

# Introduction

**After reading this chapter,  
the reader will be able to explain**

1. the purpose for writing this book;
2. the information contained in each chapter.

**M**y interest in teacher evaluation began in 1980 when I served in the role of vice president of a local teachers association/union. The teachers in the district had just completed a state labor-board election to certify its first teachers union (teachers association). As vice president of the association, I was chosen to chair the negotiations of the district's first contract between the teachers association and the school board. One of the components of that contract was the development of a process for the evaluation of teachers. Because the district did not have a formal process for evaluating teachers, I began to read about different models for teacher evaluation. Once the contract was negotiated, I was asked to take the role of chair of the teachers association's grievance committee. This seemed to be a logical job for me, since I had been intimately involved in the development and bargaining of all the articles in the teachers' contract. My first experiences with representing teachers in this capacity were related to interpretations of the supervision and evaluation clause in the contract.

I credit the National Education Association (NEA) with providing me with the excellent nuts-and-bolts training in teacher supervision and evaluation that I would draw upon for the rest of my career. I subsequently went on to earn a master's degree and doctorate and spend 16 years in school administration, learning a great deal about supervision and evaluation through those experiences. However, my early lessons from the NEA contained important components that did not appear in my subsequent academic and administrative training.

In 1986, I was hired for my first administrative position (assistant principal), and I was trained by the district in a model of clinical supervision and evaluation. At the same time, I was working on my Ph.D. in school administration. This offered me a great opportunity to examine and practice teacher supervision and evaluation, both from an academic and a practical, boots-on-the-ground perspective. Subsequently, I worked in administrative roles as principal and director of student services, evaluating regular education classroom teachers, special education teachers, guidance counselors, speech and language pathologists, school nurses, school psychologists, social workers, and professionals in just about every other position that exists in a school district. My fascination with the supervision and evaluation process continued, and I focused much of my professional reading and other professional development activities in this area.

In 1995, I had what, to me, was a unique opportunity. I was hired as the assistant superintendent for personnel (a.k.a. human resources) in a nearby urban-suburban school district. This position gave me the opportunity for districtwide leadership in labor relations, and particularly, staff supervision and evaluation. Charged with improving a supervision and evaluation program that was functioning poorly, I set out to learn all I could about the topic. I examined a long list of models and training programs before deciding that none provided all the components needed for an effective model of teacher supervision and evaluation. It was then that I began creating the model that would, in 2002, become the topic of the first edition of this book.

In 1999, I began to work with other school districts on a part-time basis, assisting them with im-

proving their supervision and evaluation programs, as I continued my work as an assistant superintendent. In 2002, I left the assistant superintendent position to devote myself full time to this work as president of Ribas Associates and Publications (<http://ribasassociates.com>). In this role, I have had the opportunity to work with a number of supervision and evaluation programs across the United States and Canada. These experiences and the continuing development of the professional knowledge base on teacher supervision, evaluation, and development led to the publication of the second edition of this book in 2005. Since 2002, the other consultants in our organization and I have used the various editions of this book to work with school districts, developing supervision, evaluation, and development systems and training teachers and administrators in those systems. The collective knowledge we obtained, combined with the most current professional literature on the topic, has gone into the creation of this third edition and the model it contains.

The model in this book addresses the four components that an administration and a teachers association need to understand to have an effective program of supervision, evaluation, and development. These components, Educational, Legal, Political, and Social-Emotional (E.L.P.S.), and the definitions for supervision, evaluation, and development are explained in Chapter 1 and referenced throughout the book. The book is structured with nine chapters.

Chapter 1 briefly discusses the evolution of teacher supervision and evaluation. Since this is a book more about practice than theory, we provide ample references for those interested in the theoretic underpinnings of various models, but do not discuss the models in depth in this book. The first chapter discusses the change from supervision and evaluation as a solely summative process controlled completely by the administrator to the professional growth cycle model that is now in use in many school districts. For the remainder of this book, I will refer to the *supervision, evaluation, and development system*, rather than the *supervision and evaluation system*. As discussed in Chapter 1, we will see how the teacher-development process (professional development) and supervision are now inseparable as a single process designed to create

positive change in teacher performance in order to ultimately raise student achievement. Chapter 1 also explains some of the common terms used in supervision, evaluation, and development, such as *supervision*, *evaluation*, and *clinical supervision and evaluation*, and describes how they apply to daily practice. It then goes on to explain each of the four E.L.P.S. (Educational, Legal, Political, and Social-Emotional) components.

Chapter 2 explains how administrators can use classroom observations to assist teachers in the development of their teaching. It describes the techniques for gathering data during a classroom observation, the process of analyzing that data, and the skills for effectively converting that data into clear and concise observation writeups. Full-lesson observation is just one in a long list of ways in which we gather data about classroom teaching. Later chapters will look at the other types of data that administrators and teachers should examine to have a 360-degree view of a teacher's performance.

Chapter 3 looks at all the different types of teacher-supervisor conferences that are used in the supervision, evaluation, and development process. It provides supervisors with concrete strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of those conferences.

Chapter 4 looks at all the sources of data (other than those obtained in a full-length lesson observation and a conference) that teachers and administrators should examine during the supervision, evaluation, and development process. It teaches supervisors how to gather and analyze these various data sources. Supervisors also learn to determine which sources of data are information, which are evidence, and the appropriate use of each. The chapter concludes by describing how all data sources are gathered together to write the summative evaluation report at the end of the year or the end of the multiyear evaluation cycle.

Chapter 5 looks at the structures needed at the district level for effective teacher supervision, evaluation, and development systems. These are the structures put in place by assistant superintendents, superintendents, and school boards to enable administrators to effectively conduct actual supervision, evaluation, and development activities. Training and coaching individual evaluators

will not yield effective teacher supervision, evaluation, and development in a school district. Effective districtwide supervision, evaluation, and development require a systemwide approach that includes ongoing training, coaching, support, and assessment of the work of the individual supervisors.

Chapter 6 looks at the procedures for working effectively with low-performing, tenured teachers. It includes creating and implementing effective performance-improvement plans for teachers performing below a district's standard and enhanced goals plans for teachers barely meeting a district's standard. It teaches important legal concepts, such as due process, rules of evidence, harassment, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Weingarten Right, and the Duty of Fair Representation, that are directly related to working with low-performing, tenured teachers. Readers will learn how to improve the work of teachers with a history of low performance, or, if these teachers fail to improve, to remove them.

Chapter 7 looks at the concept of progressive discipline. This is the structure for addressing the behavior of teachers (or other employees) that needs to be corrected immediately and cannot wait for the full supervision, evaluation, and development cycle to occur. It also addresses extreme instances of teacher misconduct that require immediate disciplinary action.

Chapter 8 looks at the development of supervision, evaluation, and development documents. It describes the process for developing teacher performance standards and procedures for assessing teachers' implementation of those performance standards. It contains sample teacher performance standards and procedures that districts can use to develop their own supervision, evaluation, and development systems.

Chapter 9 looks at the relationship between the teachers associations (unions) and management as it relates to a district's supervision, evaluation, and development system. It helps labor leaders and administrators understand each other's perspectives and work together to provide a system that is fair to teachers and increases student performance levels.

## **Conclusion**

The supervision, evaluation, and development process is a district's primary method of quality control and educational improvement. As you read this book, you will see that this is one of the few processes that impacts every teacher, guidance counselor, school psychologist, and other type of professional providing direct service to students. Thereby, this process affects the education of every student in the district.

Creating a system for successfully supervising, evaluating, and developing the entire professional staff of a school district is a daunting task. The reason for this is that an effective systemwide program can be achieved only if the administrators, teachers and teachers' association/union understand and attend to the educational, legal, political, and social-emotional dimensions of the process. Historically, the expertise, time, and money needed to provide adequate training for such a program has forced most districts to focus, at best, on only one or two of these dimensions. Consequently, evaluators and teachers are often frustrated with the supervi-

sion, evaluation, and development process, because they lack the understanding, training, and support needed to effectively attend to all four dimensions. This book provides districts with the tools to systematically and cost effectively assess and revise their supervision, evaluation, and development programs to successfully address the E.L.P.S. dimensions. The book combines the most current research and practice in the field with more than 30 years of my own experience working on this topic with school districts in my roles as a teachers association officer, administrator, and consultant.

This book is intended to be a practical guide that school boards, administrators, and teachers associations can use to ensure that the supervision, evaluation, and development system in their school or district results in high student achievement and positive relationships between the education professionals and their supervisors. Every example in this book is an actual example taken from my work and that of the consultants in my organization, as we worked with school-district personnel in a wide range of districts. It is a book by practitioners, for practitioners.