Conversations

As informal observations are frequent and timely, so are the follow-up reflective conversations. My study participants' views aligned with those from the literature regarding the importance of face-to-face administrator–teacher reflective conversations taking place as soon as possible after an informal observation to more immediately and meaningfully impact teachers' professional growth (Baeder, 2018a; Campbell, 2013; Marshall, 2013; O'Leary, 2020; Zepeda, 2017). Reflective conversations on the day following informal observations are essential in the TBO approach (Randall, 2020).

During my study, Principal Nora did not yet use the TBO reflection form or any other written tool for informal observations and reflective conversations, however, participants' perspectives indicated administrators using a descriptive observation record with no ratings would support teachers' professional growth and more strongly build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Even without written feedback, hearing from

Principal Nora through a comfortable reflective conversation on what she observed was more valuable to teachers than any written tool with ratings. Teachers saw their reflective conversations with Nora as one of the best types of professional development. Participants' views not only matched the TBO approach (Randall, 2020) but are also supported by the formative supervision literature (Baeder, 2018a; Marshall, 2013; O'Leary, 2020; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013).

Frequency, timeliness, and using ratings-free, descriptive observation records are simply three aspects of reflective conversations promoting teachers' professional growth and trusting relationships. Also noteworthy are the approaches administrators and teachers use during reflective conversations as I will describe through my second and third assertions.

Security in Risk-Taking, Making Mistakes, and Asking for Feedback and Support

My second assertion is that **reflective conversations focused on the teacher's perspective, reflection, and strengths help teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support**. I will first present literature connections regarding the teacher's perspective and reflection followed by how focusing on teachers' strengths is supported by the literature.

Focusing on the Teacher's Perspective and Reflection

My study results showed that administrators and teachers believe reflective conversations focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection help teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. First, it was evident from participants' interview responses that teachers regularly and meaningfully engage in all types of reflection including

reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, (Schön, 1983) and reflection-for-action (Killion & Todnem, 1991). Then teachers' perspectives and reflections were the foci of administrator–teacher reflective conversations where teachers had the opportunity to express and share their reflections first. This focus on the teacher's perspective and reflection is recommended by education researchers as supporting teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2004; Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Nolan & Huber, 1989; Schön, 1983; Stark et al., 2017). When trusting relationships are built, teachers feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support (Blase & Blase, 2004; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Forsyth et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015).

Focusing on the Teacher's Strengths

My study results also showed that administrators and teachers believe reflective conversations focused on the teacher's strengths help teachers to feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support. Principal Nora sharing what she viewed as strengths helped teachers to feel safe and supported to continue to build on those strengths and take risks in trying something new in their instruction. Nora also did not make suggestions if none were needed. She acknowledged teachers' strengths from their own perspectives and expertise and added her ideas without always feeling the need to make suggestions for improvements. Formative supervision researchers support this approach as positively impacting teachers' professional growth and building trusting relationships (Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004;

Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2014; 2018; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Stark et al., 2017; Zepeda, 2017).

Through reflective conversations focused on the teacher's perspective, reflection, and strengths, Nora and her teachers collaborated and learned from each other. In addition, this concept is paramount in the TBO approach to formative supervision (Randall, 2020).

Administrators' Approaches to Feedback

My third assertion is that **reflective conversations involving nondirective, collaborative, caring, honest, and open approaches to administrator feedback help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships**. I will first share connections to the literature regarding nondirective and collaborative approaches followed by more elaboration on caring, honest, and open approaches.

Nondirective and Collaborative Approaches

My study results showed that administrators and teachers believe reflective conversations involving nondirective and collaborative approaches to administrator feedback help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Nondirective and collaborative approaches include listening, clarifying, encouraging, reflecting, and presenting (Glickman et al., 2018). As Principal Nora used the approach of presenting, she used supportive, nonthreatening phrasing when offering suggestions and did not tell teachers what to do. Nora and teachers reflected together during reflective conversations, collaborating on instructional changes and professional development needed. Not only did Nora and teachers reflect on possible professional development needs, teachers viewed the reflective conversations themselves as relevant professional development. My

study results showed and the literature advocates that administrators' nondirective and collaborative approaches to feedback and collaborative reflection lead to more trusting relationships between administrators and teachers (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2018; Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Ponticell et al., 2018; Stark et al., 2017; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; York-Barr et al., 2001).

Caring, Honest, and Open Approaches

My study results showed that administrators and teachers believe reflective conversations involving caring, honest, and open approaches to administrator feedback help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Administrators demonstrate the facets of trust of benevolence, honesty, and openness (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) through such approaches. Further, benevolent, honest, and open approaches to formative supervision are recommended by additional educational researchers (Baeder, 2018a; Blase & Blase, 2000; 2004; Ghaye, 2011; Glickman et al., 2018; Marshall, 2013; Ponticell et al., 2018; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; York-Barr et al., 2001; Zepeda, 2017).

Notably, Glickman et al.'s (2018) nondirective and collaborative approaches of listening, clarifying, encouraging, reflecting, and presenting involve caring, honesty, and openness, so in essence, there is a conceptual overlap with Glickman et al.'s and Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (1999) two bodies of research. Further, Randall's (2020) trust-based reflective conversations follow nondirective and collaborative approaches where administrators and teachers demonstrate caring, honesty, and openness, leading to trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Competing Demands of Administrators' Jobs

My fourth and final assertion is that **the many competing demands of administrators' jobs can hinder the consistent implementation of formative supervision**. Based on my own experiences as an administrator, Cycle 1 and 2 study results, and relevant literature (Baeder, 2018a; Baeder, 2018b; Canelake, 2012; Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Grissom et al., 2013; Hallinger, 2005; Horng et al., 2010; Malloy, 2020; Marshall, 2013; McGhee, 2020; Range et al., 2011; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004; Sebastian et al., 2018; Sloat, 2015), this study finding was not surprising. I had identified as parts of my problem of practice, the demands of administrators' jobs and specifically the time-consuming aspects of implementing TES. Therefore, I had set "time" as a pre-conceived category for my dissertation study qualitative analysis and had been expecting time issues to emerge in my analysis.

However, by including in my intervention workshop Baeder's (2018a) and Randall's (2020) suggested strategies for making time for formative supervision as well as creating a schedule to help Principal Nora organize her time, I had hoped to help remedy the time issue during my dissertation study. Nora reported improved strategies for addressing student discipline that had reduced the time she and her dean spent on this vital administrator job responsibility, but other factors such as state testing, teacher evaluation processes, and events beyond Nora's control substantially hindered the time needed for her to implement formative supervision more fully. Sometimes time-related barriers interfered with the frequency of Nora's informal observations and reflective conversations. Particularly during my dissertation study, the time needed for overseeing

state testing, conducting teacher evaluations, and interference from unforeseeable events prevented Principal Nora from being able to implement the TBO reflection form.

I will present a few ideas to alleviate the time issue in the "implications for practice" section of this chapter, including ideas from my study participants, but it is important to note that the many competing demands of administrators' jobs is a problem and can be difficult to address.

Summary

My mixed methods action research study found that participants believe formative supervision supports teacher's professional growth and helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations more powerfully impact teachers' professional growth than do infrequent and announced formal observations. Administrator–teacher reflective conversations involving nondirective, collaborative, caring, and honest approaches to feedback as well as focusing on the teacher's perspectives, reflection and strengths result in trusting relationships. Due to trusting administrator–teacher relationships, teachers feel secure in risk-taking, making mistakes, and asking for administrators' feedback and support.

Limitations of the Study

Although my study findings indicated administrators and teachers do believe formative supervision supports professional growth and helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships, it is also important to explain the limitations of my study. Limitations included intervention-related aspects and issues regarding the study timeline, small sample size of participants, and some characteristics of my researcher role.

Intervention-Related

I have already discussed one limitation of my study—the time-related barriers that hindered Principal Nora's application of the TBO reflection form, a major component of Randall's (2020) TBO approach to formative supervision. I had been greatly interested in exploring how the form would be used and what would be participants' perceptions of the following form and reflective conversation components' effects on teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships:

- The teacher and administrator sit side-by-side for reflective dialogue and collaboratively complete a written observation reflection form the administrator started during the observation.
- The administrator shares descriptive observation evidence without ratings.
- The administrator adds to the observation reflection form based on the teacher's input and checks the form with the teacher before emailing it to the teacher.

Although survey responses and interview discussions showed participants agreed these aspects of reflective conversations supported teachers' professional growth and helped to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships, the participants did not actually experience using the TBO reflection form as an informal observation tool and guide for reflective conversations during the dissertation study.

For the most part, participants did experience the full TBO approach to formative supervision including the following:

- Cycles of unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations relatively equal in length (usually 20 minutes) and frequency for every teacher

- No more than nine observable teaching practices relative to what is taking place in the classroom are "looked for" (Principal Nora focused on five evidence areas— learning target, student interview, teacher/student rapport and relationship, classroom and student behavior management, and specific differentiation/adaptive practice).
- Frequent, timely, and face-to-face reflective conversations for every teacher, usually in the teacher's classroom, although Nora and her teachers also spontaneously met in her office.
- Reflective conversations where the administrator uses nondirective and collaborative approaches to feedback and focuses on the teacher's perspective, reflection, and strengths.
- Reflective conversations involving the administrator opening by asking a reflective question and the teacher shares reflections first.
- The teacher has the opportunity to talk about what she was doing during the observed lesson to help students learn and what she might have done differently to re-teach the lesson.

However, in addition to participants not yet experiencing the TBO reflection form, I believe the participants also did not experience the TBO strategies of administrators asking teachers' permission to meet for reflective conversations as well as administrators waiting to offer suggestions until after the first three observations. As I explained in Chapter 4, my study timeline was not completely conducive to Principal Nora trying these TBO aspects because she had already begun establishing trusting relationships with her teachers through her frequent positive interactions and consistent informal

observations since the beginning of the 2023–2024 school year. She may have not found it necessary to ask teachers for permission to meet as the teachers appeared to be ready to talk any time during the school day when they were not teaching. Also, by the time the study began in February, the teachers were probably used to and open to receiving Nora's suggestions. Trusting relationships and the expectations of back-and-forth reflection and feedback had already been established. Since the participants did not actually experience these two TBO strategies during the dissertation study and I had been very interested in hearing about participants' experience-based perceptions of the strategies, I consider it a minor limitation of my study. Nevertheless, participants generally perceived the two strategies as supporting teachers' professional growth and helping to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships. It is evident from the overall study results that participants perceive the TBO approach to formative supervision as positively affecting teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

Timeline, Participants, and Researcher Role

Not only were the time-related barriers of administrators' jobs and my study timeline not conducive for the participants experiencing some aspects of TBO, my overall timeline could be considered a limitation. The actual intervention took place only over a nine-week period in the second semester of the 2023–2024 school year. Although my Cycle 2 study started at the beginning of the school year and richly informed my dissertation study, more ideal would have been a school-year-long dissertation study with the same participants from the beginning to the end.

Regarding participants, my small sample of five total participants including only one administrator and four teachers could be considered a limitation. All were female

with six or more years of experience in education. It was inappropriate for me to analyze quantitative data regarding teachers' grade levels and subjects taught due to the small sample size. Even the district and role experience data I did analyze presented limited perspectives among solely five participants. Additional administrator and teacher participants with more varied demographics and levels of experience from the other district schools would have provided me with more extensive, valuable information. Also, a larger sample size would have led to my findings being more likely applicable and generalizable to the broader population of P–12 Arizonan and American public school administrators and teachers, meeting the criteria for high degrees of external validity in quantitative research (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Further, with more participants, perhaps there would have been more statistically significant changes in my participants' post-intervention perceptions, meeting the criteria for high degrees of internal validity (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

However, as mentioned in Chapter 3, working closely with a few participants coming from one organization where the research is focused is a typical feature of action research (Ivankova, 2015; Mertler, 2020). In addition, there are scholarly views regarding the concept of external validity being not entirely applicable to qualitative or even mixed methods action research despite its inclusion of quantitative data collection and analysis (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Mertler, 2020). A more applicable concept for action research may be that of transferability as Mertler has stated:

> Transferability involves the provision of descriptive and contextualized statements so that someone reading the study can easily identify with the setting. Remember, in qualitative studies—as well as in action research—the goal is not

> to generalize findings to other settings but instead to have a clear and in-depth understanding of this particular setting. (p. 141)

A second concept relevant to action research findings is that of naturalistic generalizations (Stake & Trumbull, 1982) explained as follows:

> *Research* can evoke *Vicarious Experience* which leads to *Improved Practice*… The naturalistic researcher seeks to present selected raw data…portrayals of actual teaching and learning problems, witnessings of observers who understand the reality of the classroom, words of the people involved. These raw data provide the reader with vicarious experience which interacts with her existing naturalistic generalizations, formed previously from her particular experience. (p. 5)

In the case of my action research study with five participants including one administrator and four teachers, because I have described the national and local context, explicated the educational terms featured in my quantitative surveys, and thoroughly relayed the stories and perspectives of my participants in their own words, I believe it is likely a fellow P–12 educator would read my study and be able to relate to its findings and apply the ideas and outcomes to their own contexts. I feel due to the profound concepts of transferability and naturalistic generalizations applying to action research, my quantitative analyses presented through descriptive and inferential statistics should not be discounted. The quantitative data accurately and specifically represent the perceptions of my five educator participants and both quantitative and qualitative findings can be transferred and naturally generalized as relevant ideas and connections for other educators.

Regarding my role as an insider/outsider, participant-observer, there were some limitations. As a participant-observer researcher not on the school campus and not actually implementing the intervention myself, I did not have any control in its implementation. I instead served as a support and the facilitator of capturing participants' views through surveys and interviews. This was a meaningful role and still resulted in

answering my research questions and determining implications for practice, but I could not directly help with any situations that interfered with the intervention. Further, although I was an experienced P–12 teacher and administrator with expertise in evaluation and supervision, I had not myself implemented TBO or been trained by TBO's creator, Craig Randall or another experienced TBO administrator. I based my Cycle 1, Cycle 2, and dissertation cycle workshops and follow-up support on my readings and ponderings of his book, online podcasts, and the formative supervision literature. This approach was not unusual, as any administrator could read the TBO book and put its well-explained practices in place. "Book studies" are relevant and practical methods of professional development. It is evident that my workshop trained participants well enough that Principal Nora was successful in implementing frequent informal observations and reflective conversations that positively impacted her teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships. Nevertheless, I feel training with Craig Randall for administrator participants and myself would have been even more beneficial, particularly with learning to effectively use the TBO reflection form directly from the source. It was not possible for my participating district at the time, but perhaps it could be in the future.

Implications for Practice

There are three contexts I have chosen on which to focus regarding my study's implications for practice: the national context of P–12 public schools; the local context of my participating school district and possibly other Arizona schools; and a context I have minimally explored—university educational leadership programs.

National Context of P–12 Public Schools

My study points toward the vital need in American P–12 public education for a renewed focus on formative supervision and less concentration on summative evaluation. To support teachers' professional growth and build trusting administrator–teacher relationships, the formative supervision process needs to involve cycles of unannounced, frequent, and timely informal observations followed by face-to-face reflective conversations for every teacher. Reflective conversations must entail administrators using nondirective, collaborative, caring, and honest approaches to feedback and focusing on the teacher's perspectives, reflection and strengths. Administrators need to have the opportunity to deeply learn the actual intentions behind classical clinical supervision (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer et al., 1980) and discover and employ the profound ideas behind developmental supervision (Glickman et al., 2018) and solution-focused supervision (Stark et al., 2017). Administrators need to find out about Randall's (2020) Trust-Based Observations approach to supervision by reading his book as a start and if possible, getting in touch with him to find out about professional development options.

Summative evaluation needs to "take a back seat" to formative supervision and serve only as a medium to identify and potentially nonrenew (but first do everything possible to support) the estimated 1–3% of ineffective teachers if absolutely necessary. Or perhaps as Glanz (2024) has suggested, if administrators "build a vibrant supervisory system that encourages nonjudgmental, supportive, ongoing, and deep conversations about teaching" (p. 72) then teacher evaluation can mostly be eliminated. Glanz has advocated for the elimination of teacher evaluation except in two exceptional cases: 1) "to ensure a beginning teacher's competence…[using] a fair and suitable evaluative

instrument or system…[and] only after a thorough process should a judgment be made" (p. 72); and 2) to "evaluate a tenured teacher, should the situation arise that complaints are leveled against them, although originally good, has for a variety of possible reasons, experienced burnout, [also using] a fair and unbiased evaluative process" (p. 72). Glanz has explained for only these two situations are evaluations warranted. Otherwise, it is only supervision and not evaluation that actually helps teachers to grow and improve.

Similar to Glanz's ideas about using evaluation only for exceptional cases, Glatthorn (1997) had conceived two types of evaluation under his differentiated supervision model—intensive evaluation and standard evaluation. Glatthorn had explained, "The intensive evaluation is used to make high-stakes decisions: grant tenure, deny tenure; promote, not promote; and renew contract, not renew contract" (p. 7). Any teacher who is "experienced and known to be competent" (p. 8) would receive standard evaluation. The procedures and processes for the two differ in the number of formal observations with "several observations" paired with conferences for intensive evaluation; and "the minimum number of observations and conferences specified by state or district policies" (p. 8) for standard evaluation. Glatthorn had deemed standard evaluation as "solely a compliance mechanism to satisfy policy requirements" (p. 8). Otherwise, under his differentiated supervision model, Glatthorn had advocated for teachers having three "developmental options" (p. 6) for "fostering their professional development" (p. 6) including his intensive clinical supervision model, cooperative development among small groups of teachers, and teacher self-directed development.

I have found two possible evaluation models that could be used if differentiated, teacher experience-based evaluation is possible or even for districts that have no choice

but to evaluate all teachers using the same methods. Reasons could be due to state statutes, "unchangeable" district policies, or the understandable need for some type of overall accountability so the public can be assured all of our teachers are teaching our students and doing their jobs. One model has been developed for more than 40 years, Scriven's (1994) Duties-Based Teacher Evaluation Model; and the other was developed by Randall (2020) along with his TBO approach to formative supervision, his TBO Evaluation approach.

Duties-Based Teacher Evaluation Model

Scriven's (1994) Duties-Based Teacher Evaluation (DBTE) model was aptly named because he had developed a "DOTT (Duties of the Teacher)" (p. 152) list on which teachers could be evaluated. Scriven had created the DOTT list over a period of more than 40 years (Hazi, 2021) based on the concepts of "duties common to all teaching jobs: they define the profession of teaching and *distinguish it from the work of other professions*" (Scriven, 1994, p. 153) and "what teachers can *legitimately* be held responsible for knowing and doing" (p. 156). Scriven had further explained:

> This list is not just an inventory of remote ideals relevant only to the stars of the profession. It specifies the areas where most people think a certain minimum competence is required to discharge a teacher's obligations. Roughly speaking, these areas are: (1) subject-matter knowledge, (2) instructional skill, (3) assessment skill, (4) professionalism, and typically (5) a small set of other, relatively secondary, "other duties" to the school or community, such as school committee work, monitoring the lunch room, or addressing community meetings. (p. 152)

Scriven revised the list "repeatedly in the light of comments from several thousand experienced teachers, administrators, parents, and lawyers—and students—in Australia and the United States" (p. 155). Although more than 40 years old since its first iteration of 52 versions (Hazi, 2021), with the DOTT list's simple phrasing such as "recording and

reporting student achievement" (p. 165) which an evaluator could check off or rate on a state-mandated or other scale, I found everything on the list to still be relevant today. I could envision an approach where administrators used the DBTE model to evaluate teachers, without even conducting formal observations, for the purpose of meeting compliance and in rare cases, enacting nonrenewal using a fair and thorough process. Then separately from the evaluation process, administrators could use professional growth- and trust-building formative supervision practices.

I discovered Scriven's timeless model by reading recent scholars' references to his work. Berliner (2018) explained Scriven's premise:

> [He] noted that teachers have certain duties to perform, just as do physicians and nurses…he asks why we do not simply judge teachers on whether they fulfill the essential duties of their profession, much like the assessment practices in some other professional fields. (p. 16)

Berliner elaborated further:

> The fulfilling of duties, say, grading papers and tests in a reasonable time, preparing visuals to accompany the teaching of hard topics…are necessary though not sufficient conditions for being an excellent teacher. They do however, present less reliability problems than more nuanced judgements, say, whether the feedback accompanying a returned test was appropriate. Or whether the visuals used to explain difficult concepts were any good. Assessing the fulfillment of the duties of teaching provides reason to believe we have identified an adequate teacher. On the other hand, not fulfilling the requisite duties of teaching puts the spotlight on teachers in need of remediation, or perhaps, even dismissal… Evaluating teachers in this way is much closer to the way some other professionals are evaluated…Duties-based assessments examine the presence or absence of those things required to do one's job. (p. 16)

Hazi (2021) also discussed Scriven's approach regarding teacher evaluation:

> A principal would determine whether a teacher performs essential duties such as planning a lesson, constructing tests, grading papers, explaining a difficult concept, and managing discipline…the principal decides whether a teacher is "satisfactory" to continue employment or if the teacher requires dismissal or remediation…Scriven's duty-based approach allows the principal…to ensure teachers do no harm. Fulfilling his/her legal responsibility of personnel

> evaluation, the principal may, but is not expected to, carry the more complex and time-consuming burden of dismissal or improvement. (p. 52)

Berliner (2018) and Hazi (2021) have explained well how using a manageable and less judgmental TES not conflated with supervision could meet policy-based and accountability requirements. A second approach could be using Randall's (2020) TBO Evaluation process separately from the TBO formative supervision approach.

TBO Evaluation

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Randall (2020) has devised an approach to teacher evaluation without conflating it with the TBO formative supervision process and without evaluating pedagogy. Randall (2020) explained:

> Performance will always be evaluated in teaching, as it is with any job, and, like any job, it will factor into retention decisions. There is no getting around evaluation; it is part of life in the work world. What can be done in teacher evaluation, though, is eliminating an enormous obstacle to professional growth: the evaluation of pedagogy. (p. 153)

In considering the unsuccessful history of the conflation of evaluation and supervision, Randall remarked:

> Despite these repeated warnings on the difficulty or even the possibility of effectively combining two tasks seemingly at odds with each other, no meaningful solutions on ways to resolve the issue have been made. In fact, the more common response has been to suggest that for teacher evaluation to be most beneficial, a concerted effort must be made to establish a logical link between the two purposes…In other words, even though they don't work, find a way to make them work. Over the past few decades, that's exactly what models of observation have done: combine incongruous methods together, unsuccessfully. The intent is worthy: combine them because evaluation is important, and obviously everyone wants to help teachers improve. But it's not working. (p. 154)

Through Randall's evaluation approach, instead of evaluating pedagogy, administrators would evaluate teachers in a manner similar to Scriven's (1994) duties-based approach, using "traditional indicators of workplace success for any job: planning and preparation,

collegiality and communication, and professionalism" (Randall, 2020, p. 154). Administrators rate teachers and teachers rate themselves in these areas using a "five-level scale…*latent, emerging, proficient, innovating,* and *leading*" (p. 155) where acceptable levels are differentiated by teacher experience. More experienced teachers are considered satisfactory at levels of *proficient* on up while less experienced teachers can be considered satisfactory starting at the *emerging* level. Further, "each district also has to make decisions on the basis of what [areas are] acceptable for *latent*" (p. 155) for less experienced teachers.

In addition to evaluating duties-type areas, TBO evaluation includes evaluating evidence of teachers exhibiting growth mindsets à la Dweck's (2016) research. Randall explained, "In evaluating mindsets, schools are sending a message of belief in teachers, belief in change, and belief that abilities can be cultivated. The growth mindset is the starting point for change" (p. 155). Each of the TBO evaluation areas including growth mindset and processes involved are detailed in Randall's book. Generally, the processes involve "creating a feel as close as possible to that of a reflective conversation" (p. 155). Randall elaborated further about when administrators and teachers meet for evaluations:

> Everyone knows that evaluative marks are given at this meeting, which increases the stakes, but that doesn't mean that the format and tone have to be different. Principals still take steps, like in any other reflective conversation, to make the meeting about strengths and about growth and to make it as positive as possible. (p. 155)

Based on my experience, literature review, and study results, I believe the most powerful, professional growth- and trust-building approaches to formative supervision and summative evaluation without conflation would involve fully using Randall's TBO approaches to both supervision and evaluation.

Other Solutions to the Supervision-Evaluation Conflation Problem

Despite the potential of Randall's (2020) TBO and other possibilities for meaningful approaches to supervision and separate approaches to evaluation, and regardless of ESSA returning evaluation system power back to the states and local districts (Close et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2020, Wieczorek et al., 2022); some districts may not be able to freely choose observation tools or separate the two processes. This issue may be due to state statutes, district policies that may take time or particular steps to change, acceptance of the "status quo", or even that administrators and teachers have found their observation tools and evaluation processes to be effective in meeting requirements while still supporting teachers' professional growth.

In the case where a district is required by state statute or has other reasons for using only a renowned, professional-standards-based observation framework for evaluation but the district still has a choice among frameworks, I would recommend Marzano's (2017) instructional model of *The New Art and Science of Teaching* (NASOT). I have never had the opportunity to use it, but based on my informal review of this model and others, I found NASOT to be the most organized and least overwhelming with clear descriptors of both teacher evidence of instructional performance and student evidence of learning. Marzano and his colleagues have also recommended more flexibility in evaluating teachers after they "have been classified as effective relative to their pedagogical skills" (Marzano et al., 2021, p. 80). They have suggested, "Teachers who have demonstrated their competence…have been adequately vetted relative to their pedagogical skills and should not be required to submit observational and nonobservational evidence for all ten design areas [of NASOT] each year" (p. 80). The

concept is similar to what Glatthorn (1998) had proposed about experienced, competent teachers.

If a district is required to use a particular professional-standards-based observation framework for evaluation, there may be ways to use it for evaluation to meet compliance while accepting the need for minor levels of evaluation–supervision conflation. Creative ideas Craig Randall has seen administrators use include:

- As the administrator does cycles of informal observations and reflective conversations over time, the administrator could "check off" observed evidence areas on the required observation tool, then later use the information for completing the evaluation. The administrator would be forthright with teachers about using this method and inform them before and during the evaluation conference.
- If a pre-observation conference with particular time requirements is not required, then during one informal observation, the administrator could stay longer, open the required evaluation tool on a laptop, and use the observation as the required formal observation for evaluation.
- An administrator could include the evaluation tool's observable teaching practices on the TBO form if absolutely necessary. (C. Randall, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

I see all of these ideas about minimizing the conflation of supervision and evaluation as also time-saving. Hopefully such strategies can also allow administrators more time to focus on formative supervision practices.

Summary

My problem of practice entailed TES impeding teachers' professional growth and trusting, teacher–evaluator relationships on a national level. My mixed methods action research study with five educators from the same school district showed that the need for a focus on formative supervision over summative evaluation is imperative. I have recommended ways American public schools may be able to work with their state and district TES requirements. I believe P–12 administrators need to put in place whatever is possible within the parameters of their requirements to focus on formative supervision practices that build trusting administrator–teacher relationships and support teachers' professional growth. My top recommendation is for schools to use Randall's (2020) TBO approach to formative supervision, and if possible, his TBO evaluation method as well.

Local Context of my Participating School District

I have detailed my study's implications for practice among American public schools. Now I will focus my attention to my participating school district, as my action research project was with and for them. It is key in action research to actually use its results to make changes for improvement. Although centered on this particular district, my recommendations may also be applicable for other Arizona public schools.

Participants' Insights

It was evident from my study that my five participants believed formative supervision more powerfully impacted teachers' professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships than did formal evaluation. Therefore, there is a need at my participating school district for Principal Nora to continue her practices and

possibly expand on them further by using the TBO reflection form and other TBO strategies. During our post-intervention interview, Nora shared her ideas for the 2024–2025 school year and these included her desire to use the TBO form in her cycles of informal observations and reflective conversations. She also talked about the evaluation practices the district's administrative team was going to put into place. She and other school administrators including their deans of students had attended a "qualified evaluator" training and the hope was with all three schools' deans having Arizona principal's certificates, the deans could help with teacher evaluations, making more time for both the principals and deans for evaluations as well as formative supervision. I have since checked the district's publicly-posted governing board agendas and the board did approve all deans in addition to the principals as qualified evaluators. This is promising for the district and is aligned with ideas two of my teacher participants had about more delegation and more administrators to help with evaluation and supervision in addition to their other duties. Nora also explained that the superintendent and her fellow principals had realized there was a need for a more thorough orientation for all teachers on the Danielson Framework (2013) for evaluations. They were working on a consistent pre-service professional development plan to address that issue.

During our interview, Nora did say she was not sure TBO would be something "districts would move towards because of everything, the way the state has things laid out for us." I thought she was partly referring to state statute requirements for TES, but I also asked her more about the qualified evaluator training she and the other administrators had recently taken. I recalled my own qualified evaluator training about 20 years ago. At the time, I know it was required by state statute and the only way, or

perhaps the most optimal way to get it was through Arizona School Administrators (ASA). I remembered that the training had emphasized the clinical supervision process for evaluations, although I believe this was not a state requirement itself. Today, Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 15-537 (n.d.) still requires certified teachers be evaluated by qualified evaluators, but there are options for training—ASA's program, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) has a program, and districts can create their own. There do not seem to be specific requirements for what is involved in qualified evaluator training. During Nora's interview, these thoughts entered my mind and so I asked her if qualified evaluator training still included how to use pre- and post-observation conferences. She said "yes" but these were only "best practice" suggestions and not required. Nora also reminded me that during the 2023–2024 school year, she had started to ask teachers if they preferred announced or unannounced formal observations for evaluations, and would follow their preference. She had found unannounced formal observations worked well for many of her teachers and was planning to continue this practice for the 2024–2025 school year. I asked her how she would meet the district's pre-observation conference requirement and she explained the pre-conference would be "just more for me to discuss with them, how would they like me to approach their evaluation process?…I'm not saying how it should be, but more of…'How would you like us to work through this process together?'" So, not only is Nora going to continue using meaningful formative supervision practices, but she will continue to make her evaluation processes as trust-building as possible by seeking teachers' input on how she should approach their evaluations. Her ideas are in line with what I would have recommended.

Working with Arizona's TES Requirements

After the study ended and I conducted qualitative analysis, I thought more about Nora's statement about how she did not think "districts would move towards [TBO] because of everything, the way the state has things laid out for us." Although I had carefully studied the most recent Arizona statutes with requirements for TES, I realized it would be beneficial for my participating district for me to more critically analyze what is and what is not required for TES by the state so I could make more informed recommendations to my district about options for approaching supervision and evaluation. Was there actually anything in the statutes preventing my district and other Arizona districts from substantially changing their TES and focusing more on formative supervision practices such as TBO? Or did Nora have misconceptions based on the nation's and state's past NCLB and RttT-mandated requirements, just as I had before exploring the background behind my problem of practice?

Here is what I found through my additional review. A.R.S. 15-537 (n.d.) has set requirements for public school governing boards' adopted TES including but not limited to the following:

- The TES "shall include four performance classifications, designated as highly effective, effective, developing and ineffective" (para. 1).
- Certified teachers must be evaluated at least once per year but it is allowable to adopt policies creating an "alternative performance evaluation cycle" (para. 4) for continuing teachers (three years or more in the district) "who have been evaluated and designated as [highly effective] for at least three consecutive years by the same school district" (para. 4) under their adopted TES. When such

teachers are evaluated, it can be through an "expedited performance review" (para. 3) process that "may classify teacher performance in categories that include teamwork and support for lower-performing teachers" (para. 3).

- Each school year, there must be "at least two actual classroom observations… demonstrating teaching skills in a complete and uninterrupted lesson" (para. 16) but the second observation requirement can be waived for continuing teachers who after the first observation, meet the effective or highly effective levels.
- After an observation, the evaluator must give the teacher written feedback "within ten business days" (para. 16).

Therefore, A.R.S. 15-537 requires two observations per year but only at least one evaluation. It is possible to waive the second observation for effective or highly effective, continuing teachers. It is also possible for a district to adopt policies for alternative evaluation requirements for continuing teachers evaluated as highly effective for three or more consecutive years. The statute does not require the observations to be formal, announced, or scheduled, only that the evaluator observes "a complete and uninterrupted lesson" (para. 16). There are no requirements for holding pre- and post-observation conferences or summative evaluation conferences. Teachers do not have to do any type of documentation such as observation tool-based self-reflection forms or submit formal written lesson plans. There are also no mandates for using particular observation tools or how written feedback is to be structured. Alignment to ADE's Arizona Framework for Measuring Educator Effectiveness (2018) and the Arizona State Board of Education-adopted Professional Teaching Standards (n.d.) have not been required since 2019.

Considering these present facts about TES requirements in Arizona public schools, I have recommendations to my participating school district and other districts in Arizona regarding TES and formative supervision processes. These are considerations only, as my district and other Arizona districts should follow state statute and best practices regarding teachers having input on the district's TES components and then these being reviewed by the district's governing board for approval.

First, formative supervision processes do not have to be board-approved, so my suggestion to the district would be to further implement TBO by hiring Craig Randall's training where administrators can more thoroughly learn how to use the TBO form and more about effective time management strategies. Then let the teachers find out what it is all about and build on the practices slowly over the school year. Administrators can work together collaboratively with the superintendent as a professional learning community to improve their formative supervision practices and help each other with time management ideas and addressing issues preventing consistent formative supervision. The administrative team could even use a fun, motivating strategy suggested by Craig Randall to hold each other accountable by comparing observation totals at meetings and whomever has the lowest percentage of visits, has to buy the others lunch! (C. Randall, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

Second, regarding TES, I advise the district continue with their current board-adopted practices for the 2024–2025 school year, but start to look toward changes for the 2025–2026 school year. District and school administrators can meet with teachers and talk about formative supervision, TBO, and the TES. Under state statute, there are many options for changes. The district can use "Meet and Confer" and other collaborative

processes as well as surveys to find out teachers' perceptions and needs. If the administrators and teachers would be amenable, I would recommend considering the following ideas (worded as if I were speaking directly to the administrative team):

- Keep the component of your district policy where continuing teachers may have their second formal observations waived if they meet the effective or highly effective level with their first informal observations.
- Create a plan for continuing teachers who have been evaluated as highly effective for three consecutive years to now evaluate them with an alternative cycle such as evaluating them every three years instead of annually. When they are evaluated, use a simple tool that uses categories such as how they are involved with "teamwork and support for lower-performing teachers" (A.R.S. 15-537, para. 3).
- Keep the district policy component of two formal observations for probationary teachers as it is required by the state. However, either minimize the time set for these (e.g., no more than 30 minutes) or use two informal observations to meet these requirements. Further, the two observations need only lead to one summative evaluation. There is no requirement to have two evaluations unless there are serious concerns that warrant a professional improvement plan.
- Discontinue the requirements for pre- and post-observation conferences in your policy unless administrators and teachers view these conferences as vital. If a pre-conference is needed to orient teachers on the evaluation process, then also use it as Principal Nora is, to seek each individual teacher's input on how they would like to implement the process within state-defined parameters. If teachers would still like post-conferences for closure, then keep that in place.

- Use a simple observation tool such as Scriven's (1994) DBTE model or even better, Randall's (2020) TBO evaluation approach. There is no need to continue using the Danielson Framework (2013) or any other extensive standards-based observation framework unless that is what your administrators and teachers would like to continue doing. Written feedback to your teachers can be simple. Just ensure the summative evaluation uses the state-required proficiency labels.
- Discontinue unrequired teacher documentation such as written lesson plans for scheduled formal observations and self-reflection sheets using the observation tool where teachers rate themselves. Continue goal-setting with SLOs because these are required by the state, but use authentic, formative processes to encourage teachers in their reflection and share their reflections verbally through reflective conversations and through their input on the TBO reflection form.

Overall Recommendation

Last, I have an overall recommendation for my participating district and other Arizona districts. Instead of using evaluation as the medium to support teachers' professional growth, use formative supervision, ideally the TBO approach with consistent cycles of informal observations followed by reflective conversations guided by nondirective, collaborative, caring, honest, and open approaches to feedback focused on the teacher's perspective, reflection, and strengths.

University Educational Leadership Programs

My last set of implications for practice concerns university educational leadership programs, of which I have very little experience except only as a graduate student myself 20 years ago and more recently, as a mentor to educational leadership students.

Therefore, my recommendations will be minimal at this time, but I do want to advocate for the need for university educational leadership programs to reflect on their practices and consider changes based on my research findings.

I believe from my experiences with educational leadership students and with new principals through my cycles of action research, professional development for administrators on formative supervision practices needs to begin at the pre-service level in university educational leadership programs. I have realized now that 20 years ago, my "Supervision of Instruction" course was about evaluation more so than supervision despite its title. I remember we learned about and practiced the clinical supervision cycle of pre-conference, observation, and post-conference, but I did not know the background and true intentions of clinical supervision. The cycle for me became synonymous with evaluation.

Admittedly, I do not know what is happening currently at universities around the nation, but I do understand from the three aspiring administrators I mentored at different points in time starting about ten years ago, their university supervision courses were similar to mine, maybe even more focused on evaluation given the accountability climate created by NCLB and RttT. My hope is that there are programs around the country similar to Texas Christian University's solution-focused teacher supervision (Stark et al., 2017) program and if not, that further research and pilot programs could lead to university programs matching the content and approaches of their supervision courses and programs to their titles. I believe an ideal "Supervision of Instruction" course would use Glickman et al.'s (2018) *SuperVision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach* (or the 2024 edition) as a main text and Randall's (2020) *Trust-Based*

Observations: Maximizing Teaching and Learning Growth as a supplemental text. The supervision courses should be taught and facilitated by experienced administrators who believe in the tenets of formative supervision.

Implications for Future Research

Four broad implications for future research stand out based on my study. These include literature reviews and action research in university educational leadership programs; further action research in P–12 schools using TBO; more formal research settings implementing my framework and/or TBO or other formative supervision approaches; and studies regarding how administrators manage their time to consistently implement formative supervision.

University Educational Leadership Programs Research

The first implication for future research relates to my last point about implications for practice regarding university educational leadership programs and "Supervision of Instruction" courses. I believe there is a need for further research on universities' educational leadership programs and their approaches to preparing future school leaders in the areas of teacher supervision and instructional leadership. It would at least involve literature reviews and content analyses of documents, syllabi, and websites of universities with educational leadership programs across the nation. Perhaps the study would involve interviews with program directors and professors. The overarching question would be, "What are the objectives, resources, assignments, approaches, and practicum experiences of the programs and how do the programs incorporate formative supervision?"

I came across Stark et al.'s (2017) solution-focused teacher supervision research through my literature review although I was not actively looking for research or

information about current university educational leadership programs. I had focused my efforts on finding evaluation and supervision-focused literature regarding P–12 in-service teachers and administrators. I also found a wealth of literature about past supervision approaches, many stemming from university research and programs, but I could not take the time to delve further into what may currently be happening. I believe some possible university professors and their programs to explore further would be Drs. Mary Lynne Derrington at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Alyson Lavigne at Utah State University; and Ian Mette at University of Buffalo. A second related research need is for any educational leadership programs actively promoting formative supervision, the professors and researchers involved engage in action research and publish it as did Stark et al. (2017).

TBO Action Research in P–12 Schools and Formal Settings

Additional research regarding TBO's effects on teacher's professional growth and trusting administrator–teacher relationships would be invaluable. My participating school district could continue and expand on their implementation of TBO. The administrators could try TBO fully with all of their teachers. They could explore TBO's effects through reflective conversations as informal interviews, use simple self-created surveys, or even use my survey if they were interested. The district's action research could continue each school year as they make refinements based on their findings.

Perhaps there are other districts or schools who have trained with Craig Randall and would partner with him to conduct action research on TBO's effects. The impacts on different demographics of administrators and teachers such as years of experience, grade levels, and subject areas, particularly those like special education and electives whose

evaluation experiences may have been less relevant to their professional growth, could be examined. Reporting the results through educational research journals but also directly to practitioners via social media, podcasts, and other easily accessible mediums could better disseminate the information to the nation-wide educator population.

Further Exploration of my Formative Supervision Conceptual Framework

In a more formal research setting, perhaps educational researchers could explore the application of my formative supervision conceptual framework based on their access to school districts and other settings. Connecting back to higher education-related implications, my framework and/or TBO or other formative supervision approaches could be used in pre-service teacher education research.

Time-Related Research

There has been extensive research on administrators' use of time and the increasing demands of their roles. However, there has been less research about how administrators have developed ways to successfully manage their time and duties to ensure the consistent implementation of formative supervision. Although I gleaned some time management ideas from my participants and Craig Randall, and I believe minimizing teacher evaluation practices to maximize formative supervision practices would make a great difference, I still feel administrators and I do not have enough practical solutions to address this problem. Perhaps educational researchers with resources and funding could conduct large sample studies where administrators' successful ideas are collected and compiled. Additionally, there could be research studies focused on trying different strategies and what administrators newly find successful.

Personal Lessons Learned

Through my cycles of action research, I learned personal lessons related to my background as an educational practitioner and now as a formal researcher.

As an educator, I have always been and always will be an action researcher. Nevertheless, my experiences in engaging in formal research were new and I learned so much from these experiences. I learned about investigating a problem of practice, conducting a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature, and synthesizing the myriad of complex pieces to form a viable understanding of where we were, where we are now, and what we can do about it. I learned about mixed methods action research and how quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis complement each other to answer complex research questions. Most exciting was my discovery of qualitative research—the development of interview questions that to try to help people freely share their stories, the openness and readiness needed to truly listen to those stories, the coding of the people's words to attempt to capture the essence of their stories, and the sharing of their perspectives in a report where I hopefully do their stories justice. I am so appreciative of my study participants' trust in me and the opportunities to learn from others.

My own experience as an educator spans more than 26 years, but there were so many things I did not know until I engaged in doctoral research to find solutions to my problem of practice. I had ideas about why my problem of practice existed, but I did not know the complete picture. I still do not know the complete picture, but I am closer to fully understanding than I was before. I have realized that although teacher evaluation is not entirely negative, it has outrun supervision in the race of importance in educators'

minds and practices. Why did I not know the true foundations of clinical supervision? It developed before I was born and came into prominence while I was an elementary student. My own teachers probably experienced it. Why did I not know my ideals about how an administrator collaborates and reflects with individual teachers, using nondirective approaches and building trusting relationships had a title—developmental supervision? It began in the 1980s but Carl Glickman and his colleagues are still actively refining developmental supervision and publishing new editions of their texts. I am grateful for the opportunity I had to "rediscover" teacher supervision and hope through publishing my dissertation and what may follow, that other educational practitioners and researchers will also experience that rediscovery and take meaningful action.

Conclusion

I began this dissertation with the story of Sylvie, who was fictional but based on myself and the many teachers I have known. Now I have had the privilege to share the stories of Nora, Delphine, Janette, Kayla, and Penny. I hope other educational practitioners and researchers can take these stories to heart and join me in fostering a renewal of the meaningful practices of formative supervision. Administrators and teachers need a process that builds trusting administrator–teacher relationships and supports professional growth. Their growth leads to our students' growth.

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APPENDIX A

TRUST-BASED OBSERVATIONS REFLECTION FORM (RANDALL, 2020; 2023a)

Trust-Based
OBSERVATIONS

Trust-Based Observations/Reflection Form

Teacher:	Subject:	Date:

1) **What were you doing, pedagogically speaking, to help students learn?**

2) If you had the opportunity to re-teach the lesson, what, if anything, might you have done differently?

3) Question of the Year.

4) What progress have you made on your Action Research Big Goal?

TBO GOAL:

EVIDENCE OF:

LEARNING TARGET (**Toolbox Possibilities:** Rubrics; Exemplars):

"X" if Observed	Areas of Observation:
	"I statement," using active verb, specific to skill, knowledge or understanding and conveyed in developmentally appropriate student language
	Unpacked during class
	Constantly displayed during class
	Use of rubrics/success criteria/exemplars connected to LT
	Use of performance of understanding
	Formatively assessed during class
	Reviewed at end of class

STUDENT INTERVIEW: Alignment of Intent and Impact

Do students know the learning target and why it has value (extension/further use in life)? Can students demonstrate learning of their target, how they know they have learned it?

TEACHER/STUDENT RAPPORT and RELATIONSHIP (**Toolbox Possibilities**: Personal Discourse/1-on-1; Tone; Use of Humor; Respect/Dignity; T Sharing of Themselves; T Sharing Mistakes; Empathy; Knowledge of Ind St; Body Language; Relentlessness; Accountability; High Expectations; Feedback to Students; Active Listening; Use of Praise, Safe Learning Environment, Use of Names, Passion):

TOOL	DETAILS

CLASSROOM and STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT (**Toolbox Possibilities**: Enforceable Statements; Choices; Empathy; L&L Strategies; Strong Class Beginnings; 10:2; Proximity Control; Strong Transitions; Responsive Teaching; Restorative Practice; Feedback--Specific and Timely; Cooperative Learning; With-it-ness; Interventions; Group Contingencies; Tangible Recognition; Clear Expectations; Consequences, Environmental, Quiet/Attention Signals, Reminders, I Notice, Engagement, Planning, First Attention to Best Conduct, Ignoring):

TOOL	DETAILS

COOPERATIVE LEARNING (**Toolbox Possibilities:** Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures; PIES (Individual Accountability, Equal Participation); Room Set-Up; Role Assignments):

Structure Activity	P-Positive Interdependence	I-Individual Accountability	E-Equal Participation	S-Simultaneous Interaction

WORKING MEMORY/COGNITIVE LOAD: 10/2/REFLECTION AND PROCESSING TIME (**Toolbox Possibilities:** 10:2; Chunk and Chew' Kagan Structure; 3,2,1; 1 question; Drawing; Text Message/Twitter Post; 1 Minute Paper; Sample Test Questions; 6 Words; One Sentence/Paragraph Summary; Dear Absent Student; Whiteboards; $2/Headline Summary, Analogy):

Time	Learning Principle	Activity Details	Time	Reflection/Processing Activity
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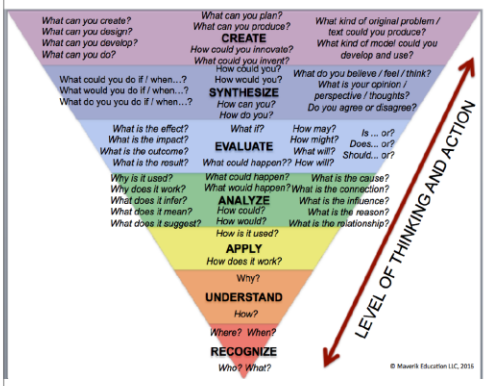
QUESTIONING/HIGHER ORDER THINKING (Toolbox Possibilities: Bloom's Revised Checklist):

GOOD QUESTIONS AND BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY



THINK TIME	HOW MANY ANSWER	QUESTION SPECIFICS

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT/KNOWING WHAT EACH STUDENT HAS LEARNED TO GUIDE NEXT STEPS (Toolbox Possibilities: Interviews; Conferring; 10:2/Chunk 'n Chew; Cooperative Learning; Questioning; Note Taking; Graphic Organizers; Exit Slips; Rubrics; Exemplars; Demonstration Station; Examples/Non-examples; Mini-Whiteboards; 10, 50 100 Word Summary; 3 Things; Analogy; Metacognition Exit; Back Channel; Draw It; 1 Minute; Online Quiz; Plickers; Photo Capture; New Clothes; Do's & Don'ts; Yes/No chart; Explain What Matters; Venn Diagram; Non-graded Quizzes Self and Peer Assessment)

WHO	HOW	TYPE	ASSESSMENT SPECIFICS
"TEACHER" "PEER-TO-PEER" "STUDENT"	"IN THE MOMENT" "PLANNED FOR"	"OBSERVATIONS" "CONVERSATIONS" "ARTIFACTS OF LEARNING"	
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DESCRIPTIVE PROGRESS FEEDBACK (Toolbox Possibilities: Modeling; Peer Coaching; Self Coaching; Rubrics; Exemplars; Conferring; Met, Not Yet Met, I Noticed; More of, Less of; What's Working?, What's Not?, What's Next?; Highlighters; Traffic Lights; Post It Notes; Two Stars and a Wish; Margins; But What if You Did?):

WHO	TYPE	FEEDBACK SPECIFICS
"TEACHER INFORMAL" "TEACHER FORMAL" "PEER-TO-PEER" "SELF"	"BASIC" "INSTRUCTIONAL" "COACHING"	
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SPECIFIC DIFFERENTIATION/ADAPTIVE PRACTICE: (Toolbox Possibilities: Flexible Grouping; Tiering; Graphic Organizers; Centers; Learning Contracts/Agendas; Small Group Instructions; Enrichment/Extensions; Think Dots/Task Cards/Think Tac Toe/Menus; Project/Problem/Performance Based Learning; RAFT; Remediation/Extension Activities; Multimedia/Technology; Conferring; Cooperative Learning; Rubrics; Chunk 'n Chew; Learner Preference Cards; Learner Profile Quick Surveys; Compacting; Anchor Activities)

METHOD	AREA	LEARNER VOICE and ACCESS	DIFFERENTIATION SPECIFICS
"INTUITIVE" "INTENTIONAL"	"CONTENT" "PROCESS" "PRODUCT"	"READINESS" "INTEREST" "LEARNER PREFERENCE"	
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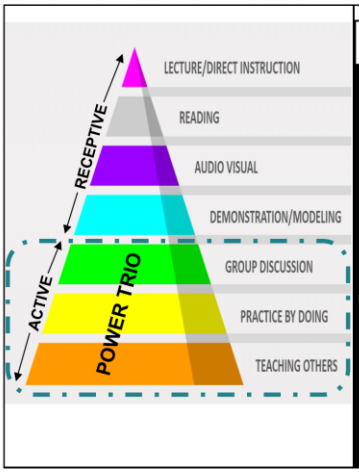
LEARNING PRINCIPLES USED FOR EMBEDDING/RETENTION OF LEARNING:



Time Spent	RETENTION OF LEARNING ACTIVITY SPECIFICS

TEACHING INTANGIBLES and ADDITIONAL PEDAGOGY:

Is there anything you would like me to add about this visit that I might not have captured? Is there anything specific you would like me to look for on the next visit?

APPENDIX B

PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION SURVEY

Introduction & Consent

Thank you for participating in my dissertation action research study. Your participation in this study and this survey is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at your school district.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team, Valerie Dehombreux at vdehombr@asu.edu or [phone number] or Jane Neapolitan at jane.neapolitan@asu.edu or [phone number].

By agreeing to participate, you are indicating that you are at least 18 years or older and you have read and comprehend the informed consent.

❑ Yes, I have read the informed consent.

Unique Identifier

To protect your confidentiality, please create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, please record the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be SAR6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your pre-intervention survey responses and your post-intervention survey responses when we analyze the data.

My unique identifier is: _____ (e.g., SAR6789, see paragraph above)

Definitions:

For the purposes of this survey, **teacher supervision** is defined as ongoing, formative processes where teachers' supervisors/administrators collect data through informal means such as frequent, non-evaluative, informal observations and follow-up administrator–teacher feedback provided through reflective conversations. The purpose of formative supervision is to provide support as well as determine resources and professional development for teachers.

In contrast with formative supervision, prominent **teacher evaluation** practices include administrators conducting formal observations 1-2 times per year, using professional standards-based observation instruments, and implementing state-required student assessment outcome models, usually involving standardized tests. Formal observations

are usually preceded by pre-conferences and followed by post-conferences. Evaluation's dominant purpose is to rate teacher's performance, possibly leading to decisions about teachers' contracted employment or performance pay.

Demographic Data

Please select your current school position type:

Administrator Teacher

Education Experience

	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6 or more years
How many years have you been working in PreK-12 education?				
How many years have you been working in your current school district?				
How many years have you been working in your current position?				

If you are a teacher, for what grade levels and/or subjects? (Mark all that apply.)

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
All core subjects (elem.)													
ELA													
Electives/special areas													
Intervention													
Math													
Science													
Social Studies													
Special Education													
Other _____ (Please identify)													

Section Directions: For the following sections, please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, and 1= *Strongly Disagree*.

1. Formative supervision focused on the teacher's perspective and reflection helps to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

2. Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in risk taking and making mistakes.

3. Formative supervision helps teachers to feel secure in asking for administrators' feedback and support.

4. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Items 1–3.

5. I believe the following aspects of **non-evaluative, informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth:	6	5	4	3	2	1
Unannounced						
No shorter or longer than 15–20 minutes each						
Frequent (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)						
Every teacher is observed relatively equally in length and frequency						
During an observation, no more than 9 observable teaching practices relative to what is taking place in the classroom are "looked for"						
Observation records are descriptive with no ratings or interpretations						

6. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item 5.

7. Administrators implementing unannounced informal teacher observations shows they have confidence in teachers' instructional practices.

8. Administrators' frequent and timely informal teacher observations help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

9. Administrators informally observing every teacher relatively equally in length and frequency facilitates trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

10. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Items 7–9.

11. I believe the following aspects of **formal observations** for **summative evaluations** support teachers' professional growth:	6	5	4	3	2	1
Announced (scheduled by administrator and teacher)						
At least 30 minutes and up to an hour each						
No more than 1–2 times per year						
Probationary and/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/developing are observed more often than continuing and/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective						
During an observation, all observable teaching practices on the evaluation form (typically 30–50) are "looked for"						
Observation records include interpretative written feedback and ratings (e.g., 4 - highly effective, 3 - effective, 2 - developing, 1 - ineffective)						

12. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item 11.

13. I believe the following aspects of **post-conferences** following **formal observations** for **summative evaluations** support teachers' professional growth:	6	5	4	3	2	1
Within at least 10 school days after the formal observation						
About 30–45 minutes in duration						
As frequent as formal observations (no more than 1–2 times per year)						

Probationary and/or teachers evaluated as ineffective/developing have post-observation conferences more often than continuing and/or teachers evaluated as effective/highly effective						
Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through an e-mailed evaluation form or through an electronic evaluation system						
Takes place in the administrator's office						
The teacher and administrator sit across from each other or side-by-side depending on the administrator's preferences, the nature of the office furniture, and/or how the administrator and teacher view documents together						
The administrator or teacher may speak first depending on the administrator's approach						
The administrator shares the evaluation form with all practices rated						
The administrator gives feedback including strengths and areas for growth						
The teacher shares required documents such as a self-assessment form, observation reflection form, and/or evidence portfolio						
The teacher talks about his/her reflections of the observed lesson and evaluation ratings including strengths and areas for growth						
The administrator does not make any changes to the evaluation form and both the administrator and teacher sign it. The teacher receives a signed copy.						

14. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item 13.

15. I believe the following aspects of administrator–teacher **reflective conversations** following **informal observations through formative supervision** support teachers' professional growth:	6	5	4	3	2	1
Within at least 1–2 days after the informal observation						
About 10–20 minutes in duration						
As frequent as informal observations (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)						
Every teacher has the opportunity for a reflective conversation relatively equal in duration and frequency						
Face-to-face instead of only receiving feedback through a note or e-mail						
Takes place in the teacher's classroom when students are not there						
The teacher and administrator sit side-by-side for reflective dialogue and collaboratively completing a written observation reflection form that the administrator started during the observation						
The administrator opens by asking a reflective question and the teacher shares his/her reflections first						
The teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she was doing during the observed lesson to help students learn						
The teacher has the opportunity to talk about what he/she might have done differently to re-teach the lesson						
The administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths he/she noticed during the observation						
The administrator offers focused suggestions based on his/her observations only after the first three observations, but willingly and supportively responds to the teacher's request for suggestions						
The administrator adds to the observation reflection form based on the teacher's input and checks the form with the teacher before e-mailing it to the teacher.						

16. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item 15.

17. I believe the following aspects of administrator–teacher **reflective conversations** following **informal observations through formative supervision** help to build trusting administrator–teacher relationships.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Within at least 1–2 days after the informal observation (at least every 3–4 weeks for each teacher)						
Administrators ask permission to meet						
Face-to-face, in the teacher's classroom, with the administrator and teacher sitting side-by-side						
Teachers have the opportunity to share reflections of their strengths						
The administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths they noticed during the observation						
The administrator shares descriptive evidence of the teacher's strengths before sharing interpretations						
The administrator shares descriptive observation evidence without ratings						
The administrator waits to offer suggestions until after the first three observations						
Administrators listen intently to teachers, ask them clarifying questions to help teachers reflect, and provide encouragement						

18. Please share any reasons or insights regarding your answers to Item 17.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Formative Interview Questions: Interview 1

Thank you for participating in my dissertation action research study. Your participation in this study and this interview is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at your school district.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

I will request to audio record your interview responses. The interviews will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interviews to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interviews start, just let me know.

May I audio record this interview?

Thank you for meeting with me today for this first interview about formative teacher supervision and Trust-Based Observations. As you respond to the questions, please do not mention names of individuals in your responses.

(Possible follow-up questions for 2–6: That's interesting, could you tell me more about…? OR What did you mean by…?)

1. Please tell me briefly about your background in PreK-12 education leading up to your current role.

2. Tell me about your (or your supervisor's) implementation of the formative teacher supervision approach, Trust-Based Observations or TBO.

3. Tell me so far what you think about TBO.

4. Tell me so far what you think about TBO informal observations.

5. Tell me so far what you think about TBO reflective conversations.

6. Tell me so far what you think about TBO and trusting administrator–teacher relationships.

7. I have no further questions. Is there something else you think I should know about to better understand your implementation and perceptions of formative supervision and TBO so far?

8. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your valuable time and sharing of insights in interviewing with me today.

Formative Interview Questions: Interview 2

Thank you for participating in my dissertation action research study. Your participation in this study and this interview is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at your school district.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

I will request to audio record your interview responses. The interviews will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interviews to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interviews start, just let me know.
May I audio record this interview?

Thank you for meeting with me today for this second interview about formative teacher supervision and Trust-Based Observations. As you respond to the questions, please do not mention names of individuals in your responses.

(Possible follow-up questions for 1–8: That's interesting, could you tell me more about…? OR What did you mean by…?)

1. Tell me about your (or your supervisor's) implementation of the formative teacher supervision approach, Trust-Based Observations or TBO since the last time we talked.

2. Tell me what you have been thinking about TBO since the last time we talked.

3. Tell me what you have been thinking about TBO informal observations since the last time we talked.

4. Tell me what you have been thinking about TBO reflective conversations since the last time we talked.

5. Teacher: How have reflective conversations supported you with your reflection?
Administrator: How do you believe reflective conversations have supported teachers with their reflection?

6. Teacher: What do you believe would help you improve your reflection to better support your professional growth?
Administrator: What do you believe would help teachers improve their reflection to better support their professional growth?

7. Tell me what you have been thinking about TBO and trusting administrator–teacher relationships since the last time we talked.

8. Have there been any changes in your thinking about TBO since the last time we talked?

9. I have no further questions. Is there something else you think I should know about to better understand your implementation and perceptions of formative supervision and TBO?

10. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your valuable time and sharing of insights in interviewing with me today.

Post-Intervention Interview Questions

Thank you for participating in my dissertation action research study. Your participation in this study and this interview is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at your school district.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

I will request to audio record your interview responses. The interviews will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interviews to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interviews start, just let me know.
May I audio record this interview?

Thank you for meeting with me today for this post-intervention interview about formative teacher supervision and Trust-Based Observations. As you respond to the questions, please try not to mention names of individuals.

(Possible follow-up questions for 1–14: That's interesting, could you tell me more about…? OR What did you mean by…?)

1. Tell me about your (or your supervisor's) implementation of the formative teacher supervision approach, Trust-Based Observations or TBO since the last time we talked.

2. As we come to a close with our study, tell me what you think about formative supervision and TBO.

3. Tell me what you think about TBO informal observations.

4. Tell me what you think about TBO reflective conversations.

5. Teacher: How have reflective conversations supported you with your reflection?
Administrator: How do you believe reflective conversations have supported teachers with their reflection?

6. Teacher: How has feedback during your reflective conversations supported you with your reflection and professional growth?
Administrator: How do you believe your feedback during reflective conversations has supported teachers with their reflection and professional growth?

7. Teacher: What do you believe would help you improve your reflection and your supervisor's feedback to better support your professional growth?

Administrator: What do you believe would help teachers improve their reflection and your feedback to better support their professional growth?

8. What do you believe has helped you (or your supervisor) to implement formative supervision and TBO effectively?

9. What do you feel are the greatest limitations to implementing formative supervision and TBO effectively?

10. What do you believe would help you (or your supervisor) to implement formative supervision and TBO more effectively?

11. What do you feel are the greatest benefits of implementing formative supervision and TBO?

12. How do you believe formative supervision and TBO affect teachers' professional growth?

13. How do you believe formative supervision and TBO affect trusting teacher–administrator relationships?

14. Have there been any changes in your thinking about formative supervision and TBO since the last time we talked or since the beginning of the study?

15. I have no further questions. Is there something else you think I should know about to better understand your implementation and perceptions of formative supervision and TBO?

16. Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your valuable time and sharing of insights in interviewing with me today.

APPENDIX D

ASU IRB APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Jane Neapolitan
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus
-
Jane.Neapolitan@asu.edu

Dear Jane Neapolitan:

On 12/27/2023 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Formative Supervision's Effects on Trusting Administrator-Teacher Relationships and Teachers' Professional Growth
Investigator:	Jane Neapolitan
IRB ID:	STUDY00019224
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Dehombreux Valerie Dissertation Study District Research Approval Letter.pdf, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc); • Dehombreux Valerie Dissertation Study IRB Protocol v3.pdf, Category: IRB Protocol; • Dehombreux Valerie Dissertation Study Professional Development Agendas.pdf, Category: Other; • Dehombreux Valerie Response to IRB Letter.pdf, Category: Other; • recruitment_methods_27-12-2023.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • supporting_documents_13-12-2023.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2)(ii) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation (low risk) on 12/15/2023.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Valerie Dehombreux
Valerie Dehombreux

APPENDIX E

STUDY RECRUITMENT/CONSENT LETTERS

Administrator Participant Recruitment/Consent Letter

Dear Administrator:

My name is Valerie Dehombreux and I am a doctoral candidate with the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Jane Neapolitan, an ASU faculty member. We are conducting a research study on school administrators using formative teacher supervision processes. The purpose of this study is to provide professional development focused on a new formative teacher supervision process, separate from the summative evaluation process.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in an intervention including participating in a 3-day in-person workshop for approximately 6 hours each day; three 15-20 minute follow-up virtual meetings; three 15-20 minute virtual formative interviews; implementing the supervision process for about 12 weeks; completion of an online survey on two occasions (20-30 minutes each); and a virtual post-intervention interview (20-30 minutes) concerning your attitudes about and experiences with implementing formative supervision.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at [your school district]. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

The benefit to participation is the opportunity for you to learn strategies and practices related to formative teacher supervision processes, which have the potential to benefit your teachers and students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

In the surveys, to protect your confidentiality, I will ask you to create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your pre-intervention survey responses and your post-intervention responses when we analyze the data.

I will request to audio record your interview responses. The interviews will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interviews to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interviews start, just let me know. Interview recordings will be transcribed and any identifying information de-identified. Interview data will be tracked by placing the recordings and transcripts in computer files for each participant and titling each with a non-identifying coding system (e.g., Admin 1, Admin 2, Teacher 1, Teacher 2). A separate Excel sheet will list each participant code, their contact information, and interview dates, serving as a master list for tracking. The tracking sheet with contact information and the interview recordings

with possibly identifying information will be stored on a password-protected computer for a period of four years and then deleted.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Valerie Dehombreux at vdehombr@asu.edu or [phone number] or Jane Neapolitan at jane.neapolitan@asu.edu or [phone number].

Thank you,

Valerie Dehombreux, Doctoral Candidate
Jane Neapolitan, Faculty Associate

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Jane Neapolitan at [phone number] or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

By signing below, I agree to be a part of the study.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Participant Recruitment/Consent Letter

Dear Teacher:

My name is Valerie Dehombreux and I am a doctoral candidate with the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Jane Neapolitan, an ASU faculty member. We are conducting a research study on school administrators using formative teacher supervision processes. The purpose of this study is to provide professional development focused on a new formative teacher supervision process, separate from the summative evaluation process.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in an intervention involving your school administrator implementing a new formative teacher supervision process with you for about twelve weeks; two formative, virtual interviews of 15-20 minutes each; completion of an online survey on two occasions (20-30 minutes each); and a post-intervention virtual interview (20-30 minutes) concerning your attitudes about and experiences with formative teacher supervision.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at the [your school district]. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

The benefit to participation is the opportunity for you and your school administrator to learn strategies and practices related to formative teacher supervision processes, which have the potential to benefit your school's teachers and students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

In the surveys, to protect your confidentiality, I will ask you to create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your pre-intervention survey responses and your post-intervention responses when we analyze the data.

I will request to audio record your interview responses. The interviews will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interviews to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interviews start, just let me know. Interview recordings will be transcribed and any identifying information de-identified. Interview data will be tracked by placing the recordings and transcripts in computer files for each participant and titling each with a non-identifying coding system (e.g., Admin 1, Admin 2, Teacher 1, Teacher 2). A separate Excel sheet will list each participant code, their contact information, and interview dates, serving as a master list for tracking. The tracking sheet with contact information and the interview recordings with possibly identifying information will be stored on a password-protected computer for a period of four years and then deleted.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will be shared with others for future research purposes or other uses.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Valerie Dehombreux at vdehombr@asu.edu or [phone number] or Jane Neapolitan at jane.neapolitan@asu.edu or [phone number].

Thank you,

Valerie Dehombreux, Doctoral Candidate
Jane Neapolitan, Faculty Associate

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Jane Neapolitan at [phone number] or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

By signing below, I agree to be a part of the study.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____