

Nolan Jr., James, & Hoover, Linda A. (2007). *Teacher supervision and evaluation* (Updated edition). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Pp. xv + 356 ISBN 0-471-71567-0

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July 3, 2008

Nolan and Hoover begin this outstanding text by suggesting that their goal was to produce “a manuscript that will equip educators with the knowledge and skills needed to transform teacher supervision and evaluation into a powerful vehicle for maximizing teacher growth and enhancing student learning” (p. v). In the twelve chapters that follow, the authors skillfully outline a supervision and evaluation process that combines current literature with classic works. The authors make clear and consistent distinctions between supervision and evaluation and define supervision and evaluation systems that are differentiated based on the experience level of the teacher.

The authors begin with a discussion of their beliefs about supervision and evaluation. Drawing on their experience as teachers, researchers, and consultants, Nolan and Hoover describe supervision and evaluation as separate but complementary functions that are designed to “enhance the educational experiences and learning of all students” (p. 4). They recognize, however, that the processes of supervision and evaluation are complex and should be driven by regular data collection and supported by professional development. Moreover, the authors acknowledge the need for differentiated programs for teachers at various stages in their careers, noting, “a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher supervision and evaluation makes no more sense than does a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching children and adolescents” (p. 6). Finally, the authors posit a view that all educators be involved in the evaluation and supervision process, stating, “All educators, therefore, have two roles to play,” (p. 8), first in determining their own professional growth and second working with colleagues to foster their growth. The authors do not limit their belief about the need for inclusion to supervision, and suggest, “... the teacher should have significant responsibilities within the evaluation process” (p. 9).

The first two sections of the book are devoted to the supervision process. The authors include chapters describing strategies and processes for five supervisory models: classroom observations, peer coaching, self-directed teacher growth, action research, and collegial development groups. In each chapter, the authors provide a rationale for including the strategy in a supervision model, guidelines for effective implementation of the strategy, and examples of teacher work product from each strategy. Throughout the text are reflective questions and exercises that help the reader to focus on prior conceptions of the material in preparation for learning new information.

Two of the supervision strategies rely on classroom observation: the classroom observation model and peer coaching. A complete and thorough description of both strategies includes a discussion of the need for building trust and using positive communication. Additionally, the authors describe a number of data collection procedures that would allow a supervisor to obtain non-judgmental data about the classroom experience. According to the authors, the purpose of the observation is to encourage teachers to engage in continuous reflection and inquiry into their classroom behaviors; peer coaching is an effective way for colleagues to work together to encourage such reflection. The authors suggest that peer-coaching systems allow school administrators to focus their attention on those teachers needing more direct and formal assistance (p. 95).

Three supervision strategies, designed for “tenured, experienced educators who have consistently demonstrated teaching competence over time” (p. 111) are self-directed teacher growth, action research, and collegial development groups. The authors argue that self-directed teacher learning, which is a form of job-embedded learning, “is directly associated with supervision” (p. 112). In all three supervisory strategies, the authors encourage teachers to take the lead role in determining learning needs, implementing the learning, and evaluating the efficacy of their changes. This discussion is congruent with the collective learning and the application of that learning tenet

of the Professional Learning Community model proposed by Hord and Sommers (2008) and Eaker, Dufour, and Dufour (2002). Nolan and Hoover recommend that the principal's role in such supervisory situations be that of providing access to training and resources and monitoring teachers' participation in the supervision. The authors argue strongly for significant and structured professional development for those teachers electing these alternative supervision models. They note that without continuing support from trained advisors and access to peers with whom to discuss questions or concerns and with whom to celebrate success, teachers cannot obtain the full benefit of these strategies. Moreover, they assert that common training allows administrators to have common expectations for participation.

Following a set of case study documents designed to supplement the material in the text, Nolan and Hoover include two sections (eight chapters) in which they discuss teacher evaluation models. The authors include a brief history of teacher evaluation in the United States, noting "Historically, teacher evaluation in the United States has been the search for the perfect, research-based model of teaching that could serve as a benchmark for evaluating the performance of individual teachers" (p. 210). They conclude by noting that although experts have developed standards of teaching that could guide teacher evaluation, they recommend that standard be developed locally. The authors argue that local development helps to increase the likelihood of buy-in by staff and helps to develop shared meanings of the language in the document.

The four chapters thoroughly describe the development and implementation of a teacher evaluation model that includes significant input from the teacher being evaluated. A variety of data sources are recommended, including observations, teacher artifacts, videotapes, student and parent input, and student learning data. The authors provide clear examples of questions that could be posed by an evaluator, artifacts that a teacher could collect, and recommendations for making the final summative evaluation.

Recognizing that teachers at different stages in their careers have different evaluation needs, the authors propose differentiated models for pre-service teachers, novice teachers, and marginal teachers. The authors suggest that teachers in each of these categories requires more direct and formal evaluation (and supervision) and data collection activities that allow judgments for continued employment to be made.

The final chapter "serves as a blueprint for combining and translating [the material in the rest of the book] into a fully functioning system of teacher supervision and evaluation" (p. 323). Again recognizing the importance of teacher involvement in the process, the authors suggest convening a task force to investigate the existing model and the needs for change. The authors note, "the next step is to collaboratively develop a strategic plan for [overhauling the existing system]" (p. 328), and provide suggestions for the development and implementation of the plan.

This text appears to be designed for use in a course on teacher evaluation for individuals seeking administrative certification. The pedagogical components, including guided questions for pre-reading reflection and journaling, discussion questions, individual activities, and theory-into-practice application questions, make the text ideal for this purpose. Moreover, the inclusion of relevant references to current literature would allow a student to pursue topics of interest with ease. The text could also serve as the main text in an administrative collegial development group interested in improving the current status of teacher supervision and evaluation in a school or district.

References

Eaker, Robert, DuFour, Richard, & DuFour, Rebecca. (2002). *Getting started: Reculturing schools to become professional learning communities*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Hord, S. M., & Sommers, W. A. (2008). *Leading professional learning communities: Voices from research and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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