

**Supervision of Instruction and Peer Coaching: An Implementation Plan**

by

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Field Project

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This field project has been examined and approved.

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**Abstract**

Effective leaders are needed in WELS schools to do a variety of things. Among the top of the list is to carry out the role of instructional supervisor. The following field project focuses on creating and establishing positive teacher attitudes towards the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process. Teachers at Michigan Lutheran Seminary were surveyed about their beliefs and experiences with instructional supervision, participated in professional growth activities related to instructional supervision, and actively participated in the supervisory process through classroom observations and creating professional plans for growth. At the conclusion of the project, the researcher conducted a survey to measure the effectiveness of the plan in fostering positive attitudes about teacher growth.

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **Identify the Issue**

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) schools need effective leaders. The times have not changed. The need for principals to lead schools remains high because we are still in a time of “heightened expectations” (Bartoletti & Connely, 2013, p. 2). Principals are tasked with filling many different roles and it is not getting any easier. Among the lengthy list given by Bartoletti and Connely (2013) is that of an instructional leader.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS) has twenty-two teachers who are tasked with helping students to grow spiritually, academically, socially, physically, and emotionally while being encouraged to consider full-time service in the public ministry of the Gospel. The professors, instructors, and tutors who have been called to their positions must engage in continued growth, and the principal (vice president) plays a key part in helping teachers improve. Since the 2014-2015 school year, there have been four different people who have filled the role of the principal. Because of this, the key role of instructional leader by the principal has not been fully met and has fallen by the wayside; there has been no formal plan for supervising instruction and all that this entails in the classrooms. Since “leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (Louis et al., 2010, p. 6), the role of instructional leader and supervisor of instruction is one that should not be taken lightly. Because of the effects on student learning, supervision of instruction at MLS should be ongoing, be a priority, be a collaborative process, and provide honest feedback.

### **Importance of the Project**

The purpose of educational supervision is to help teachers improve their learning and to grow as professional educators (Lipton & Wellman, 2013) and most importantly, improve student learning. This is crucial because “teacher learning links directly to student learning (Lipton & Wellman, 2013, p. 1). Teachers are never finished products and always have room for improvement (Danielson, 2012). The principal, as overseer of all teachers, must work with each teacher to improve his/her teaching, and must have a formal plan to do so. Yet, due to the growing number of administrative responsibilities and no formal observation plan, this often gets overlooked.

In order for the supervisory process to be effective, and for teacher attitudes concerning professional growth to be positive, there must be a formal plan that can be carried out. The principal must give and clearly communicate the intended purpose of it. It should be a learning process for the supervisor and the teachers. The supervisor should be able to provide useful feedback in order to see student achievement rise. Therefore, the observations must be conducted with integrity and skill since “classroom observation remains the most practical activity for collecting formal data about teacher performance” (Danielson, 2000, p. 83). Creating a collaborative environment in this process will help teachers to see that they are the drivers in the process. Doing so will allow everyone to see that it is a shared process that necessitates collective work by everyone (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011).

### **Project Purpose**

It is the purpose of this project to foster positive attitudes about teacher growth by implementing the WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process (MGEP). The



MGEP was created and developed to emphasize teacher growth through formative assessment and coaching. Implementing such a plan and program to foster positive attitudes about instructional supervision demonstrates a strong commitment and a desire to grow as professional educators in order to positively impact student growth and learning. It also demonstrates an intentional effort on the part of the principal to fulfill the role of the main instructional leader. Based on the WELS and its Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) MGEP (based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching), this plan will make use of classroom walkthroughs, formal classroom observations, peer coaching, summative evaluations, and the Ministry Development Plan (MDP) which will foster an environment of growth. The project also fulfills the purpose of providing accurate teacher evaluation data to the WELS CLS, helping to create an accurate and up to date database of information for use on call lists.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

### Foundation for Leadership

Supervision of instruction is an important component of a school leader's responsibilities. Educational researchers speak about the necessary qualities, behaviors, and characteristics of a leader. While their work is important to keep in mind, Reverend Lauersdorf (1991) also writes about seven qualities that a Christian leader must demonstrate: a leader follows THE leader, a leader serves like THE leader, a leader sets a good example like THE leader, a leader shares the vision of THE leader, a leader feels for people like THE leader, a leader trusts people like THE leader, and a leader prays like THE leader. Those are qualities that must be evident in the ongoing process of supervision of instruction. Additionally, qualifications for overseers are laid out in God's Word in 1 Timothy 3:1-6:

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

By demonstrating these very qualities, the supervisor of instruction demonstrates the very qualities of Jesus, the perfect leader and supervisor.

### Need for Supervision

A principal should be on the frontlines of supervisory behavior since "the key task for school administration is to ensure effective teaching and learning environment and providing the needed elements for school improvement" (Ghavifekr et al., 2019, p. 30).

He must promote and speak positively about the benefits of supervision for the students, classroom teacher, and the principal. In order for the supervisory process to be beneficial, it is necessary for the supervisor to have the required skills so that observations are reliable and are conducted with fidelity since “classroom observation is a crucial aspect of any system of teacher evaluation” (Danielson, p. 2, 2012). The skills an observer needs include being able to collect evidence that is objective, being able to interpret evidence against clearly distinguished levels of performance, and being able to conduct a professional conversation with teachers about the observations (Danielson, 2012). All these must be done *with* each teacher (Danielson, 2012).

The school principal must work individually with each teacher. It must be a process that “will encourage collaboration and participation” (Benigno, 2016, p. 128). A strong, solid foundation must be created to allow such a collegial relationship to be developed with classroom teachers. It is beneficial for a relationship to be established in order to positively affect both the attitudes of teachers as well as the instruction that happens in the classroom. It is necessary for a school principal to establish an environment and a school climate and culture that promotes positive interactions between teachers and the principal. If supervision is to go well, then the principal must have a good rapport with classroom teachers (Ediger, 2009). Data from a 2006 MetLife survey of American teachers shows that teachers who leave the profession have principals who don’t ask for suggestions, don’t show appreciation for their work, and don’t treat them with respect. Therefore, creating a foundation that is solid and built on trust will allow the principal and the teacher to work collaboratively to best support students (Ediger, 2009; Hall, 2019).

In order to work collaboratively with classroom teachers, principals must get into their classrooms. They are the ones responsible for helping teachers improve their teaching (Moss & Brookhart, 2015; Richardson, 2008). This includes both new teachers and veteran teachers (New Teacher Project, 2010). The purpose of the classroom visit is not just to focus on the behaviors of teachers, but also to examine the work of students and talk with them (Barton & Klump, 2007). Getting into classrooms allows the principal to provide the teacher with meaningful feedback. Both parties can agree on next steps for the teacher and how they can work together to achieve that (New Teacher Project, 2010).

The supervisory process does not just involve the observer. Classroom teachers must be active participants in the supervisory process. After all, they are learners and, no matter how good a lesson is, all teaching can be improved since teaching is demanding and complex (Danielson, 2012). By actively involving classroom teachers in the supervisory process, they have opportunities for self-assessment, reflection, and discussion through professional conversations (Danielson, 2012).

### **Need for Coaching**

While it is important for the principal to work collaboratively with classroom teachers, it is also important that the principal establishes a collaborative working environment between classroom teachers. Preventing isolation of teachers and creating opportunities for discussions centered around student learning should be the collective work of everyone (Lunenburg, 2010). A principal must provide such a structure for teachers to be able to work and learn together to enhance student learning.

Peer coaching must be separate from the evaluative process. Through coaching, the focus is on the formative part of supervision. Peer coaching can help raise the bar for

all teachers to continually strive for excellence (B. Tschannen-Moran & M. Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Coaching provides the support and access every teacher needs to improve their instruction. Positive interactions between teachers and their coaches leads to greater improvement in instruction (Pierce, 2019). To further ensure the success of peer coaching, the purpose of it and the goals must be clearly communicated. Additionally, providing teachers time to observe in other classrooms serves as a benefit to the observing teacher (Ballinger, 2000; Humphries, 1981; Glickman et al., 2014).

### **Need for Data**

In order to provide meaningful and helpful feedback as the instructional leader, it is necessary to use data to help improve student learning. By using student data, the principal as the instructional leader can help teachers identify how the instruction needs to be improved and can help identify specific students who may need extra help so that the teacher can assist all learners. By using student performance data, what is taught can be connected to what is learned and teachers and principals can work together to construct specific learning plans that will positively affect student achievement (Moss & Brookhart, 2015; Lunenburg, 2010). Without the use of data, meaningful feedback cannot be provided to the teacher because superficial judgments are being made about behaviors and practices that may not have any impact on student learning.

### **Conclusion**

“No one is born knowing how to teach. Classroom instruction is one of the most complex intellectual and emotional tasks that any professional undertakes in our society; and the journey towards expertise is a lifetime’s work” (Lipton & Wellman, 2013, p. 49). This is what it is all about. Teachers need to continually strive to improve, and the clear

reminder of the need to continually do just that is necessary. In order to be successful and positively impact student learning, a teacher must be proficient in the classroom. School leaders and supervisors of instruction will work individually with each teacher to help them grow as teachers and as Christians to serve the children and families with whom they are privileged to work.

## **Chapter III: Implementation**

### **Introduction**

The number of responsibilities of a principal continues to grow. There are many roles a principal must fill, and they're all important. At the top of the list is being the instructional leader. Too often, instructional supervision is something that is loosely thrown together, if there is time, and it is not made a priority. On top of that, it is something towards which teachers don't always look favorably and speak positively. The goal of this project was to foster positive attitudes about teacher growth by implementing the WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process (MGEP).

### **Procedures**

With the goal of striving to foster positive attitudes about teacher growth, I first needed to get an understanding of teachers' beliefs about supervision of instruction. Members of the Michigan Lutheran Seminary faculty were given two surveys to take at the beginning of this project that would communicate their beliefs about instructional supervision, their past experiences with instructional supervision, and how it might be improved at MLS. Of the 23 total teachers at MLS this year, there were 11 who took the surveys for the first time at the end of December 2020. Of the 11 teachers who volunteered to participate in this project, four of them have 0-5 years of experience at MLS, three of them have 6-10 years of experience, three of them have 11-15 years of experience, and one has over 20 years of experience. Outside of their teaching experience just at MLS, three have 0-5 total years of teaching experience, three have 11-15 years of experience, one has 16-20 years of experience, and four have over 20 years of teaching experience.

In January at the beginning of the second semester, I planned out my visits that I would conduct. Throughout the course of the second semester, I conducted both classroom walkthroughs and traditional observations which was already a normal practice. I also met with teachers to discuss their Ministry Development Plans (most teachers already had one or were working on one prior to the start of this project) with the goal of deepening their understanding of how the use of it emphasizes professional growth and student learning. At the end of March, I led the entire faculty through the fourth module of the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process. MLS was already an early adopter of the MGEP, but the faculty had not been led through the entire process, so while there were already a handful of pieces that were put in place and there was familiarity with the process, this was one of the final pieces for full implementation.

An original hope was that there could be at least a couple of summative evaluations that took place at the end of the year; however, none were conducted because of the need for data to be brought by both the evaluator and the teacher. Because of a different-than-normal school year and transitions happening at the end of the year, there were no veteran teachers who volunteered who were able to gather sufficient evidence in time. Moving forward, teachers will be divided up into a few different groups which will be communicated to them so they can be aware of their timeline for a summative evaluation.

At the end of the school year, teachers were once again given the two surveys they took at the beginning of this project. This round of surveys was compared to the first round of surveys to measure and track the growth and development of positive attitudes towards teacher growth.



**Artifacts**

The two surveys were created using Google Forms. The first survey (Appendix A) provided teachers with an opportunity to share their perceptions of supervision of instruction. It provided details on the respondents' background knowledge and expectations for supervision of instruction based on their past experiences. The second survey (Appendix B) provided teachers with an opportunity to share their beliefs about supervision of instruction using an inventory adapted from Glickman (1981). This survey provided insight into what the participants felt is paramount for the supervisory process to be successful. Both surveys were completed anonymously. The information received in these two surveys would help me as I worked with the teachers over the course of the next few months.

As previously stated, the survey found in Appendix A was filled out prior to the start of the project and gave teachers an opportunity to share their perceptions of supervision of instruction and provide details on their background knowledge and expectations for supervision of instruction based on their past experiences. This survey provided both qualitative and quantitative data with the ability to compare the results from each round of the survey. 11 respondents completed round one of the surveys and 10 of the original 11 respondents completed round two of the surveys. Below is a summary for both rounds of the Supervision of Instruction Survey (Appendix A) and a comparison of the results of the Supervision of Instruction Beliefs Inventory (Appendix B).

There were two modules of the MGEP that were used, referenced, and shared with the teachers. The first was module three, which focuses on the MDP. The goal was

to deepen their understanding of how the MDP emphasizes professional growth and student learning and how the MDP is used as a formative growth tool. Sharing of this module was key because there are two major shifts in thinking associated with it. The first is the shift from thinking of teaching as simply delivering content to thinking of teaching as something that has a positive impact on student learning. The second shift is emphasizing teacher and student growth over teacher evaluation. The second module dealt with the evaluation being a summative process. The goal in sharing this module with the teachers was to continue to emphasize growth being a focal point the entire process. While evaluation is a key piece, it is not the only piece. Effective feedback is needed for growth, and summative evaluations are just one example of feedback teachers can use to improve teaching for student learning.

## **Results**

By using Google Forms for my surveys, the results were already organized for me. I tallied each of the answers from the prompts and compared them from pre- to post-survey. For questions and prompts that were free response, I coded those by grouping similar responses and recording them.

### ***Supervision of Instruction Survey Round One***

#1 *How would you define the term “instructional supervisor”?* (Free response)

Seven teachers noted that it is someone who offers feedback (identifies strengths & areas for growth), three teachers noted that it is someone who oversees instruction in the classrooms, and one teacher noted that it is someone who critically evaluates teachers.

#2 *What are the purposes of supervision?* (Free response)

Four teachers said the purpose was to improve instruction, five teachers said the purpose was to be able to offer feedback (positives & areas for growth), and two teachers said the purpose was to oversee the curriculum to make sure all parts were being fulfilled.

#3 *How often have you been supervised in the past?* (Choice of six responses)

Nine teachers chose “Once per year” and two teachers chose “None at all”.

#4 *What is your level of satisfaction with supervision in the past?* (Four-point Likert response)

Six teachers chose “Adequate” while five teachers chose “Less than adequate”.

Teachers had an opportunity to provide an explanation for their response. Some positive explanations given were that teachers were happy with the amount of supervision, and they received helpful feedback. Some negative explanations given were that supervision has been spotty and inconsistent, little feedback was given or no discussion took place, and observations had either never or very rarely taken place. One teacher made note of no previous experience due to being a beginning teacher.

#5 *How many walkthrough (short) visits do you expect?* (Choice of six responses)

Five teachers chose “Once per semester”, two chose “Twice per semester”, two chose “Twice per year”, one chose “Once per year”, and one chose “None at all”.

#6 *How many traditional (long with a pre- and post-observation conference) visits do you expect?* (Choice of six responses)

Seven teachers chose “Once per year” and four teachers chose “Once per semester”.

#7 *Does your supervisor notify you of the classroom instruction supervision?* (Yes/No)

Eight teachers chose “Yes” and three teachers chose “No”. In the free response explanation to their answers, two teachers said they want to be notified regardless, six teachers prefer to be notified only to verify that there is not a test or some other activity that doesn’t lend itself for instructional supervision, and three teachers said advance notice was not necessary.

#8 *Do you and your supervisor plan for the lesson observation?* (Yes/No)

Five teachers said “Yes” and six teachers said “No”.

#9 *Does the presence of the supervisor in your classroom inhibit you?* (Yes/No)

Nine of the teachers said “No” and two of the teachers said “Yes”. In the free response explanation to their answers, four teachers said that their teaching wouldn’t change regardless of having someone in the room or not, three teachers said that it does not inhibit them because there is a shared goal and focus on growth, and three teachers said that while it doesn’t inhibit them, there is a general anxiousness felt anytime someone visits their classroom.

#10 *Do you hold post-instructional discussions with your supervisor?* (Yes/No)

Eight teachers said “Yes” and three teachers said “No”.

#11 *Would you prefer a post-instructional discussion on the lesson observation?*

(Yes/No)

Nine teachers said “Yes” and two teachers said “No”. In the free response explanation to their answers, 10 of the teachers made note about the effectiveness of feedback (both positives and areas for growth) that come out of these meetings, and one teacher said only if the supervisor felt it was necessary.

#12 *Is there any benefit to classroom teachers observing other teachers to improve attitudes about teacher learning?* (Free response)

10 of the teachers said there was benefit to visiting other classrooms while one teacher was unsure if there was benefit but was willing to explore the possibility.

#13 *What could be done to improve the current practices of supervision at MLS?* (Free response)

Nine of the teachers identified consistency and structure, one teacher identified discussions connected to instructional supervision, and one teacher was unsure because of no previous experience of instructional supervision at MLS.

### ***Supervision of Instruction Survey Round Two***

#1 *How would you define the term “instructional supervisor”?* (Free response)

Five teachers noted that it is someone who offers feedback (identifies strengths & areas for growth) and five teachers noted that it is someone who oversees instruction in the classrooms and school.

#2 *What are the purposes of supervision?* (Free response)

Eight teachers said the purpose was to offer feedback/encourage teacher growth, one teacher said the purpose to was directly improve student learning, and one teacher said the purpose was to make sure goals are being met.

#3 *How often have you been supervised in the past?* (Choice of 6 responses)

Six teachers chose “Once per year”, two teachers chose “Once per semester”, one teacher chose “Twice per year”, and one teacher chose “None at all”.

#4 *What is your level of satisfaction with supervision in the past?* (4-point Likert response)

Five teachers chose “Adequate”, three teachers chose “Less than adequate”, one teacher chose “Inadequate”, and one teacher chose “More than adequate”. Some positive explanations given were that when teachers have had someone observe their classroom, they have enjoyed working with a supervisor who is willing to listen, understand, and help. Some negative explanations given were that very few visits have been made, the feedback has been either non-existent or not beneficial, and no post-observation conversations have been held.

#5 *How many walkthrough (short) visits do you expect? (Choice of 6 responses)*

Seven teachers chose “Twice per semester”, two teachers chose “Once per semester”, and one teacher chose “Twice per year”.

#6 *How many traditional (long with a pre- and post-observation conference) visits do you expect? (Choice of 6 responses)*

Five teachers chose “Once per year”, three teachers chose “Once per semester”, one teacher chose “Twice per semester”, and one teacher chose “Twice per year”.

#7 *Does your supervisor notify you of the classroom instruction supervision? (Yes/No)*

Eight teachers said “Yes” and two teachers said “No”. In the free response explanation to their answers, six teachers said they want to be notified only to verify that there is not a test or some other activity that doesn’t lend itself for instructional supervision, and four teachers said that advance notice was not necessary or needed.

#8 *Do you and your supervisor plan for the lesson observation? (Yes/No)*

Seven teachers said “No” and three teachers said “Yes.”

#9 *Does the presence of the supervisor in your classroom inhibit you? (Yes/No)*

Eight teachers said “No” and two teachers said “Yes”. In the free response explanation to their answers, seven teachers said their teaching wouldn’t change regardless of having someone in the room or not either because they understand there is a shared goal and they want their teaching to be authentic, and three teachers said that while it doesn’t inhibit them, there is a general anxiousness felt anytime someone visits their classroom.

#10 *Do you hold post-instructional discussions with your supervisor/* (Yes/No)

Eight teachers said “No” and two teachers said “Yes”.

#11 *Would you prefer a post-instructional discussion on the lesson observation?*

(Yes/No)

10 teachers said “Yes” and nobody said “No”. In the free response explanation to their answers, all 10 teachers made note about the effectiveness of feedback (both positives and areas for growth) and discussion that takes place during these meetings as they work together to be on the same page.

#12 *Is there any benefit to classroom teachers observing other teachers to improve attitudes about teacher learning?* (Free response)

All 10 teachers said there was benefit to visiting other classrooms because of the benefit it gives in teachers being able to learn from each other and encourage one another.

#13 *What could be done to improve the current practices of supervision at MLS?* (Free response)

Eight teachers identified having a formal, consistent structure in place that was regular so it became something that was natural, and two teachers identified receiving quality feedback as something that could improve supervision at MLS.

**Table 1***Supervision of Instruction Beliefs Rounds One and Two Summary and Comparison*

Question Number	Choice	Number of Responses	
		Round one	Round two
1	Supervisors should give teachers a large degree of autonomy and initiative within broadly defined limits.	8	4
	Supervisors should give teachers directions about methods that will help them improve their teaching.	3	6
2	It is important for teachers to set their own goals and objectives for professional growth.	8	6
	It is important for supervisors to help teachers reconcile their personalities and teaching styles with the philosophy and direction of the school.	3	4
3	Teachers are likely to feel uncomfortable and anxious if the objectives on which they will be evaluated are not clearly defined by the supervisor.	3	3
	Evaluations of teachers are meaningless if teachers are not able to define with their supervisors the objectives for evaluation.	8	7
4	An open, trusting, warm, and personal relationship with teachers is the most important ingredient in supervising teachers.	10	8
	A supervisor who is too intimate with teachers risks being less effective and less respected than a supervisor who keeps a certain degree of professional distance from teachers.	1	2
5	The supervisor's role during conferences is to make the interaction positive, to share realistic information, and to help teachers plan their own solutions to problems.	10	8
	The methods and strategies a supervisor uses with teachers in a conference are aimed at them reaching agreement over the needs for future improvement.	1	2
6	In the initial phase of working with a teacher:	4	4
	The supervisor should develop objectives with each teacher that will help accomplish school goals. The supervisor should try to identify the talents and goals of individual teachers so they can work on their own improvement.	7	6
7	When several teachers have a similar classroom problem, the supervisor should:	5	5



	Have the teachers form an ad hoc group and help them work together to solve the problem. Help teachers on an individual basis find their strengths, abilities, and resources so that each one finds his or her own solution to the problem.	6	5
	The most important clue that an attitude of desiring to grow professionally exists when:		
8	The supervisor determines that several teachers need intervention based on the mutually agreed-upon set of objectives Teachers, through self-assessment and feedback, determine their areas for improvement and agree upon a path for growth.	1 10	0 10
9	The supervisory staff should decide the objectives of an in-service workshop since they have a broad perspective on the teacher's attitudes towards growth and the school's needs. Teachers and supervisory staff should reach consensus about the objectives of an in-service workshop before the workshop is held.	5 6	4 6
10	Teachers who feel they are growing based on their goals and objectives for improvement (as identified in their MDP) will be more effective than teachers who are not experiencing personal growth. The knowledge and ability of teaching strategies and methods that have been proven over the years should be taught and practiced by all teachers to be effective in their classrooms.	8 3	9 1
	When the supervisor conducts a classroom observation:		
11	The supervisor should make recommendations to the teacher about how to conduct the lesson differently. The supervisor should ask the teacher to reflect on the lesson, but not interject any opinions or judgments.	8 3	5 5
12	One effective way to improve teacher performance is to formulate clear behavioral objectives and create meaningful incentives for achieving them. Behavioral objectives are rewarding and helpful to some teachers but stifling to others - some teachers benefit from behavioral objectives in some situations but not in others.	2 9	2 8
13	During a pre-observation conference:	3	1

	The supervisor should suggest to the teacher what to observe, but let the teacher make the final decision about the objectives and methods of observation.		
	The teacher and supervisor mutually decide the objectives and methods of observation.	8	9
14	Improvement occurs very slowly if teachers are left on their own; but when a group of teachers work together on a specific problem, they learn rapidly and their morale remains high.	4	4
	Group activities may be enjoyable, but individual, open discussion with a teacher about a problem and its possible solutions leads to more sustained results.	7	6
	When a professional development workshop is scheduled:	7	7
15	All teachers who participated in the decision to hold the workshop should be expected to attend it.		
	Teachers, regardless of their role in forming a workshop, should be able to decide if the workshop is relevant to their personal or professional growth and, if not, should not be expected to attend.	4	3

*Note.* 10 of the original 11 teachers completed this survey the second time.

Through the results of the survey, it is evident that there is a desire for solid instructional supervision to take place. Teachers clearly understand the role that instructional supervision has and they want to be an active participant in the process to help themselves as teachers grow so they can positively impact student learning.

## **Chapter IV: Reflective Essay**

### **Introduction**

Reflection is a key activity in which educators must participate. In looking back over this project and its implementation, it must be remembered that the sole focus of the project was to foster positive attitudes about teacher growth in implementing the MGEP. This intentional effort not only on the part of the principal but also the teachers demonstrates a strong commitment and desire to grow as educators with an eye on improving student learning. This is the purpose of educational supervision: to help teachers improve their learning and to grow as professional educators (Lipton & Wellmann, 2013) and most importantly, improve student learning.

### **Conclusions**

Through this field project, it was my goal to walk my colleagues through this process to help them see the benefits of instructional supervision not just to them as teachers but also to their students. In helping them to see the benefit, I wanted to help them develop positive attitudes towards and a level of excitement for instructional supervision and the MGEP by realizing that they are not finished products (Danielson, 2012). Through the survey data and conversations with colleagues, I believe that we were successful in doing that together.

At the onset of the project, several teachers completed two surveys regarding their views, beliefs, and past experiences with instructional supervision. Throughout the course of the semester, teachers were then directly involved through walkthroughs, observations, and the presentation of parts of the MGEP. At the conclusion of the project, 10 of the original eleven completed the same two surveys to determine the effectiveness of the

activities that were completed throughout the semester. The completion of the second round of surveys allowed me to make one overall conclusion: the teachers at Michigan Lutheran Seminary see the benefits of instructional supervision and have a strong desire to be part of an improved supervisory process.

There were several things that most of the respondents noted about their past experiences with instructional supervision. The first thing that was noted was the inadequacy in their level of satisfaction. In the conclusion survey, 60% of the respondents noted that they were only visited once per year. In both surveys that were completed, many people noted expanded on that by saying they had very few visits to their classrooms. Additionally, when people did visit their classrooms, some who conducted the visits had either no formal training in instructional supervision or no background or degree in education. Another main theme about their past experiences was that either very little feedback was received, or the feedback that was given was not effective or beneficial to the teacher.

With the emphasis placed on continued growth, every single respondent noted the benefit that visiting the classrooms of other teachers to improve attitudes about teacher learning could have. It was noted that there are many things teachers can learn from each other to apply in their own classrooms. A key component of effective instructional supervision is the need for peer coaching. This collaboration between teachers emphasizes the formative part of supervision as teachers push one another towards excellence (B. Tschannen-Moran & M. Tschannen-Moran, 2011). As some noted, the key to this component being successful is clearly outlining and stating the purpose and goal of peer visits and coaching in order for it to be successful.

The survey results provided overwhelming evidence that there is a strong desire for instructional supervision and teachers have a positive outlook on the benefit it brings to their instruction and student learning. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents noted that the presence of a supervisor in the classroom does not inhibit the teacher. While the teacher may feel more anxious than normal, they understand that the emphasis is on growth and the supervisor is there as the one responsible for helping teachers improve their teaching (Moss & Brookhart, 2015; Richardson, 2008). In the open-ended question about what could be done to improve instructional supervision, many communicated their desire to be visited more often, be given clear and effective feedback, and for there to be a formal and consistent plan to carry out instructional supervision for the benefit of the teacher and students.

The teachers realize the amount of time that it takes for the supervisory process to be effective. They also realize that the benefit it brings to them and their students. A key piece that contributes to the success of the supervisory process is gathering data to provide effective feedback (Danielson, 2000). In the concluding survey, 100% of the respondents communicated a preference to having a post-instructional discussion on the lesson observation. This was up from 81% from the first survey. The teachers emphasized again and again the desire for effective feedback for growth. One respondent even went so far as to say that this was the most beneficial part of the whole process as together, they determine the next steps towards growth (New Teacher Project, 2010).

### **Recommendations**

The first recommendation is that this work is not tied to an individual. A comment that one teacher made during the presentation of module IV was that different

administrators have different priorities and things on which they focus during their time at an institution. Instructional supervision is not one of those things that can come and go with administrators. It is a crucial part of teacher evaluation and is something that must be a constant not just for the benefit of the teachers but for the students (Danielson, 2012). This outline for instructional supervision can be carried out by a trained and qualified administrator, and not just the author of this project.

The second recommendation is that this needs to be part of the onboarding process. The teachers who were part of this project are well-aware of the various activities and goals of instructional supervision. As new teachers become part of the faculty at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, time must be given to communicate these same goals and processes of the MGEP. Making this a priority early on will show a strong commitment to collaboration and encourage participation (Benigno, 2016).

The third recommendation is to construct the yearly plan for supervision and peer coaching and observation at the beginning of the year. Doing so will demonstrate a commitment to carrying out this process and showing the importance of it. Providing multiple opportunities for involvement shows that this is a collective work involving multiple people (Danielson, 2012; Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011; Lunenburg, 2010).

By following these recommendations and carrying out this plan, all who participate in the supervisory process will help to show the importance it must have. By carrying out this ongoing, collaborative process, we can work together to positively impact student learning (Lipton & Wellman, 2013).

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Supervision of Instruction Survey (Converted to Google Form)

1. How would you define the term “instructional supervisor”?
2. What are the purposes of supervision?
3. How often have you been supervised in the past?
  - a. Once per semester
  - b. Twice per semester
  - c. Once per year
  - d. More than 6 times per year
  - e. Twice per year
  - f. None at all
4. What is your level of satisfaction with supervision in the past?
  - a. More than adequate
  - b. Adequate
  - c. Less than adequate
  - d. Inadequate
  - e. Explain your selection
5. How many walkthrough (short) visits do you expect?
  - a. Once per semester
  - b. Twice per semester
  - c. Once per year
  - d. More than 6 times per year
  - e. Twice per year

- f. None at all
6. How many traditional (long with a pre- and post-observation conference) visits do you expect?
- a. Once per semester
  - b. Twice per semester
  - c. Once per year
  - d. More than 6 times per year
  - e. Twice per year
  - f. None at all
7. Does your supervisor notify you of the classroom instruction supervision?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Would you wish for advance notification? (Briefly provide reasons):
8. Do you and your supervisor plan for the lesson observation?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
9. Does the presence of the supervisor in your classroom inhibit you?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Provide brief explanation:
10. Do you hold post-instructional discussions with your supervisor?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

- c. Would you prefer a post-instructional discussion on the lesson observation? Provide brief explanation:

11. Is there any benefit to classroom teachers observing other teachers to improve attitudes about teacher learning? Explain.

12. What could be done to improve the current practices of supervision at MLS?

13. Your gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

14. Your experience at MLS

- a. 0-5 years
- b. 6-10 years
- c. 11-15 years
- d. 16-20 years
- e. 20+ years

**Appendix B: Supervision of Instruction Beliefs Inventory (survey adapted from Glickman (1981))**

*Check the box for either A or B for each item. You may not completely agree with either choice, but choose the one that is closest to how you feel.*

1.     A. Supervisors should give teachers a large degree of autonomy and initiative within broadly defined limits.  
  
       B. Supervisors should give teachers directions about methods that will help them improve their teaching.
2.     A. It is important for teachers to set their own goals and objectives for professional growth.  
  
       B. It is important for supervisors to help teachers reconcile their personalities and teaching styles with the philosophy and direction of the school.
3.     A. Teachers are likely to feel uncomfortable and anxious if the objectives on which they will be evaluated are not clearly defined by the supervisor.  
  
       B. Evaluations of teachers are meaningless if teachers are not able to define with their supervisors the objectives for evaluation.
4.     A. An open, trusting, warm, and personal relationship with teachers is the most important ingredient in supervising teachers.  
  
       B. A supervisor who is too intimate with teachers risks being less effective and less respected than a supervisor who keeps a certain degree of professional distance from teachers.

5.
  - A. The supervisor's role during conferences is to make the interaction positive, to share realistic information, and to help teachers plan their own solutions to problems.
  - B. The methods and strategies a supervisor uses with teachers in a conference are aimed at them reaching agreement over the needs for future improvement.
6. In the initial phase of working with a teacher:
  - A. The supervisor should develop objectives with each teacher that will help accomplish school goals.
  - B. The supervisor should try to identify the talents and goals of individual teachers so they can work on their own improvement.
7. When several teachers have a similar classroom problem, the supervisor should:
  - A. Have the teachers form an ad hoc group and help them work together to solve the problem.
  - B. Help teachers on an individual basis find their strengths, abilities, and resources so that each one finds his or her own solution to the problem.
8. The most important clue that an attitude of desiring to grow professionally exists when:
  - A. The supervisor determines that several teachers need intervention based on the mutually agreed-upon set of objectives.
  - B. Teachers, through self-assessment and feedback, determine their areas for improvement and agree upon a path for growth.

9.
  - A. The supervisory staff should decide the objectives of an in-service workshop since they have a broad perspective on the teacher's attitudes towards growth and the school's needs.
  - B. Teachers and supervisory staff should reach consensus about the objectives of an in-service workshop before the workshop is held.
10.
  - A. Teachers who feel they are growing based on their goals and objectives for improvement (as identified in their MDP) will be more effective than teachers who are not experiencing personal growth.
  - B. The knowledge and ability of teaching strategies and methods that have been proven over the years should be taught and practiced by all teachers to be effective in their classrooms.
11. When the supervisor conducts a classroom observation:
  - A. The supervisor should make recommendations to the teacher about how to conduct the lesson differently.
  - B. The supervisor should ask the teacher to reflect on the lesson, but not interject any opinions or judgments.
12.
  - A. One effective way to improve teacher performance is to formulate clear behavioral objectives and create meaningful incentives for achieving them.
  - B. Behavioral objectives are rewarding and helpful to some teachers but stifling to others - some teachers benefit from behavioral objectives in some situations but not in others.
13. During a pre-observation conference:

- A. The supervisor should suggest to the teacher what to observe, but let the teacher make the final decision about the objectives and methods of observation.
  - B. The teacher and supervisor mutually decide the objectives and methods of observation.
14. A. Improvement occurs very slowly if teachers are left on their own; but when a group of teachers work together on a specific problem, they learn rapidly and their morale remains high.
- B. Group activities may be enjoyable, but individual, open discussion with a teacher about a problem and its possible solutions leads to more sustained results.
15. When a professional development workshop is scheduled:
- A. All teachers who participated in the decision to hold the workshop should be expected to attend it.
  - B. Teachers, regardless of their role in forming a workshop, should be able to decide if the workshop is relevant to their personal or professional growth and, if not, should not be expected to attend.
16. Your gender
- a. Male
  - b. Female
17. Your experience at MLS
- a. 0-5 years
  - b. 6-10 years
  - c. 11-15 years
  - d. 16-20 years



e. 20+ years

**Appendix C: Consent Form****CONSENT FORM**

## Supervision of Instruction and Peer Coaching: An Implementation Plan

You are invited to be in a research study of implementing a supervision of instruction and peer coaching plan. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher at Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Justin Danell as part of the Master of Science in Educational Administration Program at Martin Luther College.

**Background Information**

The purpose of this study is to foster positive attitudes about teacher growth by implementing the WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process (MGEP).

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things: complete two surveys about supervision of instruction at two different times during the 2020-2021 school year, participate and engage in pre- and post-observation conferences once per semester, and work through the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process.

**Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

The benefits to participation are helping to create a culture of growth where teachers show support and are supported so that collectively, we can positively impact student learning.

**Compensation:** No payment will be received for your participation in this study.

**Confidentiality:** The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:** Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Martin Luther College. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:** The researcher conducting this study is: Justin Danell. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at 4252 Rosewood Drive, Saginaw, MI 48603; 989-295-1413; [jjd@mlsem.org](mailto:jjd@mlsem.org). (Justin's Adviser for this field project is Dr. Jeff Wiechman; 507-217-6896; [wiechmjf@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:wiechmjf@mlc-wels.edu)) If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Director of Graduate Studies at Martin Luther College, 1995 Luther Ct, New Ulm, MN 56073; (507) 354-8221 ext. 398.

***You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.***

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_