ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

ABOUT

SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

by

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#### ABSTRACT

This project examines problems in the supervision of instruction within elementary schools and, by means of a survey, attempts to determine elementary classroom teachers' perceptions about who can supervise instruction effectively and how much supervision of instruction time they would like to receive.

A brief review of the literature indicates six problems. First, teachers and their supervisors may disagree on the aims of education.

Second, it may be difficult to agree upon the number of supervisory personnel needed within a school system. Third, the contradictory forces of hierarchical control and of professional autonomy may cause friction. Fourth, some supervisory personnel may find a conflict between their roles as both evaluators of teachers' competence and as professional mentors to the same teachers. Fifth, it is often difficult to determine which sources of pupil learning can be attributed to teachers' influence. Sixth, because research indicates that there is considerable discrepancy among the perceptions of a group of supervisors, the objectivity of a particular supervisor's judgment or offered assistance may be suspect.

A questionnaire eliciting teachers' perceptions about how much supervision they received in the 1974-75 school year, about how much supervision they would like to have received and about who they feel is able to effectively evaluate teachers' competence and help teachers grow professionally was sent to one hundred North Vancouver elementary class-room teachers in order to get a random, stratified proportional sample.

Data from the seventy-five returns are discussed and three main conclusions

are drawn. Elementary classroom teachers would prefer more evaluation of their professional work. At the same time, elementary classroom teachers would like to get more assistance in their professional development than they presently receive. Moreover, many elementary classroom teachers are receptive to changes which would result in the tasks related to supervision of instruction being performed not only by traditionally recognized supervisory personnel but also by other teachers within the school system.

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#### CHAPTER I

#### THE NEED TO EXAMINE

#### SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

#### INTRODUCTION

A great deal of human and financial resources are used to support the public school systems in Canada and in most other countries. It is almost a universal practice in public school systems that one or more teachers in a school are held responsible for providing educational training and guidance to a specified group of students. In order to ensure that this responsibility is carried out persons are appointed to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers and to help teachers improve their professional skills and expertise. It is hoped that supervisory personnel will motivate competent teachers to teach as well as possible, that they will identify superior teachers (possibly for new assignments), and that they will try to maintain high teacher morale. Supervisory personnel are also required to identify incompetent teachers, to help them in trying to become competent or if necessary to remove them from teaching positions.

The success of supervisory practices can be examined from several viewpoints. Trustees, the elected representatives of the public who have traditionally appointed persons to supervisory positions, may view supervision of
instruction in terms of the quality of educational programs given the students
in the school district. Persons in supervisory positions in many cases probably
set for themselves criteria for the success or failure of their supervisory
services. Those who are supervised, whether actually or potentially, may have
expectations of a supervision program or may at least have impressions about
supervisory personnel and practices. It is the perceptions of this latter
group, the classroom teachers, with which this paper is concerned primarily.

#### THE PROBLEM

The amount and kind of instructional supervision within a school system presumably affects the tenure, expertise and job satisfaction of classroom teachers. As most supervision of instruction attempts to improve teacher effectiveness it may be helpful to find out from classroom teacher their perceptions about the amount of supervision they now have and from whom they receive it as well as the amount of supervision they would like to have and from whom they would like to receive it.

Although teachers' perceptions about the optimal amount of supervision and about the persons able to do the supervision should probably not determine solely the supervisory practices within a school system, if most teachers are concerned about continuously improving their professional expertise then their perceptions should at least be considered in deciding on how many human and financial resources are to be allocated to the supervision of instruction. Moreover, after considering teachers' perceptions it might be advisable to provide for a variety of ways in which teachers are assisted in their professional development and in which teacher competence is evaluated.

The main concern of this project is to determine what are the generalized perceptions of elementary classroom teachers in one British Columbia school district about supervision of instruction and then to draw some tentative conclusions about possible changes in supervisory practices.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF ONGOING STUDY

Supervision of instruction is a very difficult and complex problem. Researchers (Ryans, 1960, and others referred to in Part Two) generally agree that:

- Changes of values at different times result in changes in perceptions of what constitutes effective teaching.
- 2. Despite the efforts to remain objective, supervisors usually find it impossible to divorce their values from their image of a good teacher.
- 3. No single person is a universally effective teacher.
- 4. No single trait or cluster of traits is indispensable to effective teaching.

If these findings or observations are valid and it is, in fact, impossible to predict what kinds of teachers will be effective in given situations or to determine how able the supervisors are to work toward the achievement of aims currently accepted by the whole community rather than their personal objectives, it seems to follow logically that an ongoing study of supervisory practices is needed.

At the same time, if it is necessary to evaluate teachers' competence and to help teachers develop professionally then it is necessary to decide on which persons are able to evaluate teacher competence and which persons are able to help in the professional growth of teachers.

#### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

<u>Perceptions</u>. In both the questionnaire and throughout this report of the project, the term 'perception' shall be interpreted as meaning an immediate or intuitive judgment.

Evaluation of Teaching Competence. Since this survey was conducted in a British Columbia school district the meaning of "evaluation of teaching competence" is determined within the context of this educational system. Formal and legally sanctioned evaluation of a public school teacher's professional abilities is done by the principal of the school to which the teacher is assigned and/or by the superintendent of the school district. Directors of instruction are permitted to write formal evaluations of teachers' work but in North Vancouver the director's area of responsibility was almost exclusively within the secondary schools. At the time of this survey there was a superintendent and one assistant superintendent who were available to elementary teachers for an evaluation of their teaching competence. As used in this project, 'evaluate' means to make a judgment about or to give an appraisal of. 'Competence' connotes fitness for teaching the children to which the teacher has been assigned: in other words, the teacher possesses adequate teaching skills and is capable of providing acceptable professional guidance for the education of children. As an operational definition, particularly for the fifth page of the questionnaire, in the analysis of the data and in the discussion in Chapters IV and V, 'evaluation of teacher competence' shall be interpreted to mean the making of sound judgments about a person's ability to educate children.

Assistance In Professional Growth. The term 'professional' is here used to denote the special knowledge and requisite skills needed by a teacher in order to educate children. 'Professional growth' and 'professional development' are used interchangeably and, in the context of this study, mean an increase in a teacher's knowledge and/or an improvement or increase in a teacher's skills in teaching. 'Growth' or 'development' in the ability to teach also implies, although does not necessarily presuppose, at least basic competence in teaching.

This report does not attempt to discuss the various ways in which 'assistance' can be given. However, as examples, such methods as discussions and demonstrations of effective teaching strategies might be used.

Temporary Appointment. According to the Regulations of the Public Schools Act for British Columbia, a temporary teaching appointment is

- (a) for a period not exceeding one year, to any position temporarily existing or temporarily vacant;
- (b) for a period not exceeding the remainder of the existing school-year, to any position which has become vacant during a school-year.

(Regulations, 1973:14)

It is this definition which is used.

Continuing Appointment. The definition used here is stated in Section 128 of the B.C. Public Schools Act.

(2) Every appointment made by a Board, except a probationary or temporary appointment made under the regulations... shall be deemed to be and to constitute a continuing contract until terminated in the manner provided in this Act.... (PSA, 1974:4000)

<u>Probationary Appointment</u>. The Regulations of the B.C. Public Schools

Act define the procedure for a Board to change a teacher's appointment from

continuing to probationary:

...the Board may, at any time during the first nine months of a teacher's appointment...terminate his continuing contract and place him on a probationary appointment. (Regulations, 1973:12)

Supervision. There is an extended discussion at the beginning of Chapter II about the definitions given to 'supervision' by various scholars and writers. As a general description of the meaning given the word throughout this project, 'supervision' includes those activities which are performed in order to evaluate the teaching of teachers, to help teachers improve their professional knowledge and skills, and possibly to direct at times the professional activities of teachers.

#### AN OVERVIEW

Chapter II contains three main topics. It begins with a few examples from the literature of definitions of 'supervision.' There is discussion on what are some commonly agreed upon elements of supervision. This is followed by an outline of various supervisory roles. The viewpoints of several writers are presented and reference is made to some of the research in this area. The chapter ends with a discussion of six basic problems which need to be considered.

Chapter III explains how the sample was arrived at, how the data was collected and some of the considerations made in constructing the question-naire.

Chapter IV points out what are considered to be significant data and briefly discusses possible reasons for the results of the completed returns.

Chapter V draws some conclusions and points out implications for further decision making in the area of supervision of instruction.

#### CHAPTER II

#### PERSPECTIVES ON

#### SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

#### DEFINITIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Scholars and researchers have defined supervision of instruction in various ways:

Supervision consists of all the activities leading to the improvement of instruction, activities related to morale, improving human relations, in-service education, and curriculum development.

(Wiles, 1967:5)

Essentially, supervision is that form of professional leadership directed towards the improvement of learning through activities which result in the professional growth of the teaching staff. The goal of supervision is better learning, and this goal is attained through better teaching. Improved teaching is the result of professional growth on the part of the teacher, and the function of supervision is to promote this professional growth.

(Robinson, 1965:55)

...an expert technical service primarily aimed at studying and improving cooperatively all factors which affect child growth and development...

(Burton, 1955:11)

...effective change in the teaching-learning situation... is the ultimate end of supervision

(Claye, 1963:360)

The common dimension of supervision—found in all positions of leadership—is the ability to perceive desirable objectives, and to help others contribute to this vision and to act in accordance with it.

(Lucio, 1969:21)

The primary aim of supervision must be to recognize the inherent value of each person, to the end that the full potential of all will be realized.

(Neagley, 1964:1)

Reeves discusses the conditions under which effective supervision can take place:

Supervision involves working with persons in such a way that direction, coordination and evaluation can be most effective. Supervision implies creating the conditions under which people work well and strive to achieve the goals...Good supervision seeks to create a climate in which personal needs and desires are also given scope for expression and satisfaction; it seeks to avoid situations in which personal goals are inevitably sacrificed in the name of institutional purposes.

(Reeves, 1962:14)

From this sampling of definitions and descriptions of what is meant by "supervision of instruction" several key elements are apparent:

- those who supervise try to improve instruction by changing teacher behaviour,
- 2. improved student learning is the primary objective of supervision.
- 3. sound human relations are needed for effective supervision, and
- 4. those who supervise are expected to have greater professional expertise and a broader vision of instruction than do those who are being supervised.

These generalizations imply several assumptions which are crucial to successful supervisory practices. They imply that those who supervise know what should be learned by students and what kinds of instruction and interpersonal relationships between students and teachers are likely to ensure and increase the students' learning. They also imply that the teachers being supervised will agree with or will eventually agree with the supervisors on what should be learned by students and on effective instructional methods.

#### SUPERVISORY ROLES

Research studies on the effectiveness of various supervisory personnel are plentiful in the literature. Two studies might serve as examples.

Parsons (1971) received questionnaire returns from 556 teachers in West

Central Ontario. His major findings included:

- Of the 26 supervisory positions considered, the principal was rated the most influential in affecting the behaviour of teachers with respect to the content, processes and outcomes of their teaching.
- 2. The principal was rated significantly higher on effectiveness of supervision than any other position.
- 3. Eighty-eight per cent of the teachers selected the principal, program consultant, other teachers, vice-principal, resource teacher, inspector and area superintendent as the most effective.

Claye (1963) surveyed a sampling of teachers from five different states in the United States and suggests that:

- Teachers want supervision from principals as well as from those persons with titles of supervisor.
- 2. Principals do not supervise adequately.
- 3. The kinds of help teachers want do not change significantly as the length of time in service varies.
- 4. The kinds of experiences provided for principals in our training programs needs re-examination.

(Claye, 1963:361)

After extensive study and research, Blumberg is led "to two general statements about supervision in the schools:

1. A good bit of what occurs in the name of supervision in the schools—the transactions that take place

between supervisor and teacher--constitutes a waste of time, as teachers see it. In great numbers of cases, the best evaluation that teachers can give of their supervision is that it is not harmful.

2. The character of the relationship between teachers as a group and supervisors as a group can be described as somewhat of a cold war. Neither side trusts the other and each side is convinced of the correctness of its position.

(Blumberg, 1974:2)

Lucio (1962:76) proposes a new direction for school supervision. In contrasting school systems with religious institutions and business concerns he points out that a minister is not accountable for the changed behaviour of his communicants but a business manager must produce intended results: he thinks that school systems are more like religious than business organizations. He states that "the most important issue today" in school supervision is whether schools should produce results or "merely carry out practices that appear desirable in themselves."

Public school systems have traditionally appointed personnel to various supervisory positions. For example, in British Columbia each school district has a superintendent or district superintendent. Some also have directors, supervisors, consultants, and coordinators. A few have assistant superintendents. Within the schools, supervisory personnel include principals, vice-principals, head teachers, senior assistants, department heads, and area coordinators.

Each of these appointed supervisory positions is designated in provincial legislation and regulation, or in school board policies and regulations. For example:

The District Superintendent of Schools shall have general supervision and direction over the educational staff of the

school district, including teachers, principals, viceprincipals, and district supervisory and other employed teachers...

(Regulations, 1973:6)

A director of instruction shall, under the direction of the District Superintendent, by conferring with principals singly or in groups, by meeting with teachers, by visiting classrooms and observing the learning situations, and by carrying out such other duties as are designed to improve instruction, coordinate the work of the grade levels within the schools in the areas of his responsibility.

(Regulations, 1973:10)

A supervisor shall, under the direction of the District Superintendent, carry out duties designed to help teachers improve classroom instruction, and in the performance of his duties shall have access to any classroom. A supervisor shall not evaluate the work of any teacher in a written report.

(Regulations, 1973:10)

A teacher consultant, under the direction of the District Superintendent, shall, by observation, demonstration, consultation, and visitation, upon the request of the teacher, the principal or the District Superintendent, assist teachers in improving classroom instruction. A teacher consultant, in his discussions with the principal or with the District Superintendent, shall not make any evaluation of individual teachers.

(Regulations, 1973:10)

The Regulations stipulate that "any school district personnel not specifically mentioned in these regulations, but employed in an instructional capacity...shall not be considered as a school district supervisory person, and his duties shall not include those of a director of instruction, supervisor, or teacher consultant." (Regulations, 1973:11) Furthermore, the Regulations require that "the principal is responsible for administering and supervising the school including...the programme of teaching and learning activities conducted by the school..." and shall "...if directed by the District Superintendent of Schools, make a written report on the work of every teacher appointed to that school in that school-year, and on every other teacher not less than once in every three years..." (Regulations, 1973:16)

Laws, whether in the form of legislation enacted by a legislative body or in the form of regulations sanctioned by legislation, tend either to permit a variety of actions (procedures), to require certain actions (procedures) or to prohibit specified actions (procedures). In the Regulations cited above it is clear that in the British Columbia school system district superintendents, directors (under the direction of the superintendent) and principals are both permitted and required to evaluate the work of teachers. A supervisor is not permitted to make a written evaluation of a teacher's work while a consultant is prohibited from making statements to the principal or superintendent which are evaluative of a teacher's work. Other district personnel cannot be required to evaluate teachers. However, the Regulations do not prohibit a teacher from making an oral or written report on another teacher's work. It would appear that legally it is permissable for one or more teachers to evaluate the work of a colleague. (Of course, the laws governing slander and defamation of character must be kept in mind.)

The Regulations require and permit the involvement of a number of persons in the professional development of a teacher. The district superintendent and principal are required to ensure professional competence and, it would seem by implication, professional growth. In districts which have directors, supervisors and consultants, the prime task of people in these positions seems to be helping teachers to become more effective in their professional tasks. Again, the Regulations do not prohibit any teachers from helping colleagues grow professionally and therefore, presumably, classroom teachers can serve this part of what has traditionally been called 'supervision'.

#### PROBLEMS IN SUPERVISORY PRACTICES

Since the time of the ancient civilizations along the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates rivers, writers on education have proposed aims for the education of children. At the beginning of the Western European tradition, Plato discussed the aims of education:

Perhaps we shall hardly invent a system better than the one which long experience has worked out, with its two branches for the cultivation of the mind and of the body.

(Cornford, 1958:68)

The 'cultivation of the mind' included studies in literature, theology, history, drama, poetry, and music. "The ultimate end of all education is insight into the harmonious order (cosmos) of the whole world." (Cornford, 1958:88)

Countless writers, since then, often identified with particular historical or philosophical periods——Ancient Romans (Cicero), Medieval Times (Boethries), the Renaissance (Erasmus), the Reformation (Luther), Idealism (Kant), Realism (Rousseau), Pragmatism (Dewey), Existentialism (Sartre), Philosophical Analysis (Russell), Progressivism (Kilpatrick) or Perennialism (Hutchins)——have expounded on what ought to be the aims of education.

During the past 40 years the expectations which writers have of public education ranges from the precise and modest

The ability to read effectively, to speak lucidly and to write with precision and clarity are skills of permanent worth. If our schools were to do nothing else than help all children reach a high level of competence in these three areas they would be serving the pupils well---whether they were to continue on to further formal study or not.

As a parent, my expectations for teachers are pretty modest. "Please teach my child to read and write and speak---very well. Please don't mess around with the value system I have been trying to develop and certainly don't impose your value system on my child. Remember that I have to live with my mistakes as a parent; you don't have to live with your mistakes as a teacher. And finally, please help my child to be

a competent human being."

(Ellis, 1974:8)

to the more fluid

The moment one begins to ask questions about the value of specific courses, one is asking about the objectives of education. The construction of curricula proceeds in a world where changing social, cultural and political conditions continually alter the surroundings and the goals of schools and their students.

(Bruner, 1960:8)

#### to the very demanding

...theoretical ideas should always find important applications within the pupil's curriculum...The problem of education is to make the pupil see the wood by means of the trees...There is only one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestations...What education has to impart is an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas, and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it.

(Whitehead, 1929:17-23)

The expectations of public schools differ in terms of perspective,

from the relaxed, essentially child-oriented

We have clearly shown that a child has a need to observe, to reflect, to learn, to concentrate, to isolate himself, and also from time to time to suspend his activities in silence...it is our duty to direct a child's activities, sparing him useless efforts which would dissipate his energies, divert his instinctive search for knowledge, and be a frequent cause of nervous disorders and hindrance to his growth.

(Montessori, 1967: Title pages)

to the adult-oriented

...education is not just a preparation for living'...it is an initiation into a distinctive form of life. For an educated man is one who has an understanding of his own past, of literature and scientific discovery, and other practically 'useless' activities, which distinguish him from rats and savages. Such a man would agree that material things have to be produced, houses built, wars fought perhaps, and governmental tasks efficiently and fairly carried out. For these practical concerns are necessary for perpetuating those truly civilized activities which

distinguish civilized men from savages...One of the diseases of contemporary thought about education is its preoccupation with the practical, with the mechanics of life, to the exclusion of concern about what sort of life is worth living.

(Peters, 1964:87)

Some writers strongly condemn current public school education. Postman and Weingartner insist it must be changed:

The institution we call 'school' is what it is because we made it that way. If it is irrelevant, as Marshall McLuhan says; if it shields children from reality, as Norbert Wiener says; if it educates for obsolescence, as John Gardner says; if it does not develop intelligence, as Jerome Bruner says; if it is based on fear, as John Holt says; if it avoids the promotion of significant learnings, as Carl Rogers says; if it induces alienation, as Paul Goodman says; if it punishes creativity and independence, as Edgar Friedenberg says; if, in short, it is not doing what needs to be done, it can be changed; it must be changed.

(Postman, 1969:13)

Given the perspective of such diversity of opinion, both among writers over the past 3000 years and among current educators, it is not surprising that teachers and supervisors might find it difficult to state individually, let alone agree upon, what should be the aims or purposes of public school education.

Lindblom's proposal for an efficient administrative process may be considered. He suggests that agreement on values (substitute aims or objectives) may not be possible but agreement on policy (substitute course content and teaching methods) may be agreed upon more easily:

Agreement on policy...becomes the only practicable test of the policy's correctness. And for one administrator to seek to win the other over to agreement on ends as well would accomplish nothing and create quite unnecessary controversy... If agreement directly on policy as a test for 'best' policy seems a poor substitute for testing the policy against its objectives, it ought to be remembered that objectives themselves have no ultimate validity other than they are agreed upon. Hence agreement is the test of 'best' policy in both methods.

(Lindblom, 1964:69)

Of course, there are those who would disagree with Lindblom. Lewis is one of those:

The philosophy behind objectives is that unless specific objectives on all levels of operating the school system are set, mutually agreed to and performed, there will be relatively little value or basis for measuring the performance of educators. School management by objectives is the process by which all the efforts of the employees of a school system are exerted toward achieving specific objectives within established time periods. A statement of objectives is a personal commitment to a specific act or results. Objective setting must be future oriented.

(Lewis, 1973:67)

There are various possible sources of educational aims or objectives and in a given situation either the supervisor or the teacher being supervised may appeal to criteria established by any one of several sources. A provincial department of education may prescribe or recommend certain courses or guidelines for instruction. However, recently in British Columbia there have been so many revisions of courses that the newly 'prescribed' courses can be seen to be catching up to the actual curricula in the schools rather than giving new guidelines to teachers. School boards sometimes adopt broad statements of purposes or objectives but these are often not specific enough to assist in determining criteria for the supervision of teachers. Probably the most common sources of explicit or implicit aims on which supervisory practices are based come either from an agreement between the supervisor and the supervised teacher or from the supervisor unilaterally.

There is often not agreement within educational systems, districts and/ or schools about the aims of education and therein may lie one of the problems in agreeing upon effective practices for the supervision of teachers. A second problem in supervisory practices is deciding on how many supervisory personnel are necessary. As school systems become larger there is a tendency for the number and kinds of supervisors to increase. (Lucio, 1969:22) This implies that the larger the system the greater the need for more supervisors. Parkinson (1957) states that there are two motivating forces responsible for an increased number of supervisors: an official wants to multiply subordinates, not rivals, and officials make work for each other. Lucio applies Parkinson's law to school supervision:

...picture a school supervisor who feels overworked. Because of this feeling he may resign, or halve the work with a colleague, or demand the assistance of two subordinates. Rather than lose pension rights or bring in a rival for promotion, Parkinson predicts he will demand the subordinates. Two are necessary for status reasons and to keep each in order by fear of the other's promotion. Parkinson gives a full account of the second force by which several officials do what one did before, making so much work for each other that all are fully occupied and the original supervisor is working harder than ever.

(Lucio, 1969:22-3)

If a school district is not interested in providing jobs for supervisors whose work contributes little to improved teaching and learning then the number of people appointed to supervisory positions must be monitored carefully.

A third problem relates to the concept of 'supervision'. It usually connotes judgment of competence and/or assistance in improving performance. It implies a hierarchical system in which those who have greater knowledge and/or more expertise assess and assist those who have less knowledge and/or less expertise. As teachers may consider themselves professionally autonomous the aspect of supervision which relates to professional development may best be done in a context other than the hierarchical. "The key to getting the teacher to want to improve may be the type of psychological

contract the school organization offers to its members." (Housego, 1973:4)

Robinson has stated the problem succinctly:

In schools today, then, we have, existing side by side, two inherently contradictory forces both of which are growing in importance. On the one hand, there is the bureaucratic demand for control expressing itself in hierarchical supervision, and on the other hand, there is the growing trend towards teachers developing professional role concepts.

(Robinson, 1965:4-5)

There is evidence that teachers are becoming increasingly concerned about professional autonomy. For example, in 1972 the B.C. Teachers' Federation adopted a set of seven criteria for teacher evaluation and in 1974 adopted a policy "that the teachers of B.C. accept responsibility of maintaining through a collegial process the competence of their colleagues." (B.C.T.F., 1974-5:66)

If collegial evaluation and professional growth through a collegial process were to become a common practice (as it is to a large extent in the medical and legal professions) then terms other than 'supervision' and 'supervisors' might better describe the assessment and assistance functions.

A fourth problem concerns the conflict in roles of those supervisors who must both help and judge the same teachers. The problem is particularly evident where the teacher's basic competence is questionable. One of the conditions for improved teacher performance is a frank, honest exchange of opinions between the teacher and the supervisor. However, if the teacher knows or feels that the weaknesses which he/she points out to the supervisor might be included in the supervisor's evaluative report there will no doubt be considerable hesitation in sharing such information. Even if the teacher's tenure is not affected, there may be a reluctance to expose weaknesses and seek help from a superordinate. Blumberg (1974:2-3) states that "research strongly suggests that supervisory-teacher relationships are most often

seen as subtle and strategic gamesmanship that is best characterized by closedness and defensiveness."

There are in the literature several supervisory models which try to reduce the threat to the teacher. Goldhammer (1969) recommends a clinical approach with five stages:

- 1. The preobservation conference
- 2. Observation of classroom teaching
- 3. Analysis of the data derived from the observation and preparation of the strategy to be used in the supervisor-teacher conference
- 4. The supervisor-teacher conference
- 5. The post-conference in which the supervisor evaluates his performance

Lewis (1973:88) offers a model based on an objective-centered performance appraisal. He states that the value of writing performance objectives is to "provide a clear focus for performance activity" and to "provide a means by which the educational leader and the educator enter into a contract for performance." Neagley and Evans (1964:159-160) agree that before effective supervision can take place "good rapport should exist between the teacher and the supervisor." However, they also stress that "it is no longer possible to generalize concerning the correct procedures to use under all circumstances in classroom visitation and observation. The visitor, the purpose of the visit, the teacher visited, and the type of activity observed condition the procedures to be used." Blumberg (1965:3-4) recommends that supervisory conferences might be more productive if at the beginning the supervisor engaged the teacher in a discussion of how the teacher perceives the supervisor-teacher relationship. Moreover, supervisors should work with teachers in such a manner that defensiveness, where it exists, is replaced by supportiveness. Comfort and Bowen also point out the problem of the conflicting roles which some supervisory personnel encounter:

The most recent body of research and conceptualization relative to the supervisory role explicitly views the appropriate function/focus as one of facilitating curricular and instructional improvement. Supported by the research on human relations and change, emphasis is given to the idea of working with teachers in conceiving, implementing, and evaluating changes in instructional practices... The supervisor is to be viewed by the teachers as non-threatening. open to their needs and ideas, providing information when requested, and as identifying with the teachers...To what degree do supervisors' defined tasks include (a) the judging of teacher performance, (b) the communication of performance judgements to the administrative staff, and (c) the enforcement of administrative policy? The latter three task dimensions have a propensity for undermining the achievement of the proposed focus of supervision.

(Comfort, 1974:628)

If the assessment and assistance roles are incompatible, in terms of the same person carrying out both functions, it may be advisable to separate them. Indeed, it has been argued that those who judge teachers' basic competence should be completely divorced from the professional development role. Bridges (1974) advocates a disclosure-free system of evaluation in which:

- 1. The evaluators and evaluatees must have complete anonymity.
- 2. The evaluatee decides whether a deficiency exists that he/she wishes to correct. There are no sanctions to be used against the person if he/she chooses to ignore the information.
- 3. Participation in the system is voluntary, and the evaluatee determines the types of information which he/she considers relevant to his/her performance.
- 4. A neutral third party, one completely independent of the educational system in which the evaluators and evaluatees are employed, gathers, analyzes, and reports the information to the appropriate people within the system.

This system could be structured around any one or all of the three standard variables in judging teacher competence--product, process and presage.

In discussing the role of the principal, Enns argues:

The real tasks of the principal in his school--giving leadership in program development, in staff development, in creating an organizational climate conducive to teaching and learning in public relations, and the myriad other tasks involved in running a school well-- are so important, and so arduous, that to require teacher evaluation as well would divert attention and effort away from what seem to be the central concerns. (Enns, 1965:39)

Of course, it can be argued that the assessment and assistance functions are so closely related as to be inseparable, that the evaluator should do everything possible to help the evaluatee overcome teaching deficiencies before the final judgement is made.

A fifth problem in supervisory practices needs to be considered: the difficulty of measuring or determining the degree to which there is a causal relationship between the teaching by the teacher and learning by the students. Greenfield discusses this problem:

...much research has been devoted to the evaluation of teacher effectiveness. It is apparent from this study that classroom effects are only part of the forces which go to produce achievement in pupils. Some account must therefore be taken of the total complex of organizational factors which have a bearing upon classroom achievement, particularly if a teacher is to be judged by the performance of pupils in a class. The teacher is only one of many significant elements in a classroom system which have an influence upon the achievement of pupils. Therefore, even if classroom sources of pupil achievement can be isolated from other system effects, there remains the problem of which of the many variables in classrooms are significant in relation to pupil achievement.

(Greenfield, 1964:30)

A sixth problem centres around the validity and reliability of the perceptions, advice and judgements of supervisory personnel. In a study involving sixty-three superintendents and sixty-five principals, Worth found

"extreme discrepancies" not only in the ratings of a lesson commonly observed but also in the descriptions of that lesson. He concludes:

In light of the findings of this study, administrators may well need to re-examine their conceptions of good teaching if they are to maintain claims to expertness and infallibility in this area.

(Worth, 1961:5)

In February 1975 a similar experiment was conducted with a class of seventeen second-year graduate students (most of whom were practicing school administrators) enrolled in the Administrative Leadership Program at Simon Fraser University. The ratings and descriptions of a commonly observed lesson also varied greatly.

The six problems discussed above——the disagreement about the aims of education, the number of supervisory personnel needed, the contradictory forces of hierarchical control and professional autonomy, the conflicting assessment and assistance roles of some supervisors, the difficulty of determining which sources of pupil achievement can be attributed to the teacher influence and the discrepancies among supervisors' perceptions——indicate a need to maintain an ongoing discussion on and investigation into effective methods for evaluating teacher competence and assisting teachers in their professional growth.

# CHAPTER III RESEARCH PROCEDURES

#### THE SAMPLE

A random, stratified proportional sample of elementary classroom teachers in North Vancouver was conducted. The survey questionnaire was intended for only classroom teachers: personnel such as librarians, remedial reading teachers, administrators, counsellors and others who do not enrol a class nor spend most of their time teaching a regular class were not included in the sample. Because it was presumed that practices related to the evaluation of teacher competence and to the professional development of teachers might vary from school to school it was considered necessary to ensure a response from as many schools as possible.

At the time of the survey there were 446 elementary classroom teachers in the North Vancouver school district: questionnaires were sent to 100 of these. The number of classroom teachers in each of the district's thirty-one elementary schools (annexed schools were considered as a part of the larger schools) was determined and each school was allocated a proportional representation in the sample. For example, Blueridge Elementary had twenty teachers and was allocated five teachers whereas Cloverley Elementary had eleven teachers and was allocated two teachers in the sample.

On a master list of all teachers within each school in the district the names of the classroom teachers were numbered. To get a random sample from within each school, cardboard tickets with numbers on them corres-

T A B L E I

QUESTIONNAIRES SENT OUT AND RETURNED

	Number of Classroom Teachers In Each School	Number of Questionnaires Sent Out	Number of Questionnaires Returned
	20	5	5
	8	2	2
	19	4	4
	17	4	3
	12	3	3
	19	4	4
	11	2	2
	19	4	3
	19	4	3
	11	2	2
	21	5	3
	14	3	0
	14	3	3
	12	3	3
	11	2	ĺ
	14	3	2
	8	2	ī
	14	3	2
	11	2	2
	9	2	2
	12	3	Ō
	7	2	2
	21	5	4
	10	2	2
	24	6	2
	17	4	4
	18	4	3
	15	3	2
	20	5	4
	9	2	0
	10	2	2
Total	446	100	75

ponding to the numbers assigned to each teacher on that staff were drawn from a container: the number of tickets drawn was governed by the predetermined proportional allocation for each school. Thus a list of 100 elementary classroom teachers was drawn up.

#### DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

With the permission of the Superintendent of Schools for North Vancouver, an explanatory letter (Appendix A), the questionnaire (Appendix B), a stamped self-addressed envelope in which to return the questionnaire, and a stamped self-addressed postcard were sent by means of the school board's twice-weekly delivery system to the 100 teachers. As explained in the letter, the postcard was intended to provide a check on which teachers had returned the question-naire but at the same time to ensure confidentiality. Seventy-five question-naires were returned.

The responses were tabulated by hand. Each of the tallied raw scores for the seventy-eight categories was computed into a percentage of the total responses within each of the thirty numbered statements. For example, under statement number 1 in section A on page 1 of the questionnaire, the "at no time" category received 31 responses out of the 75 responses to that statement so that category received a 41% response (see Table III). Moreover, the responses to the 78 categories were analysed in terms of the four criteria listed under the personal data section. For example, there were 15 questionnaire returns from teachers in their second or third year; of these 15 teachers, 14 checked the "at no time" category for statement number 2 in section A on page 1 so that category received a 93% response (see Appendix C)

#### TABLE II

# PERSONAL DATA ON RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES

#### Years of Teaching Experience:

- 9 in first year
- 15 in second and third year
- 20 in fourth, fifth and sixth year
- 31 more than six years

#### Size of Present School:

- 15 under 250 students
- 22 from 250 to 400 students
- 36 more than 400 students
- 2 had no responses

#### Current Tenure Within the District:

- 63 continuing appointment
- 11 temporary appointment
- 1 placed on probation

### Main Teaching Area This Year:

- 9 Kindergarten
- 34 Grades 1 to 3
- 32 Grades 4 to 7

In computing the percentages, all figures were rounded off and therefore the percentages for almost all statements total 98% or 99%.

#### INSTRUMENTATION

The questionnaire was self-constructed and judged to have face validity because there were virtually no questions about the intentions of the questions and there was little ambiguity of responses. In effect each teacher was asked:

- 1. How much evaluation of your teaching competence have you received this year and from whom?
- 2. Given the personnel who are currently assigned to supervisory duties and who are your colleagues on staff at your school, how much evaluation of your teaching competence would you like to have received this year and from whom?
- 3. How much assistance in your professional development have you received this year and from whom?
- 4. Given the personnel who are currently assigned to supervisory duties and who are your colleagues on staff at your school, how much assistance in your professional development would you like to have received this year and from whom?
- 5. Regardless of the present incumbents in supervisory positions or of the teachers who happen to be assigned presently to your school's staff, who is able to evaluate your competence as a teacher?
- 6. Regardless of the present incumbents in supervisory positions or of the teachers who happen to be assigned presently to your school's staff, who is able to help you in your professional development?

In order to keep the questionnaire as short and as simple as possible, it was limited to six pages which required minimal effort to complete. The preliminary page requested four items of information about the respondent: years of teaching experience, size of present school, current tenure within the district and main teaching area. The following

four pages constituted Part One and attempted to elicit perceptions about the first four questions above. The last page was Part Two and tried to find out the more generalized perceptions with respect to questions 5 and 6 above.

Each of the statements in Part One began with "During this school year..." in order to emphasize that it was current practices about which perceptions were sought. The time categories in statements 1, 2 and 3 on pages 1 and 2 and in all statements on pages 3 and 4 were kept constant: the "at no time" category was obviously necessary, the "less than 1 hour in total" category was considered necessary in order to indicate minimal supervision, and the category "for between 1 and 5 hours in total" would indicate the equivalent of not more than one full instructional day.

Although the only legally recognized reporting, in British Columbia, on teachers' competence is the official report signed by a principal or Superintendent of Schools, classroom teachers and principals sometimes write letters of recommendation for colleagues and therefore "a letter of professional recommendation" was included in statement 4, 5 and 6 on pages 1 and 2.

In designing Part Two consideration was given to asking teachers to rank the various persons or groups of persons in order of perceived ability to evaluate and to assist teachers. However, it was rejected on the basis that a flexibility of response might be restricted. Statements 4 and 5 under Section A and statement 5 under Section B were included as possible alternatives to present practices. Statement 3 under Section B

is presently encouraged by North Vancouver School Board policy which allows school staffs to appoint classroom teachers to educational leadership positions and either that such teachers be paid additional allowances or that substitute teacher time be provided for released professional development time.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A limited analysis of the data from the returned questionnaires is made in this chapter. Table III is a summary of all responses and is the table from which most of the figures quoted are extracted.

The preliminary page of the questionnaire asked teachers to provide four items of personal information. The first question asked the respondents how many years of teaching experience they had: Tables IV and VIII give the percentage of responses according to this classification. Similarly, Tables V and IX give the percentage of responses according to the school size, Tables VI and X give the percentage of responses according to the teachers' tenure, and Tables VII and XI give the percentage of responses according to the main teaching area (Grade level) of the teachers.

The analysis of the data is divided into six sections. The first three sections deal with the data on the evaluation of teacher competence and the last three deal with data on the assistance in professional growth. Each of the six sections begins with a number of statements citing what are thought to be the most important and significant data. Each section concludes with a brief discussion.

TABLE III

TOTAL RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RESPONSES
WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

Page	Statement	No time	Cate Less than 1 hr.	gory 1-5 hr.	More than 5 hr.
1 1 2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 4 4 4	1 2 3 1 2 3 1 <b>2</b> 3 4 1 2 3	41 94 94 21 62 61 54 92 61 86 12 57 21	26 2 4 17 20 8 26 4 22 8 32 24 25	29 2 46 16 24 12 1 8 1 37 14 38 37	2 1 14 1 6 4 5 1 17 2 14 10
1 1 1 2 2 2	4 5 6 4 5 6	Yes 54 ,2 73 26 29	No 45 100 97 25 73 70		
5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	A 1 A 2 A 3 A 4 A 5 B 1 B 2 B 3 B 4 B 5	SA 28 2 14 4 9 32 5 45 21 24	A 52 38 38 33 32 52 49 42 60 52	U 13 26 22 38 37 6 22 5	D SD 5 1 22 9 10 12 13 9 8 12 8 18 2 1 4 2 2 1 5

#### ACTUAL EVALUATION OF TEACHER COMPETENCE

written evaluation of teachers' professional ability is made almost exclusively by principals. In this sample, no teacher received an evaluation report from the superintendents and only two of the 75 teachers received letters of recommendation from classroom teachers whereas 54% received evaluations from principals. All first year teachers received a written report from principals: approximately half of the teachers with more experience received a report from principals. It may be significant that in schools with less than 400 students, more than 70% of the teachers received reports from principals whereas in schools with more than 400 students only 41% received evaluations. Almost all teachers on temporary appointment (90%) received an evaluation from principals but only 47% of those on continuing appointment received such evaluations.

Not only were principals responsible for almost all written evaluation of teachers' work but also they did almost all the observation of teaching in order to evaluate teaching competence. Whereas 94% of all teachers had no observation time either from other teachers or from the superintendents, less than one-half (41%) received no observation time from principals. All first-year teachers received at least some observation time and more than half (55%) of the first-year teachers had from one to five hours of observation time from principals. On the other hand, of those with more than three years of teaching experience, 50% received no observation time from principals and only approximately 20% received from one to five hours. Teachers on temporary appointment received

more observation time from principals than did teachers on continuing appointment: 90% of temporary teachers received some time but only 51% of continuing teachers received some time.

It may be significant that although all first year teachers received reports from principals, 33% received less than one hour of observation and that although 90% of the temporary teachers received reports, 45% received less than one hour of observation from principals.

It is not unexpected that principals do most of the observation of teachers' teaching and the evaluation of teachers' competence. Principals are required by provincial regulations and school board policies to make written reports on teachers within their schools. They have time during regular classroom hours to do the evaluating: elementary classroom teachers do not normally have the opportunity, unless they are team teaching, to observe other teachers teaching and superintendents probably have so much other work to do and have so many teachers within their districts that it is possible for them to observe and write reports on only those few teachers whose basic competence is questioned.

#### DESIRED EVALUATION OF TEACHING COMPETENCE

Total responses indicate that teachers would like more evaluation of their teaching abilities. Approximately half (54%) received an evaluation from principals but almost three-quarters (73%) would like to have had an evaluation from principals. Although no one in the sample received a report from the superintendents, one-quarter (26%) would like to have received one. Similarly, only 2% received evaluations from teachers but 29% would like to have received evaluations from teachers.

Although none of the first year teachers received a written evaluation from other teachers or the superintendents, 44% would like to have received an evaluation from other teachers and 44% would like to have received an evaluation from a superintendent. Of those with more than three years of experience, approximately one-quarter (26%) would like to have had an evaluation from a superintendent and almost one-third (31%) would like to have received an evaluation from other teachers. Almost half (45%) of those on temporary appointment would like to have received an evaluation from a superintendent and one-quarter (27%) would like to have received an evaluation from a teacher. Of the 63 teachers on continuing appointment, 30% would like to have received a written evaluation from a teacher.

Teacher responses to statements about how much observation time, primarily to evaluate their competence, they would like to have had indicated that they would like to have had more time than they actually received. 57% actually received some time from principals but 77% said they would like to have received some time: 31% received one hour

or more but 60% would like to have received one hour or more. There are some even greater differences within the four personal data categorizations. For example, although 46% of the teachers with two or three years of experience received one or more hours of observation from principals, 80% would like to have had one or more hours. In schools of 250 or more students, approximately 33% received one or more hours of observation from principals but 58% would like to have received one or more hours. 26% of the teachers on continuing appointment received one or more hours of observation time from principals yet 58% would like to have received one or more hours.

Teachers would also have liked more observation time from a superintendent: 4% received some time whereas 37% would like to have received
some time. Similarly, teachers would like to have received more observation time from other teachers. 5% received some time but 38% would
like to have received some time: almost one-third (30%) of the teachers
would like to have received one or more hours of observation, primarily
to evaluate their competence, from one or more teachers.

On the basis of this data it seems justifiable to state that many teachers would welcome more observation of their teaching, particularly from principals and other teachers, for the purpose of evaluating their teaching expertise. There are at least two possible reasons why class-room teachers' perceived needs in this area are apparently not met---the lack of sufficient time and a reluctance to pass judgement on a teacher's professional ability. The time factor, with respect to classroom teachers reporting on other classroom teachers, has already been mentioned

in the previous section: as most classroom teachers have self-contained classrooms and teach at the same times it is not possible for them to observe other teachers in order to evaluate their teaching. In light of some of the problems related to the evaluation of teaching competence, as discussed in Chapter II (the contradictory forces of hierarchical control and professional autonomy, the conflicting assessment and assistance roles, the difficulty of stating with assurance which sources of pupil achievement can be attributed to the teacher's influence and the unreliability of observers' perceptions about what is happening educationally in the classroom), it is reasonable to expect that many classroom teachers and principals would be reluctant to pass judgment on a teacher's professional effectiveness.

## GENERALIZED PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PERSONNEL ABLE EFFECTIVELY TO EVALUATE COMPETENCE

The first two pages of the questionnaire were intended to elicit from teachers their perceptions about current evaluation practices, given the personnel appointed to their schools and to district positions this year. In page five of the questionnaire teachers were invited to respond, with a more generalized viewpoint on a five-point scale, as to which persons are usually able to evaluate teacher competence.

A large majority of the teachers in this sample felt that principals are able to evaluate teachers effectively: 80% agreed or strongly agreed and only 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Only 40% agreed or strongly agreed that superintendents are able to evaluate teachers. In response to the statement that one or more teachers on the same staff are able to evaluate the competence of a teacher on that staff, 62% either agreed or strongly agreed. 37% agreed or strongly agreed that a team or teams of teachers appointed by the school board are able to evaluate teacher competence and 39% agreed or strongly agreed that a team or teams of teachers elected by the teachers in the school district are able to evaluate teacher competence. There was a considerable frequency of 'undecided' responses to both the proposition of school board appointed teams and the proposition of teacher elected teams: 38% and 37% respectively.

If a response in the 'undecided' category indicates either neutrality or at least a willingness to participate without a commitment to ensure success, the addition of the responses in the 'strongly agree', 'agree' and 'undecided' categories yields some interesting results.

93% of the teachers are at least receptive to the evaluation of teachers being done by principals. 66% felt that superintendents might, at least, be able to evaluate teachers. To each of the other three proposals, namely, teachers on the same staff, teams of teachers appointed by the school board, and teams of teachers elected by teachers, approximately three-quarters of the sample group did not, at least, object:

74%, 75%, and 78% respectively.

Although there was no space provided for written remarks on the questionnaire, several teachers commented that although superintendents might have the ability to evaluate teacher competence effectively, they do not have enough time to do so. Similarly, several teachers also commented that classroom teachers might be able to evaluate teacher competence effectively but it would be necessary to provide them with non-teaching time in order for them to be able to do the evaluation.

There are several possible reasons why such a large number of teachers responded positively to the statement that principals are able to evaluate teacher competence. Many may have experienced a worthwhile evaluation process with a principal. It may be felt that principals have the time available to do a sound evaluation. On the other hand, teachers may believe that principals have the necessary knowledge and wisdom in order to make a valid judgment on professional teaching expertise.

It would seem reasonable to conclude from the results of this survey that although most classroom teachers are confident that

principals are able to evaluate teacher competence, many elementary classroom teachers would welcome changes which would make it possible also for designated classroom teachers to evaluate other classroom teachers. More than one third would be receptive to a proposal that a team or teams of teachers, either appointed by the school board or elected by the teachers in the school district, evaluate teacher competence: an additional third of the teachers might be receptive to such a proposal. At least one half of the elementary teachers would be receptive to a plan whereby one or more teachers on a staff evaluated the competence of teachers on the same staff: an additional third of the teachers might wish to participate in such a plan.

#### ACTUAL ASSISTANCE IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Classroom teachers in this sample received most of their assistance for professional growth from either principals or the district's supervisors and consultants. 42% received some assistance from principals and 16% received one or more hours from principals. Approximately onethird (35%) received some assistance time from supervisors or consultants: of these, 13% received one or more hours.

First year teachers received more assistance time from principals than did those with more experience: 77% in their first year received at least some assistance whereas 46% of those in their second or third years received help from the principals, 40% of those in their fourth, fifth or sixth year, and 30% of those with more than six years of teaching experience received some assistance from principals. Teachers on temporary appointment received more assistance time from principals than did those on continuing appointment: 81% of the temporary teachers received at least some time and 33% of the continuing teachers received some time. There seems to be a tendency for principals to give more assistance to teachers in the younger grades: 59% of the Grades 4 to 7 teachers received no assistance, 55% of the Grades 1 to 3 teachers and only 44% of the Kindergarten teachers received no help.

The supervisors and consultants in the district from which the sample was taken gave much more assistance time to teachers on temporary appointment than those on continuing appointment: 81% of the temporary teachers received at least some time but only 26% of the continuing teachers received at least some time. The supervisors and consultants

tended to spend more time in schools with under 250 students than in the larger schools: 40% and approximately 67% respectively. Moreover, the supervisors and consultants gave more assistance time to those in their first year than those with more experience. Three-quarters of the teachers with more than three years of experience received no assistance time, 40% of those in their second or third year received no time and only 22% of those in their first year received no time from supervisors or consultants.

It would seem that many classroom teachers receive at their schools no assistance in their professional growth. More than half (54%) receive no assistance time from principals, practically all (92%) receive no assistance time from the superintendents, almost two-thirds (61%) receive no time from the supervisors or consultants, and about six-sevenths (86%) receive no assistance time from other classroom teachers.

#### DESIRED ASSISTANCE IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The apparent brevity or lack of assistance time which teachers actually receive from others is in sharp contrast to teachers' perceptions about how much time they would like to receive from others in order to assist them in their professional growth. The greatest differences lie in the time categories of one or more hours. Although only 16% received one or more hours from principals, 54% would like to have received one or more hours; 1% received one or more hours from the superintendents but 16% would have welcomed one or more hours; 13% had one or more hours from the supervisors or consultants yet 52% would like to have received one or more hours; only 2% received from other teachers in their schools one or more hours of assistance in their professional development whereas 47% would like to have received one or more hours of assistance from their teaching colleagues.

Temporary teachers tend to want more assistance time than do continuing teachers. For example, all temporary teachers wanted at least some assistance time from principals but only 80% of the continuing teachers wanted some time. 81% of the temporary teachers wanted one or more hours of time from supervisors or consultants but only 47% of the continuing teachers wanted one or more hours.

It is apparent that elementary classroom teachers would like to have more assistance within their schools than they presently receive.

Because the responses in the categories of one or more hours were 54% for principals, 52% for supervisors or consultants and 47% for other teachers on the same staff, it also seems evident teachers perceive that

more assistance from each of these groups of educators would be valuable to them in improving their teaching expertise and thus benefitting the children's education.

## GENERALIZED PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PERSONNEL ABLE TO ASSIST EFFECTIVELY IN THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF TEACHERS

Results of this survey show a great deal of confidence in the ability of at least four groups of educators to help teachers develop professionally. Responses in the 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' categories to statements that designated groups of educators are able to give teachers assistance for professional growth total as follows: 84% for principals, 87% for teachers on the same staff, 81% for teachers appointed by the school board, and 76% for teachers elected by teachers in the school district. Moreover, if the responses in the 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' categories are added then only 8% disagree that principals are able to give such assistance, 20% disagree that superintendents are able to give assistance, only 5% disagree that teachers on the same staff are able to give assistance for professional growth, only 4% disagree that teachers appointed by the school board are able to give such assistance, and only 6% disagree that teachers elected by the teachers in the school district are able to give assistance for professional development. It may be significant that most of the disagreement concerning the latter three groups came from teachers with more than six years of teaching experience, who are in schools with more than 400 students, and who are on continuing appointment.

Several teachers again commented in the margins of the questionnaire that, in order for classroom teachers to assist other classroom teachers, time would have to be provided.

It is evident that most teachers are receptive to assistance for professional growth not only from the officially recognized supervisory personnel such as principals, supervisors, consultants and superintendents but also from various other educators such as classroom teachers on the same staff, classroom teachers from other schools, or possibly teachers from other districts. The potential for professional growth could be exciting.

#### CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND

This study began with several assumptions. It took it to be the case that all or at least almost all classroom teachers would like to be professionally competent and would like to grow continuously in their professional expertise. It was assumed that in making decisions about who should evaluate teachers' performance and help them improve their teaching skills, it would be reasonable to consult those most directly affected by the decisions, namely, classroom teachers. It was further assumed that teachers' perceptions about what changes are needed to improve current supervisory practices need not necessarily be the only reason for changes in practices but that teachers' perceptions should at least be given serious and thorough consideration. Moreover, it was assumed that it might be interesting to see if a random sample of elementary classroom teachers in one school district generally concurred with the recently adopted policy of the B.C.T.F. (discussed in Chapter II).

Although any analysis must be interpreted carefully because the size of some subsets are very small, the results of this survey lead to a number of conclusions:

- Many teachers in elementary schools would like to receive more written evaluations of their competence as teachers.
- 2. Many teachers in elementary schools would like to receive written evaluations not only from principals and superintendents but also from one or more classroom teachers.

- 3. Many teachers in elementary schools would like to have their teaching observed, primarily for the purpose of evaluating their competence, over a longer period of time.
- 4. Many teachers in elementary schools would like to have their teaching observed, primarily for the purpose of evaluating their competence, not only by principals and superintendents but also by one or more teachers.
- 5. Many teachers in elementary schools would like to receive observation of their teaching and discussion about the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching for more extended periods of time than they currently receive.
- 6. Many teachers in elementary schools would like to receive observation of their teaching and discussion of the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching not only from principals, superintendents, supervisors and consultants but also from other teachers.
- 7. Many teachers in elementary schools would welcome changes in the procedures for evaluating teacher competence which would allow such groups as one or more teachers on the same staff, teams of teachers appointed by the school board or teams of teachers elected by the teachers in the school district to evaluate classroom teachers' performance.
- 8. A large majority of teachers in elementary schools would support changes which would make it possible for teachers to receive assistance in their professional growth not only from principals, superintendents and teachers appointed by the school board to supervisory or consultative positions but also from teachers on the same staff and teachers elected by teachers in the school district.

The expressed desire of many teachers to receive evaluations of their teaching abilities from a greater number of personnel could be based on at least two factors. First, as teachers would like to receive more evaluation than they presently get and as those who do almost all the evaluation now, namely, principals, may not have the time available to meet adequately teachers' felt needs for evaluation, if some of the evaluation of teachers' work were done also by classroom teachers within the school it may solve a problem. Secondly, although teachers express

a strong confidence in the ability of principals to evaluate teacher performance, because research indicates that the perceptions of one evaluation often varies significantly from another evaluation (Worth:1961) it may be advisable to have several professional opinions about the competence of a teacher, not necessarily for the protection of the teacher whose competence is being evaluated but primarily for the protection of the children under whose influence they must benefit or suffer. Peer evaluation, in addition to evaluation by a superordinate, may be more effective in ensuring that incompetent teachers are released from their contract or fired. On the other hand, as most teachers whose basic competence is not questioned probably want more written evaluation of their teaching ability in order to have sound credentials in case they wished to be promoted or to get a position in another school, changed procedures which provided an opportunity for teachers to get more evaluation might be possible.

Peer evaluation of teachers is a well established practice in some school systems. For example, Blumberg (1974) reports one process in the United States (livonia, Michigan) where peer evaluation has been going on for more than five years. Although there are potential abuses of such an evaluation system, such as the election of evaluators on grounds of popularity rather than expertise, the teachers in that system apparently feel "...it is working well and that the chances for abuse are lessened because so many people are involved in the process." (Blumberg, 1974:162)

If classroom teachers are to evaluate other classroom teachers, one of the obvious problems that needs to be dealt with is the provision of time to do the evaluation. Where team teaching is possible the availability of time may not be as great a problem. However, in a

school district with not enough funds to provide for a considerable additional amount of substitute teacher time in order to release teachers to do the evaluations, maybe one of the few alternatives available is that the principals teach more and thus provide time for classroom teachers to observe other teachers. This might require a re-definition of principals' current tasks.

A peer evaluation system might minimize some of the problems outlined in Chapter II. If at the beginning of the school year the staff members of a school agreed upon what the major aims of the school should be and ways in which teachers would try to achieve these aims, there would at least be some commonly recognized referent points on which to judge teachers' performance. The problem of deciding on how many supervisory personnel should be appointed to a school district, in order to provide adequate evaluation of teachers' performance, would be minimal—peer evaluation may even allow for a reduction in the district's full—time supervisory staff. Peer evaluation could lessen the friction caused by the contradictory forces of hierarchical control and professional autonomy.

One problem in supervision which peer evaluator may not solve is the conflict between the role of evaluation and the role of assistant. A teacher in the Livonia system is quoted as saying:

"My coach was on the same grade level as I was. We worked together on problems and she was the person to whom I could address questions. I think I would have been reluctant to ask the same questions of my principal or evaluator. Of course, what I did not know until just a short time ago was that my coach was herself involved in evaluating me. Perhaps had I known that I would have

been less comfortable about exposing my weaknesses to her."
(Blumberg, 1974:162)

Given a staff of fifteen or more teachers, it would probably be feasible to divide the evaluation and assistance functions among various teachers so that the two functions could be exercised discretely.

As the teachers in this project's sample indicate considerable receptivity to the proposal of peer evaluation, and as peer evaluation seem to have been working successfully in several school systems, offering classroom teachers in one or more B.C. school districts the opportunity of participating in a peer evaluation system seems appropriate.

There is very strong support among the teachers in this sample for assistance in professional development from a greater number of educators than is currently available. Although only three alternative sources of assistance were proffered in the questionnaire, in addition to the traditional sources of principals, superintendents, supervisors and consultants, the confidence teachers obviously have in the ability of classroom teachers to assist them in their professional growth justifies experimentation with alternate professional development programs.

One such alternative might be the Educational Leadership plan operating in North Vancouver. The school board policy entitles each elementary school to a grant based on the number of teachers on staff. These monies may be used either to pay one or more classroom teachers, designated as educational leaders, special allowances for providing other teachers with professional development or the monies may be used to buy the services of substitute teachers so that classroom teachers can be released from teaching time in order to plan teaching strategies

cooperatively, to share new ideas, to review new teaching materials, etc. Although there has as yet been no official report on the effectiveness of this program, particularly in terms of whether or not classroom teachers feel they have benefitted from it, informal conversations indicate that in at least some schools teachers are gaining valuable professional assistance from it.

Although teachers in this survey are very much in favour of classroom teachers (or of those who normally teach full-time but may be on a
short term appointment to a special position within the district)
assisting other classroom teachers in their professional growth, they
seem not to be very concerned about who designates the assisting
teachers. The data does suggest, however, that teachers would be receptive to assistance from a variety of personnel.

Some of the problems discussed in Chapter II might be alleviated, in the area of assistance for professional development, if alternative personnel were available. If classroom teachers could help other classroom teachers, no additional full-time supervisory positions need be established, the friction between the forces of hierarchical control and professional autonomy would not be created, the evaluating and assisting roles could be divided among more persons and kept discrete, and because more persons could be involved in assisting a teacher to develop professionally, there might be more objectivity in the total assistance given a teacher.

There seems to be a trend in the public school system in British Columbia toward decentralization of decision making. In some school

districts the teaching staffs of the schools are given the opportunity of selecting new staff members. It probably follows that with this additional responsibility should go the additional obligation of providing the new staff members with adequate professional assistance.

Because most teachers would like more assistance for professional growth and because those currently appointed to supervisory positions may not have the available time, a program whereby classroom teachers could help other classroom teachers might make it possible for staffs to fulfill adequately this obligation toward new staff members.

As a concise summary of the results of this survey, three major conclusions can be drawn. First, elementary classroom teachers would like to receive more observation and evaluation of their teaching. Secondly, elementary classroom teachers would like to receive more assistance for professional development than they currently receive. And thirdly, elementary classroom teachers are receptive to evaluation and assistance being given by a greater number of personnel.

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#### APPENDIX A

310 East 29th Street, North Vancouver, B.C., May 26, 1975.

#### Dear Colleague:

Enclosed is a questionnaire which is being sent, with the permission of the Superintendent of Schools, to one hundred classroom teachers in the elementary schools of North Vancouver.

I should like to use the results of this questionnaire in a special project for a course I am completing at Simon Fraser University. Moreover, as we are in a period of transition with respect to educational leadership, professional development and evaluation of teacher competence, I think it might be appropriate to take a survey of teachers' perceptions about three current professional concerns:

- 1. Is it necessary to evaluate or judge teacher competence? If it is, who should do the evaluation?
- 2. Do teachers need assistance within the schools to grow professionally? If they do, who should give that assistance?
- 3. Can those who evaluate teachers' competence also assist effectively in the professional development of the same teachers?

Although there could be the possibility of interpreting the results of this questionnaire as an evaluation of the work done by people in special positions, that is not my intention and I trust nobody else will attempt to interpret the results in those terms. My intention is solely to determine whether or not classroom teachers feel that current supervisory practices need to be changed.

I hope you can take about ten minutes now or this evening to fill out the accompanying questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope. Also enclosed is a stamped, self-addressed postcard. At the time you mail the questionnaire please also mail the postcard. In this way the confidentiality of the responses will be ensured and at the same time I will know who has returned the question-naire. If it is easier for you, please drop both the completed questionnaire

and the postcard into the school board delivery bag. I would appreciate a relatively large number of returns to ensure the reliability of the sample. I hope you will not mind my phoning you at home if I have not received your return within a week.

Many thanks for your help.

Yours truly,

David L. Janzen.

DLJ/ld

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

## Teachers' Perceptions About The Supervision of Teachers

In order to ensure the confidentiality of your responses, please do not put your name on this questionnaire.

There are two parts. The first deals with your present school and with those who are currently on your staff or who hold positions within this district. The second part asks you to generalize: your responses might indicate a desire to maintain current practices or to make changes in those practices.

#### Personal Data

1.	Years of teaching experience:
	in first year
	in second or third year
	in fourth, fifth or sixth year
	more than six years
2.	Size of present school:
	under 250 students
	from 250 to 400 students
	more than 400 students
3.	Current tenure within the district:
	continuing appointment
	temporary appointment
	placed on probation
4.	Main teaching area this year:
	Kindergarten
	Grades 1 to 3
	Grades 4 to 7

### PART ONE

A.	Actual	Evaluation	of My	Teaching	Competence

1.	During this school year the principal observed my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
2.	During this school year the superintendent or assistant superintendent observed my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
3.	During this school year one or more teachers (other than the principal) observed my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
4.	During this school year the principal wrote for me a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my competence as a teacher:
	yes
	no
5.	During this school year the superintendent or assistant superintendent wrote for me a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my competence as a teacher:
	yes
	no
6.	During this school year one or more teachers (other than the principal) wrote for me a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my competence as a teacher:
	yes
	no

...2

Des	ired Evaluation of My Teaching Competence
	Regardless of what the actual evaluation was, please indicate a preference.
1.	During this school year I would like to have had the principal observe my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
2.	During this school year I would like to have had the superintendent or assistant superintendent observe my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
3.	During this school year I would like to have had one or more teachers (other than the principal) observe my teaching, primarily to evaluate my competence as a teacher
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
4.	During this school year I would like to have received from the principal a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my competence as a teacher:
	yes
	no
5.	During this school year I would like to have received from the superintendent or assistant superintendent a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my com- petence as a teacher:
	yes
	no
6.	During this school year I would like to have received from one or more teachers (other than the principal) a letter of professional recommendation or a report on my competence as a teacher:
	yes

. 3

C.			Professional	

1.	fessional growth, the principal observed my teaching and discussed with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
2.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, the superintendent or assistant super- intendent observed my teaching and discussed with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
3.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, the district's supervisors or consultants observed my teaching and discussed with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
4.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, one or more teachers on my school's staff (other than the principal) observed my teaching and dis- cussed with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total

Des	ired Assistance In My Professional Growth
	Regardless of what the actual assistance was, please indicate a preference in each category.
1.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, I would like to have had the principal observe my teaching and discuss with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
2.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, I would like to have had the superinten- dent or assistant superintendent observe my teaching and discuss with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
3.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, I would like to have had the district's supervisors or consultants observe my teaching and discuss with me the strengths and weaknesses in my teaching:
	at no time
	for some time but less than 1 hour in total
	for between 1 and 5 hours in total
	for more than 5 hours in total
4.	During this school year, in order to assist me in my pro- fessional growth, I would like to have had one or more teachers on my school's staff (other than the principal)

observe my teaching and discuss with me the strengths
and weaknesses in my teaching:

\_\_\_\_\_ at no time
\_\_\_\_\_ for some time but less than 1 hour in total
\_\_\_\_\_ for between 1 and 5 hours in total

\_\_\_\_ for more than 5 hours in total

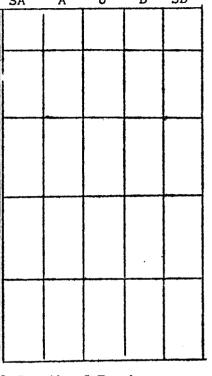
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### PART TWO

#### A. Effective Evaluation of Teacher Competence

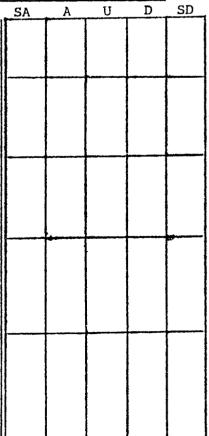
Under the headings strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD), please check how you feel about each statement.

- 1. Principals are able to evaluate teacher competence.
- 2. Superintendents or assistant superintendents are able to evaluate teacher competence.
- 3. One or more teachers on the same staff (other than the principal) are able to evaluate teacher competence.
- 4. A team or teams of teachers, appointed by the school board, are able to evaluate teacher competence.
- 5. A team or teams of teachers, elected by the teachers in the school district, are able to evaluate teacher competence.



#### B. Effective Assistance to the Professional Growth of Teachers

- Principals are able to give teachers assistance for professional growth.
- 2. Superintendents and assistant superintendents are able to give to teachers assistance for professional growth.
- 3. Teachers on the same staff (other than the principal) are able to give to teachers assistance for professional growth.
- 4. Teachers appointed by the school board to supervisory or consultative positions are able to give teachers assistance for professional growth.
- 5. Teachers elected by the teachers in the school district to supervisory or consultative positions are able to give teachers assistance for professional growth.



ACCORDING TO YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

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Page		۲٦	↽	↤	2	5	2

#### APPENDIX D

# ACCORDING TO SIZE OF PRESENT SCHOOL, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON THE FIRST FOUR PAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

Page	State-	No	Time		Less	than	1 hr.	15	hour	5_	More	than	5 hrs.
	ment	Under	250-	Over	Under	250-	Over	Under	250 <b>-</b>	Over	Under	250-	Over
Enro	lment	250	400	400	250	400	400	250	400	400	250	400	400
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Page	State- ment	Under	<u>Yes</u> 250-	Over	Under	<u>No</u> 250-	Over
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2	4	80	77	72	20	<b>2</b> 2	27
2	5 6	13 33	27 40	33 27	86 66	72 59	63 72

#### APPENDIX E

## ACCORDING TO CURRENT TENURE WITHIN THE DISTRICT, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON THE FIRST FOUR PAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

Page	State-	No T	ime	Less th	nan 1hr.	1 <b>-</b> 5 h	ours	More th	nan 5 hrs.
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4	2	63	57	<b>1</b> 8	26	18	11		3
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1	5			100	100
1	6		3	100	96
2 :	4	90	68	9	30
2	5	45	22	54	<b>7</b> 6
2	6	27	30	72	69

### APPENDIX F

# ACCORDING TO MAIN TEACHING AREA THIS YEAR, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON THE FIRST FOUR PAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

Page	State-	<u>N</u>	lo Tim	ie	Les	s thar	ılhr.	1-	5 hou	rs	More	than	5 hrs.
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2	3	66	61	59	11	11	3	22	20	28	1	5	9
3	1	44	55	59	44	29	18		11	15	11	2	3
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3	3	55	55	71	22	23	18	11	1.4	3	11	5	3
3	4	77	94	87	22	5	3	1		3			3
4	1	11	5	<b>1</b> 8	33	44	18	44	32	40	11	17	18
4	2	55	52	62	44	20	21	1	23	9	1	2	3
4	3	11	20	25	33	23	25	33	44	34	22	11	15
4	4	33	38	37	11	11	18	44	44	28	11	5	15

Page	State- ment	К	<u>Yes</u> 1-3	4-7	K	No 1-3	4-7
1	4	66	64	43	33	35	53
1	5				100	100	100
1	6		2	3	100	97	96
2	4	77	82	62	11	17	37
2	5	33	<b>3</b> 5	<b>1</b> 5	66	64	81
2	6	33	26	37	66	73	62

ACCORDING TO YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON PAGE FIVE AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

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11 20 5	20 5	2		32	99	08	30	48	11		15	3	11			16				
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APPENDIX H

ACCORDING TO SIZE OF PRESENT SCHOOL,
RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON PAGE FIVE
AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

rer         Under         250-         Over         Under         250-         400 <t< th=""><th>11</th><th></th><th>ć</th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th>٢</th><th></th><th></th><th>{</th><th></th></t<>	11		ć									٢			{	
66         50         47         6         9         19         4         8           26         50         41         33         22         25         26         13         19         13         4           46         45         33         22         25         26         13         13         4           20         33         26         9         30         6         13         4           20         45         30         60         31         36         6         9         5         13         4           46         50         58         9         8         6         4         8         6         4         8           46         40         41         6         4         2         18         6         4         8         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         6         7         4         7         6         6         6         7         13         4         8         6         6         4         8         6         7         6 <td>Under 250- C 250 400</td> <td>250- (</td> <td>0</td> <td>7ver 400</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>Over 400</td> <td>Under 250</td> <td></td> <td>over 400</td> <td>Under 250</td> <td>250<b>-</b> 400</td> <td>Over 400</td> <td>Under 250</td> <td>400</td> <td>over 400</td>	Under 250- C 250 400	250- (	0	7ver 400		-	Over 400	Under 250		over 400	Under 250	250 <b>-</b> 400	Over 400	Under 250	400	over 400
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#### APPENDIX I

# ACCORDING TO CURRENT TENURE WITHIN THE DISTRICT, RESPONSES TO EACH CATEGORY ON PAGE FIVE AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES WITHIN EACH NUMBERED STATEMENT

Page	State- ment	S	_	<u>A</u>		Cate	Ţ	,	<u>D</u>	<u>S</u>	
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