The Development of and Relationship Between Elgin U-46's Teacher Appraisal System and Mentor Program: 1998-2010

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELGIN U-46'S TEACHER APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND MENTOR PROGRAM: 1998-2010

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

PROGRAM IN ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the historical development of Elgin School District U-46’s teacher appraisal system and teacher mentor program during the years of 1998-2010. In 1998 a formal mentor program was implemented for the first time in district history. Shortly thereafter, district and union leadership agreed to revamp the 25-year-old appraisal system. The study aimed to explore how district and union leadership prepared for, adopted, and implemented appraisal and mentoring during this time period through the framework of Thomas Sergiovanni’s (1992) sources of authority for leadership.

The research questions of this study focused on five topics: the historical development of the teacher appraisal plan (TAP), the historical development of the teacher mentor program (TMP), sources of authorities for leadership evidenced during the stages of implementation and development, challenges faced and sources of authorities evidenced to overcome them, and evidence that appraisal and mentoring either complement or contradict each other in U-46.

An elaborate look at primary documents including teacher contracts, School Board reports and minutes, local newspaper articles, meeting agendas, professional development presentations, staff surveys, and selected professional literature helped reveal the change process undergone for teacher appraisal and showed the development of the mentor program.
As Senate Bill 315 recently passed, more districts will be revisiting their teacher appraisal system to include student performance data as a measure in order to qualify for “Race to the Top” funding. Article 21A of Illinois School Code continues to require districts to mentor their novice teachers, although the quality of these programs inevitably varies. These mandates, along with the continuous need to strengthen teacher performance in an accountability-driven era, make this a relevant study for educational leaders. Understanding the successes and challenges of Elgin U-46 can provide administrators and union officials, insight as they move forward with similar developments and changes.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Consider this high school track athlete. He has joined the team as a junior after his football coach told him he needed to keep in shape during the off season. Early in the season he races to victory after victory in the 400 meter dash. Fans are cheering, teammates are admiring him, and the coach is praising him as the program has not experienced success in recent years. The season progresses and he is still finishing in the top three in all his races, consistently winning medals. The coach now is saying things like “You are the best! I think you can take the state title!” Thinking that he had a winner, the coach did not elevate the boy’s training program as the season progressed, as there did not seem to be a reason, looking at his win-loss records.

Sectional Finals approached and the coach told his new star that he was a sure thing. He had won races the whole season and it was natural to assume he would keep winning. Sectional Finals though, always bring teams together that have not necessarily competed against each other all season, and the coach did not do his homework by checking what other star 400 meter runners were clocking in at. The coach also failed to note that the state qualifying benchmark was 49.9 seconds, as he never had an athlete come close to it since he took over the program. Only the top two finishers from the Sectional advance, unless more run under the benchmark time. The football player-turned-track star had been running around 53 seconds all season. He failed to advance to
the State Meet despite his winning record all season, having the admiration of his teammates, and the constant praise and attention from his coach. The athlete was crushed because he was told all along how great he was and that he was even a possible state champion contender.

Few would disagree that the person at fault in this scenario was the coach. The coach had the responsibility of preparing his athletes for races and setting them up for success. In this case, the coach only looked at how frequently the athlete was winning races and did not pay any attention to the fact that he was consistently running four seconds over the state qualifying benchmark. It was the responsibility of the coach to not only know what the benchmark was, but also to adequately prepare the athlete to meet that mark. Instead, he offered him praise for performing below the standard the state had set, and did not motivate him or provide the training regimen to help him get there. Had the athlete been explicitly told at the beginning of the season what the standard was, and then been provided the coaching and training to get there, he may have been able to advance to the State Meet. Unfortunately, the season ended the way it did, the athlete felt let down, and he elected to play volleyball the spring of his senior year.

The high school athletic analogy presented here has a strong connection to the workplace. In education, novice teachers are more likely to be successful with a quality induction and mentoring program, an awareness of the professional standards that need to be met, knowledge of how to go about meeting them, and an appraisal system that provides the necessary formative feedback to keep them on the right path. The state of Illinois and the school districts that comprise it have come to understand that
administrators cannot effectively on their own both mentor and evaluate teachers. Modern mentor programs pair veteran teachers who demonstrate mastery in the field with new teachers in an effort to provide non-evaluative feedback that can set them up for successful classroom observations, and ultimately, contract renewal. While every district in Illinois is required to have a mentor program and appraisal system for teachers per Illinois School Code, it is not likely that all districts take the time to examine how and if the two support and complement each other. Because of this, it is possible that the mentor program in some places does not successfully support the appraisal system that is in place to determine future employment. If helping novice teachers develop a keen understanding of the appraisal system and then offering them the support to perform to the appraisal standards set by the district are not major goals of the mentor program, it may surely fall short of being successful. Similar to the track athlete that did not make the State Meet, new teachers may function under false assumptions up until the evaluator tells them things are not going well, and it is too late.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine one Illinois school district’s teacher appraisal system and mentor program from an historical perspective. Using Elgin School District U-46 as the site of the case study, the goal is to research and develop an understanding of how both the appraisal system and mentor program have historically developed, and examine how under certain conditions it may either complement or contradict each other. Thomas Sergiovanni’s (1992) sources of authority for leadership as a lens for analysis will be used in relation to analyzing the preparation for, the
adoption of, and implementation for the current appraisal system. The historical development of the mentor program will also be analyzed through the sources of authority, specific to preparation and implementation work as well as modifications and additions through the years. In unraveling the development of the appraisal system and mentor program in U-46, barriers for progress and challenges faced will be explained. In determining if and how these barriers were overcome, the sources of authority used will be analyzed as well. If both the new teacher appraisal system and mentor program complement each other, factors that contribute to this success will be revealed so that other school districts can use this study as a potential model should they decide to undergo a change process for better consistency. If there are contradictions between the two and evidence shows the mentor program does not support its teachers specific to how they are measured professionally, recommendations for change will be made and both U-46 and neighboring school districts can see benefit in reading this study.

**Research Questions**

Five key questions drive the research and are answered upon completing of the study:

1. How has U-46’s teacher appraisal system developed between the years 1998 to 2010?
2. How has U-46’s teacher mentor program developed between the years 1998 to 2010?
3. What sources of authority for leadership per Sergiovanni were evidenced in the preparation for and implementation of both programs?
4. What challenges or barriers did the appraisal system and mentor program face during this time period and which sources of authority were used to address them?

5. In what ways do U-46’s current appraisal system and mentor program complement and/or contradict each other?

A formal teacher mentor program was first bargained into the Elgin Teacher Association (ETA) contract or The Elgin Agreement in 1998 (see Appendix A). This study focuses primarily on the time period between the Board of Education and the ETA bargained in the mentoring language to 2010, the beginning year of this study. Teacher appraisal has most likely existed in some form since the district first opened its doors, but this dissertation will only trace back to the 1970s, targeting the transition from one system to a new one.

Significance of the Study

Sergiovanni (1992) opens his book by saying:

I believe there are two reasons for the failure of leadership. First, we have come to view leadership as behavior rather than action, as something psychological rather than spiritual, as having to do with persons rather than ideas. Second, in trying to understand what drives leadership, we have overemphasized bureaucratic, psychological, and technical-rational authority, seriously neglecting professional and moral authority. (p. 3)

Senate Bill 315

Such is arguably the case in the context of teacher appraisal systems. Illinois Senate Bill 315, filed in January 2010, serves as the most current legislation specific to teacher evaluation at the time of this study. The bill states:
The General Assembly finds and declares all of the following:
1. Effective teachers and school leaders are a critical factor contributing to student achievement. 2. Many existing district performance evaluation systems fail to adequately distinguish between effective and ineffective teachers and principals. A recent study of evaluation systems in 3 of the largest Illinois districts found that out of 41,174 teacher evaluations performed over a 5-year period, 92.6% of teachers were rated “superior” or “excellent”, 7% were rated “satisfactory”, and only 0.4% were rated “unsatisfactory.” (www.ilga.gov)

This data, viewed alongside data that several Illinois public schools are not making “Adequate Yearly Progress” has brought forth new legislation to take effect September 1, 2012 for school districts who do not qualify for exemptions.

By no later than the applicable implementation date, each school district shall, in good faith cooperation with its teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive bargaining representatives for its teachers, incorporate the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating teacher performance, into its evaluation plan for all teachers, both those teachers in contractual continued service and those teachers not in contractual continual service. The plan will specifically describe how student growth data and indicators will be used as part of the evaluation process, how this information will relate to evaluation standards, the assessments or other indicators of student performance that will be used in measuring student growth and the weight that each will have, the methodology that will be used to measure student growth, and the criteria other than student growth that will be used in evaluating the teacher and the weight that each will have. (www.ilga.gov)

It seems Sergiovanni (1992) would be pleased that the action requires school districts to work cooperatively with teacher bargaining representatives in order to include the implementation of student performance data in teacher appraisal. U-46 has recently bargained the Danielson Framework into their upcoming teacher contract and it can be argued the professional standards in this model could be a starting point for making more evidence-driven evaluation systems and instruments. “Distinguished” teaching is
described in her framework as facilitating student-led classrooms, where knowledge is constructed through learning opportunities established by the teacher (Danielson, 2007). Currently, there are several school districts that have adopted and modified their framework across the country; this new legislation could result in more district leaders not only adopting the Danielson Framework, but also changing their approach to executing change in their system and the way they actually observe and evaluate teachers. The U-46 case study could serve as a valuable source for other districts that, based on Illinois Senate Bill 315, need to enact change in their teacher appraisal protocols and instruments.

National Context

While U-46 has just recently updated their appraisal plan to focus on professional teaching standards addressed via the Danielson Framework, other school districts across the country are already heading in the direction mandated by Senate Bill 315. Peterson and Staley posted an article on Bloomberg.com on November 29, 2009 citing New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s order for the city’s public schools to start using student achievement data in the evaluations of teachers who are up for tenure. A month after winning re-election, he also “urged state lawmakers to require all school districts to link student gains and teacher evaluations to boost the state’s chances of winning part of the $4.35 billion in competitive federal stimulus grants” (www.bloomberg.com). The Race to the Top criteria bar states from applying for the grants if they don’t let schools use student-performance data in teacher evaluations (www.bloomberg.com). Wisconsin governor Jim Doyle signed a law November 10, 2009 that allows the use of student
achievement data in teacher evaluations. The California State Senate voted to make a similar change (www.bloomberg.com). At that state and national level, local school districts are being pushed through legislation to revamp teacher appraisal practices.

Sadly, for many school districts it is when legislation mandates a change to be made in teacher appraisal in order to qualify for funding, that it is even considered. Best practice would be for a district to establish an evaluation committee comprised of district and building level administrators, teachers in various content areas and/or grade levels, and union leadership. Input from parents, community members, and students may also be considered as the committee routinely reviews current appraisal protocols and instruments, and make necessary adjustment through collective bargaining agreements.

**Illinois School Code-Teacher Appraisal**

Illinois School Code Article 24A (2008) states:

The district shall, no later than October 1, 1986, submit a copy of its evaluation plan to the State Board of Education, which shall review the plan and make public its comments thereon, and the district shall at the same time provide a copy to the exclusive bargaining representatives. Whenever any substantial change is made in a district’s evaluation plan, the new plan shall be submitted to the State Board of Education for review and comment, and the district shall at the same time provide a copy of any such new plan to the exclusive bargaining representatives. (p. 537)

Nowhere in Illinois School Code can it be found that a district and its local bargaining unit have to revisit, revise, or make changes on a continual basis for the purpose of increasing teacher performance and student achievement. So long as both parties are content on the appraisal system in place, and legislation is not requiring anything be done, districts can go years without doing anything regarding this important area of
leadership. Such was the case in Elgin U-46, which made no changes to their appraisal system for over 25 years according to a 2009 *Daily Herald* article entitled “Report: Good, bad U-46 teachers go unaddressed.” The Hunter-based evaluation instrument stayed in contractual language far after Madeline Hunter’s method became outdated.

Educational leaders may benefit from reading this case study as legislation, teaching staff, and the local community can, at any time, call for change in current practice specific to teacher appraisal. It is important to have a firm understanding of how the process of changing a teacher appraisal system can develop, who should be involved in the process, what barriers might be experienced, how barriers can be overcome, and how teacher appraisal can be connected to other internal programs to make it more meaningful and sustainable in a district. Currently Illinois School Code has the following expectation for teacher appraisal:

*Article 24A, Evaluation of Certified Employees, 105 ILCS 5/24A-5,* calls for an administrator with Type 75 certification to conduct evaluations that include at least the following components:

1. Personal observation of the teacher in the classroom (on at least 2 different school days in school districts having a population exceeding 500,000) by a district administrator qualified under Section 24A-3 [105 ILCS 5/24A-3] or - in school districts having a population exceeding 500,000 – by either an administrator qualified under Section 24A-3 [105 ILCS 5/24A-3] or an assistant principal under the supervision of an administrator qualified under Section 24A-3 [105 ILCS 5/24A-3], unless the teacher has no classroom duties.
2. Consideration of the teacher’s attendance, planning, and instructional methods, classroom management, where relevant, and competency in the subject matter taught, where relevant.
3. Rating the teacher’s performance as “excellent”, “satisfactory”, or “unsatisfactory”.
4. Specification as to the teacher’s strengths and weaknesses, with supporting reasons for the comments made.
5. Inclusion of a copy of the evaluation in the teacher’s personnel file and provision of a copy to the teacher. (Illinois School Code, 2008, p. 537)

Illinois School Code-Teacher Mentoring

Illinois School Code also inserted mandatory new teacher induction and mentoring beginning the 2003-2004 school year under Article 21A. While U-46 historical evidence shows they went too long before looking to update their appraisal system, in the case of teacher mentoring they were ahead of the state requirement. Section 21A-20 of School Code says a mentor program is to “assist new teachers in developing the skills and strategies necessary for instructional excellence” (p. 515).

Program requirements prescribed by School Code and necessary to receive state funding support are as follows:

1. Assigns a mentor teacher to each new teacher for a period of at least two school years.
2. Aligns with the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, content area standards, and applicable local school improvement and professional development plans, if any.
3. Addresses all of the following elements and how they will be provided:
   a. Mentoring and support of the new teacher.
   b. Professional development specifically designed to ensure the growth of the new teacher’s knowledge and skills.
   c. Formative assessment designed to ensure feedback and reflection, which must not be used in any evaluation of the new teacher.
   d. Describes the role of mentor teachers, the criteria and process for their selection, and how they will be trained, provided that each mentor teacher shall demonstrate the best practices in teaching his or her respective field of practice. A mentor teacher may not directly or indirectly participate in the evaluation of a new teacher pursuant to Article 24A of this Code or the evaluation procedure of the public school. (p. 515)
The commitment and belief from the state of Illinois in regard to the importance of mentoring is supported with funding language in School Code.

Sec. 21A-25. Funding. For each new teacher participating in a new teacher induction and mentoring program that meets the requirements set forth in Section 21A-20 of this Code or in an existing program that is in the process of transition to a program that meets those requirements, the State Board of Education shall pay the public school $1,200 annually for each of 2 school years for the purpose of providing one or more of the following: 1. Mentor teacher compensation, 2. Mentor teacher training or new teacher training or both, 3. Release time. (p. 516)

Sharon Gibson wrote *Mentoring in business and industry: The need for a phenomenological perspective*, which pointed to several desirable outcomes of mentoring

- Increased job satisfaction (Aryee et al., 1996; Chao, 1997; Corzine et al., 1994; Fagenson, 1989; Koberg et al., 1994; Mobley et al., 1994; Scandura, 1997)
- Enhanced career mobility/opportunity (Corzine et al., 1994; Fagenson, 1989)
- Recognition (Fagenson, 1989)
- Increased organizational commitment and socialization (Chao, 1997; Donaldson et al., 2000; Scandura, 1997)
- Decreased work alienation (Koberg et al., 1994)

These outcomes may be likely to be reached if the mentor program is aligned with the appraisal system that is used to assess individual teacher’s performances and make decisions about employment. It is important for school districts to have an understanding of the historical development of their teacher appraisal and mentor programs as both require consistent reflection, review and modifications. As new research and knowledge in the field surfaces, each school district is charged with determining if and how that information will be implemented.
Volumes of research consume educational journals speaking to the importance of quality mentor programs and appraisal systems; this study looks to show the significance of exploring individual school districts’ historical development, barriers and challenges faced, and sources of leadership used for steering the course. It also is important to know if the mentor program, in trying to set up novice teachers for success, considers the appraisal system for which they are ultimately rated. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan delivered a speech at Columbia University with regard to teacher preparation that was released on October 22, 2009. While the audience is teacher preparation program at the university level, his words are also applicable to new teacher induction and mentoring and effective appraisal:

I believe that education is the civil rights issue for our generation. And if you care about promoting opportunity and reducing inequality, about promoting civil knowledge and participation, the classroom is the place to start. Children today in our neediest schools are more likely to have the least qualified teachers. And that is why great teaching is about more than education --- it is a daily fight for social justice.

We currently have about 3.2 million teachers who work in some 95,000 schools. But more than half of those teachers and principals are Baby Boomers. And during the next four years we could lose a third of our veteran teachers and school leaders to retirement and attrition. By 2014, just five years from now, the U.S. Department of Education projects that up to one million new teaching positions will be filled by new teachers.

These major demographic shifts means that teaching is going to be a booming profession in the years ahead --- with school districts nationwide making up to 200,000 new, first-time hires annually. Our ability to attract, and more importantly retain, great talent over the next five years will shape public education for the next 30 years --- it is truly a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Duncan continued later in his speech:
A great teacher can literally change the course of a student’s life. They light a lifelong curiosity, a desire to participate in democracy, and instill a thirst for knowledge. It’s no surprise that studies repeatedly document that the single biggest influence on student academic growth is the quality of the teacher standing in front of the classroom—not socioeconomic status, not family background, but the quality of the teacher at the head of the class. (www.ed.gov)

Once teachers leave the university and enter the field of teaching, the responsibility shifts to the school district. In order for teachers to develop into the caliber of professional Duncan discusses, novice teacher need to be supported through mentoring, and be evaluated objectively on a formative basis. Teachers need access to resources and support but must also show competence and as Collins’ Good to Great (2001) references, be on a clear path to greatness. Good is just not good enough.

**Methodology**

The methodology utilized for this study will be historical documentary research. To understand and articulate the last fifteen years of appraisal and mentor program development, it is necessary to obtain, read, and analyze an array of documents that when compiled, provide insight and explanation to both. “Historical research is more than the mere retelling of past facts, but is a fluid and dynamic account of past events that attempts to recapture the complex nuances, individual personalities, and ideas that influenced the events being investigated” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). McCulloch (2004) says “to understand documents is to read between the lines of our material world” (p. 1). The past has significance for the present and the future; historical research can help people learn from previous successes and failures. It is important “…to discover how and why the document was produced and how it was received. Documents are
social and historical constructs, and to examine them without considering this simply misses the point” (p. 6). The process of researching the historical development of appraisal and mentoring, as well as examining challenges and sources of leadership authority applied, requires an in-depth look at published and non-published local and national level documents, most of which are primary source in nature.

A distinction between primary and secondary sources is critical in documentary research. Marwick’s definitions appear in McCulloch’s (2004) work: primary sources consist of basic, raw, imperfect evidence and are often fragmented and difficult to use (p. 30). They were created within the period studied by those directly a part of the period. Secondary sources are the articles and books of other historians (p. 30). They are produced later by historians studying the earlier period.

This study begins with an overview of Elgin School District U-46, utilizing information from their website and a completed dissertation focusing on the district written by Mary Maloney-Geregach (2006). Primary sources for the study of appraisal and mentor program development come mostly from the U-46’s Teacher Leader for Mentoring. The researcher obtained, through his cooperation, various meeting agendas, professional development materials, presentations, manuals, professional articles used, ETA contracts, written policy, board meeting minutes, and newspaper articles. Archived newspapers from the Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin also aided to the investigation of the past, both specific to the programs but also contextually. The story for both appraisal and mentoring will be written, accompanied with analysis using Sergiovanni’s *Moral Leadership*. 
This research does not focus on qualitative issues such as district personnel’s attitudes and perceptions of appraisal and mentor program effectiveness, although existing, district-compiled staff survey data will be included. The teacher appraisal plan and mentor program are both comprehensive Board-approved documents that are subject to change through collective bargaining. Both are also referenced in *The Elgin Agreement* and Board Policy. The researcher was able to recover previous teacher contracts to understand the old appraisal plan. Committee meeting agendas, Board reports, and professional literature they reviewed were examined to assess the change process, and the actual bargained Teacher Appraisal Plan was necessary to have in writing in order to show development.

In 2006, the Teacher Leader for Mentoring established a comprehensive website that now includes video interviews of school leaders, mentors, and mentees. These voices add to the documentary methodology approach. Also included are program requirements, initiatives, curriculum and instruction best practices, and values and beliefs. The researcher was able to obtain a copy of the binder issued to mentor teachers and a copy of the binder issued to new teachers. Together, these documents can provide a comprehensive history of the program as new items have been included throughout the timeline of the program.

While this study primarily explores 1998-2010, the goals and research questions are best answered by recovering district documents (both in-house and public), professional literature that was applied by school leaders, local newspapers and reports that provide an objective context to the time period, and electronic sources (both
published by U-46 and outside agencies. Together, a comprehensive story can be told and leadership choices can be best depicted.

**Overview of Elgin School District U-46**

In 1996, Maloney-Geregach completed a dissertation entitled *The Development of Elgin, Illinois from 1835-1935 and Its Impact on School District U-46*. She gave a historical perspective of how the town was founded and developed over its first 100 years, how the Elgin schools developed over the first 100 years, and the relationship between the development of the town and the development of the schools. In her last chapter, she provided an update by reviewing events from 1936 to 2005. “School District U-46 has had history repeat itself several times, with budget shortfalls, overcrowding of students, the need for additional facilities, and personnel issues” (Maloney-Geregach, 2006, p. 2). These are issues that easily make items like mentoring and appraisal seem secondary of importance.

During the 1960’s and 1970’s, there was an increase in the number of low-income families moving to Elgin. School were built during the 1950’s, 1960’s, and 1970’s throughout the school district, in Elgin as well as the other towns served by School District U-46. The U-46 teachers went on strike five times between 1971-1981 due to dissatisfaction over wages and working conditions. (p. 126)

Maloney-Geregach also shared, using Alft’s *Elgin: An American History*, that:

The 1970’s were turbulent times for School District U-46. There was an increase in racial, ethnic and learning diversity of the school district. Bilingual Spanish instruction commenced in 1971. Racial riots in the 1970’s caused Elgin and Larkin High Schools to suspend classes a total of five times. The Elgin Teachers’ Association (ETA) began supporting school board candidates who shared their sympathies. Four out of five referenda between 1972-1980 failed. In 1974, the U-46 bus drivers went on strike. (p. 132)
More currently an article from the *Daily Herald* was published in November 2007 entitled “U-46 teacher union files strike notice.” The article explained that sessions with a federal mediator were set to be scheduled in December. It went on to say that the union also filed intent to strike notice during negotiations for the 2004-2007 contract, but a deal was reached before the start of school. ETA President Tim Davis said in the article, “Class sizes and case loads are the sticking points, though any fix to those issues could affect teacher raises.” This article confirmed Maloney-Geregach’s claim that history repeats itself in this school district, and that budget shortfalls, personnel issues, and class sizes seem to dominate the focus of the district and union groups.

The sheer size of the district can be a causal factor in the problems the district has historically faced.

Covering 90 square miles, School District U-46 serves portions of 11 communities in the northwest suburbs of Chicago in Cook, DuPage and Kane Counties. The District is approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and serves over 40,000 children in grades preK-12. The District ranks as the second largest in Illinois with 40 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, and 5 high schools. (www.u-46.org)

School District U-46 has student demographics as of November 2009 that are 37.7% white, 43.8% Hispanic, 8% Asian, and 6.8% African American (www.u-46.org). Having a graduation rate of 88.2% and several schools that are not making Adequate Yearly Progress defined under NCLB, the Board and District Leadership continue to face the challenge of improving their schools. While funding continues to be a major barrier, the school district has shown evidence over the last 20 years that more value and attention can and should be placed directly on the teachers. One way U-46 has worked to combat
personnel issues is by undergoing the development of a formal teacher mentor program. Not long after this program experienced success, the district revisited its longstanding appraisal system and eventually asked the Teacher Leader for Mentoring to spearhead that committee. The work done in reflecting on the current appraisal system, researching and preparing for adopting and implementing a new one further cements the district’s direction of putting better systems in place to retain high quality educators and weed out ones who are counterproductive to the organization.

**Rationale for Research in U-46**

Every school district has its own problems, as does any organization outside the educational arena. The researcher wanted to select a district that had a sense of urgency for district and school improvement. Elgin U-46 has had to overcome barriers to success again and again with finance, working conditions, teacher morale, and community support. Compared to neighboring school districts just east of them such as Township High School Districts 211 in Schaumburg and 214 in Arlington Heights, this district has more difficulty recruiting and retaining high quality teachers that over time can make meaningful change for the students they serve. That being said, Elgin U-46 has its own share of high quality educators who make a positive impact on the community it serves despite the challenges the district continue to face. One such person is Bill DuBois, a former Kane County Educator of the Year who oversaw the development of the appraisal system and mentor program in the latter of his career. Elgin U-46 was selected because this individual was able to recover the historical documents necessary to complete this
kind of study. DuBois serving as a leader in both capacities made this research more manageable and attainable.

**Overview of Sergiovanni’s Sources of Authority for Leadership**

Thomas Sergiovanni’s *Moral Leadership* offers five sources of authority leaders use, and suggests that the leaders too often stick to the first three, when in fact it is the professional and moral authorities that truly invest people in what they do for an organization. Below is a detailed explanation of each source of authority:

**Bureaucratic Authority:** Definition is in the form of mandates, rules, regulations, job descriptions, and role expectation. This particular authority rely heavily on the hierarchical management, predetermined standards, and prescriptions handed down by the administration for what, when, and how to comply with the standards of the organization.

**Psychological Authority:** Can be perceived as a leadership style based on motivational know-how and human relations skills. The use of this authority produces congenial relationships, harmonious interpersonal climates, and an atmosphere of cooperation. Increased compliance and performances are the hallmarks. What gets rewarded gets done.

**Technical-rational Authority:** Derived from logic and scientific research in education. This authority relies heavily on evidence: evidence that is presumed to be the truth. Scientific knowledge is considered super ordinate to practice. Facts and objective evidence are what matters.

**Professional Authority:** Consists of knowledge of a craft and personal expertise. Research and scientific knowledge is only used to inform not prescribe. Authority from within comes from socialization and internalized values and knowledge. This discipline seeks to promote a dialogue that establishes and accepts tenets and practices. Standards are acknowledged and accountability internalized. Values, preferences, and beliefs are subjective and ephemeral.

**Moral Authority:** Based on obligations and duties from widely shared values, ideas and ideals. The creation of community, felt interdependence and the promotion of collegiality are essential. Informal norms govern behavior and community members respond to felt duties and obligations.
The informal norm system enforces professional and community values: self-managing is an attribute. (Sergiovanni, 1992, pp. 36-39)

Within the case study, the researcher determined which sources of authority were present:

- During the preparation for, adoption of, and initial implementation of the new appraisal system that included the Danielson Framework.
- During the preparation for, development of, and implementation of the mentor program.
- When either the appraisal system or mentor program faced challenges and overcame barriers.

**Definition of Terms**

**Danielson Framework:** The framework for teaching described by Danielson (2007) identifies those aspects of a teacher’s responsibilities that have been documented through empirical studies and theoretical research as promoting improved student learning. Although they are not the only possible description of practice, these responsibilities seek to define what teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession. The activity of teaching is divided into 22 components clustered into four domains: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Chapter II provides access to the specifics components for each domain.

**Historical Research:** “The process of systematically examining past events or combinations of events to arrive at an account of what happened in the past” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

**Mentor:** a trusted counselor or guide; a tutor or coach (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed., 2000).
Primary Source: “A source in which the creator was a direct witness or in some other way directly involved or related to the event” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Secondary Source: “A source that was created from primary sources, other secondary sources, or some combination of primary and secondary sources. A secondary source is a source that is at least one step removed from direct contact, involvement, or relationship with the event being researched” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Teacher Appraisal: Also referred to as teacher evaluation, it includes a systematic effort to rank, rate, grade, judge, or evaluate in written form or through recorded notation, the performance of a teacher, including all duties described or attributed to teachers of that system at the time (Baker, 1997).

Overview of Chapters

Chapter II focuses on teacher appraisal in U-46. It begins by providing a historical overview leading up to 2000, when the Board, ETA, and District Leadership first committed to revamping the teacher evaluation process (see Appendix A). A description of the evaluation protocols and instruments prior to the district turning to the Danielson Framework will be shared. A description of the current program, including the Danielson Framework itself, will be the next area of focus. Once that is established, an examination of the early work and preparation for revamping the teacher evaluation process, the adoption stage of the new framework, and the initial implementation up to 2010 will be documented. Barriers and challenges presented during the various phases of development will be described using sources available. For both the development of the
appraisal program and the challenges experienced, sources of authority for leadership will emerge in the narrative.

Chapter III focuses on teacher mentoring in U-46. It begins by briefly discussing mentoring in U-46 prior to 1998, the first year of the formal Teacher Mentor Program in the district (see Appendix A). A description of the current mentor program will be given using the same materials a new teacher and mentor in U-46 would receive as well as the coordinator’s own materials. This chapter explores the development of the program in its early, middle, and later stages, determines what challenges may have been experienced and overcome, and use Sergiovanni’s (1992) sources of authority as a lens for examining how the district took action.

Chapter IV analyzes the relationship between the teacher appraisal system and the mentor program in U-46. Considering how each developed and all the work behind it, it is important to see if common sources of authority were used, both in terms of the stages of implementation and when challenges occurred along the way. Just as, if not more important, this chapter examines whether or not the teacher mentor program and teacher appraisal system work together or against each other. It is here where findings are articulated as to whether the two complement or contradict each other.

Chapter V concludes the study with discussion of research questions, findings, and conclusions. Implications for educational leadership both within U-46 and other school districts in Illinois are discussed, as well as recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER II

TEACHER APPRAISAL IN U-46

Teacher appraisal, like most systems under the educational realm, has evolved in American education with political, social, and economic implications. A history of reform and legislation has pushed and pulled how educational leaders evaluate teachers. History has repeatedly shown the pendulum in education; changes of the past are replaced with more change, and after time what was once outdated can become once again current practice. Appraisal has constantly been characterized as a means to improve teacher performance and student learning, while increasing efficiency and public confidence in the school systems. Baker (1997) completed a study that demonstrated how reforms, initiatives, and legislation the last 200 years have not drastically changed the way teachers are evaluated. “Teacher supervision and evaluation today is little changed from the practices of the 18th century and remains a reflected image of practices that had been well underway throughout the country in the first two decades of the century. What the 1980s reform movement wrought in teacher evaluation was simply a re-invention of the past” (p. 3). Despite the pendulum problem, the point-counterpoint moves in education, increased accountability (currently No Child Left Behind legislation) demands school districts continually ask themselves if their current systems (appraisal, curriculum, assessment, among other components) are operating in a way that will maximize student performance. School districts such as U-46, who face challenges that
other school districts may not experience, may put teacher appraisal improvements on
the bottom of their agenda for years as items like financial crisis, union relations, and
student discipline feel more urgency.

An Old System Long Untouched

Such seems to be the case with U-46, who has only in recent years made
movements to change an appraisal system that went untouched for 25 years. In October
2008, members of the teacher appraisal plan (TAP) oversight committee presented to the
Board of Education the new appraisal system that would “replace the present one that has
been used for 25 years” and “will be phased in over a three-year period” according to
School Board meeting minutes from October 6, 2008. U-46, like hundreds of school
districts throughout the country, has moved to the Charlotte Danielson Framework for
Teaching, using multiple Danielson-published materials to not only change the evaluation
instruments in the district, but also the practices that go along with them. Enhancing
professional practice: A framework for teaching (2nd ed.) was the main source used;
published in 2007, it adds to the original edition from 1996, when Danielson’s
Framework first hit the educational scene. The new appraisal plan will not be fully
implemented across the district until 2012; U-46 leadership realized that when a system is
in place for a quarter of a century, the negative implications of changing it all at once
could be immense. Content with it or not, the system dating back to the 1970s was
familiar and comfortable. Teachers approaching retirement may not want to be evaluated
under a new system just prior to retirement. Recent history from the decade of 2000 also
showed teacher resistance during the early phases of the change process; leadership had
to rethink how they could impose change. The Madeline Hunter-based evaluation system of the past needed to be replaced, but often times in a large unit district with a history of struggles, the manner in which change occurs may matter more than the actual change itself.

Hunter (1984) wrote “Only observation can yield suggestions for ways to increase both effectiveness and artistry” (p. 173). The 1970s saw Hunter training throughout the country as programs like *The Program for Effective Teaching* (PET), developed by Bill Etheridge emerged as the Hunter Method was taught through associates of Hunter herself. Hunter inspirational talks and trainings focused on both staff development and clinical supervision (Kelly, 2000). The primary topics were instructional skills: selecting the objective at the appropriate level of difficulty, teaching to the objective, maintaining the focus of the learner on the learning, using without abuse the principles of learning (motivation, reinforcement, retention, and transfer), and monitoring and adjusting the learning/teaching (Terry, 1993).

A brief overview of the Hunter Method is found in the appendix of Kelly’s *The Hunter Method as an Informational Cascade* (2000):

1. Is the objective at the correct level of difficulty?

**Formulating Objectives**
- The content the students will learn
- The behavior of students that demonstrates understanding
- The conditions under which the students will demonstrate understanding
- The performance level that will demonstrate a satisfactory level of understanding
Task Analysis
- Select an objective
- If necessary, refine or define the learning to take place
- Brainstorm the steps involved in learning the objective, then impeach all but essential learnings
- Sequence the learnings that must be taught in order
- Match each learning objective to observable student behavior that demonstrates understanding

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

2. How congruent with objectives are teacher and student behaviors?

Teacher Behaviors Used to Teach and Objective
- Providing information
- Asking questions
- Planned activities for students
- Response to students

3. How well does the teacher monitor student progress and adjust teaching?

Eliciting Overt Responses Matched to the Objective
- Sampling
- Signals
- Choral response
- Individual private response

Checking Student Responses

Interpreting Student Responses

Acting Accordingly
- Re-teach
- Assign more practice
- Adjust the level of difficulty
• Provide additional models or examples
• Abandon the lesson

4. Is the teacher effectively using the principles of learning?

Anticipatory Set
• Relates to past experience
• Congruent to the objective
• Provides for active participation of all learners

Motivation
• Intrinsic/extrinsic
• Level of concern
• Success
• Feeling tone
• Student interest
• Immediate, specific feedback

Active Participation
• Covert
• Overt

Reinforcement
• Positive reinforcement
• Extinction
• Negative reinforcement
• Punishment
• Schedules for reinforcement

Retention
• Personal meaning to students
• Degree of original learning
• Schedule of practice
• Feeling tone
• Modeling critical attributes
• Transfer

Transfer
• Noting similarity of elements
• High degree of original learning
• Teaching critical attributes. (pp. 122-124)
The Elgin Agreement (2000) contains the evaluation instrument for U-46 teachers that have been in use since the 1970s and it planned to be completely removed after the 2011-2012 school year, replaced with the now partly phased in Danielson Framework. Located in the appendix of the teacher’s contract, it has as a statement of purpose “Evaluation is a process whereby the teacher and the supervisor focus upon performance areas needing improvement and those showing strengths for the purpose of improving instruction” (p. 90). Areas included in the evaluation form were modeled after Hunter’s principles that dominated the 1970s and 1980s.

1. Observed Activities: Narrative description of observable activities.

2. Management Skills
   a. Relationships with Pupils: Skill in working with the class as a unit and with pupils as individuals
   b. Discipline: Skills in maintaining an environment in which learning can take place
   c. Personal Efficiency: Evidence of good organizational skills and fulfillment of classroom responsibilities
   d. Skills unique to special services such as case management, conferences

3. Planning Skills
   a. Physical Environment: Maintenance of proper physical environment, care of school equipment, creating an appropriate classroom appearance
   b. Planning and Organization: Degree to which instructional program is carefully planned and efficiently organized
   c. Appropriateness of Materials: Adaptation of materials and methods to levels of learning ability to pupils, compatibility of instructional materials with course of study
   d. Skills unique to special services such as preparation of staffing, establishment of priorities

4. Instructional Skills
   a. Resourcefulness: Use of creative methods and procedures; ability to adapt to unusual situations
b. Ability to Motivate: Evidence of skill in drawing out pupils and getting them to achieve at their level of ability

c. Observable Skills: Art of questioning, clarity of assignments, reaction to pupil response, utilization of interest and contribution of pupils

d. Voice and Speech: Pronunciation, correctness of language appropriate to the level of the student, and ability to be heard

e. Skills unique to special services such as reports, consultations

5. Others: Informal observations and recognition of accomplishments. (pp. 90-91)

The formal observation form for both non-tenured and tenured teachers in U-46 that has been utilized with these performance indicators is designed to be highly narrative in style. The forms (see Appendix B) have the five headings from above with blank lines below suggesting evaluators are to comment in writing on observed activities, management skills, planning skills, instructional skills, and others. The forms instruct the evaluators to see appendix of the Elgin Agreement for the components and descriptions listed above. The forms also require evaluators to write strength areas, weaknesses/areas of improvement, and recommendations. Room is given for teacher comments to be made to respond to the evaluation.

The tenured observation form strongly suggests formal observations are a one-time occurrence. Illinois School Code Article 24A clearly shows that so long as tenured teachers are formally evaluated (observed and provided a summative evaluation) once every two years, school districts are in compliance. The tenured formal observation form has summative-like language that would be inappropriate to give if the observation were to take place in the fall. On top of the five headings, evaluators must check “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory” for teacher’s competency in the subject matters taught
and/or services provided as well as provide a written explanation if “Unsatisfactory”.
The same must be done for the category of teacher attendance. There is a place for
evaluators to check whether or not a second observation is needed, and a “Rating of
Evaluatee’s Performance.” The formal observation tool, though seemingly formative in
nature, has performance ratings of excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory, with room
for comments from the teacher. The convoluted nature of this instrument is reason for
change alone, considering there is a “Certified Staff Appraisal Summary” (see Appendix
C).

Oddly enough, the summary form appears to be inconsistent with the observation
form for tenured teachers. After asking evaluators to list the observation and conference
dates (formal and informal), the form has a space for “Satisfactory” and “Unsatisfactory”
ratings for management, planning, instructional, and others. Absent is the excellent
rating that appears on the observation form. Recommendations consist of re-employ for
another probationary year, re-employ for tenure or dismiss from tenure, making this
summary form for all certified teachers in the district. Issues of confusion, inconsistency,
and noncompliance to School Code, where three ratings are required for summative
evaluations (24A) are at the surface of the need for change in U-46 teacher appraisal.

teachers:

Beginning during the month of October and continuing through March 15,
not less than three (3) classroom observations shall be held at least three
(3) weeks apart, with each observation being not less than thirty (30)
consecutive minutes in length. Following each observation, the evaluator
shall meet with the teacher within three (3) school days to discuss the
observation. The written report of the observation shall be provided to the teacher within five (5) school days of the meeting held to discuss the observation. The teacher shall have five (5) school days from the date of his/her receipt of the written report to include any comments on the written report. A decision by the Board to not renew the contract of any non-tenured teacher shall be preceded by at least five (5) observations except in the event of an honorable dismissal. (p. 43)

Absent from contractual language regarding U-46 teacher appraisal are pre-conferences. While Hunter did not advocate for pre-conferences as part of the clinical supervision cycle, Danielson (2007) attests “It is not only during a lesson that teachers demonstrate their teaching skill. They have also had to plan the lesson, revealing their proficiency in the components of Domain 1 (Planning and Preparation)” (p. 172). Conversation between evaluator and teacher prior to the lesson helps the evaluator see what is going into the lesson, provides a clearer focus, and offers teachers the chance to ask for specific feedback after the lesson. Danielson lists the following as possible questions to be asked and answered prior to an evaluation:

1. To which part of your curriculum does this lesson relate?
2. How does this learning “fit” in the sequence of learning for this class?
3. Briefly describe the students in this class, including those with special needs.
4. What are your learning outcomes for this lesson? What do you want the students to understand?
5. How will you engage the students in the learning? What will you do? What will the students do? Will the students work in groups, individually, or as a large group? Provide any worksheets or other materials the students will be using.
6. How will you differentiate instruction for different individuals or groups of students in the class?
7. How and when will you know whether the students have learning what you intend?
8. Is there anything that you would like me to specifically observe during the lesson? (p. 173)
Contractual language requires the evaluator and teacher to meet no later than three days after the observation day but does not require that the form is complete (Elgin Agreement, 2000, p. 43). No more than five days after the follow-up meeting the written report is to be issued to the teacher to discuss the observation (p. 43). To paraphrase using the contract language, evaluators and teachers are either required to meet once after the observation without any documentation accounted for or meet twice, once without documentation and then another time with it handy. Problematic with this is:

1) A conference is held with no written feedback resulting from it, where the evaluator could technically have not completed the write up yet.

2) There is no requirement for the teacher to do any reflecting prior to the post-conference as there is no post-conference reflection form in the contract.

3) A second post-conference costs both parties unneeded time.

More emphasis needed to be placed on conversation prior to the observation, as well as self-reflection from the teacher once the observation was complete.

While four to five subheadings can be found under the performance areas of management, planning, and instruction, the vague, one sentence descriptions allow for a great deal of subjectivity on the part of the evaluator. While narrative comments serve as the basis for written feedback on the form, it is unclear as to how an evaluator can derive a summative rating. Inter-rater reliability in a district this size is challenging enough; a form that does not give clear direction on how to rate a teacher can lead to big discrepancies across the district. In a district where personnel issues have historically been a challenge (Maloney-Geregach, 2006), a new appraisal system, one that fosters
consistency, fairness, and conversations centered around continuous professional growth, could serve as a method for improving organizational climate. This line of thinking, coupled with the understanding that the existing appraisal system was outdated, became the basis for change after a 25 year run of Madeline Hunter.

**Beginnings of a New Appraisal Plan**

In 1998, the Teacher Mentor Program (TMP) was first bargained as part of *The Elgin Agreement* (see Appendix A). Significant to the new teacher appraisal plan, four years later the TMP adopted Danielson’s framework for teaching as the core curriculum of the program. Success of this program, to be discussed in the following chapter, led to the thinking of aligning the curriculum to teacher appraisal. Knowing that Danielson’s Framework was widely accepted at the local and national levels, it made sense to point to her research as the foundation for change. *The Elgin Agreement* in 2000 included an addendum on teacher evaluation that did not exist in previous contracts:

> The parties agree to appoint a joint committee composed of nine (9) persons appointed by the Association, and nine (9) persons appointed by the District, to study and make recommendations concerning teacher evaluation. The Committee will be co-chaired by a representative of the Association and a representative of the District. The Association and the District will collaborate on the appointments to ensure representational balance between areas and interests within the District. The charge of the Committee will be to develop a system of professional staff evaluation to improve instruction and student performance. (p. 86)

Appendix A, a timeline of both the TMP and TAP in U-46, was composed by Bill DuBois, Teacher Leader for Mentoring. DuBois, as the historical development of the TAP shows, played a key leadership role in moving the appraisal system in the direction it is presented in. Key components to be discussed in more depth include:
• 1991: Labor strife. Recognition that we needed to work collaboratively as opposed to conflict

• 1996: Strategic Plan focuses on teacher quality

• 2000: Collective Bargaining. BOE/District Leadership/ETA commit to revamping the teacher evaluation process. Collaborative effort formed. After delayed start, the committee began working in 2002.

• 2004: Collective Bargaining: BOE/District Leadership/ETA write specific contract language which appoints a committee to design a new evaluation tool by June 2005.

• 2005: ETA membership rejects evaluation tentative agreement

• 2006: ETA/BOE/District Leadership agree to form a new committee and commit to designing a new evaluation tool for membership vote in 2007.

• December 12, 2007: ETA membership ratifies comprehensive bargaining agreement, which contains TAP.

• January 14, 2008: BOE adopts TAP, charging the oversight committee with the on-going work involved in strategically implementing the new system over a four year period.

In *The Elgin* Agreement (2004), additional language was added to the 2000 addendum on teacher evaluation that read:

> During the course of negotiations for the 2004 Agreement, the parties discussed the Teacher Evaluation Instrument and Pilot. The ETA and Board agreed to pilot the Evaluation Instrument for the 2004-2005 school year and agree that it is the intention of the Parties to fully implement the
Teacher Evaluation Instrument and process for the 2005-2006 school year. The Parties agree that guidelines and processes will be finalized in June. (p. 87)

Charlotte Danielson’s Framework was planned to be piloted in U-46, just two years after the TMP adopted it as its curriculum. The framework itself lends to both collegial conversations about comprehensive teacher quality but also to teacher evaluation. *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (2nd ed.) illustrates each of the four domains, and the components and elements that fall under them:

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation**

*Component 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy*
- Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline
- Knowledge of prerequisite relationships
- Knowledge of content-related pedagogy

*Component 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students*
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development
- Knowledge of the learning process
- Knowledge of students’ skills, knowledge, and language proficiency
- Knowledge of students’ interests and cultural heritage
- Knowledge of students’ special needs

*Component 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes*
- Value, sequence, and alignment
- Clarity
- Balance
- Suitability for diverse learners

*Component 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources*
- Resources for classroom use
- Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy
- Resources for students
Component 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction
- Learning activities
- Instructional materials and resources
- Instructional groups
- Lesson and unit structure

Component 1f: Designing Student Assessments
- Congruence with instructional outcomes
- Criteria and standards
- Design of formative assessments
- Use for planning

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment
Component 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- Teacher interaction with students
- Student interactions with other students

Component 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning
- Importance of the content
- Expectations for learning and achievement
- Student pride in work

Component 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures
- Management of instructional groups
- Management of transitions
- Management of materials and supplies
- Performance of non-instructional duties
- Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals

Component 2d: Managing Student Behavior
- Expectations
- Monitoring of student behavior
- Response to student misbehavior

Component 2e: Organizing Physical Space
- Safety and accessibility
- Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources
Domain 3: Instruction
Component 3a: Communicating with Students
- Expectations for learning
- Directions and procedures
- Explanations of content
- Use of oral and written language

Component 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- Quality of questions
- Discussion techniques
- Student participation

Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning
- Activities and assignments
- Grouping of students
- Instructional materials and resources
- Structure and pacing

Component 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction
- Assessment criteria
- Monitoring of student learning
- Feedback to students
- Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress

Component 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness
- Lesson adjustment
- Response to students
- Persistence

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities
Component 4a: Reflecting on Teaching
- Accuracy
- Use in future teaching

Component 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records
- Student completion of assignments
- Student progress in learning
- Non-instructional records
Component 4c: Communicating with Families
- Information about the instructional program
- Information about individual students
- Engagement of families in the instructional program

Component 4d: Participating in a Professional Community
- Relationships with colleagues
- Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry
- Service to the school
- Participation in school and district projects

Component 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally
- Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill
- Receptivity to feedback from colleagues
- Service to the profession

Component 4f: Showing Professionalism
- Integrity and ethical conduct
- Service to students
- Advocacy
- Decision-making
- Compliance with school and district regulations

More descriptive language detailing the elements that fall under the components are segregated by the four rating categories, sometimes just slightly (i.e., “sometimes” to “always”) or drastically (teacher-controlled to student-centered). A rubric with descriptions under “Assistance Needed”, “Basic”, “Proficient”, and “Distinguished” help evaluators make decisions about performance, as evidence it to be collected to support ratings. More detailed and comprehensive than the previous instrument and the Hunter Method, the rubrics can be found in Danielson’s 2007 work.

Despite the Framework at their fingertips, neither Party followed through on the pilot during the 2004-2005 school year. In reality, the committee formed in 2004 for the first time and spent the summer and fall to February 2005 trying to apply the Danielson
Framework to the existing contract. The committee’s worked seemingly stopped at taking new language and replacing it with the old; no evidence of teacher training on Danielson exists prior to 2006. The scenario leading to the Elgin Teacher’s Association membership vote in February 2005 is as follows: oversight committee works to incorporate Danielson Framework language into the teacher contract, U-46 administrators receive training in 2004 on the Danielson Framework through an educational agency called CEC, Danielson herself visits U-46 that same year for professional development of administrators, and teachers not a part of the oversight committee are left to read and research the Framework at their discretion (see Appendix A).

This lack of information and absence of a clear approach to communicate change and reason for change with teachers was a big reason why the union voted down the evaluation tentative agreement in May 2005. *The Courier News* covered an article entitled, “U46, union looks at teacher evaluations” on February 2, 2005. The article explained “the union hasn’t received much of a feel for acceptance of the proposed system by teachers yet, but Booth (ETA member) said it is an improvement over the old method.” It summarized how the non-tenured and tenured teachers would be treated differently, giving more allowances to the idea that newer teachers still are developing their skills (Roche, 2005). The following quote, read by ETA members, along with the uncertainty of the system itself, lead to the rejection of the proposed agreement:

Because the new system focuses on evidence-building and fact-finding, it is considered more objective than subjective. And that means U46 may have an easier time in the future ridding itself of ineffective teachers. In the past, it’s been difficult for the district to dismiss employees because
it’s been so subjective. I think now when it gets to the point of dismissing an employee, it’s going to be pretty clear.

This coming from a union officer, it is no wonder why teachers resisted the change, some fearing for their jobs, others being deemed incompetent and put on remediation plans for the first time.

Despite this roadblock for change, district and union leadership continued to be committed to the idea that the appraisal system needed to be phased out and that the Danielson Framework was the best research-based system to move towards. A new approach was necessary in working with ETA members, one that would help ease their fears and educate them at the same time. It was in early 2006, less than one year after the union voted down Danielson, Bill DuBois committed to joining the oversight committee and help lead the charge for the adoption of the new Framework. Tim Davis, ETA President, in a brochure for March 2006 re-election called *Proven Leadership and Commitment*, said about teacher evaluation:

The proposed evaluation process was rejected by the membership in May, 2005. We have started an initiative to address evaluation concerns. The first step is to gather information about the May, 2005 vote, and based upon this information, to begin conversations within the ETA. With this initiative, we plan to be well prepared for any contract discussions on the topic in 2007. All ETA members will have many opportunities to contribute to the process through surveys, focus groups, and committees.

What the oversight committee learned, was that the issues of the past were still the reality of today. *The Daily Herald* report in November, 2007 pointed to class size and salary concerns as the major pieces holding up the agreement (Krone, 2007), yet the seven teacher strikes between 1978 and 1991 (2007) included personnel issues from a
more cultural standpoint. This included the way in which teachers were evaluated, as the subjectivity of the old version of appraisal did not correspond with opening appraisal contract language. For years, “Purposes of Teacher Appraisal” included the following language:

The parties recognize that appraisal is something that is done with the teacher and not to the teacher. The parties further recognize the importance and value of developing a procedure for assisting and appraising the progress and success of both newly employed and experienced personnel. Therefore, the following procedure shall be used to accomplish these goals with teachers. (*The Elgin Agreement 2000-2003*)

The subjectivity complaint dismisses the perception that teachers felt appraisal was a professional dialogue of quality teaching and learning and a continuous opportunity for growth in the field. The procedures and evaluation tool lent more to a top-down conversation where ratings were centralized and reflection marginalized. DuBois knew that the way to sell the Danielson Framework was to make the issue of teacher appraisal more global. After deciding to do double duty, running the TMP while co-chairing the teacher appraisal oversight committee, he created the following agenda for September 22, 2006, his first meeting with the oversight committee:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Purpose and Charge
- Norms: How will we work together
- History
- Overview of Framework
- Discussion:
  - New Tools and Processes
  - Portfolios
  - Individual Professional Growth Plans
The nature of the agenda seemingly changes from the 2004 work in that purpose, norms, and history discussions precede any actual appraisal plan writing. DuBois drew on his success with the mentor program and started by having conversations within the oversight committee on values and beliefs, operating norms within the committee, using history to shape the future, and addressing how these conversations within the small group can trickle to a teaching staff of over 2,000 members. Evidenced by the documents DuBois pointed to in helping create the new appraisal system, as well as the professional development content used to educate the ETA members, the oversight committee used professional literature in the field, directly and indirectly related to teacher appraisal, to address the labor strife that resulted in the recognition that the parties needed to work collaboratively as opposed to in conflict. This recognition began back in 1991 (see Appendix A). Teacher appraisal was soon becoming a primary method in addressing some of the personnel issues that had historically stigmatized U-46 (Maloney-Geregach, 2006).

**Professional Literature Applied**

The following professional articles reviewed served as the foundation for discussion and work to be done to revamp the teacher appraisal system and the professional development and early implementation that followed. The work done by the oversight committee, after the initial rejection by the union, led to it passing on second attempt and the Board of Education officially adopted the new teacher appraisal plan in January, 2008.
DuBois saw in his experience in the district that effective change in teacher appraisal, much like any system, needed to address the cultural piece that had created years of labor strife. As the committee consisted of district and union leadership representatives, trust emerged as an identified norm of the group and a central issue to improving the district’s appraisal system and culture. “Fuel for reform: The importance of trust in changing schools” helped with this discussion as a ten year study of Chicago school reforms concluded that school with a high degree of “relational trust” are more likely to make the kind of changes that help raise student achievement (Gordon, 2002). “Improvements in such areas as classroom instruction, curriculum, teacher preparation, and professional development have little chance of succeeding without improvements in a school’s social climate.” Gordon points to Bryk and Schneider’s four vital signs for identifying and assessing trust in schools: respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity.

*Partnership Learning*, a Kansas University Research on Learning publication, was studied by the committee as embodies six principles: equality, choice, voice, reflection, dialogue and praxis (Knight, 2003). Knight describes each principle and list questions for school leaders to consider.

**Equality**

Knight (2003) describes traditional professional development as the antithesis of equality.

What might happen on a traditional staff development day? Teachers might go to a training session that they did not choose. At the session, a trainer at the front of the group might do most of the talking. The entire
session could be built around the assumption that the teachers would implement whatever they were learning about, yet the teachers would spend most of the session quietly (or sometimes not so quietly) resisting the efforts of the trainer.

He describes how teaching is personal, yet many professional developers do not tread lightly, and if teacher’s ideas cannot be voiced in workshops, their ideas do not count. Absent from professional development, then, is equality.

Choice

“One reason traditional professional development fails may be that teachers frequently have little choice in what they learn. Often, in professional development, teachers ‘do not have a right to say no’” (Knight, 2003). Teachers will no doubt become resistant to new initiatives when they are told that their school is adopting an innovation whether they want to or not. “The trouble is that when you take away teacher’s right to say no, their ability to choose, you are no longer treating them as professional partners, and you significantly decrease the likelihood that they will embrace what you propose.”

Voice

“In Partnership Learning all individuals are given chances to express their points of view. This means that a primary benefit of partnership is that each individual gets a chance to learn from many others. In Partnership Learning, all workshop participants have the freedom to express their opinions about content being covered” (Knight, 2003). Listening to each other with care is something that Knight says enhances the training.
Reflection

If we are creating a learning partnership, if our partners are equal with us, if they are free to speak their own minds and free to make real, meaningful choices, it follows that one of the most important choices they will make is how to make sense of whatever we are proposing to learn (Knight, 2003).

Respecting people’s professionalism as opposed to dictating to others what to believe will lead to better outcomes with new initiatives.

Dialogue

Dialogue brings people together as equals so they can share ideas, create new knowledge, and learn. Specifically, participants engaged in dialogue attempt to open up discussion and share, literally, what is on each other’s minds. During dialogue, people inquire into each other’s positions at least as much as they advocate their own point of view, and they use specific strategies to surface their own and others’ assumptions (Knight, 2003).

Key to this occurring in professional development is the facilitator’s ability to avoid manipulation, engage participants in conversation about content, and think and learn with participants as everyone moves through the content being discussed (Knight, 2003).

Praxis

Praxis describes the act of applying new ideas to our own lives (Knight, 2003). The most important implication is the assumption that if we are to apply new knowledge to our lives in some way, we need to have a clear understanding of our current reality.

The Kansas-based Partnership Learning would later be applied directly in some aspects and theoretically used in others when time came to professionally develop staff on the Danielson Framework.

Reeves’ (2006) How Do You Change School Culture? listed four essentials that are consistent across many leadership contexts. He first says to define what you will not
change, or identify specific values, traditions, and relationships that you will preserve.

“They take care not to convey the message, ‘Everything you have been doing in the past was ineffective, and your experience and professional judgment are irrelevant.’ A more thoughtful message is, ‘I am only going to ask you to engage in changes that will have meaning and value for you and every stakeholder we serve’” (Reeves, 2006).

Second is to recognize the importance of actions (Reeves, 2006).

The greatest impediment to meaningful change is the gap between what leaders say they value and what they actually do. Staff members are not seduced by a leader’s claim of ‘collaborative culture’ when every meeting is a series of lectures, announcements, and warnings. Claims about a ‘culture of high expectations’ are undermined when school policies encourage good grades for poor student work. The ‘culture of respect’ is undermined by every imperious, demanding, or angry email and voice mail coming from the principal. Leaders most clearly speak through their actions.

Third is to use the right change tools for your school or district. Christensen, Marx, and Stevenson (2006) differentiate culture tools, such as rituals and traditions; power tools, such as threats and coercion; management tools, such as training, procedures, and measurement systems; and leadership tools, such as role modeling and vision. “Leaders must choose the appropriate change tools on the basis of a combination of factors, including the extent to which staff members agree on what they want and how to get there” (Christensen, et al., 2006).

Michael Fullan’s Leading in a Culture of Change, a staff development workshop at a conference in December, 2002 also served as a point of reference for the U-46 teacher appraisal oversight committee. Highlighted in the document included the complexity of change (Fullan, 1993).
1. You can’t mandate what matters.
2. Change is a journey, not a blueprint.
3. Problems are our friends.
4. Vision and strategic planning come later.
5. Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.
6. Neither centralization nor decentralization works.
7. Connection with the wider environment is critical for success.
8. Every person is a change agent.

Fullan’s *Eight Change Lessons from Change Forces with a Vengeance* was also highlighted by the oversight committee:

1. Give up the idea that the pace of change will slow down.
2. Coherence making is a never-ending proposition and is everyone’s responsibility.
3. Changing context is the focus.
4. Premature clarity is a dangerous thing.
5. The public’s thirst for transparency is irreversible.
6. You can’t get large-scale reform through bottom-up strategies---but beware of the trap.
7. Mobilize the social attractors---moral purpose, quality relationships, quality knowledge.
8. Charismatic leadership is negatively associated with sustainability.

Fullan (2003) drove home in his conference presentation, three policy sets for educational transformation:

1. Curriculum, student assessment, teacher learning
2. Individual development of teachers and administrators
3. Improving the conditions of work

These three policy sets, according to Fullan, needed to be immersed in moral purpose and knowledge. Together, they lead to increase teacher passion, purpose, and capacity, as well as student engagement and learning.

Barth’s *Improving Relationships within the Schoolhouse* (2006) discussed an incontrovertible finding:
The nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school and on student accomplishment than anything else. If the relationships between administrators and teachers are trusting, generous, helpful, and cooperative, then the relationships between teachers and students, between students and students, and between teachers and parents are likely to be trusting, generous, helpful, and cooperative. If, on the other hand, relationships between administrators and teachers are fearful, competitive, suspicious, and corrosive, then these qualities will disseminate throughout the school community (Barth, 2006).

The relationships among the educators in a school define all relationships within that school’s culture. Barth says that schools are full of nondiscussables, important matters including the leadership of the principal, issues of race, the underperforming teacher, our personal visions for a good school, and the nature of the relationships among the adults of the school. The null, if brought to the explicit, could lead to greater relationships, which in turn could lead to stronger efficiency and achievement results. Barth suggests that to create a culture of collegiality, educators must talk about practice, share craft knowledge, observe one another, and root for one another. He goes so far as to say what school leaders can do to foster this by citing Judith Warren Little:

1. State expectations explicitly. For instance, “I expect all of us to work together this year, share our craft knowledge, and help one another in whatever ways we can.”
2. Model Collegiality. For instance, visibly join in cheering on others or have another principal observe a faculty meeting.
3. Reward those who behave as colleagues. For instance, grant release time, recognition space, materials, and funds to those who collaborate.
4. Protect those who engage in these collegial behaviors. A principal should not say, for instance, “Janet has a great idea that she wants to share with us today.” This sets Janet up for a possible harsh response. Rather, the principal might say, “I observed something in Janet’s classroom last week that blew my socks off, and I’ve asked her to share it with us.” In this way, the leader can run interference for other educators. (Little, 1982)
Literature on change, culture, and relationships was coupled with literature on teacher leadership. It becomes apparent that in considering teacher appraisal, U-46 looked to see how the already implemented mentor program (TMP) could support it. Peter Schmidt’s *A Vote for Peer Review* (1990), Alexandra Moses’ *Grading Thy Neighbor* (2006) and Thomas Hoerr’s *Thanking Your Stars* (2006) were reviewed and discussed by the committee in preparing the development the new appraisal system. In Toledo, Ohio, the year 1990, state legislature approved a measure that altered state labor-relations laws to sanction teacher peer-review programs (Schmidt, 1990). “The Toledo program provides for first-year teachers to be monitored and assessed by veteran teachers, who then recommend to a review board whether the individual’s contract should be renewed.” A bracketed item that drew U-46’s attention was a comment by Cecile Gill, director of governmental services for the OEA. “Our position is that teachers who evaluate other teachers should do so for the purpose of improving the performance of the teacher being evaluated.” She asserts that “teachers who know that their evaluators could eventually recommend discharge will be less likely to discuss the difficulties they are encountering” (cited in Schmidt, 1990). This assertion helped the oversight committee cement Danielson as the chosen framework in that the Teacher Mentor Program had at its core the Danielson curriculum. By creating a system where mentors and evaluators provide separate feedback using the same criterion, novice teachers have double the resource and feedback throughout the school year.

Peer review expanded to Chicago Public Schools in 2006 (Moses, 2006). The system gives teacher responsibility for evaluating certain colleagues--typically those who
are new or struggling--with the aim of retaining good teachers and ousting those who show little potential. CPS administrators teamed up with the Chicago Teachers Union on a pilot program in eight schools, targeting 125 teachers with four or fewer years in the district. In 2007 the program planned to grow to include tenured teachers chosen for intervention. Marc Wigler, administrator of the program for the CTU, said retention is the primary goal. “At the end of the year, mentors will report to an evaluation board, which decides whether to renew teachers’ contracts. This structured process is an improvement over giving principals free rein to dismiss non-tenured teachers.”

Another article reviewed by the oversight committee, *Thanking Your Stars*, speaks to the alignment of appraisal and mentoring. “Most principals end up spending 80 percent of their time working with the 20 percent of teachers who are wrestling with some professional difficulty. It pains me to admit that I give far less time to teachers who are at the top of their game than to those who are struggling” (Hoerr, 2006). Hoerr argues it is tempting to ignore our star teachers, but a big part of leadership is listening and developing relationships. “Involving top-flight teachers in the peer-observation process can yield powerful benefits. Imagine the growth that will take place--for star teachers as well as for emerging stars--when teachers exchange suggestions with their peers. Surely this served as affirmation the TMP was a benefit, and it made the addition of DuBois, coordinator of the TMP, an important addition to the TAP committee. As Tim Davis, ETA President said in his reelection brochure, the union leadership needed to listen; program success in TMP needed to help shape the appraisal system.
A New Approach Leads to a New Plan

Discussions over the body of literature reviewed led to interest-based problem solving. Members of district and union leadership that comprised the TAP Oversight Committee used the Illinois Mutual Interest Negotiations (IMIN) Promotions Manual (1997) as a document of action in investing time in publishing a TAP proposal to the union and Board. Based on Fisher and Ury’s *Getting to Yes* (1991), it is designed to help negotiating parties:

- Reach higher quality agreements in negotiations
- Produce wise outcomes for all parties
- Focus on real interests, not positions
- Resolve problems with less polarization
- Deal with real substance
- Show value for people and relationships.

The focus of IMIN, which became the focus of U-46 was to separate the people from the problem, focus on interests not on positions, invent options for mutual gains, determine objective criteria and standards, think through alternatives if agreement is not possible, evaluate options against interests, standards, and alternatives, and gain consensus on an option and develop a framework for the final agreement. Interest-based bargaining became the means of creating a mutually agreed upon plan with the following in play:

- Collaboration
- Participants as problem solvers
- The goal of a wise outcome reached efficiently and amicably
- Separating the people from the problem
- Be soft on the people, hard on the problem
- Proceed independent of trust.

DuBois’ experience with the TMP preparation and implementation carried over to TAP. Before any discussions of number of observations, types of ratings, or forms
creation, the TAP committee started with bargaining values and beliefs, as indicated on the first page of the School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, designed by the ETA and U-46 on December 12, 2007 and adopted on January 14, 2008. Bargained language of appraisal purpose now included:

- Support and focus professional growth and development in a quest for distinguished levels of performance
- Unify the teacher and administration in its pursuit to maximize student learning
- Ensure a quality professional staff (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 2)

Values bargained and agreed upon included: trust, fairness, professionalism, equity, continuous learning, teaching and learning, and collaboration. It is no coincidence that the values here listed coincide with the review of literature read and discussed by the TAP Oversight Committee. The values listed have ties to the both the teacher mentor program as well as the ETA Strategic Plan. Each value listed had bulleted beliefs alongside them:
Table 1

*Table Values and Beliefs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>○ Presumption of competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Supportive and non-punitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>○ Availability of resources to support the process;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teachers &amp; administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Data and evidence based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Consistent objective district criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Due process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>○ Professional growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Self-evaluate, reflection, goal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Investment of time is valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ More ownership from teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Professionally engaging option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity (appropriateness)</td>
<td>○ Differentiated/relevant for individual needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(career stages, position, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Choice by teacher of data and evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous learning</td>
<td>○ Growth producing for individual &amp; students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Ongoing, not event based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Focus on strengths and areas for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
<td>○ Accountability for teaching and student performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Impact higher levels of student achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>○ Conversation based (not a checklist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Potential for expanded participation at appropriate level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These values and beliefs were paramount for the TAP committee to move forward in collectively establishing a new plan that would be released to ETA membership and then the Board of Education for approval.

The system is structured to provide choice, differentiation and professional growth opportunities for staff. Observation is one component of the teacher appraisal system which can also include; collaborative conversations, self reflection and data based evidence. In order to ensure
focus on our shared values and beliefs, there is a clear need to establish consistent, objective, research-based district criteria. Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching provides that research-based definition of effective teaching and is one component of this comprehensive system. (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 3)

The pages that follow relay to all parties the four domains of teaching, the components under each domain, and definitions of distinguished, proficient, basic, and unsatisfactory teaching. The TAP makes clear:

The Framework defines levels of performance. The levels of performance are intended to define the teaching, not the teacher. They are not intended to be used as a checklist; rather the purpose of the rubrics is to give teachers specific and meaningful feedback to improve practice through observation and self reflection. (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 8)

U-46 obtained a waiver from the summative ratings given by the Illinois State Board of Education (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 8) and is described as “an important departure because the continual learning and insights that comes from deep self-reflection and collaborative conversation becomes the goal for all professional educators in U-46” (p. 8). The summative assessment requires evaluators to only list strengths and areas for growth, with a “Teacher Meets Expectations” or “Teacher Does Not Meet Expectations” rating. The summative tool is simplified to make the new formative observation forms of greater substance. The new observation form (see Appendix E) has observers listing evidence of various domain components (actions and statements) in a chronological format. Follow up requires observers to compose “What’s Working”, “Current Focus-Challenges Concerns”, “Teacher’s Next Steps”, and
“Administrator’s Next Steps”. This language signifies an on-going partnership between administrator and teacher in a quest for continued growth and improvement.

U-46 lifted, with permission, the exact language of Danielson’s (2007) planning conference and reflection conference, thus introducing the preferred clinical cycle described by Danielson: planning conference, observation, reflection conference.

Danielson uses the following questions to guide a reflective conference:

1. In general, how successful was the lesson? Did the students learn what you intended for them to learn? How do you know?
2. If you were able to bring samples of student work, what do these samples reveal about those students’ levels of engagement and understanding?
3. If your area of focus in Domain 2 was classroom procedures 2c, student conduct 2d, or use of physical space 2e, please comment to what extent did these contribute to student learning?
4. Did you depart from your plan? If so, how, and why?
5. Comment on different aspects of your instructional delivery (e.g., activities, grouping of students, materials, and resources.) To what extent were they effective?
6. If you had a chance to teach this lesson again to the same group of students, what would you do differently?

The TAP broke up teacher groups based on need and experience. The pre-tenured appraisal system consisted of three components:

1. Observations: informal and formal
2. Conferences: foundation, planning, reflective, and summative
3. Years 1 and 2: Portfolios and Years 3 and 4: Goal Setting

One informal observation was required for all pre-tenured teachers as part of the plan. Up to three (minimum two) for years one and two and up to three (minimum one) for years three and four formal observations must take place with the clinical cycle (and forms) to be completed. U-46 added a required “Foundation Conference” for all new hires. “The purpose is to develop the conversational, collaborative relationship between
the teacher and evaluator that defines their future work together. The goal is to build the relationship, accelerate the growth of the new teacher, and to provide new teachers with help and support prior to their first formal observation” (p. 12). Also prudent to the evidence based, collegial TAP, are the incorporation of portfolios/artifacts of evidence and goal setting components of appraisal for pre-tenured teachers. DuBois obviously had a strong hand in creating these components as TMP overlap is embedded in the language.

Tenured teacher appraisal components consist of: self-directed professional growth, observations, and conferences. Self-directed professional growth gave teachers a lot of choice and freedom as activities could fall under “District or School Initiatives”, “Classroom Based Inquiry or Masters Degree”, “Doctorate/National Board Certification”, and “Teachers Making a Significant Change in Assignment.” Activities that fall under “District or School Initiatives” include implementation of DIP/SIP, implementation of curriculum roadmap initiatives, committee participation, among others. “Classroom Based Inquiry” includes curriculum implementation, instructional strategy use, new teacher mentor, and peer consultation/coaching/observing.

During observation years, the same planning conference, observation, reflection conference is expected with tenured staff, and teachers must also prepare that year a self-directed inquiry form. Here tenured staff use their professional growth plans to ask and answer: what ongoing inquiry will be pursued (what are you trying to find out?), what is the connection between this goal and the teaching assignment?, what would success look like?, methods/activities and a timeline. The comprehensive plan calls for more time and energy on the part of both administrator and teacher, but the return is a more
collaborative, improvement-driven plan with increased accountability on both parties. The return on this could be increased collegiality between administrator and teacher, and teacher and teacher, a higher respect for professional practice for teaching, and clearer images of what a satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching is.

The TAP Oversight Committee did its work to develop a comprehensive plan that included values and beliefs as well as choice for the majority of staff in the district. The extra time spent on reading, discussing, and interest bargaining paid off (with the facilitation assistance of Audrey Soglin, Executive Director of the Illinois Education Association) as the ETA ratified the comprehensive bargaining agreement on December 12, 2007, which contained the TAP (see Appendix A). The following month the Board of Education approved the plan and charged the TAP oversight committee with developing a four-year implementation strategy.

In an effort to better communicate the TAP than what was done in 2005, when members voted down the proposal, the ETA not only communicated the content overview of the new plan, but accepted feedback and questions from the members. Using the ETA Communiqué, union leaders communicated “Evaluation FAQs” that were distributed on September 20, 2007. The union-published document said, “We recognize that there are many concerns about transitioning from what we are currently using to evaluate teachers (all certified personnel) to a new system. Questions that were asked and answered in this newsletter included:

1. Will it help eliminate some teachers who continue to slip through even when they are not competent?
2. Where are the safeguards against using the system punitively?
3. Why would pre-tenured years have to work on portfolio? I feel that it should be done once teachers become tenured.
4. How exactly will new/tenured teachers be given all the Danielson information? 4 days training? Not clear.
5. How is the proposal different from the last one that was voted down? How was it improved?
6. This seems very complex. The old system had the advantage of simplicity.
7. Do teachers have any opportunity to provide input for the use in evaluating their administrators?
8. Do we need it? It looks that we have to do more work? We don’t need more work.
9. Under the tenured portion it states that evidence of participation in a plan is mandatory and that lacking evidence/level of participation a person will be assigned to an option. What level is expected? How much evidence? What are the guidelines for this so that it avoids abuse by both teachers and administrators?
10. What forms must be completed in writing? Which ones are turned into human resources?
11. Can you lay out an example of what a plan might look like for a physical education teacher who fills district needs by coaching multiple sports and may not fit that well into the school’s improvement plan? Many of us see this as a tremendous amount of extra work on top of what we are already doing.
12. It says that for Option 1 the decision will be mutually agreed to or the evaluation committee will decide. Can you explain how this decision will be reached?

Question 5 gave a clear response that ultimately led to the TAP being accepted by union members:

- Details of the new proposal were presented to teachers and administrators at the same time (In 2005 only administrators received information)
- Started by clearly defining our values and beliefs, and this guided our work throughout the process.
- Encourages professional dialogue.
- We have designed a four-year training and rollout schedule rather than trying to do it all in one year. The 2007-2008 school year would be used for putting training components in place.
- There is an opt-out provision for teachers who intend to retire by June 2011.
There is greater differentiation that recognizes the evolving needs of teachers in years one and two, and then in years three and four. Also, there are many options for tenured teachers.

The work of the bargaining team was facilitated by an acknowledged expert in teacher appraisal systems. Audrey Soglin, Director of the Consortium for Educational Change, actively facilitated all of our meetings. This ensured that we always had access to what is current best practice in designing and implementing teacher appraisal systems.

There will be an on-going Evaluation Committee that will be co-chaired by an ETA member and a designee from administration. Part of best practice is to continually monitor the use and effectiveness of the teacher appraisal system, and recommend changes with input from teachers and administrators. To make sure the spirit and intent of what was agreed to during bargaining is implemented, some members from each bargaining team will be on the initial committee. Any proposed changes would be brought to the ETA Representative Assembly and the U-46 Board of Education for consideration and approval.

The focus is on defining effective teaching, and it is acknowledged that there are many effective teaching styles.

The first proposal of implementation stemmed off the “choice” component of the committee’s research; starting in 2008-2009 teachers not new to the district could be offered the choice of staying with the old plan or opting in to the new Framework after receiving training. The training itself consisted of five modules as evidenced on the TAP Statement of Assurance Form (see Appendix E). The first module was the only required module for all U-46 teachers, including a broad overview of the Danielson Framework. Modules B-E each corresponds with Domains 1-4 of the Framework; teachers attended as many modules as they want to become familiarized and comfortable with the content. The Statement of Assurance Form required all teachers to submit to Human Resources the number of training sessions attended and the year in which they desire to move to the new system. The latest teachers are able to move is 2012, the year the four-year plan
ends and the district fully adopts the Danielson Framework and the Teacher Appraisal Plan approved by the Board of Education.

At the same time the TAP Oversight Committee saw the importance of training its teachers on the domains of teaching and other components of the new appraisal plan, it saw that to be effectively and consistently implemented, those that conduct evaluations needed additional training. Never before was there accountability placed on the administrator to agree to “next steps” with individual teachers they evaluated. The new forms required administrators to personally invest in the development of those on staff, to place focus on evidence that supported the Danielson Framework for Teaching as opposed to more frivolous or inconsequential actions/mannerisms, and spend extra time having professional dialogue before and after observations of teaching.

Alongside thorough review of the Danielson Framework itself, DuBois and the Oversight Committee refused to defer away from the conversations that moved them to the finalized plan. Administrator TAP training PowerPoint slides reveal a conversation between trainers and school leaders surrounding forms of teacher culture. Adapted from Andy Hargreaves, five forms were explicitly discussed:

1. Fragmented individualism: isolation; ceiling to improvement; protection from outside interference.
2. Balkanization: city states; inconsistencies; loyalties and identities tied to particular group; whole is less than sum of its parts.
3. Contrived collegiality: strategy for creating collegiality; also a strategy for containing and controlling it; administrative procedure; safe simulation; a device that can suppress desire.
4. Collaborative culture: sharing, trust support; center to daily work; “family” structure may involve paternalistic or maternalistic leadership; continuous improvement.
5. The moving mosaic: blurred boundaries; overlapping categories and membership; flexible, dynamic, responsive; also uncertain, vulnerable, contested.

The TAP PowerPoint (Summer 2009) also succeeded in showing its relations to the District Improvement Plan, which for three years has centered on five pillars:

Teaching, Learning, and Leadership; Recognition and Interventions; Operational Excellence; Accountability; and Family and Community Engagement (www.u-46.org).

The PowerPoint for the TAP training of 2009 circled bulleted items under the first four pillars:

Table 2

*Table 2 - TAP in the U-46 District Improvement Plan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching, Learning, and Leadership</th>
<th>Recognition and Interventions</th>
<th>Operational Excellence</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build capacity by providing leadership opportunities and embedding professional development.</td>
<td>Recognize achievement and contributions at all levels.</td>
<td>Use resources efficiently and effectively.</td>
<td>Create a comprehensive accountability plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align technology and data systems.</td>
<td>Develop a performance management system.</td>
<td>Continue to maintain a safe and nurturing environment in our schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School administrators were introduced to a new paradigm at their training sessions, with shift to the new TAP. It was important for administrators to see that the evaluative criteria and measures of quality teaching had changed to reflect a new framework, which was chosen in part because the oversight committee saw in what was in line with the values and beliefs they agreed upon. The shift also represented an evidence-based, differentiated approach for probationary and tenured teaching staff.

Table 3

**A New U-46 Paradigm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift From</th>
<th>Shift To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outdated and limited</td>
<td>Updated to reflect the world today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few shared values, beliefs, and assumptions about good teaching</td>
<td>Negotiated set of U-46 values and beliefs. As well as Frameworks values and assumptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of precision</td>
<td>Greater objectivity and specificity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical, one way communication and less engaging</td>
<td>Collaborative, more engaging, and dynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No differentiation</td>
<td>Differentiation: novice, experienced, and constituent group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes limited administrator expertise</td>
<td>Provisions made for some to connect with administrator with specific skill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training also included the acknowledgement of pitfalls to the old plan and promise of the new TAP. The table shows the cultural shift that the oversight committee envisioned when persuading teachers that a “yes” vote would drastically change how they were evaluated for the better. What was once a system that seemed to be something that was done onto teachers, now appeared to be more relational and focused on growth through a partnership between teacher and evaluator.
Table 4

Pitfalls of the Old Plan; Promises of the New TAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitfalls of Old Plan</th>
<th>Promise of New TAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection</td>
<td>Collegial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One sided, one-way; directional</td>
<td>Collaboration between administrator and teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrary, subjective</td>
<td>Standards based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event oriented</td>
<td>Transformational, on-going, pattern and growth oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused primarily on the teacher’s classroom in isolation from the larger culture in the workplace</td>
<td>Clearly established the importance of the culture of the workplace as a major determinant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

District leadership involved in the training of administrators discussed some “below the surface” considerations that appear on one of the last PowerPoint slides:

- High expectations of staff…particularly those opting in the new plan in 2009-2010. Others will be watching.
- Being conscious of modeling a set of skills, strategies, attributes, and characteristics that accommodate the new TAP and no support the old evaluation model.
- The potential need for ongoing staff training and/or support.
- Talk it and walk it.
- Remembering that change takes time and conscious thinking…as well as patience, understanding, and forgiveness.
- Time and planning for new observation/conferencing model.
- The need for administrator support all next school year, and beyond.

U-46 administrators will be evaluating teachers under the “old plan” and the Board-approved TAP until the district moves to full adoption in the fall of 2012. Until then, administrators must refer to individual staff members’ TAP Statement of Assurance Form to know which system to use.
Ten months after Board approval, members of U-46 staff involved in the Danielson training of teachers and administrators were asked to present an update at the October 6, 2008 Board meeting. Meeting minutes show the presentation fell under District Improvement Plan initiatives, alongside high school grade classifications.

Dubois, Sherry Hullinger (Director of Staff Development) and DJ Donner (Administrator Co-Chair of the Evaluation Committee) presented a nineteen-slide PowerPoint to the School Board that night providing an overview of the framework, what the committee learned about teacher quality, the negotiated agreement and process, and implementation of the evaluation plan. The presenters highlighted critical components of Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (2nd ed.), including common themes of the differentiated frameworks. The common themes slide included the following bullet list:

- Equity
- Cultural competence and sensitivity
- High expectations
- Developmental appropriateness
- Attention to individual students…including those with special needs
- Appropriate use of technology
- Student assumption of responsibility

Explanation was given regarding the two different cycles (pre-tenured and tenured) and new forms were displayed for the Board to see. Donner presented “Staff Appraisal Committee: Start to Present to Future”, a slide that provided a timeline of work completed and one that showed what was to come.
Work Completed

April ’08: Establish co-chairs, attend IBB training, discuss delivery models
May ’08: Establish subcommittees, discusses responsibilities
June ’08: Subcommittee works with CEC and constructs skeletal outline of U-46 delivery model
Aug/Sept. ’08: Co-Chairs work together to recruit ETA and Administrative potential trainers
Sept. ’08: All subcommittees report out work, new subcommittee formed to put flesh to the bone of the summer work

What Is Coming Up

Oct. ’08: Review of final product
Nov. ’08: Trainer kits are put together
Dec. ’08: Train the Trainers takes place
Jan. ’09: Trainers become familiar with module kits
Feb. ’09: Training begins on county wide ROE day (Feb. 27)
March ’09-May ’10: Opportunities for training provided to U-46 teachers and administrators

On February 2, 2009, at a regular School Board Meeting, ETA President Davis, who played a leadership role in the development of the new TAP, spoke to the Board and Superintendent during public comment about teacher evaluation concerns. Like any new system within an organization as large as U-46, inconsistencies with implementation emerged.

Mr. Davis stated that while reading through a teacher’s evaluations he looked for evidence from the evaluators that harm was being done to students through his teaching. There were no comments indicating that there was serious concerns, in fact, the evaluators noted that he had good classroom management skills. An area of concern that was noted was the fact that he did not use Bloom’s Taxonomy. Mr. Davis stated that Bloom’s Taxonomy was created in 1956 and is not support systematically in U-46. Mr. Davis stated that this is a deceptive use of jargon. He noted that he has also heard from pre-tenure colleagues at Streamwood High School that they received good evaluations over the past few years and now have suddenly become ineffective teachers. Mr. Davis stated that if
teachers are going to be non-renewed there should be compelling evidence that they are no longer effective. Without evidence, it can only be inferred that the Principal does not like the teacher. Mr. Davis said that hundreds of hours have been put into creating the teacher evaluation system that will be launched next year. Until then, the ETA will continue to shine a bright light on situations where the old evaluation system is used inappropriately and will also look for evidence that teacher are being supported by their administrators (School District U-46 Meeting Minutes, February 2, 2009).

This public comment refers to the “old plan” but provides significant context to the transition years of moving to the new TAP. Providing teachers a choice between the two systems has its benefits from a leadership perspective, but also has drawbacks in regards to consistency across the district. On top of issues of inter-rate reliability in a district this large, school administrators are asked to use two different systems, drastically different from each other.

Also in February 2009, a U-46 Leadership Update posted on the district webpage revealed the first group of certified staff participated in TAP training. On a teacher institute day, February 6, nearly 900 teachers and administrators were “in class”. These 900 were the first of three large groups to be trained in two 2.5 hour modules on the new system based on the Danielson Framework. Notable from “Leadership Update: February 2009” was that DuBois, “in order to benefit from the first training and to prepare for the same presentations on February 27 and May 1…convened some of the trainers on February 13 to review the sessions, consider the feedback and evaluations of the participants, and made modifications to the materials or agendas prior to the next trainings.” The use of feedback from participants helped drive the remaining trainings, making for a richer, more meaningful experience.
June 22, 2009 Board meeting minutes showed another update on the TAP. “School District U-46 is concluding the first year of a four-year phased in implementation of the new Teacher Appraisal Plan (TAP). This first year has been a huge success for this project.” Members of the Oversight Committee and TAP trainers presented an overview and update on the project and spoke to their interpretation of success in completion of year one phase in.

**U-46 Participates in The Widget Effect**

*Daily Herald* published an article on July 3, 2009 entitled “Report: Good, bad U-46 teachers go unaddressed.” The article summarized a recent study published by The New Teacher Project, which analyzed 12 districts’ failure to correctly assess teacher effectiveness (Lester, 2009). One thousand-seven hundred and fifty-five teachers and administrators were surveyed in U-46, contributing to the 15,000 teachers and 1,300 principals through all 12 sites.

Of those responses, the report found that poor performance often goes unaddressed, with less than 1 percent of teachers receiving unsatisfactory ratings, even in schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress again and again. Six of the 12 districts in the survey, including U-46, did not dismiss a single tenured teacher for poor performance in the past five years. On the flip side, excellence also goes unrecognized for both beginning teachers and tenured ones. ‘When superlative rating are the norm, truly exceptional teachers cannot be formally identified,’ a release on the report said.

ETA President Davis called the report, “validation for the work that we’re doing with the new teacher appraisal plan” and the old evaluation system “benign at best” (Lester, 2009).
The Widget Effect, published in 2009 by Daniel Weisberg, Susan Sexton, Jennifer Mulhern, and David Keeling of The New Teacher Project, was a qualitative and quantitative study designed to “describe the tendency of school districts to assume classroom effectiveness is the same from teacher to teacher.” Characteristics of the widget effect in teacher evaluation include: all teachers are rated good to great, excellence goes unrecognized, inadequate professional development is offered, no special attention to novices given, and poor performance goes unaddressed (p. 6). To reverse the widget effect the researchers argue school districts need to:

1. Adopt a comprehensive performance evaluation system that fairly, accurately, and credibly differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness in promoting student achievement.

2. Train administrators and other evaluators in the teacher performance evaluation system and hold them accountable for using it effectively.

3. Integrate the performance evaluation system with critical human capital policies and functions such as teacher assignment, professional development, compensation, retention, and dismissal.

4. Adopt dismissal policies that provide lower-stakes options for ineffective teachers to exit the district and a system of due process that is fair but efficient.

The report showed that between school years 2003 and 2007, 2,035 tenured U-46 teachers were rated “excellent”, 264 “satisfactory”, and 11 “unsatisfactory”. Only 28
pre-tenured teachers had been released for performance the past five years, at an average of 0.9% (Weisberg et al., 2009).

Based on the results of The Widget Effect, The New Teacher Project group composed an action plan completed September 2009 for U-46 entitled The Impact of State and Local Capital Policies on Illinois School District U-46. Findings and recommendations were tailored to U-46; state certification, teacher mentoring, and teacher evaluation were the three areas of focus. Finding #3 was “teacher evaluations, which are primarily based upon few classroom observations, result in almost all teachers receiving the highest performance rating and few receiving the support and feedback they need to improve their performance” (The New Teacher Project, 2009). After comparing negotiated contractual language of the old plan to Illinois School Code, the finding that 74% of U-46 probationary teachers report receiving an excellent rating on their last performance evaluation was released (Weisberg et al., 2009). In 2006-2007, U-46 had the highest percentage of tenured teachers receiving the district’s top evaluation rating among the three Illinois districts studied (Rockford and Chicago Public Schools). Forty-eight percent of U-46 teachers reported being observed only one time during their most recent evaluation. Quoted in the finding by a U-46 teacher, “My evaluator emailed me dates he would evaluate me, but failed to show up.” Most staggering was the finding that only 43% of teachers and 20% of administrators believe that the evaluation process helps teachers improve their performance. This finding corresponds nicely with ETA President Davis’s quote in the Daily Herald that the study validates the work done for the new TAP.
The New Teacher Project presented their recommendations as well, which did include to “ensure teacher evaluations are rigorous, accurately differentiate performance, provide meaningful feedback and are used to inform key human capital decisions” (The New Teacher Project, 2009, p. 28). Recommendations to support this included:

- Require that all teachers be evaluated on an annual basis, regardless of tenure status.
- Revisit the new evaluation process to ensure it:
  - Bases evaluations upon a set of teaching standards developed with teacher input and designed to measure teacher effectiveness at promoting student achievement;
  - Utilizes multiple sources of data throughout the evaluation process, including student assessment data, daily student work, feedback from department chairs, student and parent survey data and multiple unannounced observations of varying length.
  - Consistently identifies and communicates strengths and weaknesses in teachers’ instruction.
  - Provides for informal and formal conversations between teachers and administrators about classroom instruction.
- Norm evaluation ratings to ensure consistent and fair implementation of the process across the district.
- Task school leaders, instructional coaches and department/grade-level chairs with providing every teacher with individually differentiated tools and support, based upon professional development needs identified during the evaluation process.
- Train teachers in the standards and evaluation process, with special focus on the need for feedback for effective professional growth.
- Utilize ratings to inform key decision-making related to hiring, tenure, layoffs, displacements, compensation, dismissal, and professional development.

The group realized that educating teachers on the process and providing them support must be coupled with building administrator training and support. It cannot be assumed that all school leaders know how to best support their teachers through the evaluation process. The fourth strategy in the report was entitled, “Support and train administrators
on the evaluation process and hold them accountable for implementation” (The New Teacher Project, 2009). Recommendations included:

- Train and support administrators consistently throughout the school year on how to:
  - Conduct rigorous evaluations of teachers based on the extent to which teachers promote student achievement.
  - Provide all teachers with frequent, meaningful and actionable feedback, which clearly articulates where their individual performance falls in contrast to district teaching standards.
  - Utilize legitimate means to address performance concerns fairly, objectively and efficiently.
- Hold quarterly meetings for all administrators in which key strategies are reinforced and principals can share and reflect upon their practice in this area with their peers.
- Provide administrators with additional resources so that they have the time to increase the frequency and duration of classroom observations and provide ongoing feedback and development to teachers.
- Provide targeted support for principals in identifying poor performers before teachers are granted tenure and after, implementing the remediation process and removing those who do not improve.
- Make teacher performance management a primary component of administrator evaluation, using teacher feedback as a data source in this domain.
- Hold administrators accountable for fairly developing and evaluation teachers so that rating are accurately distributed across the rating spectrum.

Recent history shows that the new TAP hits multiple of these recommended bullet points. To be seen is whether or not the district will provide the on-going support to teachers and administrators after the new plan is fully implemented. Teachers will come and go in a district that recently released approximately 750 teachers due to budget cuts on March 15, 2010 (www.u-46.org). Administrators, too, will come and go, but even those staff members who show longevity cannot be left with just training on the front end in a system that is supposed to be continuing to make modifications even after the 2008
Board-approved TAP becomes universally applied. John Keilman of *The Chicago Tribune* wrote an article in November 2009 called “School districts retooling how they evaluate teachers.” Evanston-Skokie School District 65 is moving to evaluations and salaries that are dependent on what students do (Keilman, 2009). By tracking test scores, this school district is following the concept being pushed by the Obama Administration, which seems to be an unstoppable trend. Audrey Soglin was quoted in the article as saying “I think it’s coming. In what form, in what shape, remains to be seen. We want to be at the table to help frame it.” Keilman also quotes Weisberg from the New Teacher Project, “In a world where teachers are treated as though one is as good as another, you don’t evaluate them in a thoughtful way, and you probably won’t get to the next step—an intervention to get (underachievers) to a satisfactory level” (cited in Keilman, 2009).

Some administrators are trying to address that by taking methodical notes during their observations. They try to gauge various qualities deemed essential to good teaching—everything from the clarity of an instructor’s presentation in class to the way student misbehavior is handled. Elgin-area School District U-46 introduced that system this year, and Bill DuBois, the administrator who helped to put it in place, said its design of steady, specific feedback should help teachers improve. But the system, bargained with the teachers union, focuses on the process of teaching, not student test scores. There will be an incentive to change that when negotiations for a new teachers contract open next year. The federal government is dangling the promise of extra money for districts that adopt certain policies, including the use of “data on student growth” to evaluate instructors. A district spokesman would not comment on whether U-46 might try to change its policy. But union president Tim Davis said that the tests in current use would not yield accurate results for teachers. (Keilman, 2009)

School District U-46, having just completed negotiations and Board approval of a comprehensive teacher appraisal plan in January 2008, will have to look at whether the
Danielson Framework for Teaching alone, can meet the needs of upcoming legislation, consider whether their dire financial status requires them to comply with federal funding incentives to move to student performance-based staff evaluations, and if they truly are who they say they have become, a committee that will meet quarterly and recommend changes to the ETA and District Administration. Their work does not stop after the four year implementation period is over; coincidentally, the first year of full implementation of the new TAP is the same year Senate Bill 315 is to be in effect.

*The Widget Effect* and the New Teacher Project did not stop at studying teacher evaluation practices in U-46. Data was collected, conclusions were made, and recommendations resulted after examining the district’s new teacher mentor program. This program's historical development, challenges, and successes are the focus of the next chapter.
CHAPTER III
TEACHER MENTORING IN U-46

No formal teacher mentor program existed in U-46 prior to 1998. The many schools that comprise the district, with regards to teacher mentoring, operated using the classic sink or swim model; building administrators were left to make the determination of how much, if any, mentoring would occur in their schools. Since support systems did not come from the central office, principals either allotted a small portion of their building budget to pay mentor teachers to work with new teachers in the district once employed, or teachers did so out of the goodness of their hearts. In a district this size, it is very possible individual schools were all over the spectrum in terms of how existent or non-existent, formal or informal, mentoring new teachers was. Complaints of job dissatisfaction and teacher turnover within the district from the 1970s through the early 1990s point to a feeling of lack of support at the workplace, but some new teachers were lucky to find support early on.

Six years ago, when Dawn entered the teaching profession, she felt overwhelmed. She knew the subject matter she would teach her eighth-grade class, but she had concerns about managing the classroom. “It’s tough because you are thinking about the grading scale you’re going to develop, discipline policies, progress reports, as well as your lesson plans.” Fortunately, Dawn developed a friendship with a veteran teacher who explained her approach to managing her students and policies she established. (Ryndak, 1999)
Ryndak wrote an article in the *Daily Herald*, “U-46 offers teachers guidance through mentoring”, published on August 21, 1999, weeks before the start of the first school year the district implemented their Teacher Mentor Program. The article began by citing how teachers like Dawn have either stumbled upon support from veteran teachers or were in a position to find their own way in teaching. While this was the first school year that U-46 attempted to provide all teachers new to the profession that opportunity to experience mentoring, the concept had been a work in progress throughout the mid 1990s.

Gibson (2004) provided a historical review of mentoring citing that the concept of a ‘mentor’ comes from Greek mythology, having its origin in the book the *Odyssey* written by Homer. In Levinson’s (1978) study, researchers conducted “an extensive study of 40 men and described the concept of a mentor as teacher, adviser, sponsor, host, guide, exemplar and counselor, but stressed that mentoring was less related to a formal role and defined more in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions of the relationship served” (Gibson, 2004, p. 260). Gibson’s study of mentoring in the field of business shows similar intentions in the field of education, with U-46 being one example. To understand the context of U-46’s decision-making to place emphasis on this mentor-protégé relationship, it is necessary to know which leadership group prioritized it and why.

**Elgin Teacher Association Creates Strategic Plan**

Appendix A shows that in 1996 the Elgin Teachers Association (ETA) focused on teacher quality in their newly developed strategic plan. At this time the district and union
leadership were preparing to undergo its first interest based bargaining experience for upcoming negotiations. It was at this round of negotiations that the union group first expressed the need for a teacher mentor program across the district to address the teacher quality issue that both parties could agree is vital to the organization. The 1996 ETA Strategic Plan begins with a statement of purpose, or reason for existence: “We exist to advance the cause of the teaching profession and the cause of public education---the cornerstone of our democracy.” The five-page document adopted on April 16, 1996 also lays out the following:

What principles govern ETA’s effectiveness as an organization?

- Fairness
- Integrity
- Dignity
- Equity
- Honesty
- Trust
- Justice

What does the ETA want to be?

- Principle-Centered
- Effective
- Strong
- An Advocate
- An Organization Continually Learning
- A Model of our Ideals

Most powerful and revealing of a quality focus are the beliefs that the ETA documented they stand for:

- We believe in the empowerment of teachers in all decisions that affect the profession of teaching.
- We believe in a shared decision-making process that is consistent with the professional role of teachers.
• We believe that the economic and professional well-being of teachers is necessary to the existence of quality public schools.
• We believe that professionalism is enhanced as teachers work together to improve the level of their teaching skills.
• We believe that involvement in the decision-making process by all stakeholders is necessary for quality public schools.
• We believe effective public schools require adequate facilities, supplies, equipment, and support services.
• We believe in a safe teaching/learning environment for teachers and students.
• We believe small class sizes are essential to effective student learning.
• We believe in honoring and respecting human diversity and dignity.
• We believe that a strong emphasis on staff development is essential to deal with a rapidly changing society.
• We believe that staff development needs of teachers are best identified and addressed by teachers.
• We believe that an effective school district is an organization continually learning that draws from the many and varied talents of its teachers.
• We believe that quality education depends both on a positive student-educator relationship and pedagogical or subject-matter skills.
• We believe that the ETA must represent the highest aspirations of its members and is committed to an organization based upon member involvement.
• We believe that the ETA must be an organization that models teamwork and open communications.
• We believe that the ETA must be an effective advocate organization for its members, both individually and collectively.
• We believe in a strong collective bargaining agreement.
• We believe that the ETA has a proud history and tradition which will enhance our future.

The mission, vision, and values presented here by the ETA have both teacher centered and student centered ideals. A realistic portrayal of the teacher union perspective, what is most significant is the statements that focus on staff development, teacher voice and empowerment, and collaboration with other stakeholders. While ETA was busy formalizing their own mission, vision and values under a strategic plan, district leadership began examining their organizational structure, turning to a widely regarded consultant named Patrick Dolan.
Patrick Dolan Visits U-46

District 46’s administrators, employee groups and community leaders today will attend a presentation by W. Patrick Dolan, an expert on restructuring big organizations, including public school systems. Dolan, author of “Restructuring Our Schools, A Primer On Systemic Change,” will address the representatives of all of the district’s constituencies, including the Association of Elgin School Administrators, the District U-46 Educational Assistants, the District U-46 Secretarial Association, the District U-46 Transportation Union, the Education Support Service Organization, the Elgin Teachers Association, and the Service Employees International Union for lunch workers. (Culloton, 1996, p. 1)

The Illinois School Board Journal (1998) said of Dolan:

The problem with most organizations does not rest with the people in them. Instead, the problem with most organizations rests in the structure itself. In the western world one classic model exists for organizations, whether they be factories, the military, churches, or our educational institutions. That model is the traditional organizational pyramid--a top-down, authoritarian, command and control system layered in hierarchy and divided horizontally along lines of specialization. Because it be a command model rather than a consultative one, the pyramid structure created a non-listening system that cannot retrieve its own data nor learn from it. The Dolan Model seeks to transform schools from hierarchical, top-down structures to learning communities in which stakeholders--teachers, parents, students and community members--are empowered to make a greater number of strategic decisions.

(www.zoominfo.com/people/Dolan.asp)

Rich Majka, then the assistant superintendent for employee relations, said about Dolan’s consultation for the district, “It is designed to stimulate an appetite for change in everyone associated with the district” and “…is a symbol of the district’s commitment to improving communication and collaboration in the school system” (Culloton, 1996, p. 1). Decentralizing authority in the district was the first priority described in the Daily Herald article, with Majka contending, “The whole point here is to move the district to a more collaborative sharing sense. It will be very supportive of the initiatives we hope to take
down the road” (p. 1). One such initiative came within two years, the teacher mentor program.

U-46 joined the Consortium for Educational Change, a group of area school districts that explores and experiments with ways to improve public education just prior to hiring Dolan (1996). This exploration included the examination of then National Education Association President Bob Chases’ “new unionism.” Met with heavy opposition, “At the union’s convention in July, Mr. Chase did manage to win the Representative Assembly’s support for the concept of establishing programs in which teachers assist and review their colleagues, but this initiative, which obligates no action of the part of locals, nonetheless provoked considerable opposition” (Lowe, 1998). While there were legitimate concerns about peer review, the concept of teachers assisting teachers to promote better instruction and student learning would not be ignored by U-46 at a time when Illinois School Code had not yet mandated it.

Power of the Press

On April 14, 1999, several months of preparation for implementing the Teacher Mentor Program were highlighted in the Daily Herald Neighbor section. Former U-46 Superintendent Marvin Edwards labeled the program as a “win-win” situation, perhaps referencing the cornerstone phrase in Fisher and Ury’s Getting to Yes!, a text used by U-46 to implement interest based bargaining. The article provides documentation of the beginnings of the program, specific to rationale, intentions, benefits, and criterion.

First and foremost, the mentor program will enhance the learning of U-46 students by increasing teacher effectiveness and building a collegial faculty. Significantly, the program is yet another sign of a promising new
relationship involving the U-46 school board and administration and the Elgin Teachers Association. The intent of the Teacher Mentor Program is to assist new teachers as they acquire the knowledge, skills and values appropriate for working in U-46 and that are essential for the improvement of teaching and learning. (Edwards, 1999, p. 3)

Edwards moves on to communicate on behalf of district leadership that teacher retention is a goal as well, as new employees new to the profession will be paired with a veteran mentor for two years. “Such retention is important to a large district like U-46 that annually hires more than 100 new teachers to fill slots created by retirement, resignations and growth” (p. 3). Over-arching goals of the program were supported with a list of benefits:

- The “mentee” should enjoy improved performance and accelerated development as a professional.
- There will be opportunities to access new knowledge and resources as well as develop teamwork and enhanced leadership skills.
- The newcomer’s anxiety level should be reduced with the opportunity to grow as a teacher in the non-evaluative atmosphere created by a confidential mentor/mentee relationship.
- The veteran mentor-teacher should enjoy an increased sense of personal confidence and a broadened perspective about the school district.
- As they help others, their own knowledge of teaching and learning will be enhanced as well as communication and networking skills. Significantly, they will have the satisfaction of helping make a difference.
- Other teachers and principals will benefit from the new emphasis on collaboration, interaction and support.
- The TMP should be a strong selling point for recruiting new teachers for U-46 classrooms.

The article concluded by provided an idea of how mentor teachers were nominated and selected at the program’s inception. “Teachers throughout U-46 are being asked to nominate their peers or themselves for consideration. Principals and other
administrators also can nominate mentor teacher candidates” (p. 3). The following criteria were listed for mentors:

- Excellence in teaching.
- Effectiveness in working with others.
- Sensitivity to the viewpoints of others.
- Willingness to be an active and open learner.
- Good communication skills.
- The ability to deal with complex administrative processes.
- Genuine interest in the task of mentoring and the art of teaching.
- Role model qualities.
- Guidance and counseling skills.
- Knowledge and expertise.
- Tenured status.

To support the efforts, “those selected will receive release time to work with beginning teachers and a stipend for their efforts” (p. 3). With a budget in place, the selection process “will be developed by a 14-member oversight committee composed of individuals appointed by the district and ETA. The committee is responsible for developing a training program for mentors, matching the veterans and beginners, and monitoring the program. It will be chaired by a teacher and an administrator” (p. 3).

The Teacher Mentor Program was highlighted once more by the *Daily Herald* prior to the start of the 1999-2000 school year, offering more details of early logistics. Columnist Heather Ryndak specified on August 21, “About 100 new teachers in the district were assigned their mentors Friday during an orientation. Others were paired with more experienced teachers earlier this summer. Even though the district will employ about 270 new teachers this year, only about 100 teachers will be first-time instructors” (Ryndak, 1999, p. 4).
Bill DuBois, co-chairman of the district’s mentor oversight committee, explained that pairings are based on the building in which they work, the subject matter taught and the classroom grade level. He states in the article, “The goal is for the teachers to meet weekly. U-46 will hold quarterly meetings with both the mentors and new teachers to evaluate the program, with the first meeting scheduled for Sept. 22 at Elgin High School” (p. 4). Preparation and training moved quickly. “The oversight committee flushed out the details this spring and began training this summer” (p. 4).

Adlai Stevenson High School Principal Dan Galloway conducted the training for the U-46 mentors and voiced in the article the success of it at his building for more than twenty years, “It really helps orient the teacher to the new school and gives them support” (cited in Ryndak, 1999, p. 4). A caption and photograph also illustrated the earliest orientation program put on by the TMP oversight committee, with the caption reading, “New teachers for the 1999-2000 school year in Elgin Area School District U-46 listen to Kane County Teacher’s Credit Union President Craig Bradley, during an orientation program Friday in Seigle Auditorium at Elgin Community College” (p. 4). The induction apparently included employee logistics including managing personal finances.

**Oversight Committee’s Early Work**

What the local newspapers did not fully capture at the time of the Teacher Mentor Programs’ inception was how the oversight committee framed their decisions regarding how the program would logistically operate throughout the upcoming school years. The committee, as referenced in the previous chapters, was the first in the district to collectively bargain values and beliefs, the new approach the Teacher Appraisal oversight
committee used to pass the vote and receive final Board approval. The values and beliefs fall in line with what the committee collaboratively established as their mission, vision, and purpose. These items have remained unchanged for 12 years and are the foundation of the work done by the program.

**Mission**

We are working together to support the academic success of all children in School District U-46 (www.u-46.org/tmp/TMP_Mission_Vision.htm).

**Vision**

Mentors and mentees will work together to enhance professional practice to optimize students learning (www.u-46.org/tmp/TMP_Mission_Vision.htm).

**Purpose**

The use of experienced, successful teachers to mentor new teachers in U-46 is an effective way to improve the induction of new teachers, promote good teaching methodologies, create a more satisfied group of teachers, and hopefully, reduce the loss of promising teachers (www.u-46.org/tmp/TMP_Mission_Vision.htm).

Values and beliefs of the TMP were grounded using the very principles established by the ETA in their 1996 strategic plan: fairness, integrity, dignity, equity, honesty, trust, and justice (www.u-46.org/tmp/ValuesandBeliefs.htm).

The Teacher Mentor Program was created and built upon the foundation of values and beliefs. The **values** are the fundamental building blocks upon which all the work we do with new teachers and mentors is based. The **beliefs** are what we hold as truths and rely upon them as we make decisions for all stakeholders in the TMP. We believe:

1. Mentors exemplify excellence in teaching.
2. Assistance for mentees should be embedded in the workplace.
3. New teachers need to balance immediate concerns with long-term development.
4. Mentoring encourages teaching as inquiry which leads to continuous improvement.
5. Mentors can learn to articulate their knowledge of best practice instruction and instructional strategies.
6. Mentors can clarify curriculum concepts and help to access resources.
7. Mentoring addresses specific aspects of lesson preparation and delivery.
8. Mentoring allows formative peer assessment to gather evidence which leads to continuous improvement.
9. Mentoring as a collaborative partnership promotes the growth of professional learning communities.
10. Mentoring can offer avenues for a variety of teacher leadership roles.
11. It is important to retain quality teachers and maintain continuity of the teaching staff within buildings, departments and programs. (www.u-46.org/tmp/ValuesandBeliefs.htm)

The Oversight Committee developed the Teacher Mentor Program as a way for new teachers new to the profession to have a point person for questions regarding the district, community, job responsibilities, and unique features of the building they worked in. The program ensured that all mentees would be provided non-evaluative feedback regarding their planning, classroom management, and instruction in the classroom by requiring professional conversations to take place along with classroom observations by the mentor. These foundational items remain have remained in place from the programs’ inception to the present.

**Mentor/Mentee Handbooks**

While artifacts such as local newspapers, Board reports and minutes, and professional development materials from 1996-2005 speak to the earlier years of the program, the actual TMP Handbooks for both the mentors and new teachers provide the most descriptive information on the development of the program. These handbooks have
added new contents as the program has developed through the 2000s decade. The Handbook currently contains nine sections, four of which have been in place since the beginning of the program. These four are as follows: roles and relationships, program information, professional teaching standards, and beginning of the school year.

Roles and Relationships

In opening with a purpose for the program, the Oversight Committee acknowledges the collaborative effort through interest based bargaining for teachers new to the profession to receive assistance during the first two years of their employment. The committee asserts that in the past, some teachers may have become discouraged and given up on the profession in which they might have excelled had the appropriate assistance been provided early in their careers (U46/ETA Teacher Mentor Handbook, p. 1).

The intent of the Teacher Mentor Program is to assist new teachers as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and values appropriate to working in School District U-46 and which are essential for the improvement of teaching and learning. By nurturing the professional the TMP will provide an opportunity for exemplary teachers to inspire excellence, share expertise with others, and actively participate in instructional decision-making without leaving the classroom. (p. 1)

With this purpose, the program offers “Helpful Hints” for both the mentor and mentee, and a Mentor/Mentee Agreement that both parties must sign and date to denote a contractual agreement as a precursor to the relationship to be formed.

For the Mentee:

- Appreciate your mentor’s efforts.
- Seek and accept advice. Your mentor took on his/her role to support a new teacher’s development and growth in U-46.
• Be willing to take risks and try new ideas.
• Write down questions as they arise to be certain you cover them with your mentor (keep a journal).
• Plan to meet on a regular basis. Schedule and record dates in your planner as far in advance as possible. This eliminates the possibility of not being able to find time to meet.
• Know the requirements for the TMP and the due dates. Make a plan for completing the requirements. Ask your mentor to help you.
• Listen carefully and ask questions.
• Offer suggestions and ideas. You have much to give.
• Identify problems you have; seek solutions. Be proactive rather than reactive.
• Maintain confidentiality.
• Share goals and concerns; keep mentor informed.
• Be honest with yourself and your mentor.
• Be enthusiastic! (TMP Teacher Portfolio, p. 2)

For the Mentor:

• Assume nothing.
• Recognize the new teacher will have different strengths and weaknesses than you.
• Give moderate amounts of information at any one time; avoid overload.
• Mentees will make mistakes; help them redirect, analyze and face the mistake.
• Keep goals and horizons high, yet realistic, for your mentee. Encourage them.
• Plan to meet on a regular basis. Schedule and record dates in your planners as far in advance as possible. This eliminates the possibility of not being able to find time to meet.
• Let go. Allow and encourage independence.
• Appreciate the mentee’s efforts and acknowledge their work.
• Keep a log of what was helpful and when it was needed. You may find yourself turning to this in the future.
• Self disclose; your personal experiences are valuable to the mentee and will help to build a strong relationship.
• Look for the mentee’s strengths and work from that positive point of view.
• Share: hints, ideas, materials, resources and how to be organized
• Boost morale when needed. Yes, sometimes you need to be a cheerleader.
• Think about what you would have needed or appreciated.
• Maintain confidentiality
• Believe and know that you can make a positive difference.
• Be enthusiastic.
• Keep a sense of humor; laugh together. (U46/ETA Teacher Mentor Handbook, p. 2)

The “Helpful Hints” listed in both handbooks speak to the need to form a positive relationship built on trust, respect, encouragement, communication, and fun. They also enforce the need to meet regularly and document conversations about teaching and learning improvement throughout the year. The Mentor/Mentee Agreement (see Appendix F) also emphasizes, above all, positive relationship building between parties where solutions to problems supersedes complaining and blaming. Sharing values and beliefs about teaching and learning is also an agreement listed. The hints and agreement set a strong tone that is aligned with the ETA Strategic Plan vision and values and combats the labor strife that was evident through the 1980s and 1990s.

Mentor/Mentee partner activities and a mentor checklist acknowledge that not all faculty positions are the same and that what applies to one employee may not for another, making these items recommendations only. Still, the “Suggested Partner Activities” (see Appendix G) and the Mentor Activity Checklist, broken down by week, help give clarification as to what exactly the pair should be doing throughout the school year. These recommendations also remain the same today. Excerpts from activities for weeks one to three and eight to ten help show that assistance in a variety of aspects of the teaching profession are of focus.
Week 1
- Tour the building with your mentee & indicating location of key facilities.
- Discuss how to send inter-school and US Postal Service mail.
- Introduce your mentee to the staff and procedures for duplicating.
- Buy your mentee a soda/cup of coffee in the staff café/lounge.
- Help your mentee set up his/her grade-book and seating charts.
- Review tardy and attendance policies.
- Establish a regular meeting time and location.

Week 2
- Review the student handbook with your mentee.
- Introduce your mentee to the custodians & other support staff, along with their responsibilities.
- Discuss how to fill out and sign work orders.
- Explain student hallway, assembly and/or field trip procedures.
- Explain how to get a student as a teacher’s aide.
- Discuss Open House.
- Review Mentor Program calendar and mark meetings on your calendar.
- Discuss student medical list and what to do with the information.
- Acquire copies of necessary forms (referrals, detentions, hall passes, attendance, etc.)

Week 3
- Help set up a sub folder.
- Review fire drill procedures.
- Discuss early dismissal days. What to do in short periods?
- Look at lesson plans for next week with your mentee. Discuss organization, short and long range planning and pacing of lessons.
- Invite your mentee to attend a professional organizations/district meeting with you.

Week 8
- Introduce your mentee to at least three people outside your department.
- Help with end of quarter grade distribution and cards.
- Plan (together) a cooperative learning activity to be used in either the mentee’s or mentor’s classroom sometime in the next two weeks. Do it. Evaluate its success/failure.
Week 9
- Help your mentee do some long range planning from now to winter break.
- Role-play several different parent conference situations with your mentee in preparation for Parent/Teacher conferences held in November.
- Help your mentee set up his/her grade-book for second quarter.

Week 10
- Discuss district publications such as The Potential and local newspaper articles.
- Listen as your mentee tells you about the Parents Night/Open House conversations. “The good, the bad, the ugly.”
- Begin to plan for the end of the first semester and final exams. (p. 7-8).

These activities provide orientation for new employees and allow for mentees to ask questions they may otherwise be afraid to ask in fear of sounding unintelligent. They also give mentors ideas as to what conversations should be occurring during the anticipation and survival phases of a new position. Short and long range lesson planning and lesson pacing were the only instructional items on the list for the first quarter of the school year when the program first began.

The program was built with peer coaching as a central concept. For this the Oversight Committee turned to the works of Stephen Barkley, a noted expert in the area of teacher development and peer coaching. The U46/ETA Teacher Mentor Handbook laid out the steps for the coaching role, saying “one of the best ways to enhance quality teaching is to have teachers engage in classroom observations and discussion focusing on the practice used to assist and promote student learning” (p. 18). The following steps were listed in the observation/coaching model:
1. Pre-observation conference: the mentor and mentee should meet to discuss the focus of the lesson to be observed and the needs of the mentee. The mentor should comfort the mentee by clarifying the purpose of the observation by the mentor. The goal should always be to reinforce good instructional practice and to discuss the decisions and perceptions of the mentee. The observation is not to be used as an administrative evaluation tool.

2. Classroom observation by the mentor should be announced. An agreed upon time is critical. The mentor should observe the entire lesson or class period. The mentor should take notes and gather evidence on the specific goal(s) discussed in the pre-observation conference.

3. Post-observation conference: in a timely fashion the mentor and mentee should meet for a time to review the observation. The mentor should be focused on the goal(s). Conversation should revolve around the data collected. At the conclusion of the conference the mentee makes goals for the future based on the discussion. Future classroom visits should be scheduled.

4. Mentor should continue to offer formal and informal feedback, guidance, materials, and advice. (p. 18)

Barkley’s “A View of Coaching from Four Levels” offered mentors in U-46 affirmation of what they most likely felt about being observed and evaluated by administrators. Important to successful coaching of teachers are four levels: vision, strategy, tactics, and operation (p. 19).

1. If schools are to be successful in achieving their missions, relating to society and the education of students, there must be agreement among school personnel at the instructional and administrative levels as to the mission or vision of the school system. Substantial discussion must take place if the coach and teacher are to successfully collaborate on the decision-making involved in strategy and tactics as well as the execution involved in operations.

2. When coaching a classroom teacher, strategy could be defined as the board of education adopted curriculum, or course of study, as well as teacher’s beliefs, values and priorities.
3. Tactics may be analogous to a lesson plan which describes a procedure to achieve a small goal related to the overall strategy. This daily lesson plan becomes the blueprint which the teacher will use.
4. Finally, operations would include the teacher’s skills and behaviors used to execute the lesson plan. (Barkley, cited in U46/ETA Teacher Mentor Handbook, p. 19)

The article shares the hostility that teachers feel about receiving feedback on their instruction because the observer fails to understand the vision, strategy and tactics, focusing only on the operations. The four steps in the coaching model required mentors to listen to their mentee to understand why the operations within their classroom were going to take place. The peer coaching concept, along with district and building orientation that included the weekly activities encompassed the early roles and relationships between mentor and mentee.

*Program Information*

While there have been additions and modifications made to the Teacher Mentor Program over its 12-year existence, the general program information has remained the same. The Teacher Mentor Program encompasses many of the activities that may be applied for credit toward certificate renewal. The TMP provides for:

- Released time for mentors and beginning teachers for in-district visitations. Each team…will be provided with a total of 3 days of released time each year for observation, modeling, and peer coaching.
- CPDUs may be earned for observations accompanied by meetings for reflection on practice (such as the TMP’s reflective journaling.)
- In addition, each team…will be provided with released time for one workshop. CPDUs may be earned for your attendance (or presentation) together at a workshop or conference.
- Suggested activities and support services important to the program include district workshops/meetings, informal meetings, and reflective
activities. CPDUs may be earned for your attendance at quarterly TMP meetings and other professional development activities. (p. 45)

Along with forms regarding CPDU credits and release day requests, one other significant item appears in this section. A “Request for Assistance with Existing Professional Relationship between Mentor and Mentee” form requires one party or both parties to describe the statement of reason(s) for appeal to terminate the professional relationship and explain the steps taken to address the problems in this relationship. The form states,

The Mentoring Oversight Committee acknowledges the complexity of personal and professional relationships. There are many variables that can affect the degree of success attained between a mentor and mentee. As in any relationship we urge you to have patience, communicate clearly, listen, display empathy, respect, and understanding for one another. After reasonable time, if significant problems exist you may consider this request for assistance with your professional match to the Mentoring Oversight Committee. (p. 54)

Mentors and mentees have always been encouraged to flesh out conflicts independently, but have been given the ability to request a new pairing if the relationship is not recoverable.

*Professional Teaching Standards*

The TMP acknowledged that the practice of teaching is set on standards that must be met in the classroom. Stated both handbooks, “professional teaching standards provide educators with a common language around teaching, help to identify areas of professional growth, help to guide the design and implementation of professional development experiences, and a link to teacher preparation programs with ongoing development as one secures a teaching position” (p. 62). The handbooks list and outline three types of professional teaching standards that come into play in U-46: Interstate
New Teacher Assessment and Support Continuum, Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Two activities are to be completed by the mentor and mentee using these sets of standards.

**IPTS Activity Instructions for Paired Reading** are as follows:

- “A” and “B” each read silently the narrative of one standard.
- “A” summarizes the standard description.
- “B” gives an example of what this standard might look like in the classroom.
- Select new standard and reverse roles.
- Repeat, switching, back and forth, with the rest of the standards. (p. 63)

Learning and insights are documented on a form to show evidence of completion. This activity is coupled with the IPTS Self-Assessment Summary, where strengths and areas of growth and listed for each of the eleven professional standards.

**Beginning of the School Year**

A resource guide for new teachers has been the last section of the Teacher Portfolio Handbook since the beginning of the program. This section requires mentees to seek out and document information regarding the school, the district, the community, and classroom. Included in this section is a list of questions to ask the principal, questions regarding curriculum implementation, and building procedures. When the program first began and the Hunter Method was the source of the evaluation system, essential elements of instruction including anticipatory set, motivation, active participation, closure, retention and transfer were outlined as new teachers were set to begin lesson planning.
and implementation on their own for the first time. This section also listed helpful hints for classroom management from “ten master teachers” in the district.

1. Teacher Procedures
2. Enforce Consequences, Develop Rapport, Win Cooperation
3. If Misbehavior Continues—Contract
4. Rules—Keep them simple
5. Recognize Own Feelings
6. Develop Rapport
7. Consistency
8. Procedures for Attention
9. Active Participation
10. Conference with Students Privately
11. Humor
12. Start Class Immediately
13. Model Respect
14. Climate is Work Oriented. (p. 92)

**TMP Receives National Recognition**

The Teacher Mentor Program felt success in its first two years, as evidenced by the national award it won in 2001. Bill DuBois flew to Los Angeles in June 2001 to pick up the NEA-Saturn/UAW Partnership Award (Roche, 2001, p. 4). The TMP was among five other programs throughout the country recognized that year, which focused on union-management collaboration to mentor and support new teachers. “About 225 teachers signed on initially, but the program has grown to a total of 618 teachers enrolled” (p. A4). The *Courier News* article admitted that because the program was only two years old, it is hard to measure the long-term effect of mentoring in terms of U46’s teacher-retention rate, but quoted then Program Chairwoman Karen Carlson as saying, “I think that both the mentors and the mentees have learned a lot” (p. A4).
Another Courier News article in October 2000 documents the Illinois State Board of Education’s vote to seek legislative approval of a $43 million induction and mentoring program. Druley’s “Mentor plan could help keep teachers in education” notes that “to keep new teachers on board and satisfied, the program would have the state spend $2,500 on each new teacher over a three-year period.” The article explained that most of the money would go toward training veteran teachers who then would work with novice teachers to support, challenge and guide them as they continue learning teaching methods and how to use them (p. A4). Elgin U-46 is cited in the article as being in its second year of a less formal, less expensive mentoring program than the state funded examples in other states. “Mentors in U46 receive a stipend from the district budget. The state funding would have a significant impact on the program, according to Director of School/Community Relations Larry Ascough” (p. A4).

**TMP Growth and Refinement**

It would be four more years before the state funding impact would result in full time administrative leadership for the Teacher Mentor Program. An August 2004 Daily Herald “Fox Valley in 60 Seconds” blurb revealed that “William DuBois will now direct the district’s Teacher Leader for Mentoring Program” (p. 3) This new administrative position would provide the time necessary for a stakeholder to focus solely on the effectiveness, development, and response to the Teacher Mentor Program. DuBois was appointed after being an influential force behind the Teacher Mentor Program adopting Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching as the new core curriculum in 2002. The Oversight Committee felt that conversations solely on Illinois and National teaching
standards fell short as the concepts were too broad and evidence was difficult to feasibly collect. Danielson’s four domains of teaching had specific components and elements under components to target during classroom observations and lesson plan analysis. Now, DuBois and the committee had to make additions and modifications to their mentoring handbooks so a common language of teaching could truly be used.

In 2003, mentee requirements now included one sample lesson for every quarter illustrating each of the four teaching domains. Observations by the mentor included the same pre-conference and post-conference questions cited in Danielson (1996). Five photographs illustrating Domain 2 and Domain 3 had to be included in the mentee’s portfolio of evidence. A “Collaborative Conversation Organizer” became a central tool as mentors had to documents “What’s Working”, “Challenges/Concerns”, “Teacher’s Next Steps”, and “Mentor’s Next Steps” for every classroom observation. Listed at the bottom of this form are the domains for teaching. A new section of the handbooks now included Mentor Tools. Samples of mentor tools that were focused on the Danielson Framework were a movement/pattern chart, quality of questions form, selective scripting, and a teacher’s interaction with students chart. Each of these documents references which elements of the Framework apply and include ideas on using them to assist the mentor in effective use of time.

The Oversight Committee added mentoring strategies and topics in the Roles and Relationships section of the handbook that brought Danielson’s Framework to stronger focus. Categories of focus included: engaging students in learning, classroom environment, planning and preparation, demonstrating knowledge of content and
pedagogy, assessing student learning, and communicating clearly and accurately. Each category had a list of strategies and topics for mentors to use in working with their mentee.

A section of the Frameworks as well as a section showing the link between the Frameworks and state/national standards were added to provide a reference point for both the mentor and mentee in assisting with teacher development in each of the domains.

The developmental continuum in the Frameworks program is not designed to be a check-off list used for evaluation. Rather it is to be used as guide that will allow for teachers to self assess a given ability in a non-linear fashion that allows for continual professional growth. Further, in the TMP it helps the mentee and mentor collaboratively assess the teacher’s level of proficiency, helps teachers set clear professional goals, helps to guide the mentors support and assistance, and provides a common language to describe and discuss practice.

Many factors can influence a teacher’s placement on the continuum. Class composition, new curriculum, and new grade level teaching assignment are but a few of such factors. In addition, a teacher may show indicators in more than one level of proficiency. In that case the teacher should place himself/herself at the level where all indicators are met. (U46/ETA Teacher Mentor Handbook, p. 65)

Program requirements were solidified shortly after the adoption of the Danielson Framework as the core curriculum of the program. These requirements were differentiated between Year 1 and Year 2 mentees. The requirements were to be submitted to an Oversight Committee representative quarterly. The Portfolio Progress Report (see Appendix H) was to be filled out by each mentee with supplemental artifacts illustrating completion. This portfolio was broken down into six major sections. The first section is evidence of attending District Quarterly Meetings, RAP sessions hosted by the TMP Oversight Committee without mentors present, and lesson plan with self
assessment completed. The second section was a contact log with evidence of communication with between mentor and mentee, as well as the focus of those conversations. The third section mandates that mentees should hardcopy and photo evidence of Domains 2 and 4. The fourth section requires mentors to observe their mentee at least once per quarter. These observations include the pre-observation and post-observation conference protocols described earlier in this chapter. An observation of the mentor teacher is required once during the year, which is the fifth section of the portfolio. Finally, the individual growth plan which is to be completed in collaboration between mentee and mentor teachers is due towards the end of the school year.

Year 2 mentees had fewer items to work through as RAP sessions were designed only for first year teachers. Still accounted for were quarterly meetings with the mentor and TMP Oversight Committee representatives, mentor/mentee contact log, lesson plan submission on a quarterly basis, quarterly observations of the mentee and one observation of the mentor, and an individual growth plan.

With a core curriculum established, a dedicated Oversight Committee adapting to program improvements, and a full time administrator coordinating the program, the Teacher Mentor Program seemed self-sufficient and even a selling point for teacher recruitment. Teacher contract negotiations were finalized in 2004 and new language was added to the Teacher Mentor Program. The 2000-2003 Elgin Agreement only included an addendum with highlighted the programs’ purpose, duration of mentor/mentee relationship, compensation in the form of release days, and Oversight Committee composition and duties/responsibilities (The Elgin Agreement, 2000).
The Oversight Committee will consist of fourteen (14) members. The ETA will appoint six (6) members and the District will appoint six (6) members. Two (2) at large positions will also be ex officio members by virtue of their positions in the District. These positions are Professional Development Coordinator and Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services and Accountability.

The Oversight Committee will be responsible for developing a selection process for choosing mentors. The procedure will include the application process, the criteria for selection, and the training requirements for mentors.

The Committee will be responsible for matching the mentors with beginning teachers, organizing the training sessions, and monitoring the program. (2000)

The 2004-2007 Elgin Agreement adds a complete program description including purpose, needs, benefits, and goals. This language was pulled from the mentor/mentee handbooks. With the addition of a Teacher Leader for Mentoring administrative position in 2004, contract language now included “Suggested activities and support services important to the program.” Activities were outlined as follows:

- An e-newsletter will include a calendar of events, professional articles related to beginning teaching, district information, instructional strategies, and other materials geared toward the beginning teacher and new teacher (veteran hiree). Contributing to this newsletter may be mentor teachers, the staff development director, and the directors of other district departments as needed.
- District staff development department activities which consist of in-service workshops as articulated with the mentor teachers, materials collection, and assistance in the writing of the newsletter with the mentor teachers.
- The formulation of study groups for beginning teachers, new teachers, and mentors. A primary goal will be to assist the mentees in setting goals for themselves and evaluating their own progress. These will be monthly informal small group discussions geared to the interests of the participants.
- Mentee will visit the mentor teacher’s classroom. This will provide a model of instruction.
• Mentor teachers will visit the mentee’s classroom. This will provide a model for instruction.
• Informal meetings between the mentor and mentee outside of the formal workday that are flexible in nature to allow for mentors and interns to discuss their experiences. Research cautions against too much formality in the structure of these meetings, and suggests the meetings should be flexible so that each new teacher’s individual needs and experiences can be addressed. (The Elgin Agreement, 2004)

The e-newsletter concept, study groups, and more diverse in-service offerings were not the only new additions to contract language. District administration decided another layer of leadership was necessary despite the initial success and valid improvements of the program. The Oversight Committee, which already had six district representatives working with teacher members, would continue to have daily operation and implementation ownership. The Steering Committee’s composition was described for the first time:

The Steering Committee will consist of a total of nine (9) members. The Association will appoint four members (to include the ETA President or Board of Directors designee) and the District will appoint four members (to include one member of the Superintendent’s staff). The ninth member shall be the teacher leader who is released from classroom responsibilities for the length of the contract. (p. 86)

The duties and responsibilities of the new Steering Committee were also described:

The Steering Committee will be responsible for supporting and working with the Oversight Committee in order to hire the Teacher Leader, evaluate the Teacher Leader, offer advice in the direction of the TMP, allocate funds to the TMP, and review accountability measures. The Steering Committee will meet on a quarterly basis either with the Oversight Committee (called a TMP Summit Meeting) or as a stand alone committee. (p. 86)

The contract spelled out in regards to the new administrative appointment, “The Teacher Mentor Leader will be continued on a yearly basis as a collective bargaining unit
position reporting to Human Resources. The position will be funded on a basis as
determined by the District, with the ETA making a contribution to the TMP on an annual
basis” (p. 86). Compensation for mentors and mentees had an addition in contract
language as well as the “Beginning the 2004-2005 school year, stipends to mentors for
new mentor/mentee relationships shall be paid at $500 per year” (p. 86).

The 2004 contract also included an addendum where the program would be
evaluated by participants. “An evaluation of the program will be administered at the
conclusion of the school year to determine the program’s effectiveness and to determine
what changes if any would lead to improvement. The evaluation will consist of a
questionnaire for mentors and new teachers and the composition and terms will be
addressed by the oversight committee” (p. 87).

U-46 leadership decided in 2004 that “The Danielson Frameworks is the
centerpiece for all professional growth and leadership training in U-46. Administrators
have benefitted from the training to apply practices of coaching and observing
instruction” (www.u-46.org.cnt/docs/IV-Lead.pdf). The District Improvement Plan
incorporated the Teacher Mentor Program in the leadership section that year. “Charlotte
Danielson was a guest in U-46 a few times this year, meeting with several groups
including Board of Education members, Superintendent’s staff, ETA Board members,
principals and other administrators, and the Evaluation Committee. Danielson’s training
was provided in a variety of venues, including the Teacher Mentoring Program” (www.u-
46.org.cnt/docs/IV-Lead.pdf). This coincided with the district and ETA’s first efforts to
change the teacher appraisal system, which initially did not pass the vote of ETA membership.

The 2005-2007 “Leadership Update” of the District Improvement Plan revealed that Teacher Mentoring remained centerpiece of the plan. Highlighted in the Board report was Interconnect Forums between secondary school districts and local universities.

The third Interconnect of the year was held on April 30 and hosted at the Educational Services Center. The meeting with the district’s university partners was held in the Teacher Mentoring Program Resource Room in order to feature the program. Administrators, teachers, TMP mentors and mentees provided various panels on topics related to mentoring. U-46 staff updated university representatives on current staffing needs and recruitment activities. (www.u-46.or.cnt/docs/05-07Leadership.pdf)

In 2005 the district designated a space for the Teacher Mentor Program at the Administration Center (see Appendix A). The TMP Resource Center Room quickly became not only a meeting place for staff development activities, but also a professional library for veteran and new teachers to turn to. The TMP Library has professional literature that supports the work in each of the four domains of teaching in the Danielson Framework, with works from Jo Gusman for Domain 1: Planning and Prepartation, Alfie Kohn for Domain 2: Classroom Environment, Thomas Armstrong for Domain 3: Instruction, to name a few.

In 2006, the district and ETA turned to DuBois to help reframe the new Teacher Appraisal Plan to pass the Danielson Framework as the foundation for how teachers were to be evaluated. This required the district to release two fulltime mentor teachers to keep the Teacher Mentor Program operating (see Appendix A). That same year another Interconnect Forum was held where attendees viewed two videos, one featuring the
partnership between U-46 and National Louis University and the other on the U-46 Teacher Mentor Program. DuBois provided background on the program and then shared data gathered from new teachers in U-46, providing each university partner with specific feedback on their graduates who responded to questions about how well their university prepared them for a career in teaching (www.u-46.org.net/cnt/docs/leadership-nov.pdf).

This data collection addition to the Teacher Mentor Program was a direct result of the district and ETA agreeing to create a Teacher Leader for Mentoring position and the addition of evaluation data as a measure of program effectiveness. Data-driven decision-making became a permanent fixture for the program, as evidenced by the development of a TMP website off the U-46 webpage created in 2006.

**Comprehensive Website Introduced**

The TMP Website became the program leaders’ way to communicate all aspects of the program, including improvements that have been incorporated since 1998. The program overview acknowledges its place under the Leadership Pillar of the District Improvement Plan and the “importance of tying the professional development of educators and staff district-wide to the district initiatives and specific needs of each school and classroom” (www.u-46.org/tmp). Short video interviews of the Teacher Leader for Mentoring, mentor teachers, and mentees provide voice to the highlights of the program, as well as description of the program goals and requirements.

The Teacher Leader for Mentoring provided insight on the program for the 2006-2007 school year. The following was transcribed from his video interview:
The mentors and mentees, and there are close to 600 this year in a two year program, they come into this setting (referring to Resource Room) four times a year and they come in from anywhere from two to five hour sessions with me in groups of forty or so. This year we have done over seventy such meetings so it has been pretty ambitious. But it has been wonderful and they come in and do a series of activities with me. All to help them out in their workplace and basically we talk about what does best practice look like in their workplace and that is different for everybody. We have regular education teachers, we have ELL teachers, we have special education teachers, we have related services teachers, so all the things we talk about here have to be bent and twisted to meet particular needs of the people we are serving.

(www.u-46.org/video/Teacher_Mentor_Program/?vid=Bill_DuBois1.wmv)

Two new teachers who completed their first year as teachers involved in the Teacher Mentor Program shared their perspective on the program’s value.

Honestly, I could not imagine going through this first year without being in the mentor program. Just having somebody that I can contact, somebody that I can brainstorm with, somebody just to tell me where I can go to get this form, to explain what are these Service Team Projects. It’s just been a wonderful, wonderful experience.

(www.u-46.org/video/Teacher_Mentor_Program/?vid=Tomeka_Mentee1.wmv)

I did my student teaching in U-46 at Liberty Elementary School in second grade with Marcia and it was fun to be back in the district that I had gone through all of my education in. I think I started out the year extremely overwhelmed and Marcia was able to come over before school started and she helped me come up with a better room arrangement and things like that and as I look back over the whole year I think having a mentor and having somebody I could go to via email or on the phone or just stop by was helpful with any problem spots. So I think I made it through the end of the year successful and still on two feet.

(www.u-46.org/video/Teacher_Mentor_Program/?vid=Kim_Mentee1.wmv)

A mentor provided voice on her perspective as a veteran teacher assisting a new teacher through the Teacher Mentor Program.

He’ll come up and ask a question about, “I’ve got this kid who’s doing this or that or this is going on in their lives and what should I do and he wants an answer. So I have to think back through what I have done with
other kids, what might help with that kid, what’s the continuum there that he can work with to try to make than happen. I think whenever you’re having to look at your practice to share it with someone else you have to refine it. I have learned a lot more about how to make what I do make more sense to someone else so I’ve had to refine what I do.

(www.u-46.org/video/Teacher_Mentor_Program/?vid=Lisa_Mentor1.wmv)

In 2006, the program expanded from a two year program for all new teachers new to the profession to also serving experienced new teachers to the district for one year (www.u-46.org/tmp). It also now emphasized being a program of all “teachers”. “Those in the classroom and those in other areas, such as nurses, social workers, psychologists, diagnosticians, speech language pathologists, librarians, instructional specialists, and counselors” (www.u-46.org/tmp). The second edition of Danielson’s *Frameworks for Teaching* (2007) aided in that cause as domains and components were now delineated to multiple certified staff positions.

Resources for Mentees, including literacy and math instructional links, differentiated instruction ideas, classroom management techniques, and new teacher resources were posted to the website, giving mentees a second avenue to gathering resources beyond their Teacher Portfolio Handbook. The same concept was applied for mentor teachers, where items that they received both at the four hour mentor training class and their Mentor Teacher Handbook were posted on their TMP homepage.

The Teacher Mentor Application was updated in 2007 from one with basic employee information to one that required self-reflection prior to submitting on behalf of a colleague or one’s self. As part of the application process, several items had to be completed:
1. Staff must answer the following questions in detail
   a. Why would you like to become a mentor?
   b. Briefly highlight some of the significant and rewarding experiences you have had as an educator.
   c. What strengths do you have that would enable you to be a successful mentor?
   d. Please list some ways in which you keep current with best practices in education and/or your area of expertise (i.e. workshops, conferences, professional readings, classes, etc.)
   e. Contributions you have made to your grade level/department, school, school district, and/or the profession?
   f. What words of wisdom would you share with a person new to your profession?

2. Submit a Letter of Recommendation from a current district (U-46) administrator.

   (www.u-46.org/tmp)

Weekly E-Newsletters, bargained into the Elgin Agreement in 2004, were posted to the website starting in 2007 (see Appendix I for a sample E-Newsletter). These newsletters were differentiated for both the mentor and mentee, although most content each week focused on the same teaching strategy or domain of teaching.

With the district moving to now supporting all first-time teachers and new teacher to U-46 with experience, U-46 Administration was calling the Teacher Mentor Program “the most successful retention strategy in the district” with the “program reporting higher statistics than the national average in retaining teacher” (www.u-46.org/docs/SummaryDocument2007.pdf). Program success and teacher retention in U-46 was also highlighted in July 2007 by Western Illinois University’s “Center for the Preparation of Education Professionals” newsletter. An alumni of the university, DuBois was featured as a leader who’s “attention to individual teacher needs and concerns is evident in the follow-up survey results” (p. 3). He article shared that he had presented the U-46 TMP success
story to conventions and conferences. In April 2008 DuBois presented that story at the 21st Annual International Mentoring Association Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, providing participants the opportunity to learn more about the “data driven story of alignment, high standards, best practice, and excellence” (www.mentoring-association.org/08registration.pdf).

An October 2008 Leadership Update to the School Board announced the enhancement of the Teacher Mentor Program.

For the past six years, the Teacher Mentor Program office has been staffed by one teacher leader. Two years ago, an addition to the model of delivery of mentor services was made, and U-46 instituted two full-time mentors to complement the one-to-one mentor program. The full-time mentor aspect of the TMP was adopted from the successful best practice model of the California New Teacher Center.

Due to its record-setting size, complexity of the mentoring work, and the quality of the program, the TMP approved for a second teacher-leader position by administration to support the TMP beginning in the 2008-2009 school year. This is result of Mr. DuBois assuming responsibilities related to the implementation of the new Teacher Appraisal System adopted as a result of the U-46/ETA Contract Agreement. (www.u-46.org/cnt/docs/Oct08-Leadership-update.pdf)

In December 2008 the TMP celebrated its tenth anniversary, with program leadership presenting alongside several participating teachers to the School Board, showing a summary of accomplishments (www.u-46.org/cnt/docs/120808BOEminutes.pdf). The presentation listed “Ten Things to Celebrate”:

1. Collaboration
   a. 1998-2001 TMP led by Oversight Committee
   b. 2001-2004 TMP led by Teacher Leader and Oversight Committee
   c. 2004-2008 TMP led by TL, Oversight Committee, and Steering Committee
2. Saturn/UAW/NEA Award in 2001
3. Federal teacher quality initiative (TQI) award in 2001-2002
4. Partners with National Louis University on four year teacher quality initiative in 2002
6. Instrumental in securing PLC grant in 2001-2002
7. ISBE approved status granted in 2001-2002
8. Partner with Columbia Teachers College to institute pilot mentoring cohorts in 2004.
9. Institutes two fulltime mentors based upon the NTC at Santa Cruz model in 2006
10. In 2008 TL added to support the TMP and a TL added to support the connection to the new Teacher Appraisal Plan Implementation. (www.u-46.org/deps/docreturn.cfm)

Mentee and mentor data was also shared, highlighting the state of the program.

Table 5

*Mentees Speak*

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<td>85%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor helped obtain resources</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor concerned with success</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98%</td>
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<td>Talk freely with mentor</td>
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<td>94%</td>
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<td>Meet regularly with mentor</td>
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<td>75%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<td>90%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<td>Administrator is supportive</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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Table 6

*Mentors Speak*

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<td>83%</td>
<td>99%</td>
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<td>Can talk freely with mentee</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<td>99%</td>
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<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a difference in success of mentee</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>98%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a difference in school district</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned things after working with mentee</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet regularly with mentee</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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Program success translated into more dollars being invested on the part of the district. In the 2007-2010 Elgin Agreement, monetary contributions to mentor teachers went from $750 in 2007-2008 to $1,000 in 2008-2009. It was agreed that the Board and ETA would determine a dollar amount for the 2009-2010 school year at no less than $1,000 (Elgin Agreement, 2007, p. 96).
Despite the seemingly steady incline in program resources and effectiveness, ETA leadership, in their “Proven Leadership and Commitment” brochure, explained their “fight” for mentor stipends on behalf of their serving members.

This program continues to be extremely effective in supporting and retaining talented teacher. However, the program is often the target of continued cutbacks. When district administration made the decision to use the vast majority of in-service days for Roadmap training at the expense of the Teacher Mentor Program, we fought hard and were successful in ensuring stipends for both mentors and mentees attending the resulting after school meetings. *We believe that staff development needs for teachers are best identified and addressed by teachers. We believe that professionalism is enhanced as teachers work together to improve the level of their teaching skills.*

Factors that led to the district tightening their expenditures for the program seemingly dealt with needing to incorporate other initiatives on top of this program for the District Improvement Plan, as well as the viewpoint that more district dollars had been invested in the “top” with additional leadership support positions added to the program fulltime.

In 2009, the Illinois State Board of Education featured U-46’s Teacher Mentor Program as part of the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative. The district became grant funded by the state, with ISBE boasting the district’s data and evidence driven nature, including periodic assessments which include state of the mind surveys, evaluations for all meetings and an end of the year evaluation ([http://intc.education.illinois.edu/programs/detail/sdu46](http://intc.education.illinois.edu/programs/detail/sdu46)).

In that same year, U-46 announced a new department called Teacher Effectiveness Initiatives (TEI) in their October Operational Excellence Update to the School Board. The TEI was charged with:
- Overseeing the Teacher Mentor Program that pairs new teachers with veteran educators
- Supporting and encouraging teachers in obtaining National Board Certification
- Continuing the implementation of the Teacher Appraisal Plan, the new method for evaluating teachers that was developed collaboratively with the ETA
- Providing support for administrators on the teacher evaluation process
- Collaborating with other U-46 departments in developing and maintaining partnerships with colleges and universities.
- Working with other departments to begin a program aimed at promoting teaching as a career path for high school and college students

At the November 16, 2009 School Board Meeting, the Team Leader for TEI presented information on the Teacher Appraisal Plan and the Teacher Mentor Program. He highlighted new aspects of the initiatives, including the $66,181 ISBE grant which funded training for the full-time release mentors, and training for administrators. Visits from three speakers were funded. Survey results show that both mentors and mentees are highly satisfied with the program (www.u-46.org.cnt/docs/11-16-09BOEminutes.pdf).

At this time, after not truly implementing the proposed expansion, U-46 included all new teachers who were new to the district, not just new to teaching. “Previously, the mentoring program was available to teachers new to teaching, ELL teacher who were new to U-46, and a few other select groups” (Courier News, 2009). This came at a time where the TMP Office published that as the second largest school district in Illinois, with more than 40,000 students, findings reveal that 80% of teachers who worked with a mentor stayed in the district for longer than five years (Marrazzo, 2010). U-46 budgeted $500,000 for the program for the 2009-2010 school year (2010). The New Teacher
Project published the *Widget Effect* just prior to the announcement to expand the mentor program (*Courier News*, 2009).

**The Widget Effect on Teacher Mentoring in U-46**

While the New Teacher Project’s *The Widget Effect* focused primarily on problems with evaluation practices in selected school districts including U-46, the study did not ignore the implications of a strong teacher mentoring program as part of the solution. The third finding in the study was that novice teachers receive no special attention or scrutiny. “One could argue teacher ratings are so high and development is so limited because probationary teachers undergo a rigorous screening process through which weak performers are weeded out. According to this line of argument, all the poorly performing teachers were effectively ushered out while they were still novices” (Weisberg, 2009, p. 15). The study showed the reality of all participating districts and that in U-46, only 28 probationary teachers were released for performance from 2003-2008, a 0.9 percentage of overall teachers.

This lack of rigor also leads to a limited focus on development for novice teachers. Though it is widely recognized that teachers are less effective in their first years in the classroom, differences in performance tend to go unremarked from the very beginning of a teacher’s career. Novice teachers begin receiving the highest rating when they start their career or within a few years of being hired, with 66 percent of novice teachers receiving a rating greater than ‘satisfactory’ on their most recent performance evaluation. By giving novice teachers high ratings from the day they begin teaching, schools communicate inattention to and low expectations for instructional performance. Furthermore, they miss a critical window of opportunity to focus new teachers on their instructional strengths and weaknesses during a formative point in their careers. Instead of getting meaningful feedback about what they are doing right and wrong in their instructional practice, new teachers mostly get the
message that their actual performance has little bearing on how they are rated.” (pp. 15-16)

The New Teacher Project’s “The Impact of State and Local Human Capital Policies on Illinois School District U-46 ultimately led to the Teacher Mentor Program’s recent expansion. One finding was summarized by saying teachers and administrators were very satisfied with the mentor program in U-46, yet current practices led to some missed opportunities for new teachers to participate in and benefit from the specific services that most improve teaching and learning (The New Teacher Project, 2009, p. 14). After reviewing Illinois state teacher mentoring requirements, including Article 21A and the development of the “Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Program” in which districts could apply for grant funds by developing an induction plan that includes mentoring for new teachers with at least 1.5 hours of mentor/mentee contact a week the study examined U-46’s district program. It noted that prior to the 2009-2010 school year, mentees were only those teachers who were new to the profession. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, teachers new to the district, yet who have teaching experience, will be offered one year of mentoring support (p. 15).

Research within the district asserted that U-46 teachers and administrators believed the mentor program was helpful and were more satisfied than their peers in other districts. “Eighty-four percent of administrators believe the mentor program has been ‘very helpful’ or ‘helpful’ in building a strong instructional team at their school” (The New Teacher Project, 2009, p. 16). Also studied were program participants. “Sixty-four percent of mentor program participants ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that having a mentor
helped improve their instructional performance during their first year of teaching” (p. 16). Comparing to 52% in Chicago and 42% in Rockford, 70% of U-46 teachers were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with their district’s mentor program (p. 16).

The mentor program audit revealed that many teachers new to the district, but not new to teaching, missed out on participating in the program, which they believed could have helped improve their performance (The New Teacher Project, 2009, p. 17). “Forty-one percent of teachers new to U-46 since the 1999-2000 school year report that they did not work with a mentor during their first year of teaching. Among these teachers, 54% report having taught in another school district” (p. 17). Of those teachers who did not work with a mentor, more than 66% agree that working with a mentor would have helped improve their performance in their first year of teaching in U-46 (p. 17). These findings must be used to investigate the pursuit of making the program a requirement for all new teachers to the district as opposed to an option or choice.

The New Teacher Project (2009) supported internal data collection from the Teacher Mentor Program by showing the activities that teachers deem most helpful to improving their performance. According to 1,677 U-46 teachers surveyed, observing an experiences teacher teaching, receiving feedback from a mentor on teaching practice, and being observed teaching by the mentor were the top three most effective mentoring activities (p. 18). The study looked at the percent of teachers reporting three or fewer instances of these activities: 67% reported three or fewer observations of an experienced teacher, 74% reported three of fewer occasions of receiving classroom observation from their mentor, and 81% said they observed their mentor three or fewer times (p. 18).
While the Teacher Mentor Program has a requirement of only one mentor observation per year, there is a requirement for three or more observations of the mentee. The results led to a stricter documentation system in the teacher mentor handbooks.

Observation was always a component of the teacher mentor program, but study results will most likely be the Oversight Committee’s focus. While they can always look to increase the frequency of observations, examining the protocols and effectiveness are equally important. U-46 uses Danielson’s Frameworks, as well as pre-observation and post-observation conference forms to create context and focus. Next steps may be to include student performance data to help demonstrate growth in teaching practices that impact student learning and achievement. This would be in line with Senate Bill 315 and the move to using student performance data in evaluating teacher performance. Sixty percent of teachers who were “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the mentor program reported never receiving a classroom observation from their mentor while only 12% of “very satisfied” or “satisfied” teachers with the program report the same (The New Teacher Project, 2009, p. 19). Similarly, 60% of teachers who were “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the mentor program report never observing an experienced teacher while only 7% of “very satisfied” of “satisfied” teachers report the same (p. 19). Data showed that teachers want to participate in peer observation, but what is not clear is how they would react to the inclusion of student performance analysis as part of this system.

Recommendations from the New Teacher Project included:
Require that mentees are observed by their mentor at least three times a semester.
Increase the amount of release time given to new teachers to observe their mentor, as well as other teachers in their building and other schools, to at least twice a semester during their first year of teaching.
Permit teachers new to the district, but not new to the profession, to participate in the mentor program.
Continue to increase the number of new teachers participating in the mentor program by actively promoting the program through induction events, upon hire and during district-wide and school-based meetings.

The Teacher Effectiveness Initiative (TEI) was created shortly after the results of *The Widget Effect* were released. Along with a campaign to grow their own teachers through higher education outreach, the Teacher Mentor Program and Teacher Appraisal Plan became high interest areas for the new Superintendent in U-46. In 2009 the Superintendent expanded the TMP to include all new teachers after making the TEI Coordinator his direct report (see Appendix A). The Teacher Mentor Program was the vehicle for TAP training for new teachers and mentors while the TAP Oversight Committee began training over 600 teachers on the Danielson Framework. It is proposed for 2010 that summer months will contain collaborative training for administrators and mentors for consistent use of the Danielson Framework and observation of teachers (see Appendix A).

The historical development of the Teacher Mentor Program, which began with visions from the Elgin Teacher Association in the mid 1990s and a collaborative partnership with district administration, cannot be isolated from the recent developments in teacher evaluation. *The Widget Effect* and the resulting Teacher Effectiveness
Initiative is only one reason why teacher appraisal and mentoring need to be discussed in combination. The relationship between appraisal and mentoring, the focus of the next chapter, will examine sources of authority for leadership, District Improvement Planning, and the core curriculum of Charlotte Danielson for both areas.
CHAPTER IV
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN APPRAISAL AND MENTORING IN U-46

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the relationship between U-46’s teacher appraisal plan and teacher mentor program. To do so, the primary documentary focus will be the Board-approved School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan and Teacher Mentor Handbook. The examination begins by documenting references within the Teacher Appraisal Plan of the Teacher Mentor Program. Next, selected contents from the Teacher Mentor Handbook will be reviewed to show areas of connection with the Teacher Appraisal Plan. After the review of both documents, the chapter revisits some key moments in the historical development of both the appraisal system and mentor program, focusing on sources of authority for leadership utilized for both progress made and challenges faced. *The Widget Effect* serves as the final means of comparison, as the contemporary document provided findings and conclusions for both teacher evaluation and mentoring specific to U-46.

**TMP References Within TAP Document**

The work of School District U-46 and the Elgin Teachers Association in restructuring and redesigning the teacher evaluation system was “…guided by the following purpose, values and beliefs which are jointly held by both parties…these values and beliefs provide the philosophy upon which the system is predicated” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 1). The values of trust, fairness,
professionalism, equity, continuous learning, teaching and learning, and collaboration for teacher appraisal are the same values promoted ten years earlier during the creating on the teacher mentor program.

“To underscore the importance of the use of rubrics for continual learning and growth, the district has obtained a waiver from the summative ratings given by the Illinois State Board of Education. This is an important departure because the continual learning and insights that comes from deep self-reflection and collaborative conversation becomes the goal for all professional educators in U-46” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 8). “Self-reflection” and “collaborative conversations” are paramount to the Teacher Mentor Program as both the mentor and mentee have reflective organizers to complete, and required conversations both before and after observations occur of each other.

Observations and conferences are the first two components of the pre-tenured certified teacher annual appraisal cycle (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007). Year 1 and 2 teacher portfolios are the third listed component.

Required items for classroom teachers will consist of: 2 lesson plans, a copy of the class rules, a class diagram, parent communication, a sample of one non-instructional and one instructional record keeping, one informal (formative) and one formal (summative) assessment. The new teacher will have the choice of including samples of the work they generate with their mentor and under the auspices of the Teacher Mentoring Program. (p. 14)

This requirement for first and second year teachers serves as evidence to inform the summative evaluation, and is the first direct reference to the TMP in the TAP document. For third and fourth year teachers, goal setting replaces the portfolio
requirement, where the administrator and probationary teacher agree to set one goal for the upcoming year using the Danielson Frameworks (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007).

The Teacher Mentoring Program will continue to provide support for newly hired teachers eligible for the program. Based upon a needs assessment and usage, frameworks training and other support for newly hired teachers who do not participate in the Teacher Mentoring Program will be provided through the Human Resources Department. Examples include the following:

- Access to Frameworks training modules 1-5 throughout the summer and school year.
- Access to exemplary or National Board Certified Teachers to provide guidance in curriculum implementation, delivery of instruction, classroom management and professional responsibilities.
- An online environment to allow teachers to exchange ideas and receive support from exemplary or national board certified teachers moderating the discussions.
- Networks of exemplary teachers and classrooms for teachers to observe.
- Breakout sessions for new teachers to roadmap trainings to facilitate implementation of the roadmap.
- New Teacher Orientation for late-hires. (p. 16)

The Teacher Mentor Program serves as a mechanism for support, in conjunction with Human Resources, to all probationary teachers, not just the ones that select to participate in the program. For tenured certified staff appraisal, the first component is self directed professional growth. The TAP allows for a great deal of choice in this area with the following options: district/school initiatives, classroom based inquiry or masters degree, doctorate/national board certification, and teachers making a significant change in assignment. Under the option of classroom based inquiry, one opportunity is being a new teacher mentor.
Peer observation is already part of the teacher mentoring program in U-46. Mentors are trained to document evidence and to share this evidence with new teachers in a non-judgmental way. The intent of peer coaching and observation is to promote deep self-reflection and an ongoing conversation among peers to improve practice. This is consistent with the idea that to promote continual learning and improvement, the cycle of isolation that characterizes our profession must be challenged and changed. (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007, p. 19)

The Collaborative Conversation form in the TAP is strikingly similar to the Collaborative Conversation Organizer in the Teacher Mentor Handbook. Four quadrants exist for both tools: what’s working, current challenges/concerns, teacher next step’s and next steps for either the administrator or mentor. Both forms require that the observed teacher receive both positive feedback and areas for improvement, as well as an action plan for both the teacher and evaluator or mentor to help foster improvement and grow in areas where competence is already documentable.

**Teacher Mentor Handbook Relation to TAP**

While it is clear that observations occurring between the mentor and mentee are non-evaluative in nature, there are clear similarities in regards to the process of a mentor observing a mentee, and an administrator observing a probationary teacher. As the Teacher Mentor Program adapted the Danielson Framework as its core curriculum, so did the TAP Oversight Committee work to approve it as the means to evaluate its teachers in U-46. Mentors and mentees are required to engage in on-going conversations about quality teaching and learning as described by Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, 2nd Ed. (2007). Mentoring strategies and topics listed in the Teacher Mentor Handbook were organized by components of Danielson’s
four teaching domains. Engaging students in learning, the classroom environment, planning and preparation, demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, assessing student learning, and communicating are all domains or components that the TMP provides a list of both strategies and topics to work under. Each strategy the mentor and mentee choose to strategize and discuss can turn into evidence of proficiency on a performance evaluation. For example, the mentor and mentee can collaborate by developing differentiated assessments based on student readiness after discussing heterogeneous student grouping. Those assessments can be delivered and the results of them can be used to drive instructional decisions. The work done to create assessments and analyze them to alter instructional delivery can be discussed at the pre-observation conference with the evaluating administrator. If the sequence remains in place, the mentor observation cycle occurs before the administrative cycle, meaning that work done with the mentor should carry over to the formal observation round. The evaluator can then use this evidence in the formative evaluation report, as work done in line with the Framework is the type of evidence evaluators are supposed to be focusing on.

The “Coaching Role” described in the Teacher Mentor Handbook mirrors the expectations of the observation cycle depicted in the TAP.

One of the best ways to enhance quality teaching is to have teachers engage in classroom observations and discussion focusing on the practice used to assist and promote student learning.

1. Pre-observation conference-the mentor and mentee should meet to discuss the focus of the lesson to be observed and the needs of the mentee. The mentor should comfort the mentee by clarifying the purpose of the observation by the mentor. The goal should always be to reinforce good instructional practice and to discuss the decisions
and perceptions of the mentee. The observation is not be to used as an administrative evaluation tool.

2. Classroom observation by the mentor should be announced. An agreed upon time is critical. The mentor should observe the entire lesson or class period. The mentor should take notes and gather evidence on the specific goals discussed in the pre-observation conference.

3. Post-observation conference-in a timely fashion the mentor and mentee should meet for a time to review the observation. The mentor should be focused on the goals. Conversation should revolve around the data collected. At the conclusion of the conference the mentee makes goals for the future based on the discussion. Future classroom visits should be scheduled.

4. Mentor should continue to offer formal and informal feedback, guidance, materials, and advice. (Teacher Mentor Handbook, 2007, p. 18)

Specific consistencies with the appraisal cycle are the pre-conference, observation, post-conference format, determining the lesson goals/focus, formalizing a specific date and time in advance, observing the entire lesson, taking notes on evidence based on the Frameworks, and then reviewing and goal setting in a collaborative fashion.

The Collaborative Conversation Organizer in the Teacher Mentor Handbook is not the only mentor tool that aligns with the TAP. The Content, Strategies, Alignment and Evidence form has mentors select an observation focus area:

Content: What are the students learning?

Strategies: How are the students learning? What are the students and teacher doing?

Alignment Discussion: How is the lesson aligned with student content standards and level of student development?
Evidence of Learning: How is teacher determining if the students learning the content? (p. 38). The observation focus areas all fall under a Framework component commonly evaluated on by an administrator: demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, demonstrating knowledge of students, setting instructional outcomes, demonstrating knowledge of resources, designing coherent instruction, designing student assessment, engaging students in learning, and using assessment in instruction.

The Movement/Pattern Chart in the mentor tools section of the Teacher Mentor Handbook (2007) can be used for a variety of purposed including:

- Identifying which students are on task and off task
- Tracking how the teacher moves around the classroom and interacts with students
- Identifying which students move around the room and why
- Determining where teacher directs questions
- Noting which students answer questions and which do not (p. 45).

A conversation between mentor and mentee based on findings derived from one of more of these ideas can lead to better classroom environment notes from the evaluator, if the mentee remains conscious of areas of concern. Creating an environment of respect and rapport, managing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, organizing physical space, using questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, using assessment in instruction, and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness are all components of the Framework that align with this mentor tool that can help support a new teacher develop proficiency in these areas.
Selective Scripting is an example of a mentor tool that aligns with the appraisal plan in that it focuses on the Danielson Framework. Purposes of it include:

- How teacher expresses expectations of students and communicates learning goals
- What teacher emphasizes positively and negatively
- Checking for student understanding
- Wait time
- Lesson design and instruction
- How teacher assesses student understanding and responds to confusions.

By scripting teacher and students’ actions and comments, the mentor can provide feedback all components within Domain 2: Classroom Environment and Domain 3: Instruction.

The Danielson Framework is the sixth section of the Teacher Mentor Handbook, providing a comprehensive outlook on what they are, just like inside the Teacher Appraisal Plan. A notable statement precedes the rubrics:

How should one use the developmental continuum of teacher abilities?

The developmental continuum used in the Frameworks program is not designed to be a check-off list used for evaluation. Rather it is to be used as a guide that will allow for teachers to self-assess a given ability in a non-linear fashion, allowing for continual professional growth. Further, in the TMP it helps the mentor and mentee collaboratively assess the teacher’s level of proficiency, helps teachers set clear professional goals, helps guide the mentor’s support and assistance, and provides a common language to describe and discuss practice. (Teacher Mentor Handbook, 2007, p. 65)
For both the mentor/mentee relationship as well as the evaluator/teacher relationship, conversations revolving around professional practice and proficiency are meant to be collaborative and continuous. Of course, Illinois School Code requires teacher ratings to occur, which in the U-46 teacher appraisal plan are left to the summative observation report only.

**Sources of Authority: Teacher Appraisal Plan**

Realizing in the early 1990s that the district needed to work collaboratively as opposed to in conflict, the TAP Oversight Committee was formed in 2000 to revamp the old appraisal system and place teacher quality at the forefront of importance. The Oversight Committee was comprised to district and union leadership to ensure this collaboration. The committee was slow to get started, and did not put together a plan to be voted on my union membership until 2004. Membership rejected the evaluation tentative agreement in early 2005 because leadership (both district and union) did not successfully educate them on what was the Danielson Framework, why a new teacher appraisal system was necessary, and how it benefitted the teacher. After the “no” vote in 2005, district leadership, the School Board, and ETA all agreed to form a new committee and commit to designing a new evaluation tool for membership vote in 2007 (see Appendix A). With the understanding that the district would still look to implement Danielson’s Framework for teaching as the evaluation criterion for teachers, a new approach was needed to not only create the comprehensive plan, but to show union membership the mode of reaching agreement and the value to accepting the new plan.
Moral Authority

Moral authority is described as “felt obligation and duties derived from widely shared community values, ideas, and ideals, where teachers respond to shared commitments and felt interdependence” (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 39). Assumptions with this source of authority when it is in use are: “schools are professional learning communities, communities are defined by their centers of shared values, beliefs, and commitments, and in communities, what is considered right and good is as important as what works and what is effective; people are motivated as much by emotion and beliefs as by self-interest; and collegiality is a professional virtue” (p. 39). Leadership strategies for moral authority include “identifying and making explicit the values and beliefs that define the center of the school as a community, translating them into informal norms that govern behavior, promoting collegiality as internally felt and morally driven interdependence, relying on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations, and relying on the community’s informal norms to enforce professional and community values” (p. 39). As a result of the use of this authority, teachers should “respond to community values for moral reasons; their practice becomes collective, and their performance is expansive and sustained” (p. 39).

As the Oversight Committee in 2006 to recommit to putting together a plan that would stand a better chance of garnishing union support, it turned to moral authority principles to yield desired results. The greatest indicator of this decision includes the values and beliefs bargained into the Board-approved Teacher Appraisal Plan that appear on the opening pages. These values and beliefs were “jointly held by both parties and
provide the philosophy upon which the system is predicated” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, p. 1). Grounding their new plan in values and beliefs, the Oversight Committee made explicit what defines their intentions with the teacher evaluation process. Teachers were given a new lens to look through as they were to be introduced to the Danielson Framework and appraisal requirements set forth by the committee.

The values set forth by the TAP mirrored the same values the Elgin Teachers Association created ten years earlier. Union membership could not say they do not relate to them as their group first formulated them. The beliefs that were agreed upon specific to teacher appraisal were categorized by each value. Certain beliefs can be considering comforting to teachers, while others are irrefutably best practice. Comforting beliefs include: presumption of competence, supportive/non-punitive, investment of time is valued, choice by teacher of data and evidence, growth producing, and conversation-based. While all of the committee’s beliefs can be considered best practice, the few that stand out are: data and evidence based, consistent objective district criteria, self-evaluate/reflection/goal setting, differentiated/relevant for individual needs, and accountability for teaching and student performance. The values and beliefs introduced by the Oversight Committee not only provided them guidance for completing the appraisal plan, but also a way to show teachers that the change they would be voting on was in their best interest.
Professional Authority

Professional authority is described as “informed craft knowledge and personal expertise, where teachers respond in light of common socialization, professional values, accepted tenets of practice, and internalized expertise” (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 38). Some assumptions when using this source of authority are: situations of practice are idiosyncratic, and no one best way exists, scientific knowledge informs (not prescribe) practice, and authority comes from within the teacher. Leadership strategies include giving teachers as much discretion as they want and need and making assistance, support, and professional development opportunities available, with the hope they respond to professional norms.

The actual observation process outlined by the Oversight Committee, which features the Danielson Framework as the common language for professional practice, was derived with professional authority in mind. “Teachers are to be given specific and meaningful feedback to improve practice through observations and self reflection” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, p. 8). Observations were now designed to include a professional conversation before and after it, with both administrator and teacher feedback and reflection. Strengths and growth areas came from both parties, and the two had to mutually agree upon a focus area reflected on certain components of a given teaching domain.

Providing tenured teachers choice as to how they were going to show continuous growth follows the assumption of no one best way existing. It also follows the assumption that authority cannot be external but comes from the context itself and from
within the teacher. Allowing teachers the opportunity to choose between classroom based inquiry, participation in district initiatives, graduate degrees, or National Board Certification provides individuals ownership in their paths to grow professionally and considers the context of the that individual at that moment in time. The Oversight Committee worked with the understanding that they must give teachers discretion in what they need for it to be considered successful. They also made assistance and professional development available on an as-needed basis, requiring all teachers to commit to one layer of Danielson Framework training, and then provided additional modules of training on a voluntary basis. Those teachers that felt comfortable with the overview training were allowed to sign off on the TAP Statement of Assurance Form and those that felt they needed more information to be comfortable with the change were provided that opportunity. There was also choice in what year they could begin to be evaluated with the new plan. In this training, teachers learned that Danielson is not trying to prescribe teaching practice, but only to provide a framework for conversation to inform the quality of practices displayed in the classroom. This is yet another professional authority assumption in place for the district’s new plan.

In creating the plan itself, the Oversight Committee applied the strategy of promoting a dialogue that explicitly states professional values and accepted tenets of practice as they created observation and professional growth models for probationary and tenured teachers.
Technical-Rational Authority

Technical-rational authority assumes supervision and teaching are applied sciences (Sergiovanni, 1992). Evidence is defined by logic and scientific research, and this research identifies best practice. This authority attempts to standardize the work of teachers to reflect the best way and monitor the process to ensure compliance.

While the Oversight Committee did not use many of the leadership strategies Sergiovanni (1992) says exhibit this type of leadership authority, they did use research to identify best practice. In 2006, the Oversight Committee spent valuable time reading professional literature in the field that would help capture their values and beliefs as well as best practices for clinical and professional growth cycles for teachers. The committee also wanted teachers to know that the contents in the Teacher Appraisal Plan were grounded in research that strives for best practices. These best practices reflect what became the values and beliefs collectively bargained as well as what the actual appraisal plan came to be after months of work.

Psychological Authority

Psychological authority can be perceived as a leadership style based on motivational know-how and human relation skills. The use of this authority produces congenial relationships, harmonious interpersonal climates, and an atmosphere of cooperation. Teacher responds as required when rewards are available (Sergiovanni, 1992). The TAP Oversight Committee did consider how the use of rewards could steer the ETA vote in favor of the new plan. While clinical observation cycles that focus on continual growth and professional dialogue have potential for intrinsic rewards for
participants, it was the professional growth model for tenured teachers that makes this source of authority most applicable.

Introduced in the School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan (2007) was the component of self directed professional growth under tenured certified staff professional appraisal cycle. “The U-46/ETA appraisal plan allows for a great deal of choice in this area. Tenured teachers in good standing choose the option they are comfortable by reflecting on the rubrics” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, 2007). Obtaining a masters degree, doctoral degree, and National Board Certification are three options to choose from that promote the “what gets rewarded gets done” concept. By choosing one of these three options, teachers are not only fulfilling their professional responsibility of participating in district mandated professional growth, but they are also earning credentials that increase their opportunity for advancement and advance them on the district salary schedule through lane changes.

**Bureaucratic Authority**

This authority is in the form of mandates, rules, regulations, job descriptions, and role expectation. It relies heavily of hierarchical management, predetermined standards, and prescriptions handed down by the administration for what, when, and how to comply with the standards of the organization (Sergiovanni, 1992). As the district moved to a model of teacher appraisal that promoted professionalism, continual growth and reflection, the Oversight Committee could not ignore Illinois School Code governed mandates that all school districts are required to include in their appraisal process.
Chapter I highlighted language in Illinois School Code under Article 24A that is evidenced in the new Teacher Appraisal Plan for U-46. Included in their plan are at least two observations of the teacher in the classroom on at least two different school days, with consideration of the teacher’s attendance, planning, instructional methods, classroom management, and competency of subject matter. The district selected to use the Danielson Framework to address these areas of focus, as well as employees’ strengths and weaknesses, another state mandated component of evaluation. U-46 also structured their tenured clinical and professional growth cycles so that every tenured certified staff member was observed at least once every two years, as required by School Code.

**Sources of Authority: Teacher Mentor Program**

The Teacher Mentor Program Oversight Committee was also comprised of district and union leadership, marking a collaborative effort to enact meaningful improvements to the quality of teachers in the district. Unlike the TAP Oversight Committee, the TMP did not experience resistance from either party, as the perception was universally regarded as a positive one. While no one argued the benefit, the decision to only include teachers new to the profession and some special cases was scrutinized within the district and later by the New Teacher Project, leading to program expansion. The committee, over the years, also worked to systematize the curriculum of the program, the expectations for both mentors and mentees, and the professional development meetings and RAP sessions that provided new U-46 teachers the chance to both learn and discuss in an atmosphere outside their school building.
Moral Authority

Like the TAP Oversight Committee, the TMP Oversight Committee began its work with deciding on the values and beliefs that would guide the course of the mentor program. The values and beliefs (see p. 83) helped establish the roles and relationship for mentors and mentees, the types of activities the pairs would engage in, and the emphasis on feedback and growth on classroom teaching performance. Whereas some mentor programs can overemphasize beginning of the school year items like finding forms, and contract items throughout the whole year, U-46 implemented the Danielson Framework as its core curriculum to place emphasis on teaching and learning standards. The core curriculum came into place only after beliefs such as new teachers need to balance immediate concerns with long-term development, mentors can learn to articulate their knowledge of best practice instruction and instructional strategies, and mentoring addresses specific aspects of lesson preparation and delivery were collectively bargained.

Professional Authority

Professional authority was exercised within the Oversight Committee and through the mentor program. The TMP derived off the belief that master teachers could support novice teachers in their planning, classroom environment, instruction, while offering the added support through the trials and tribulations of joining and navigating through the profession for the first time. The committee’s work was rooted in dialogue that sought to “explicitly state professional values and accepted tenets of practice” (p. 38). By creating the Teacher Mentor Handbook and Teacher Portfolio, the committee unveiled a working curriculum of requirements and suggested activities, giving some discretion but also
focus. The addition of the weekly E-newsletter also promoted continual dialogue as best practices were pushed out and then discussed both between mentor and mentee and at quarterly meetings at the TMP Resource Center. The committee sought out to require veteran teachers to hold their mentee accountable for meeting practice standards, but also to provide both the mentor and mentee specific training to make the experience valuable and worth-while. These are clear leadership strategies for use of professional authority.

The committee also placed emphasis on the importance of teachers’ practice, attempting to teach mentors how to articulate what quality teaching looks like. There became requirements for not only the mentor to observe and provide feedback on mentee’s classroom instruction, but also for the reversal to occur at least once a year. The assumptions that authority cannot be external but comes from the context itself and from within the teacher and authority from context comes from training and expertise laid the foundation for the TMP creating a systemic vision of peer coaching as a central component of the program.

*Technical-Rational Authority*

The Teacher Mentor Program in its inception sought to bring best practices into the district with the goal of benefiting not only the new teacher but also the veterans who chose to participate as a mentor. Like any program, it evolved as new research and programs emerged. When the TMP selected the Danielson Framework as its core curriculum in 2002, this source of authority was applied as leaders determined that the emphasis of the program needed to be placed more on instruction, and a common language of teaching behaviors needed to be shared between participants. This occurred
during a time period where Charlotte Danielson’s publications became widely across the country as a teacher evaluation instrument.

Just a few years later the decision paid off in an unexpected way. The second edition of Danielson’s book sought to provide guidance on best practices for certified staff outside the traditional classroom. The challenge of making mentoring relevant for counselors, psychologists, and nurses was difficult to solve as they were typically lumped into the teacher category in any given school district.

The TMP’s decision to adopt the Danielson Framework and the success experienced by the program, led to the later decision to move it to the appraisal system. The district used research to identify best practice, a leadership strategy Sergiovanni (1992) identifies with this source of authority. The other strategy TMP leaders used under this source of authority was to monitor the process to ensure compliance. The program, although grounded more in moral authority than any other, has to remain ISBE approved for funding purposes. Data collection and progress monitoring must occur to secure this funding, which puts certain requirements on all those involved in the program.

While the process of collectively bargaining as an Oversight Committee led to moral and professional approaches of authority, the idea to engage in this undertaking was from scientific research. Technical-rational authority is defined by logic and scientific research and assumes scientific knowledge is superordinate to practice (Sergiovanni, 1992). As evidenced in the two previous chapters, the Oversight Committees, first for the TMP and then later for the TAP, turned to research in the field to steer their decisions on implementation. The decision to participate in collective
bargaining began only after a book study of *Getting to Yes!* was completed and professional development supported the effort.

*Psychological Authority*

Attracting mentors to work with new teachers required U-46 to look at how veteran teachers would be rewarded for participating. While inherently there are teachers who feel a sense of reward in passing on their knowledge to the novice teacher, it was unreasonable to not provide any external rewards as well. External rewards for mentors came in the form of paid stipends that increased the last three contracts, release time from their classrooms to conduct observations and other administrative duties, and professional development that could be directly applied to not only work with their mentees but also their own classrooms.

*Bureaucratic Authority*

In 2002 the U-46 Teacher Mentor Program became one of the first state approved mentoring programs (see Appendix A). In order to do so the program had to incorporate requirements handed down by Illinois State Board of Education. Those requirements were included in the Teacher Mentor Handbook as follows:

- Contact between the mentor and new teacher
- Orient new teachers to professional development plans and School Improvement Plans
- Observations including a pre-conference, classroom observation, and post-conference
- Professional Development at least one time per semester
  - Observing experienced teachers and discussion around aspects of their teaching practice
  - Participating in workshops, conferences, seminars, symposia, or other similar events designed to increase their knowledge and skills with respect
to the IPTS or content-area standards that apply to the new teachers
area of certification or assignment
• Assessment: Participate in formative assessment
  o Prepare at least one written self-reflection on his/her teaching practice for
each quarter of the school year to be reviewed by the mentor teacher.
  Must focus on the IPTS, the new teacher’s certification and teaching
  assignment, and issue identified in the feedback received from the mentor
teacher. (Teacher Mentor Handbook, p. 2)

The Teacher Mentor Program in U-46 has relied on state funding support since 2002 to
help pay for increased leadership personnel, professional development, release time, and
outside resources to benefit the program. Meeting state requirements continues to be
essential for program adequacy, and mandates will continue to apply per Illinois School
Code Article 21A.

Findings and Conclusions from The Widget Effect

The participation in the New Teacher Projects’ study called The Widget Effect
was at the discretion of U-46 leadership. The decision to be one of the sites was in large
part because of the heavy emphasis the district recently placed in mentoring and appraisal
on the district improvement plan. While the leadership strand of the plan focused on an
increase of efforts on teacher quality through more rigorous work on the part of both
administrator and teacher, the district created the Teacher Effectiveness Initiatives group.
The decision of the new superintendent of U-46 to create a pipeline approach where the
TMP, TAP, Higher Education Outreach, and Grow Your Own Teacher programs
combined into a larger branch within the organization (see Appendix A) was an attempt
to systematically create consistency and a bridge between subcommittees that ultimately
shared similar goals and purposes. At the same time, the superintendent recommended to
the School Board that all new teachers should be included in the Teacher Mentor Program (see Appendix A). These two programmatic decisions were a direct result from the findings and conclusions reported from *The Widget Effect*, a report that school and union leaders said validated the work being done on the TAP committee.

Four key strategies emerged from the New Teacher Projects’ findings, three of which directly applied to TAP and TMP in U-46. The first relevant finding was to increase new teachers’ access to desirable mentoring activities (The New Teacher Project, 2009). The study found that 60% of teachers who were “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the mentor program reported never receiving a classroom observation from their mentor (p. 30). Recommendations of increasing observation requirements and release time, as well as opening the program up to all new U-46 teachers emerged and the district acted upon each of them.

The second recommendation focused on teacher appraisal effectiveness and recommendations were made to improve the process. Utilizing multiple data sources, provides informal and formal conversations between teachers and administrators about instruction, and differentiated tools and support were all recommended in 2009. As the new TAP will not be fully implemented district-wide until 2012, there will continue to be inconsistencies in the process and instruments used to evaluate teachers. Even so, all administrators have received training from the TAP Oversight Committee on the new plan and Danielson Framework. The TAP document has all of the ingredients for fulfilling the New Teacher Project’s recommendations as indicated by the annual professional appraisal cycle’s self-directed professional growth and observations.
The third recommendation suggested that support and training for administrators was necessary and they needed to be held accountable for implementation. While the accountability component is still at least two years out as the old and new appraisal plan are occurring simultaneously until the new plan is fully implemented, training has been occurring in recent years for administrators. In 2008 the administration received intensive TAP training as part of a four year comprehensive plan (see Appendix A) and a two day summer training followed in 2009. The TMP and TAP Timeline also shows planning for a collaborative training between mentors and evaluators on the Danielson Framework and new teacher appraisal plan. This training serves as another way to bridge the administration with the mentor program, with the goal of both being a support system for probationary teachers who need clear direction in their formative years on the job.

The Teacher Mentor Program and Teacher Appraisal Plan both share similar goals, and the New Teacher Project helped shape them through research within and outside the district. Recruiting and retaining quality teachers are important goals of the TMP, and the on-going support both the mentor teacher and the TMP Oversight Committee provide for the first two years helps attain the goal. The Teacher Mentor Program leadership wants the new hires to be successful, but also does not want to see poor performers remain in their positions. It is up to the evaluating administrators to make this determination, and while it is unacceptable for mentors to divulge confidential information regarding new hires to administrators, it is acceptable for administrators to ask mentors to discuss certain aspects of the profession with their mentees. The goal of
the Teacher Appraisal Plan is to “support and focus professional growth and
development in a quest for distinguished level of performance, to unify the teacher and
administration in its pursuit to maximize student learning, and to ensure a quality
professional staff” (School District U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan, p. 2). Continuous
learning, growth, and collaborative conversations emerge as important concepts in the
new teacher appraisal plan just as is the case with the teacher mentor program.

DuBois emerged from the beginning of the TMP a leader on the oversight
committee, and later was appointed a full time administrative position to coordinate it.
After the TAP proposal did not pass union vote, he was called on to assist the work of the
TAP oversight committee and brought forward the same leadership approach that made
the TMP successful. His leadership approach concentrated on research that promoted
best practices in the field of education, and these approaches where applied within the
oversight committees he participated on but also within the programs that the committees
developed. Moral, professional, and technical-rational authorities were all in play as both
the appraisal system and mentor program developed, experienced challenges, and were
placed in the spotlight by a larger audience as the New Teacher Project made U-46 a
subject in the study, *The Widget Effect*. 
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter has three parts. The first part revisits each of the five research questions and provides a summary of findings and conclusions as a quick reference for the reader. Implications for educational leadership are then discussed as there is relevance for both district administrators and union officials. Finally, there will be recommendations made for further research, as this study was limited to one school district, methodology, and theoretical framework.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Question 1: How has U-46’s teacher appraisal system developed during the years 1998 to 2010?

Findings

Since the late 1970’s, the district used an appraisal system based off the work of Madeline Hunter. As the Danielson Framework popularized in the late 1990s and became the core curriculum of the district’s Teacher Mentor Program in 2002, district and union leadership determined it would transfer over to appraisal and become the framework for which teachers would be evaluated.

The 2000-2003 teacher contract included for the first time language about a teacher evaluation committee. The language was put into place, but the follow through did not happen until the summer of 2004. From summer 2004 to spring 2005 the
committee, comprised of ETA members and administrators, worked on a proposal that included the Danielson Framework for teacher member vote. A lack of teacher training, communication, and a quote from a local newspaper article from a union official that was taken out of context all contributed to the no vote from the union. The change in the appraisal system was resisted due to suspicion and fear from the teaching staff.

In September 2006 the committee moved towards furthering research, educating the teaching staff, and getting the Danielson Framework set for the following years’ contract. Research was conducted on improving culture, climate, relationships and change-resistance. The appraisal plan included the more current teaching framework, but also several options for tenured staff in regards to professional growth plans. The committee utilized interest-based bargaining to uncover common values and beliefs that drove the decisions to implement new procedures, instruments, and options for teaching staff.

In 2007, after the union was able to foresee they were getting something more legitimate in relation to teacher evaluation through stronger communication efforts, 70% of the members voted positively over the proposed teacher appraisal plan. The school board approved the plan, consistently of observation and professional growth cycles in January 2008.

Immediately following board approval, planning and training for administrators and teachers took place so the plan could be phased in for the first time for the 2008-2009 school year. It was determined training would consist of five modules, the first encapsulating the entire framework and overview of the district’s plan. The final four
broke down each of the four domains of teaching described by Danielson (1996). Teachers new to the district were moved into the new plan, as well as any veteran teacher who elected to, based on their comfort after trainings. 900 teachers were trained on the framework in October 2008, 900 more in January 2009, and the final 900 in February 2009. For the 2009-2010 school year, about 35% of all certified staff worked under the new plan, and starting the 2011-2012 school year, all U-46 certified staff will work under the new plan.

Conclusion

The decision to change the teacher appraisal system after keeping it the same for over two decades was in large part due to the success of the Teacher Mentor Program, and the assumption that better observation and professional growth protocols could lead to less labor strife. The goal of the union feeling more legitimacy towards teacher appraisal coupled the need to do a better job of providing meaningful feedback that would encourage strong teachers to continue to do well and weed out weak teachers who do not belong in classrooms. The New Teacher Project’s findings of how rarely U-46 rates a teacher unsatisfactory validated the district’s need to create a system that would hold all teachers more accountable while also offering the degree of choice necessary to help teachers feel invested in the professional growth process. Knight (2003) said “The trouble is that when you take away a teacher’s right to say no, their ability to choose, you are no longer treating them as professional partners, and you significantly decrease the likelihood that they will embrace what your propose.” Through provided choice first with the amount of professional development teachers could engage in specific to the
Danielson Framework, and then through the launching of the tenured teacher professional growth plan model, U-46 leadership was able to demonstrate their value on individual teaching staff. This in turn could lead to a decrease in labor strife.

The teacher evaluation oversight committee was not able to pass the vote in 2005 because teachers were not informed. The committee refocused by going back to the basics of first developing an understanding of values and beliefs associated with teacher appraisal. The idea of using interest-based bargaining served the committee well as it was important for both teachers and administrators to be on the same page with this before moving forward with laying out the logistics. In doing this, they laid groundwork for offering choice for tenured staff with regards to professional growth. The committee saw that teachers appreciated the choice in voting yes and continued on that path by offering a degree of choice in training and starting on the new plan. The committee saw that teachers appreciated the choice in voting yes and continued on that path by offering a degree of choice in training and starting on the new plan. The Statement of Assurance form (see Appendix E) clearly shows that teachers can participate in as much or little training as they want with a minimum session and extras to accommodate all adult learners. With the expectation that the old plan completely phase out by the 2011-2012 school year, there were three school years that teachers could either move over or stay put, offering them opportunity to stay with what felt comfortable or participate in the change process from the onset.

The inclusion of the Danielson Framework as the tool for evaluating teachers, once communicated effectively, appealed to the teachers of U-46 as they soon realized it is to be implemented under the premise that “teaching is physically and cognitively demanding; a teacher makes hundreds of nontrivial decision daily, from designing
lessons, to responding to students; questions, to meeting with parents” (Danielson, 2006, p. 2). Labeled as a *thinking* person’s job, the Danielson Framework placed high value on the act of teaching and quality teacher behaviors. As a comprehensive outlook of what teaching should be, teachers can look to better themselves in some areas while feeling validated in areas they are already proficient of distinguished in through collaborative conversation.

Question 2: How has U-46’s teacher mentor program developed between the years 1998-2010?

*Findings*

The U-46 Teacher Mentor Program was not implemented until 1998, but it came to be in large part to address teacher quality issues stemming back in the 1980s and early 1990s (see Appendix A). As a way to retain high quality new teachers and provide a method of affirming the work of successful veterans, the district saw this as a “win-win” as stated in an editorial by Superintendent Edwards (1999) the first year of implementation.

The TMP Oversight Committee, comprised of stakeholders representing the district and teacher union, turned to the Elgin Teacher Association’s strategic plan, adopted in 1996, to bargain values and beliefs that would, like the TAP, drive the contents, activities, and requirements of the mentor program. The collaboration and interest-based bargaining implemented by this committee came immediately after Patrick Dolan visited U-46. The district brought him in for consultation with the goal of
decentralizing authority and moving to a collaborative sharing sense. The TMP was the first collaborative initiative that focused on teacher quality and shared leadership.

After establishing values and beliefs specific to the TMP, over-arching goals were established that has positive outcomes for novice and veteran teachers, administrators, and the students being served. A nomination system was established with characteristics of an effective mentor articulated. Essential needs and elements of the program in the early years included teacher release time for observation and attendance at quarterly meetings conducted by members of the oversight committee.

A handbook was developed for both mentors and mentees, similar in content in some areas and tailored to the appropriate role in others. This handbook started with roles and relationships, program information, professional teaching standards, resources, and beginning of school year checklists. Soon, teaching curriculum was added with Danielson’s domains of effective teaching serving as the foundation for professional development and collaborative discussions. Program requirements were elevated to include activities for both year one and year two mentees, with observations being a major highlight. Self reflection and before and after observation dialogues with mentors became a main focus, which parlayed into a more structured teacher appraisal approach after the new plan was developed and approved. The handbooks later provided a long range plan for the year for pairs to accomplish together, with multiple activities linked to the Danielson Framework. Mentors were expected to maintain a portfolio of artifacts that demonstrated their progress both as an instructor and employee of the district.
ETA contract language on teacher mentoring increased through the 2000 decade, as expansions of participants, professional development opportunities, and communications increased. Federal and local funds contributed to the allocation of a full time administrator for the TMP, and eventually, a second and third full time certified staff member were added to the leadership team. Another layer of leadership was added as the oversight committee had to report to a steering committee, charged with keeping the superintendent and school board informed. This was a result of the TMP being an integral function in the district improvement plan under the leadership strand.

The New Teacher Project collected survey data from the district in regards to the TMP and made recommendations much like the appraisal plan. For the TMP, major items included opening participation to all new teachers in the district, regardless of prior experience, and to hold mentors and mentees more accountable to observations and feedback of instruction. The district took responsibility for these recommendations and additions were made to the program.

Conclusion

The TMP Oversight Committee was the first committee with district and union leadership to go through the process of interest based bargaining to uncover value and beliefs, and then apply those to a program that places both leadership opportunity and support to teachers in the district. The mentor program was a result of a shared need to boost morale in the district, spread leadership opportunity, and better support and retain novice teachers. The district committed early to properly funding the program, hiring outside consultants to offer professional development and providing some release time to
participating staff to conduct observations and attend district meetings. This only increased as it became a state-approved program and money was available for full-time leadership.

A major development was the implementation of the Danielson Framework as a core curriculum for the program, leading to an instructional focus and an emphasis on the clinical observation process. While non-evaluative, the feedback the mentors shared had the potential to better the teaching approaches of the mentees. This development became a motivator for the district to revisit the appraisal system and move the same framework to this area, making for a consistent conversation between new teacher and evaluating administrator.

U-46 was one of the first districts in the state of Illinois to be Illinois State Board of Education approved for its teacher mentor program. This led to a funding source to be used for personnel, professional development, and release time. It also served as a way to attract new teachers to the district, as the district boasted they were able to provide a support system for the novice employee. Gibson (2004) pointed to mentoring as the means for providing increased job satisfaction, enhanced career mobility, recognition, increased organizational commitment and socialization, and decreased work alienation. This was necessary as evidenced by the multiple teacher strikes through 1970-1997 and also as Illinois School Code introduced teacher induction and mentoring as a new mandate in 2003. The district had to start examining ways that teacher morale and retention could improve; teacher mentoring served as one way to engage the organizations largest employee group in a positive way.
Superintendent Edwards publicly called the program and “win-win” (Edwards, 1999). Current Superintendent Jose Torres took this a step further in his support efforts for the program. After the results of the New Teacher Project were publicized, the Teacher Effectiveness Initiatives (TEI) assembled where a pipeline approach to recruitment, selection, mentoring, and appraisal was installed. He also supported the TMP oversight committee by recommending to the school board to expand the program to all new teachers and made the Teacher Leader for Mentoring his direct report (see Appendix A).

Question 3: What sources of authority for leadership per Sergiovanni were evidenced in the preparation for and implementation of both programs?

Findings

Evidence of all five sources of authority were found, however, there was notably more evidence of moral, professional, and technical-rational authorities specific to teacher appraisal work in U-46. Starting in 2000, the district began envisioning moving away from the 25-year old plan and updated not only the instruments used, but also the processes for both teacher observation and professional growth cycles.

In 2006, the Oversight Committee took a different approach to restructuring teacher appraisal systems. They began this round of preliminary work by bargaining values and beliefs about teachers and teaching in U-46 that would help construct the clinical and professional growth models to be implemented. These values and beliefs were revisited through the committees’ work and communicated to ETA membership
before re-voting occurred. The practice of working under a set of shared values reflects what Sergiovanni (1992) defines as moral authority.

The Oversight Committee realized that more direction was necessary to ensure more consistent teacher observations. Under the old plan, administrators may or may not have conducted authentic, reflective pre and post observation conferences complete with both oral and written feedback based on specific measures. The new appraisal plan emphasizes the importance of the professional conversation focusing on continuous improvement, and accountability for both the teacher and administrator to move in that direction.

It is the premise of the framework for teaching that it is important for students—all student—to acquire deep and flexible understanding of complex content, to be able to formulate and test hypotheses, to analyze information, and to be able to relate one part of their learning to another. To bring about this type of outcome for students, teachers themselves must have deep and flexible understanding of their content and the skills to enable students to move beyond memorization to analysis and interpretation. Thus, high-level learning by students requires high-level instruction by their teachers. (Danielson, 2006, p. 15)

This premise places a high value of the art and science of teaching, and the examination of the components under each of the four teaching domains by both the teacher and administrator requires a more authentic look at what quality teaching is and is not.

Professional authority was also evidenced through the choice provided to tenured staff specific to professional growth plans and Danielson training. Teachers were allowed the opportunity to choose between activities listed under classroom based inquiry, participation in district initiatives, graduate coursework, or National Board Certification. As the new plan was introduced, teachers were required to attend at
minimum one broad overview training session, and could elect to participate in follow up trainings specific to the four domains of teaching if they felt uncomfortable or wanted more knowledge. Staff were also given the opportunity to choose the school year they wanted to begin the switch to the new plan, with the understanding that all U-46 staff would make the shift by 2011-2012. Giving teachers as much discretion as they want and need, while making assistance, support, and professional development opportunities available are clearly demonstrated by the leadership on the Oversight Committee.

The use of professional literature in the field to serve as a reference point for discussions as the committee worked to solidify an appraisal system classified as best practice serves as the primary example of technical-rational authority in play for the preparation for and implementation of the new appraisal plan.

Results of research findings showed that the sources of authority applied for the process of changing the teacher appraisal system mirrored what occurred with the preparation and implementation of the mentor programs over the last 12 years. The mentor program was also grounded in values and beliefs, evidencing moral authority. Peer coaching became a higher point of emphasis as the program adopted the Danielson Framework and observation requirements in 2002. Dialogue and professional practice were strengthened with the additions of mentor observation tools that helped document evidence of teaching components within the framework. Professional research was applied in the development of program requirements and district-wide meetings. State mandates for both teacher appraisal and teacher mentoring factored in to structural
decision-making. Both the appraisal system and mentor program leadership
committees continually looked at ways to reward the teacher, using psychological
authority, primarily with monetary and time-saving measures.

Conclusion

Sergiovanni (1992) argued that school leaders need to look beyond just using
bureaucratic and psychological authorities. The oversight committees for teacher
appraisal and teacher mentoring did just that by incorporating moral, professional, and
technical-rational authorities in both the process of working together and through the
product that they came up with. Both appraisal and mentoring are suspect to continual
changes as new state and federal requirements dictate. The committee work for both
appraisal and mentoring is not complete and more decisions will need to be made,
hopefully using the same authorities for leadership evidenced that last 12 years.

Decisions will continue to be made with representatives from administrative and
teacher employee groups, specific to appraisal and mentoring. Barth (2006) said if the
relationships between administrators and teacher are trusting, generous, helpful, and
cooperative, then the relationships between teachers and students, between students and
students, and between teachers and parents are likely to be trusting, generous, helpful,
and cooperative. This cannot be accomplished without a common framework and shared
vision for which to work within. While the district must continue to fulfill certain
mandated requirements, the teaching staff will value those aspects of appraisal and
mentoring that are designed for the purpose of provided choice, establishing partnerships,
and promoting individual improvement.
Question 4: What challenges or barriers did the appraisal system and mentor program face during this time period and which sources of authority were used to address them?

**Findings**

The teacher appraisal plan was not Board approved until 2008, shortly after the teacher union voted and agreed to the new plan. The plan was voted down by member in 2005 primarily due to a lack of communication and a true understanding of what the changes were and why they were beneficial to teachers. The oversight committee was able to overcome the “no” vote by clearly articulating a vision for teacher evaluation, highlighting the values and beliefs shared by district and union leadership, the emphasis on professional growth and improvement on a continuous basis, and the opportunities for a differentiated approach based on individual teacher needs. Moral and professional authorities were applied appropriately to gather support from the teaching staff.

The mentor program was clearly considered a “win-win” for administration and teaching staff from its inception. Irrefutably beneficial, leaders of the program only had to look at ways to improve it over time. Mentor and mentee survey data helped program improvements take shape, as well as results from the New Teacher Project’s recent study. Program leaders also turned to research in the field to move the program beyond simple orientation to an instructional focus. Professional and technical-rational authority was evidenced by these leadership moves. Should the state of Illinois’ funding crisis pose challenges to the district in relation to teacher mentoring, moral authority would need to be applied in order to keep a great thing going in this district.
**Conclusion**

Leadership movements and decisions for challenges the oversight committee faced were aligned with the same authorities for leadership evidenced during the process of preparing for, implementing, and further developing both appraisal and mentoring in U-46. The decisions to utilize moral, professional, and technical-rational authority for specific situations that mark the history of teacher appraisal and mentoring between 1998-2010 have produced positive results, and the district has been able to move forward the new appraisal plan while also increasing participation and well-rounded opportunities within the mentor program. The district did not, as Sergiovanni (1992) promotes, completely ignore the use of bureaucratic and psychological authorities. The use of rewards and incentives for teachers helped foster cooperation and participation in both areas, and district leadership were able to promote aspects of both appraisal and mentoring as rewards for both the individual teacher and the larger organization.

Question 5: In what ways do U-46’s current appraisal system and mentor program complement and/or contradict each other?

**Findings**

U-46’s new teacher appraisal plan adopted the Charlotte Danielson Framework. This same framework was adopted by the Teacher Mentor Program five years earlier. Beyond the use of the teaching domains, components, and elements published by Danielson, the appraisal system placed high emphasis on the professional conversations about teaching that should occur before and after the classroom observation. Administrators were trained on how to collect evidence relating to the various
components that comprise the teaching domains. This evidence collection mirrors what mentor teachers are required to do for their mentees. The mentors follow the same observation cycle procedures that administrators do for probationary teachers, only their feedback is non-evaluative. While administrators continue to ultimately rate teachers on a summative report, formative evaluation became more about dialogue and goal-setting and less about the evaluator pointing out faults or offering praise. The observation process turned to more voice from the teacher, the person who has the ownership in his or her classroom and who has to make the decision to make adjustments in teaching based on their own or their evaluators’ thoughts.

Mentor tools researched in the Teacher Mentor Handbook were distributed to administrative staff at professional development trainings. The tools focus on individual teaching components and help the observer quickly organize actions within the classroom as they are occurring. These tools became a focus for post conferences for both mentees and administrators.

Values shared by the oversight committees for both appraisal and mentoring are identical. Beliefs are tailored for appraisal and mentoring. This may be in part because the ETA first introduced them in their 1996 strategic plan, and district administrators saw the value in them. It may also be that values and beliefs were identified because the Teacher Leader for Mentoring also took on a leadership role in refocusing the teacher appraisal oversight committee after the teacher union first voted down the proposal.
Conclusion

It is important that teacher mentoring efforts support mentees in a comprehensive manner. Areas such as lesson and unit planning, classroom management, instructional delivery, and other professional responsibilities associated with the profession are of primary focus in U-46’s mentor program, as the Danielson Framework has been a point of emphasis since 2002. Peer observations with focus areas under each of these domains of teaching are important so that feedback is targeted and specific for the new teacher. For both mentoring and evaluation cycles, probationary teachers consistently have conversations before and after observations that reflect the Danielson Framework. Receiving peer coaching from a mentor can lessen the stress of being evaluated by an administrator since the process becomes routine and non-evaluative feedback can be used to make positive adjustments in teaching.

While mentoring and appraisal will always have distinct purposes, it is important for common assumptions about teachers as professionals remain consistent in both areas. In U-46, mentoring and appraisal both aim to sustain a culture of continuous growth. Establishing trust and providing choice for teachers were major priorities for the appraisal committee as they moved to a new plan, and as professional literature from Barth (2006), Knight (2003), Fullan (1993) and Danielson (2006) were applied. Training mentors on establishing and maintaining positive relationships with their mentees was also a priority. Neither appraisal nor mentoring were set out to “get” the teacher, rather they are both avenues to foster improvements in areas of the profession through the framework of Danielson’s domains of teaching. The values and beliefs that drive the working systems
within appraisal and mentoring in U-46 have the potential to create a culture where teachers feel comfortable having administrators and teaching staff not only visit their classrooms, but also participating in conversations relative to their own classroom environment and instruction. This could lead to further initiatives such as co-planning, co-teaching, and action research.

**Implications for Educational Leadership**

One of the most important responsibilities of school leaders is to provide teachers specific feedback on what is going well and what needs to improve within their classrooms. Administrators have the responsibility of making decisions regarding the continued employment of probationary teachers. These decisions are mostly formed through the clinical observation process. They also are charged with making sure tenured teachers, who are assumed competent by nature, continue to professionally develop through both observation feedback and measurable professional growth plans. Administrators also have the responsibility of leading the remediation process for unsatisfactory tenured teachers.

A multi-faceted new teacher mentor program is required by Illinois School Code. Rationale for these programs range from retaining teachers in a profession that is historically left within the first few years of employment to ensuring that the most quality candidates with the most potential remain on staff, while those that seem bound for poor performance or mediocrity are exited. While mentor teachers are trained not to mix what they do with mentees with evaluating administrators, it is important for administration to use mentors as a resource to help develop novice staff in areas they see the need. Mentor
teachers should be considered instructional leaders in schools and school leaders need to foster their leadership potential by providing them direction in working with new teachers.

Examining the historical development of U-46’s teacher appraisal system and mentor program gives educational leaders a model to look at as they look to review their appraisal system with the passing of Senate Bill 315, or potentially decide their mentor program needs to refocus on similar accountability measures the bill addresses. U-46 selected the Danielson Framework as the focus of professional conversation for both appraisal and mentoring. While highly popular, it does not alone include student performance data as a measure of teacher performance. The study highlighted the Danielson Framework’s contents throughout the study, but more important than the framework itself was the process the district used to implement and develop appraisal and mentoring. The district created oversight committees comprised of key stakeholders from district and union leadership and utilized interest based bargaining to establish shared values and beliefs. These values and beliefs helped guide the working product for both appraisal and mentoring, as set requirements, professional development, and system protocols all could be justified by pointing to one or more of the bargained list.

School leaders need to consider when moral, professional, technical-rational, psychological and bureaucratic authority is best used specific to program development. Sergiovanni (1992) says that too often administrators stick to bureaucratic and psychological authorities with their leadership decisions, neglecting the possibilities that the other three authorities can offer in planning and school improvements. The oversight
committees for appraisal and mentoring in U-46 both demonstrated that multiple sources of authority can be used throughout the process of creating change and developing new systems or programmatic requirements.

While teachers will continue to be evaluated per Illinois School Code, it is uncertain if teacher mentoring will continue to be mandated as the state is currently experiencing a budget crisis. In February 2010, The Daily Herald communicated “More than $31 million in budget cuts for Elgin Area School District U-46 were announced Monday, with more to be hashed out in the coming weeks” (Lester, 2010). John Garcia of ABC7 News said in a March 15, 2010 broadcast, “The proposed cuts in U-46 include a total of 1079 district employees including 732 teachers, most of those with the least seniority” (http://abclocal.go.com/wis/story?section=news/local&id=7330726). Knowing that the reduction of staff is highly based on seniority, U-46 Superintendent Jose Torres said in the same broadcast, “These are teachers that we have invested our award winning Teacher Mentoring Program. So we have invested in them, we’ve sent them to training and we’re seeing them walk out the door, possibly.” In another Daily Herald article, Dr. Torres outlines some approaches to cuts, and said “We’re spending a lot of money on training them. One of the realizations we need to consider is that perhaps it’s not a wise use of training dollars to train first, second, and third year teachers and not build a program around a rookie because they might not return…” (Lester, 2010).

Superintendent Torres speaks to the predicament that school districts will continue to face in economically difficult times. Teacher mentor programs may not continue to receive state funding, but may continue to be mandated. Districts
experiencing financial difficulties may say they want to restrict professional
development dollars to those teachers who are most likely to stay in the district for years
to come. This does not leave first and second year teachers with much of a chance to
experience some of the wonderful things mentor programs like U-46 are offering. When
decisions are made in regards to potentially reducing or cutting programs, considering the
source of authority to make those decisions will continue to be just as important as when
developments and enhancements were made.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

This study was limited to one Illinois unit school district that implemented and
developed a teacher mentor program starting in 1998 and moved to change their teacher
appraisal plan starting in 2000. Additional research could be done in a variety of ways.
The researcher could study: (1) Administrative and teacher perceptions of the TAP and
TMP within U-46 or another school district in regards to effectiveness. (2) The historical
development of appraisal and mentoring in a school district like U-46 through a different
theoretical framework, such as Bolman and Deals’ *Reframing Organizations* (2008). (3)
A comparative study between two school district’s appraisal and mentoring histories,
including sources of authority used by both organizations during preparation work, early
implementation, and further developments. (4) A school district’s response to Senate Bill
315 as they undergo a change process specific to teacher appraisal. (5) The historical
development of U-46’s teacher appraisal system and mentoring practices from 1835-
1975.
APPENDIX A

TMP AND TAP TIMELINE
Teacher Mentor Program and Teacher Appraisal Plan Timeline

- 1991 – Labor strife. Recognition that we needed to work collaboratively as opposed to conflict
- 1993- Future Search sponsored by CEC
- 1996- ETA Strategic Plan focuses on teacher quality
- 1996 – NEA President Bob Chase calls for “new” unionism
- 1996- Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework For Teaching published
- 1996 – August, Patrick Dolan keynotes Institute Day welcome back for 4,500 U-46 certified & classified staff
- 1996- Teacher Mentor Program bargained as part of The Elgin Agreement
- 1998-99 TMP begins first year. Collaborative undertaking, lead by management and union (Oversight Committee). The program is restricted to essentially, new teachers, new to teaching
- 2000 – Collective bargaining. BOE / District Leadership / ETA commit to revamping the teacher evaluation process. Collaborative committee formed. After delayed start, the committee began working in 2002.
- 2001- TMP the recipient of the NEA/Saturn/UAW Partnership Award
- 2002 – Federal grant allowed full time teacher leader of TMP
- 2002 – TMP among first ISBE approved mentoring programs
- 2002 – BOE invites TMP TL to speak at Illinois School Board Association Meeting
- 2002 – TMP integral in obtaining $750,000 Professional Learning Community grant
- 2002 - TMP/PLC Dept sponsors Interconnect Forum w/Higher Ed partners
- 2002 – A Framework for Teaching, by Charlotte Danielson, adopted as TMP core curriculum
- 2002 – CEC certifies the first 3 of 27 Frameworks trainers.
- 2002 – FFT Training offered to interested buildings and became basis for TMP mentor / mentee meetings
- 2003 – U-46 attends first CEC PETAL Compact Meeting (mentoring as focus)
- 2003 – ETA joins TURN
- 2004 – Collective bargaining. BOE / District Leadership / ETA write specific contract language which appoints a committee to design a new evaluation tool by June 2005.
- 2004 – Teacher Leader for TMP added to collective bargaining agreement
2004 – TMP Steering Committee added to Oversight Committee as part of collective bargaining
2004 – Charlotte Danielson makes the first visit to U-46, insight on FFT, teacher evaluation, and mentoring
2004 – CEC trains all administrators in Frameworks and best practice evaluation
2005 – ETA membership rejects evaluation tentative agreement
2005 – First Higher Ed Partner revamps student teaching “appraisal” system around FFT at U-46 urging as a result of Interconnect Forum work
2005 – U-46 designates Teacher Mentor Program Resource Center Room
2006 – TMP’s first two full-time mentor teacher
2006 – ETA / BOE / District Leadership agree to form a new committee and commit to designing a new evaluation tool for membership vote in 2007.
2006 – CEC PETAL Compact membership has influence on TAP bargaining
2006 – CEC facilitates collective bargaining around teacher appraisal. FFT as the core language & approach.
2007 – December 12th, ETA membership ratifies comprehensive bargaining agreement. Contains TAP.
2007 - - Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework For Teaching 2nd edition published
2008 – January 14th, BOE adopts TAP
2008 – Four year TAP implementation strategy. TAP Oversight Committee charged with on-going work.
2008 – Added 2nd teacher leader for TMP
2008 – BOE publicly affirms support of the work the TMP is doing.
2008 – TMP teacher leader charged with TAP project manager role
2008 – Third teacher leader for the TMP added to support TMP and TAP implementation
2008 – Administrators receive intensive FFT and TAP training as part of a 4 year comprehensive plan
2008 – Admin. TAP Advisory Council formed
2008 – The New Teacher Project (TNTP) assesses mentoring and evaluation in U-46
2009 – TMP receives ISBE M & I Grant
2009 – TMP adds three full-time mentors
2009 – TAP training begins for 2900 certified staff (teachers and admin trained together)
2009 – TAP web system created
2009 – 1900 teachers sign e-statement of assurance to signal no more training & intention to begin the TAP
2009 - - CEC and U-46 collaborate for summer two day intensive TAP training
- 2009 – BOE members, Supt., and TMP Leadership attend weeklong M & I symposium sponsored by NTC
- 2009 – TNTP releases “The Widget Effect” and mentoring assessment results
- 2009 - Teacher Effectiveness Initiatives (TEI) created. Has a pipeline approach(Grow Your Own Teachers, Higher Ed Outreach, TMP, TAP, Admin TAP Support, and NBPTS)
- 2009 – TEI as a direct reports to Supt.
- 2009 – Supt. expands TMP to include all new teachers
- 2009 – TMP is the vehicle for TAP training for new hires and on-going support for mentors
- 2010 - TAP training continues for 600 teachers
- 2010 (proposed) – Summer, admin & mentor teacher collaborative training
APPENDIX B

“OLD” U-46 TEACHER OBSERVATION FORMS
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM - NON-TENURE

White copy to Personnel Office
Yellow copy to evaluator
Pink copy to evaluator
(The white copy will be submitted
by the evaluator to the Personnel
Office within 10 school days after the
post observation conference.)

SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46
ELGIN, ILLINOIS

FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION - NON-TENURE

EVALUATOR/TITLE:

To be completed for all non-tenure personnel following each of the formal observations of not less than
thirty minutes, at least three weeks apart, (unless mutually agreed upon) beginning in October continuing
through March 15.

The following areas apply to formal observations:

OBSERVED ACTIVITIES: (See Appendix c):

MANAGEMENT SKILLS: (See Appendix c):

FORM a 999
10-90-915-01

Evaluator's Initials
Evaluator's Initials

* The Teacher Appraisal system, herein referred to as the 'old plan', pertains to the evaluation system that
was in place prior to the bargaining of the 2007-2010 agreement. This article will apply to all members
eligible to remain under this system while the newly bargained Teacher Appraisal Plan is implemented.
The conditions for eligibility to remain in the 'old' system can be found in the supplement, ETA-U46
Teacher Appraisal Plan. Once a member opts into the new appraisal plan they are no longer eligible for
the 'old' plan.
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM - NON-TENURE

PLANNING SKILLS: (See Appendix c)

INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS: (See Appendix c)

OTHERS (See Appendix c)

[Signature]  
Evaluator’s Initials

[Signature]  
Evaluator’s Initials

FORM 999  
10-16-0415-01
# FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM - NON-TENURE

**STRENGTH(S):** (Describe the teacher's strengths with supporting reasons for the comments made.)

**WEAKNESS(ES)/AREA(S) FOR IMPROVEMENT:** (Describe the teacher's weakness(es) with supporting reasons for the comments made.)

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Evaluator's Comments:

Evaluator's Signature

*Evaluator's Signature*

*Indicates only that summary has been seen and discussed*
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM - TENURE

SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46
ELGIN, ILLINOIS

FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION - TENURE

Evaluator's Name: ___________________________ Observation Date(s): ____________

School: ___________________________ Time Period(s): ____________

Grade(s)/Subject(s)/Area(s)/Specialisation(s): ___________________________

Post Observation Conference Date(s): ___________________________

Evaluator/Title: ___________________________

The following areas apply to formal observations:

OBSERVED ACTIVITIES: (See Appendix c):

MANAGEMENT SKILLS: (See Appendix c):

Evaluator's Initials: ___________________________

Evaluator's Initials: ___________________________

FORM 989
10-30-94-90
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM - TENURES

PLANNING SKILLS: (See Appendix C)

INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS: (See Appendix C)

EVALUATOR'S COMPETENCY IN THE SUBJECT MATTERS TAUGHT AND/OR PROVIDED:

☐ SATISFACTORY
☐ UNSATISFACTORY (Explanation Required)

FORM # 909
10-10-2015 01

Evaluator's Initials
Evaluator's Initials
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM – TENURE

OTHERS: (See Appendix C)

EVALUATOR'S ATTENDANCE:

☐ Satisfactory
☐ Unsatisfactory (Explaination Required)

STRENGTHS: (Describe the teacher's strengths with supporting reasons for the comments made.)

WEAKNESSES/AREAS FORIMPROVEMENT: (Describe the teacher's weaknesses with supporting reasons for the comments made.)

Evaluator's Initials

Evaluator's Initials

FORM 959
10-10-041501

- 110 -
FORMAL EVALUATION OBSERVATION FORM – TENURE

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ANOTHER OBSERVATION VISIT PLANNED  □ Yes □ No

RATING OF EVALUATOR’S PERFORMANCE

☐ EXCELLENT
Documented observations reveal performance of a commendable quality. Teacher demonstrates multiple strengths in many requirements of the job.

☐ SATISFACTORY
Documented observations reveal adequate levels of performance.

☐ UNSATISFACTORY
Documented observations reveal significant weaknesses which must be remediated to meet job requirements.

Evaluators Comments:

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

EVALUATOR’S SIGNATURE  *EVALUATEE’S SIGNATURE

*Indicates only that summary has been seen and discussed

FORM #689
10-10-0415-04

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APPENDIX C

“OLD” U-46 TEACHER SUMMATIVE REPORT
CERTIFIED STAFF APPRAISAL SUMMARY FORM

SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46
ELGIN, IL

CERTIFIED STAFF APPRAISAL SUMMARY

Indicates Evaluation Year
1  2  Other

Name of Evaluator/Title

Evaluation Orientation

To be completed once each school year for all non-tenure personnel by March 15th.
To be submitted to the Personnel Office by the evaluator for the purpose of fulfilling tenure requirements.

Formal Evaluation Observation Dates
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

Formal Evaluation Conference Dates
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

Informal Evaluation Observation Dates
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

Informal Evaluation Conference Dates
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  

This final form represents a culmination of all previous FORMAL EVALUATIONS AND INFORMAL OBSERVATIONS

Date of Appraisal Conference
Evaluator's Initials
Evaluatee's Initials

White copy to Personnel Office
Yellow copy to evaluate
Pink copy to evaluator

- 112 -
CERTIFIED STAFF APPRAISAL SUMMARY FORM

CERTIFIED STAFF APPRAISAL SUMMARY

Refer to Previous Formal Evaluation Observation(s)

Check one for each area of performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Management Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning Skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instructional Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (Be specific)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

If Unsatisfactory, be specific as to why:

________________________________________

Evaluator's Comments:

________________________________________

Evaluated's Comments:

________________________________________

Evaluator's Recommendations:

__________________________ Re-employ for 2nd 3rd 4th year

__________________________ Re-employ for tenure

__________________________ Do not re-employ

Evaluator's Signature  *Evaluee's Signature

* Indicates only that final appraisal has been seen and discussed

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APPENDIX D

“NEW” U-46 TEACHER OBSERVATION FORM
### FORM C: OBSERVATION

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Actions and Statements/Questions by Teacher and Students</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- What's Working:

- Current Focus: Challenges: Continue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher's Next Steps:</th>
<th>Administrator's Next Steps:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX E

TAP STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE FORM
Teacher Appraisal Plan
Statement of Assurance Form
(please print)

Name: [Redacted]
School: Nature Ridge
Position: Grade Three
Employee ID Number: [Redacted]

Training Sessions Completed:

X Module A
X Module A and B
Module A, B, __________, __________ (fill in all that apply)

Entry into new U-46 Teacher Appraisal Plan as early as (Check One):

X Fall, 2009
X Fall, 2010
Fall, 2011
Fall, 2012

Statement of Assurance

X I am a tenured teacher and have completed the training for the
new Appraisal Plan and will enter the new system on the date
indicated above.

I am a pre-tenured teacher and have completed the training for
the new Appraisal Plan and will enter the new system on the date
indicated above.

I have declared my intent to retire from School District U-46 by
June, 2012 (notice to retire must be turned in by February, 2012).
Therefore, I am exercising my right to be exempt from the new
Appraisal Plan and remain with the "old" evaluation system.

I do affirm these statements to be true.

__________________________________________
Signature

09/30/2009
Date

Prior to beginning the new plan turn this form into the
Human Resource Department, attention Appraisal Plan Program.
Give a copy to your supervisor. Keep a copy for your records.
Additional forms available on the U-46 Website.

Note: your statement of assurance form may be submitted anytime during the school year, however it must be submitted
by May 15 if you intend to begin the new Appraisal Plan during the fall of the following school year.
APPENDIX F

MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT
Mentor/Mentee Agreement

- I will accept responsibility for establishing and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships with you and every other member of this TMP team.

- I will establish and maintain a relationship of functional trust with you and every member of this TMP staff. My relationships with each of you will be equally respectful, regardless of job titles or levels of educational preparation.

- I will be committed to finding solutions to problems, rather than complaining about them or blaming someone for them, and ask you to do the same.

- I will affirm your contribution to quality teaching.

- I will remember that neither of us is perfect, and that human errors are opportunities, not for shame or guilt, but for forgiveness and growth.

- I will attend all TMP meetings and complete the requirements of the program.

- I will share my values and beliefs about teaching and learning with you and ask that you do the same.

- I will respect the parameters of the Firewall between us and will not compromise.

Signature of Mentor

Date

Signature of Mentee

Date
APPENDIX G

TMP SUGGESTED PARTNER ACTIVITIES
Suggested Partner Activities

The following is a list of possible items/information which the partner may share with a new teacher. Check off items as they are shared.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- sharing colleagues' ideas
- textbooks, supplemental materials
- AV equipment requests
- library/media acquisition
- computer access for staff use, student use
- discretionary funds (and saving of receipts)
- shared equipment & materials (with other staff)
- keys

BUILDING TOUR/school layout & location of:

- AV equipment/library
- bus entrance, employee parking, staff workroom
- cafeteria
- custodial area
- lounge
- office
- rooms for specialists, nurses, social workers,
  psychologist, music/physical education
- staff eating area
- supply area
- workshops

TOUR OF OTHER IMPORTANT PLACES

- good lunch spots
- administration office (Educational Services Center
  introductions)
- closest school hardware/supply/grocery stores
- location of first day institute activities

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- procedures for notifying the home
- behavior expectations for hallway, lunch, washroom, playground
- establishing classroom behavior expectations
- consequences for extreme behavior problems
- expected staff supervision outside the classroom
- identify consequences and rewards

PROCEDURES

- substitute folders, lesson plans, requests for specific
  substitutions
- staff meetings, timing & schedule for team
  meetings, etc.
- program report procedures
- report card process & deadlines
- contractual requirements for non-tuition staff such as
  workshops or visits
- student attendance policies
- movement of children: entry/exit from building,
  washrooms, lunch
- student and staff "dress code"
- fire, tornado, disaster drills
- extra duties, less, clubs, activities, chaperoning
- lunch supervision, eating arrangements for students
  & staff
- homework, testing policies
- student accidents, emergencies
- pullout/push-in programs
- regular hours for employees, building use at other
  times
- referrals for special need students (LD, BD, vision,
  hearing, etc.)
- classroom supply (shrubbery, supply requisitions)
- work order procedures
- fund raising
- field trips & tours
- staff substitute policies (punctuality)
- student transportation
- budget process
- team teaching guidelines
- calling in sick, personal, Association, or professional days

MORE
Suggested Partner Activities CONTINUED

CURRICULUM
- opening day schedule
- lesson plan guidelines & expectations
- integrated activities
- the first week's lesson development
- district staff introduction
- unit & supplemental materials availability
- introduction to specialists gifted, reading, LD/ID
- speech, social worker, nurse, psychologist, guidance, etc.
- the guide/teacher manuals
- district curriculum development process (teacher role)
- district goals/benchmarks/SKII/DII/III
- Provide State/Senior outcomes
- Instructional strategies & learning activities
- subject matter aspects on the building staff
- grading procedures for day-to-day records
- report cards (later)
- the curriculum "flow" overview of units throughout the year
- student ability levels & learning styles

ORGANIZING THE CLASSROOM
- acceptable classroom displays, five animals
- traffic patterns
- storage & access to materials
- expectations of order in the workplace
- options for room arrangement & potential effect on teaching, learning, classroom management

NOTES OF ENCOURAGEMENT
- discuss your schedule & availability
- don't wait, ask about concerns, share proud moments
- share your ideas & experiences
- only provide feedback or alternatives when requested
- encourage "call for help" before things become overwhelming

PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL TOPICS
- LEA/NEA: first year teacher packet review & sharing
- encourage attendance at professional meetings/workshops/conferences
- the school calendar for the year including end of quarter, holidays, assemblies
- staffings or replacement procedures
- cumulative records & the issue of confidentiality
- avoid compromising situations when trying to help, offering students rides
- staff evaluation process
- importance of attending district-building meetings that explain expectations and changes

CELEBRATE

Congratulations!
APPENDIX H

MENTEE PORTFOLIO PROGRESS REPORT
**Portfolio Progress Report** Year 1 (2009-2010)

Teacher

Use this to track your completion of 1st year requirements for the TMP. Record the date you completed requirement and when applicable, submit a copy of your work to the TMP office and keep a copy for your records. Note due dates below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Quarterly Meetings</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend with Mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. RAP Sessions</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend without Mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Lesson Plan</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With Self Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Contact Log</th>
<th>Due by 01/15/2010</th>
<th>Due by 02/22/2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 each Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Domain 2D &amp; 2E</th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardcopy Evidence (NCR Sheets)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. Photo Evidence of Frameworks at Worksite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain 2 Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Photo for each component + 5 photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain 3 Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Photo for each component + 5 photos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G. Domain 4B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardcopy Evidence (NCR Sheet)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H. Domain 4C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardcopy Evidence: Sample of Parent Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Observation by Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1 per quarter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Self Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 per quarter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Quarter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J. Observation of Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1 for the year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter date of observation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K. Individual Growth Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below May 21, 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>2nd Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>3rd Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>4th Quarter Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Submit requirements to [teachername@u-46.org](mailto:teachername@u-46.org) through email at [teachername@u-46.org](mailto:teachername@u-46.org) or using interoffice mail, TMP office, ESC.
Portfolio Progress Report Year 2 (2009-2010)

Teacher

Use this to track your completion of 2nd year requirements for the TMP. Record the date you completed requirement and when applicable, submit a copy of your work to the TMP office and keep a copy for your records. Note due dates below.

A. Quarterly Meetings
   Attend with Mentor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

B. Lesson Plan with Self Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

C. Contact Log
   1 each Semester

| Due by 01/15/2010 | Due by 05/22/2010 |

D. Observation by Mentor
   (1 per quarter)
   Or
   Video Self Assessment
   (1 per quarter)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter</th>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

E. Observation of Mentor
   (1 for the year)

Enter date of observation

F. Individual Growth Plan

Before May 21, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>2nd Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>3rd Quarter Due Date</th>
<th>4th Quarter Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Submit requirements to tmp@qu-46.org through email or using interoffice mail.

TMP office, ESC
Quarterly Meeting One, Year One Participants

"Teachers in a learning community ... are re-searchers, students of teaching, who observe others teach, have others observe them, talk about teaching, and help other teachers. In short, they are professionals."

Roland Barthes

As a member of the TMP, you proceeded on your journey for continuous inquiry about teaching. Mentors and mentees were given time to talk about their shared values and beliefs and to deepen their understanding of their mentoring relationship. You sealed the deal by signing the Mentor/Mentee Agreement.

You began the study of the TMP’s core curriculum: Frameworks, with Domain 2: the classroom environment. Teaching depends on the quality of relationships among individuals. These relationships should be grounded in mutual respect and trust, in which all students feel valued and safe. They know they will be treated with dignity, which encourages them to take intellectual risks. The essential caring that teachers exhibit for their students and the caring that students are encouraged to exhibit for one another define Component 2A: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport.

"A culture for learning" refers to the atmosphere in the classroom that reflects the importance of the work undertaken by both students and the teacher. This is Component 3B. A culture for learning implies high expectations. It is a cognitively busy place where both students and teacher see content as important. While all the components in Domain 2 are important, 2A and 2B are essential for the TAP.

Domain 1 of Frameworks describes the critical, behind-the-scenes work of organizing for classroom instruction or delivery of service. Domain 1 is not directly observable, however, one can see evidence of an educator’s preparation for practice. To get the meaning behind the planning and preparation, one must engage in a reflective conversation. Components 1B and 1E are important TAP connections.

Special points of interest:

Rick Smith, author of Conscious Classroom Management, will be our guest speaker for RAP Session 1 on October 27, 2009 from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM location TBA

Sign up for your RAP session on CourseWhere:

How to use CourseWhere:

1. Go to the U46 Home Page and click on U-46 Employee Resources.
2. Click on Professional Growth
3. Click on CourseWhere and follow instructions
APPENDIX J

ELGIN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN
Why does the ETA exist?

We exist to advance the cause of the teaching profession and the cause of public education – the cornerstone of our democracy.

What principles govern ETA’s effectiveness as an organization?

- Fairness
- Dignity
- Honesty
- Justice
- Integrity
- Equity
- Trust

What does the ETA want to be?

- Principle-Centered
- Effective
- Strong
- An Advocate
- An Organization Continually Learning
- A Model of our Ideals

What does "principle-centered" mean? To answer this question we rely on the work of Stephen R. Covey, who defines principles as natural laws that have universal application. These laws are fundamental, timeless, and self-evident. They pertain to human relationships and human organizations. Mr. Covey compares principles to a compass which has a true north that is objective and external. He believes that principles are as permanent as the true north on the compass and that organizations that are principle-centered are based on "true north" principles such as those listed above.

*See Principles-Centered Leadership and the 7 habits of highly effective people.
What does the ETA stand for?

We believe in the empowerment of teachers in all decisions that affect the profession of teaching.

We believe in a shared decision-making process that is consistent with the professional role of teachers.

We believe that the economic and professional well-being of teachers is necessary to the existence of quality public schools.

We believe that professionalism is enhanced as teachers work together to improve the level of their teaching skills.

We believe that involvement in the decision-making process by all stakeholders is necessary for quality public schools.

We believe effective public schools require adequate facilities, supplies, equipment, and support services.

We believe in a safe teaching/learning environment for teachers and students.

We believe small class sizes are essential to effective student learning.

We believe in honoring and respecting human diversity and dignity.

We believe that a strong emphasis on staff development is essential to deal with a rapidly changing society.

We believe that staff development needs of teachers are best identified and addressed by teachers.

We believe that an effective school district is an organization continually learning that draws from the many and varied talents of its teachers.

We believe that quality education depends both on a positive student-educator relationship and pedagogical or subject-matter skills.

We believe that the ETA must represent the highest aspirations of its members and is committed to an organization based upon member involvement.

We believe that the ETA must be an organization that models teamwork and open communications.
We believe that the ETA must be an effective advocate organization for its members, both individually and collectively.

We believe in a strong collective bargaining agreement.

We believe that the ETA has a proud history and tradition which will enhance our future.

Adopted April 10, 1980
REFERENCE LIST


Collins, J. (2001). Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don’t. London: Collins.


VITA

The candidate, Joseph Schumacher, was born in Skokie, Illinois on September 24, 1980 to parents, Robert and Joan (Trader) Schumacher. Joseph’s education began in Buffalo Grove at Longfellow Elementary and Cooper Middle School. In 1999, he graduated from Buffalo Grove High School with honors distinction.

In 2003, Joseph graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Education from Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. In 2006, he received a Master of Science in Education degree in Educational Administration from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. At that time, he also earned an Illinois Type 75 Administrative Certificate. In 2007, Joseph entered the doctoral program in Administration and Supervision at Loyola University Chicago. Joseph earned his Superintendent certification in 2010 and will graduate in December 2010.

Joseph began his career in education in New Lenox, Illinois, at Lincoln-Way Central High School as an English teacher and Assistant Dean. He then accepted the position of Literacy Resource at Cooper Middle School in Buffalo Grove. Joseph served in that capacity for one year before accepting his current position of Assistant Principal at Dundee Middle School in West Dundee, Illinois.
The dissertation submitted by Joseph Schumacher has been read and approved by the following committee:

Janis Fine, Ph.D., Director
Associate Professor, School of Education
Loyola University Chicago

Vivian Gordon, J.D., Ph.D.
Associate Professor, School of Education
Loyola University Chicago

Stephanie Ramstad, Ed.D.
Principal, Carpentersville Middle School
Community Unit School District 300