



**ALBERT SHANKER INSTITUTE
THE GOOD SCHOOLS SEMINARS**

III. MEASURES OF TEACHING PRACTICE

EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

Michelle Oliva, Carrie Mathers, and Sabrina Laine, *Principal Leadership*, March 2009

This article, aimed at principals, argues that they can play a more central role in transforming teacher evaluation systems into mechanisms for improving teaching and learning. The article argues for increased frequency of regular feedback about instruction, multiple evaluators, and specific training for those observers. If the education system cannot provide meaningful formative and summative feedback to teachers, argue the authors, it relinquishes significant opportunities to influence teacher practice. Without appropriate measures that recognize excellence and identify problems, investments in teacher development are disconnected from school and district goals for improvement.

TEACHER TO TEACHER: REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW

Susan Moore Johnson, John P. Papay, Sarah E. Fiarman, Mindy Sick Munger, Emily Kalejs Qazilbash, Center for American Progress, May 2010

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) is a promising program to improve the teacher evaluation system and teaching quality more broadly. Under PAR, an innovative approach that uses expert teachers to conduct regular evaluations for novice teachers and underperforming veterans, districts can focus attention on instructional quality, retain the most effective teachers, and dismiss teachers who are not contributing to student learning. Because PAR places some evaluation responsibility on peers and requires a team of teachers and administrators to manage the process, the program is challenging to implement. The report argues, however, that it holds great potential for improving teacher quality.

THE EFFECT OF EVALUATION ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM LONGITUDINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA OF MID-CAREER TEACHERS

Eric S. Taylor, John H. Tyler, Draft Paper, September 2010

Measuring and increasing teacher effectiveness have become dominant themes in American education reform movements—with value-added modeling and classroom observation being two of the dominant methods. Each method has its advocates, and each has demonstrable advantages and disadvantages. Advocates of classroom observation suggest that such practice-based evaluation can provide important feedback that can help teachers improve their practice. To date, however, the effect of evaluation itself on teacher effectiveness is an unanswered empirical question. The authors address this question, asking: Do experienced teachers who undergo evaluation in a well developed and rigorous practice-based evaluation system become better teachers as a result of going through the evaluation process? Using data from the Cincinnati Public School system, they find evidence that Cincinnati's Teacher Evaluation System does increase a teacher's ability to promote student achievement growth as measured by test scores.

USING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES AS EVIDENCE OF EXTERNAL VALIDITY FOR INDICATORS OF TEACHER QUALITY: CONNECTICUT'S BEGINNING EDUCATOR SUPPORT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Mark Wilson, PJ Hallam, Ray Pecheone, and Pamela Moss, Draft Paper

This paper describes a study examining one aspect of the validity evidence for Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program. The BEST program (currently under revision) requires new teachers to submit a portfolio chronicling a unit of instruction at the end of their second year. State-trained scorers, who are frequently content-specialists, evaluate the portfolios on instructional design, instructional implementation, assessment of learning, and teachers' abilities to analyze teaching and learning. New teachers are rated in one of four categories in each domain: conditional, competent, proficient, and advanced. The study investigates the relationship between BEST portfolio scores and teachers' average value added effects on students' achievement as a measure of teacher quality. The researchers found a correlation between the two measures. Specifically, a one unit change in the portfolio score corresponded to a 2.20 change in fall-to-spring test score units—roughly 46% of a year's average change, or 4 months of teaching time—for the students in this study.