Abstract of the Dissertation

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RATINGS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAINS

By

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The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether students who have teachers whose evaluations indicate they have met or exceeded district standards do better on the Stanford Achievement Tests than students whose teachers are rated as needs improvement or unsatisfactory. Additionally, this study sought to determine whether the six professional standards embedded in the teacher evaluation report could be ranked according to their impact on student achievement. A quantitative non-experimental correlation design was selected for this study.

The study sample, comprised of 86 English/language arts teachers who served 6,574 students and 57 mathematics teachers serving 4,557 students, was selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Two instruments were used to gather data. The Evaluation Report for Certificated Employees, Classroom Teacher – Form A2 was used to obtain the summative ratings for each teacher included in the study. The second

instrument, the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, Form T was used to obtain the Normal Curve Equivalent scores of the evaluated teachers' students from reading, language, and mathematics subtests from Spring 2001 and Spring 2002.

Initially, two approaches were used to ascertain the relationships among the variables associated with teacher evaluation and student achievement: correlational analysis and multiple regression. All computations were performed using Analyze-it [®] for Microsoft Excel. Research hypotheses were considered supported if the relationships were significant at the .05 levels.

The findings of this study indicate that there is a low to moderate correlation between total teacher evaluation ratings and their student achievement gain scores. The findings also indicate that the relationship between teacher evaluation ratings and student achievement varies according to subject matter. Positive correlations were found only between ELA teachers rated as Not Meeting Standards and the percentage of students showing gains. The negative correlations between the mathematics teachers' evaluation ratings and their students' achievement scores indicate that teachers with higher ratings are associated with lower achievement gains.

The results from the regression analysis indicate that about 13 percent of the variance in student achievement in reading and language is due to teacher level-effects. However, the proportion of variance in student achievement scores explained by each of the six professional standards embedded in the evaluation report is statistically insignificant. The potentially misleading impressions given by the correlation analyses and the regression analyses stimulated the calculation of a binomial effect size display. These findings show that twenty-five percent more students whose teachers were rated as

Not Meeting Standards made gains on the SAT 9 than students whose teachers were evaluated as Meeting Standards.

As the public's demand for educational accountability at the local, state, and national levels continue to increase, greater attention is being given to the role teacher quality plays in student achievement. This study not only illustrates the profound impact an individual teacher can have on student achievement; it does so by using data readily available to school leadership teams. More importantly, this study illuminates a process for identifying which instructional practices are most likely to achieve the desired results, with which kinds of learners, and under what conditions.