GENERAL NOTICE

NOTICE 389 OF 2009

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, MP, Minister of Education, established a Ministerial Committee on National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), in terms of Government Notices 31403 of 2008 and 31492 of 2008 respectively. The Ministerial Committee has since submitted its final report.

All interested persons and organisations are invited to comment in writing on the final report on NEEDU as set out in the schedule.

The comments must be directed to the Director-General, Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001 for attention: Mr. T.E. Rabotapi, fax 012 312 6049, tel. no. 012 312 5987 or email Rabotapi.T@doe.gov.za.

Kindly provide the name, address, telephone and fax number and email address of the person or organisation submitting the comments.

The comments should reach the Department within 30 days from publication of this Notice.

The final report on NEEDU may also be obtained on www.education.gov.za.

GNM PANDOR, MP
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
DATE: 6-4-2009

MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON A NATIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

16 January 2009

FINAL REPORT

Members of the Ministerial Committee

Mr Paul Colditz, Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools

Ms Francine de Clerq, University of the Witwatersrand

Ms Matseliso Dipholo, South African Democratic Teachers Union

Dr Jonathan Jansen (Chairperson)

Dr Cassius Lubisi, Superintendent General for Education, KwaZulu Natal

Dr Peliwe Lolwana, Umalusi

Mr Peter Matthews, former Ofsted, United Kingdom

Ms Sussana Miller, National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa

Mr Mxolisi Roman, National Association of School Governing Bodies

Mr (JS) Steve Roux, Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie

Ms Amanda Sanger, District Six Museum

Professor Linda Darling-Hammond, an international consultant from Stanford University, was not able to participate

Administrative support from Department of Education officials

    Mr Enoch Rabotapi
    Mr Thula Nkomo

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Word of thanks

The Ministerial Committee on a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit wishes to express its sincere gratitude to every member of the broad education community who made the time and effort to contribute to this report. This includes senior officials in the national department of education, the nine provincial departments of education, district and circuit officials, school principals, teachers, concerned members of the general public through submissions, teacher unions, non-governmental organizations, business and industry, university academics, senior and retired members of the teaching profession, and independent citizens.

This report would not be possible without the constructive and passionate inputs from citizens across the country.

However, the Ministerial Committee takes sole responsibility for any errors, omissions or limitations in the final report.

Finally, the Committee thanks the Minister of Education, the Honourable GNM Pandor, for entrusting it with this vital task.

Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
DAS	Development Appraisal System
DIP	District Improvement Plan
DoE	Department of Education
DSG	Development Support Group
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
FEDSA	Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools
FET	Further Education and Training
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa
NASGB	National Association of School Governing Bodies
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education (United Kingdom)
PGP	Personal Growth Plan
PM	Performance Management
QA	Quality Assurance
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAOU	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie
SDP	School Development Plan
SDT	School Development Team
SIP	School Improvement Plan

WSE   Whole School Evaluation

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MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON A NATIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

15 January 2009

FINAL REPORT

A. The Brief

The Ministerial Committee on the establishment of a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit was appointed by the Minister of Education in September 2008 to recommend mechanisms through which the evaluation and development of schools can be undertaken.[1]

The specific tasks of the Committee were

1. to review all existing policies, mechanisms, structures, processes and tools that evaluate and develop schools and teachers;

2. to review the international literature on similar school evaluation and development bodies in other countries;

3. to make recommendations on the structure and composition, location, functions, governance, name, costs and financing of an external organization, accountable to the Minister, which will have the overall task of school evaluation and development;

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[1] The full details of the Appointment of the Ministerial Committee and its brief can be found in two documents: Government Gazette, 12 September 2008, No. 31403, Appointment of Ministerial Committee on National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), Department of Education, Notice 970 of 2008; and Government Gazette, 7 October 2008, No. 31492, Amendment to the Notice on Appointment of Ministerial Committee on National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), Department of Education, Notice 1242 of 2008;

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4.   to advise on the relationship between the proposed unit and existing policies and mechanisms aimed at school (including teacher and learner) evaluation and development;

5.   to report to the Minister of Education on the Committee's findings and recommendations; and

6.   to propose to the Minister a refinement of these terms of reference, if necessary.

The terms of reference were accepted as given, and no need for refinement of the terms was deemed necessary.

B. The Methodology

The report for this study was compiled using seven sources of data:

1.   **a synthetic review of national policy and planning documents concerned with the evaluation of schools and teachers**

In addition to the more obvious core documents from the national department—such as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), the Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and the Systemic Evaluation—the national document analysis also included subsidiary materials and provincial documents that speak to or affect issues of school and teacher evaluation and development. The aim was to be as comprehensive as possible while recognizing, of course, that not all the district and provincial documents would be accessible or even manageable for purposes of analysis within the tight time-frames of this study. The analysis began with a simple grid that examined origins, purposes, expectations, audience, actors, silences and dilemmas within each document set. But this first iteration of analysis was followed by much deeper, context- and content-analysis tasks that brought to light the meanings and intentions of these policy frames, as well as their embedded theory of action. With such detailed analyses and evaluations of the key school evaluation and development documents, it was also

possible to conduct more intelligent interviews and focus subsequent research activities en route to composing this final report.

2. a comprehensive review of international research, policy and practice on school evaluation, teacher appraisal and development

There is now considerable experience and evidence about inspection systems specifically and school evaluation, teacher appraisal and development initiatives in the international arena. Several of these key reports are available to members of the Ministerial Committee. The task was to draw together the key insights, observations and findings from these different reports in different national contexts to present a concise summary of value to the decision-making on evaluation and development in South Africa. The international member of the panel served also as a critical reviewer of the emerging work of the Committee.

3. the conduct of provincial hearings on the experiences and recommendations of a cross-section of education practitioners concerned with, and affected by, school evaluation and development policies and initiatives

The Committee conducted provincial hearings with a cross-section of stakeholders involved in or experienced with school and teacher evaluation and development. Every provincial head of education selected the mix of about 20-30 key persons representing unions, district officials, school principals, teachers, independent agencies and provincial officers who could speak with authority about their experiences of evaluation and development with schools and among teachers, and who would be in a position to make informed inputs about the purpose, design, content and location of the proposed evaluation unit. The Committee members, in various combinations, visited each of the nine provinces and the mix of personnel invited shifted as the committee felt the need for more information from a particular sector; for example, the earlier meetings were dominated by department personnel in the provinces but later more and more teachers were represented.

4. **the conduct of workshop-format interviews with key personnel in the national department of education under the Director General**

This meeting, about mid-way through the data collection process, allowed members of the Committee to interact directly with senior government officials involved in the range of monitoring and evaluation policies from whole school evaluation, development appraisal system, performance management, and systemic evaluation in the different directorates. This was an opportunity to test some initial hypotheses from the field and to seek clarity and direction on aspects of the reporting since the initial Briefing Meeting with the Minister of Education. The experiences and perspectives of the designers and supervisors of government policy on school and teacher evaluation and development offered important complementary insights from those obtained in the provinces.

5. **the collection of invited written submissions from the public at large and in particular from teachers and practitioners concerned with school evaluation, teacher appraisal and development**

A published call for written submissions was made to the public at large in recognition of the fact that there are diverse actors and agencies working with schools throughout the nine provinces and who could make valuable inputs into the work of this Committee. It also served the democratic purpose to convey a sense of the broadest participation in this process of deliberating on the substance and aims of what an evaluation and development unit could look like. Submissions were received from a range of stakeholders including the teacher unions, professional associations, provincial education departments, statutory bodies concerned with evaluation, community leaders, and individuals concerned with education practice.

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6. the collection of data from principals of "turnaround schools" — schools which, as a result of school evaluation and development interventions, were able to emerge as productive and well-managed institutions

This process of gaining insights from experienced and effective school principals from the nine provinces was conducted in a half-day workshop format in Pretoria. Provinces were asked to nominate "reputational cases" of outstanding principals who for the most part work in dismal and under-resourced school environments and yet managed to make a positive impact on teaching and learning in their schools. These whole-group interviews were very valuable to the Committee and delivered profound insight into what is wrong in education and how leadership can play a critical role in redressing the stalemate in many schools beyond the appeal to more and more resources.

7. the conduct of seminars with selected personnel and expertise in and outside of the department where key and emerging findings of this study could be tested, refined and improved

The emerging findings were shared through planned seminars with academics, unionists, practitioners, parents and agencies concerned with school and teacher evaluation and development. One seminar was convened in the north of the country (Wits University campus) and another in the south (University of Stellenbosch campus). The plan was to test initial propositions with a small group of informed persons who could comment on and indeed shape the final report on the basis of their participation at this crucial stage of the process. While this was not a voting exercise in which the findings depend how every outside person feels about the draft reports, the two seminars alerted the committee to gaps, silences, contradictions, sensitivities and dilemmas in the initial report on findings that were taken into account in the drafting of the final report.

C. The long shadow of history

Schools emerge from and are shaped by their social and historical contexts. Indeed, the education of young children stretches even further back beyond colonial influence and reflects in aspects of education today. In South Africa, formal education through institutions called schools cover more than 350 years during which time two great forces shaped the character of the contemporary school: colonialism and apartheid.

It was not, however, only the imposition of these two destructive forces on black schooling that defines the culture and character of schools today. It is also the resistance against the racial and class character of education that explains the current state of schools and proscribes the possibilities of change.

Because of this context the highly unequal character of schools persist despite comprehensive reforms since 1994 in pursuit of equal education for all. There are well-endowed public schools in South Africa with impressive resources and facilities that produce superior academic results over the 12 years of schooling. There are desperately poor schools with very little to show in terms of academic performance. In the past, the former category of schools tended to be white and the latter black. With the opening of schools to all children, increasingly the privileged schools tend to enrol white and black middle class students while the latter schools tend to remain all black. The resilience of these inequalities underlines the long shadow of history on all our schools.

For the same reason the reticence within much of the professional teacher community to inspection by external agencies is clearly a legacy of the destructive role of the officials of apartheid education whose place in the surveillance and control of black schools and teachers casts a long shadow. At the same time there are a minority of schools with well-established practices of monitoring and evaluation with high levels of teacher participation. Once again, these two dispositions towards external evaluation reflect a divided and contested history in the politics of education.

This is not to suggest, at all, that schools and teachers today are simply victims of such powerful historical forces. On the contrary, there is ample evidence in post-apartheid society that South African educators have exercised agency in taking on the worst legacies of education and acted in the interests of a democratic education for all children; the active agency of principals and teachers in professional development is but one example of teacher-led action in the field.

Even so, social, economic, cultural and political legacies do not dissipate with the installation of new governments or new policies. Consciously or otherwise, attitudes, beliefs, values and choices in education and society are informed by what came before.

This report should therefore be read with a consciousness and sensitivity to the long shadow that history casts over schools, teachers and learners even as the active agency to rise above the received legacy should be recognized and encouraged.

D. Review of national policies, structures and processes of school evaluation

Introduction

This section responds to one of the critical tasks specified in the Ministerial Brief to the Committee on a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit i.e. to review current South African policies, mechanisms, structures, processes and tools designed to evaluate and develop schools and teachers.

The focus of this review of national policies falls primarily on the principal instrument for school evaluation and teacher appraisal, the Integrated Quality Management System (or IQMS) since it integrates three major policy initiatives on appraisal and school development, namely, the Development Appraisal System (or DAS), Performance Management (or PM) and Whole School Evaluation (or WSE).

In conducting this task, the national study acknowledges the relevant policy reviews and evaluations of the Department of Education on the subject, as well as a surprisingly rich collection of South African research publications on the issue of school evaluation and teacher appraisal (see Reference list at the end of this Report).

The evaluation context and legacy is first presented, followed by an analysis of DAS, WSE and the IQMS resolution to understand what is successful, problematic and/or limited in the impact these measures have on the South African school system. The national review concludes by focusing sharply on what can be learnt from the positive lessons of "what is in place," and to guide our other main task—namely, to situate the work of an independent National Education Evaluation and Development Unit in conceptual and operational relationship to other existing quality assurance agencies in the country.

Background

The new Department of Education after Apartheid (1994) prioritized legislative and policy reforms to overhaul the fragmented and discriminatory nature of education provision, and to establish a unified, non-racial system of education and training. Since then significant changes have been introduced at every level of the education system from curriculum and assessment, to professional growth and development, to teaching and learning, and to the management and administration of schools.

Much progress has been made in moving the system away from the precepts of Apartheid education. More children attend school and more attend without the burden of school fees. More children participate in school nutrition programmes and in an expanded curriculum. More teachers and principals are exposed to inservice development than ever before. And more provision has been made to improve the infrastructure of schooling especially in rural areas of the country. That massive challenges remain is widely acknowledged; that qualitative changes in education have been effected cannot be denied. Much of this transformation of the school system was made possible through the intense participation by stakeholders in matters of education policy generally, and in policies regulating the development of teachers in particular.

The 1993 Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), a statutory body designed to provide bargaining and negotiation mechanisms on matters of education, led to the main teacher organisations being directly involved in the formulation of policies relating to their professional status and development. Negotiations in the ELRC over the terms and conditions of service of teachers, as well as their workloads and responsibilities, were never easy.

Still, by 1998 a raft of agreements and legislation on teachers and teaching was in place. For example, the *ELRC Resolution 7 and 8* of 1998 stipulated the workloads, duties and responsibilities of school-based educators, while The *Employment of Educators Act* (Act no.76 of 1998) established the terms and conditions of employment of teachers and provided for the establishment of the South African Council for Educators (SACE), a

statutory body designed to regulate the teaching profession, and composed mainly of education department and union representatives.

Of all the legal and policy reforms that impacted on teacher and school evaluation and development, the five most important were The Development Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE), Performance Management (PM), Systemic Evaluation (SE, though its major focus remains learner achievement), and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Each of these policy instruments is now briefly reviewed and assessed.

The Development Appraisal System (DAS)

The aim of the Development Appraisal System (DAS), finalized in the *ELRC Resolution 4* of 1998, was to facilitate the personal and professional development of individual educators, and to improve the quality of teaching practice and education management through the principle of lifelong learning and development (ELRC Manual for Development Appraisal, 1998). DAS represented a radical shift from previous teacher evaluation exercises in South Africa in that it was a stakeholder-driven, transparent form of appraisal targeted at school- and office-based educators (Gallie, 2006). The process of peer appraisal, or peer evaluation for development, was informed by the job functions and the so-called "seven roles of educators", roles which were formalised in the 2000 *Norms and Standards for Educators.*

Several studies criticized the DAS for its ambitious, complex and time-consuming content and instruments (Gallie 2006; Barnes 2003; Barasa and Mattson 1998). The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and other unions were keen on DAS to remedy the poor teacher education provisions available to black teachers in the Apartheid era and wanted departmental support to *precede* any attempt to monitor their work and performance.

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From their side, education departments were also keen to monitor how teachers implemented the new curriculum and assessment reforms, and to have information on the strengths and weaknesses of teachers in order to understand where and how to allocate state resources.

The DAS policy, on the other hand, worked from the assumption that teachers were professionals with sufficient professional competences, and in particular reflexive competences, to conduct a self analysis of their own work, identify personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as prioritize their needs in a personal development plan.

In this regard Barasa and Mattson (1998) argue that because most educators do not possess these competences, they should be allowed to acquire such skills "**before** they can be required by policy" (our emphasis). The policy further assumes that most teachers recognize the need for, and the responsibility to, improve themselves professionally.

Studies find, however, that many teachers expressed concern that despite DAS being in place, the department did not have the professional capacity to implement such a system-wide professional development plan. As Barnes (2003) and Gallie (2007) argue in their DAS research, teachers complained that the department did not provide them access to genuine and effective development support on the implementation of curriculum and assessment policies, let alone on what they needed to be functional in the workplace and to appraise themselves.

The Whole School Evaluation Policy

By 2000, the Department of Education also wanted to assume more of the monitoring and evaluation powers given to it by the National Education Policy Act (NEPA). The Department believed that, beyond access, equity and redress, "the issue of quality cannot be sidelined" (DoE, 2001:39). Following Section 3 (4) of *NEPA*, the national policy on *Whole-School Evaluation* (WSE) (Govt Gazette Vol.433, No. 22512, July 2001) was passed to monitor and improve schools. The aims of the *WSE policy* were as follows:

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- to inform the national government, provinces, parents and society in general about the performance of schools and the standards of learners' achievements against nationally agreed criteria.

- to provide substantiated judgments about the quality of education to inform decision-making, policies and planning within the province and at national level.

- to identify key factors that, if developed, will improve school effectiveness.

- to lay a basis for school improvement through a process of internal and external evaluation and the identification of good and problematic practices.

(DoE, 2001:39)

The WSE policy made clear that there was a need to build strong, stable and more robust schools with a positive institutional culture, as this was crucial to producing a stable and well-qualified teaching force. Teacher professional development remains a recurrent theme in this policy.

The WSE policy promotes school self-evaluation which should culminate in a school improvement plan (SIP) to then be used by the districts/circuits in their own District Improvement Plan (DIP), for which the province would secure funds. Provincially-appointed supervisors in turn visit schools in a three-to-five year cycle. After familiarizing themselves with the relevant school documents, a team of 4 or 5 supervisors use the same nationally agreed evaluation schedule to assess and rate the schools' areas of strength and improvement as well as make recommendations, which the schools would incorporate in their next SIP. The focus of the WSE policy was partly influenced by the need to ensure that the reform of school policies were implemented to enhance education quality in all schools.

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The WSE policy stipulates nine standardized performance areas covering the following school inputs, processes and outcomes:

- basic functionality
- leadership/management and communication,
- governance and relationships,
- quality of teaching and educator development,
- curriculum provision and resources,
- learners' achievements,
- school safety, security and discipline,
- school infrastructure, and
- links with parents and the community

There has been post-graduate MEd and PhD research on the WSE and its impact on schools (Lucen, 2003; Risimati, 2007; Silbert, 2008). Silbert's (2008) study offers an interrogation of the WSE policy and its selected nine areas which, in her view, omits important post-1994 constitutional requirements about learners' rights. Lucen's (2003) study provides a critical analysis of WSE implementation in a school but which does not stretch to include an analysis of the complexities, tensions and challenges which are the sources of most policy implementation problems. These studies point to several tensions in the WSE policy, enumerated below.

The first concern derives from the nine selected areas and the implicit model of school effectiveness and/or improvement on which WSE relies. It is debatable whether these nine areas are the most relevant for schools seeking to improve teaching and learning, especially since a few of the nine areas are about monitoring the implementation of school policies. But the nine areas do not give an idea of what exactly works or not inside the school environment. The nine areas are presented as a list of organisational input and process factors which are not explicitly related to the school's core functions of teaching and learning.

The second challenge is the balance between school self-evaluation and external school evaluation. In a country like South Africa, with a lack of professional evaluation capacity and a history of distrust towards school evaluation, there would be problems with school self-evaluation especially from defensive and poorly resourced schools which may not want to conduct an authentic evaluation. Yet, an external evaluation, even by well-qualified professional experts, may not in itself resolve quality problems because of the deep fear of victimization on the part of poorly resourced and struggling schools, and their experience that follow-up support is rarely a reality.

The third tension derives from how the WSE accountability framework articulates with other forms of school pressure or accountability. School inspection is only one piece in the accountability framework as there are other accountability measures in play. Schools are usually also subjected to national curriculum standards or learning outcomes, school testing (grade 12 but also in grades 3, 6 and 9), school-specified targets in their improvement plans, as well as performance management for staff.

But many government officials at district level have bemoaned the lack of school bureaucratic accountability. Taylor (2002)(2007) and Fleisch (2002, 2006) note that many poorly performing schools do not have any internal system of bureaucratic authority and accountability and that is why these schools cannot be stabilized and rendered functional.

Scholars have debated the balance between external and internal accountability. Experience shows that too great an emphasis on external accountability may lead to short term gains in test scores but at the expense of sustained quality in the medium term. Too great an emphasis on internal accountability, on the other hand, may be popular with teacher unions but it usually leads to uneven performance assessments across the system. Research and experience suggests that when there is a dynamic balance between internal and external accountability that the link between inspection and improvement will be optimal and the use of inspection to promote educational quality will be best achieved.

The fourth and related concern is about the school support promoted by the WSE component because it stipulates that the SIP of each school should specify its improvement priority needs. This approach could be said to promote a school- or teacher-driven form of professional development which assumes that there are quality evaluators in schools who have, or will develop, the expertise and knowledge from the school improvement research as well as the professionalism necessary to undertake authentic school self evaluation. Yet, such evaluation expertise does not exist in abundance in public schools. Taylor (2007) is relevant here when he states that no amount of support will benefit these schools unless their attitudes and commitment are directly confronted and changed by departmental authority.

The fifth tension lies in the balance between school support and accountability. The WSE policy states that it is an evaluation FOR school improvement because it promotes school self-evaluation and the development of an improvement plan. The external school evaluation is there to verify and strengthen internal evaluation and assist with recommendations for schools and districts to focus on. However, if the district does not manage to follow-up on WSE recommendations and assist schools with high quality support (something that is seldom the norm, according to many teachers interviewed), then schools will perceive WSE as yet another monitoring mandate that is not useful to them.

Performance Management

By 2002 other important evaluative measures were finalised in the ELRC concerning performance management. *ELRC Resolution 3* of 2002 on the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) aims to evaluate and improve performance of all public servants against pre-specified goals. This is pursued by establishing a performance culture to improve an individual public servant's awareness and understanding of their work objectives, and the performance standards expected of them, as well as providing opportunities to devise plans to address their needs (ELRC, 2002). The administrative measures and agreements on performance management

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borrowed from the new public management discourse which focuses strictly on what is produced and whether it is in line with what is expected.

Systemic Evaluation

Acting on the powers given to it by the *Assessment Policy in the General Education and Training Band (Grade R to 9) and ABET,* the DoE developed the 2003 *Systemic Evaluation Framework* to evaluate the system's progress towards its key transformation goals and the performance of learners.

The main criticisms of Systemic Evaluation is that while it provides valuable information on learner performance in grades 3, 6 and 9, the data is limited to what is available in a sampled selection of schools and learning areas (numeracy, literacy) and that the underlying factors that cause underperformance in these areas are not investigated. It follows, therefore, that there is little available in terms of change strategy to act on this data in either school improvement broadly, or specifically in altering teaching and learning to redress low performance.

Once again, the snapshot data and even the year-by-year comparisons of performance in the system is of considerable value as a check on the health of the school system; however, the repetitive nature of this data and the small gains or losses routinely recorded become relatively meaningless without a sense of the underlying causes and consequences that explain low levels of learner attainement.

The IQMS: the integration of complex evaluation systems:

The ELRC negotiations on the evaluation of educators dealt openly with sensitive and contested issues. The *ELRC Resolution 9* of 2002 and *Resolution 1* of 2003 outline the evaluation procedures, processes and performance standards for institution-based educators; and *ELRC Resolution 3* of 2003 stipulates the protocol and instrument process to guide the observation of educators in practice (namely lesson observation). These ELRC Collective Agreements provide a basis for decisions on salary progression,

rewards and others measures, and for a fair and transparent performance evaluation of institution-based educators, which seek to improve the quality of teaching and education management (ELRC, 2003).

However, teacher unions complained about the unnecessary duplication and complexity in having different structures and evaluation activities with DAS, performance measurement (PM), and the WSE policy.

It was finally decided to streamline these complex and complicated resolutions within *ELRC agreement 8* of 2003 which integrates into one system, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), three different previous systems: DAS, WSE and Performance Management (PM).

The IQMS combines educator development appraisal and performance appraisal (or appraisal for accountability). These two systems are aligned by relying on the same conceptualisation of effective educators and the same 12 performance standards to evaluate teachers' work and performance. The first four performance standards, applicable to all educators, relate to classroom observation, and the other eight assess professional issues outside the classroom.

The performance areas are as follows:

- Classroom teaching, through the following four standards:
  1. The creation of a positive learning environment
  2. Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes
  3. Lesson planning, preparation and presentation
  4. Learner assessment.

- Other professional and school development activities, through the following:
  5. Professional development in field of work/career and participation in professional bodies.
  6. Human relations and contribution to school development.

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7. Extra-curricular and Co-curricular participation.

8. Administration of resources and records.

9. Personnel.

10. Decision making and accountability.

11. Leadership, communication and servicing the governing body.

12. Strategic planning, financial planning and education management development.

Parenthetically, it is worth noting at this point that no criterion appears along with 1 – 4 relating to the response of learners to lessons, either in progress made, attitudes such as engagement, behaviour, or indeed their views e.g. of the learning environment etc. ("If you lead the horse to water in a well-planned way, does it matter if it does not drink?") The second set, 5-12, appears to anticipate no responsibility for the improvement of teaching and learning or school-based professional development.

The first eight performance standards apply to post-level 1 (junior) educators, while the post-level 2 Heads of Department (HoD's) are subjected to all but the last one, and the principals and their deputies to all twelve (ELRC, 2003). Educators have to undertake their own self-evaluations with this appraisal instrument, and then have it verified by a development support group (DSG) consisting of their senior management and one chosen staff colleague. This evaluation records educator's strengths and areas in need of development and serves as a baseline to inform the personal growth plan (PGP) of educators.

All educator PGP's are then put together by the Staff Development Team (SDT) whose implementation and training becomes the responsibility of the district office (ELRC, 2008). The new 2008 ELRC Resolution amendment proposed by the DoE asks for a "reasonable correlation between teacher scores and their learners' achievements."

Districts and schools are now for the first time in a relationship of reciprocal accountability, since they both have to account to a lower level of authority while being supported by a higher level of departmental authority. Such a transparent educator-

initiated system of appraisal for development could, in theory, break the vicious cycle of continuous blame by the various education stakeholders.

The DoE further commissioned research on the IQMS implementation (Class Act, 2007) which examines some tensions and inconsistencies in the instrument itself and show how these are partly responsible for the unreliability of the IQMS results and outcomes. Like with the WSE policy, there are tensions in the educator component of the IQMS.

The first set of tensions comes from the selected educators' performance standards which do not focus on the primacy of teaching and learning as crucial variables in the teacher effectiveness literature. Such variables include time on task, appropriate use of textbooks and materials, good communication, motivation, and the importance of positive feedback, etc.

Another related issue is that there is again no direct focus on learner achievement data as a basis from which to reflect on what needs improvement in the design and delivery of teaching (Katz *et al*, 2005). Yet, individual classroom observation or supervision was not agreed upon by SADTU (2005) on grounds that teachers of poor schools struggle with difficult teaching conditions and demanding school policies which are not backed up with sufficient support and resources from the education department.

The second set of tensions comes from the kind of teacher accountability the IQMS performance management process promotes. This is a mild form of internal professional teacher accountability. The major difficulty lies in the assumption that teachers are pro-active professionals who are committed to improve their practices by using their professional reflexive competences. Yet, most teachers and their DSGs do not know how to conduct an effective analysis of teacher performance and prioritize their development needs (Class Act, 2007) and have not been given sustained high quality training and opportunities to meet these new expectations.

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The third set of tensions revolves around the appropriate support available to teachers to improve their practices. Some Gauteng Department of Education district officials and NGOs complain that the support given to struggling teachers is rarely translated into practice because of their poor attitudes, culture and commitment to improve. Districts also mention teacher recruitment as a major problem as some teachers should never have been appointed in their jobs. Many schools and teachers, in turn, blame the district and the poor quality of some district officials. They also mention that the department underestimated the demands of these reforms and the amount of continuous support needed.

In 2004, a Ministerial Committee was appointed to design a teacher education framework and in 2007, the *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development* was completed to give greater coherence to quality teacher education in the school system. This new policy framework acknowledges the statutory responsibility of the DoE for planning and funding teacher education and development, and also acknowledges that different forms of professional support are needed for different kinds of teachers.

This is why a professional development system, coordinated by the South African Council on Education (SACE), faces serious challenges of changing negative teacher attitudes and culture towards continuous professional development and learning.

The fourth tension comes from the combination of appraisal for development and appraisal for performance measurement. Firstly, educators can become solely interested by the sanctions or rewards attached to the performance appraisal component. Instead of identifying their weaknesses and developmental needs, teachers will try to manipulate the system to qualify for a pay increase or progression. Second, many officials and school management question the combination of self- or school-led teacher appraisal for development and performance appraisal on grounds that such an approach was too advanced for an uneven school system still under (re)construction. Thus, while performance appraisal should be separate from appraisal for development, there is still a need to introduce capability procedures to achieve either.

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Another problem with the combination in one instrument of appraisal for development and appraisal for performance is that appraisees (whether school management or districts) are asked to take the position of referee and player as teachers' advisers and monitors. This poses the inevitable questions of objectivity and rigour in the appraisal exercise.

The DoE-commissioned review of IQMS implementation (Class Act, 2007) confirmed these problems of unreliability. Dissatisfaction with the first round of IQMS appraisals led the DoE to address reliability and validity problems by giving effect to Section 3.9 of the 2003 *ELRC Collective Agreement 8*, according to which the quality of the IQMS processes and outcomes had to be verified externally.

By mid-2008, the DoE trained a new layer of highly professional moderators (around 100) to verify and ensure fairness and consistency across the nine provinces (DoE, 2008).

Finally, there remains the major issue of trust, credibility and commitment to change which requires effective departmental and school strategies to change perceptions and attitudes of most schools and teachers towards external evaluation.

Some implications

From this analysis on the existing policies, mechanisms, structures and processes of school and teacher evaluation, the following emerges:

1. the importance of evaluating or appraising the appropriate functions of organizations (department and schools) and staff work responsibilities that relate directly to the core function of teaching and learning;

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2. the need to appoint quality evaluators/appraisers with a high level of professionalism and autonomy (from the departments and schools), and who themselves are subject to the monitoring and assessment of their performance;

3. the assurance that school and departmental leadership can act with greater authority in their accountability work and with more effective strategies in their supporting work, *and be supported in these roles*;

4. the importance of separating organizationally the function of performance appraisal or management of organizations (schools, districts...) and staff (officials, school-based personnel), from the function of development evaluation or appraisal; these two tasks should be conducted by different agencies;

5. the value that comes from evaluating the underlying causes behind the poor school and teacher performance by linking results to their context and to the departmental structures responsible for enabling schools and teachers. In that sense, what should be evaluated are the various levels of the education systems (national, provincial and district/circuit) and the way they mediate policies and delivery to schools;

6. the significance of monitoring the appropriateness of support for schools and teachers with the view to improving it; and

7. the requirement of aligning all quality assurance (QA) bodies, structures and processes to ensure their coherence and effectiveness at the level of schools and teachers; and

8. the necessity of developing an effective data management system to ensure that the different levels of (and actors in) the education system can access such information for school improvement purposes.

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E. What we know from the international research on school evaluation and teacher appraisal

Is there a role for school and teacher evaluation in their improvement process? What are the links between school evaluation/teacher appraisal and improved student learning? Can school and teacher evaluation serve the purpose of monitoring as well as of developing schools and teachers? What are the similarities and differences of school/teacher evaluation for monitoring and for development and should they be performed by the same authority? If school/teacher evaluation is necessary for development and monitoring, then what should be evaluated, by whom and how? These questions are central to the concern of governments, policymakers, education change agents, and academic researchers concerned with transforming schools and boosting learning achievements throughout the world. And the same questions underpin the quest of the South African government to improve education quality after Apartheid.

What follows, then, is a brief survey of the international literature on school evaluation, teacher appraisal and student learning in response to one of the tasks assigned to the Ministerial Commission on the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, namely, "to recommend mechanisms through which the evaluation and development of schools can be undertaken." The seven key questions selected for examination through the literature represent key tensions and concerns within the South African school and teacher evaluation and development context.

1. Internal or external evaluation?

School self-evaluation has the advantage of being a process which can mobilize school partners by reflecting on their own strengths and weaknesses and working together towards their development (McBeath, 1999). While it is true that school self-evaluation generates a sense of school ownership, it can also be of poor quality, especially if schools are complacent in their zones of comfort and play down their more difficult challenges, or if they do not have on-site professional evaluators (Grubb, 2000). This is where

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external evaluation can be useful in verifying and enriching self-evaluation through a more professional and objective evaluation process.

External evaluation can provide a mirror in which the school sees a reflection of its own self. If the evaluation is not firmly evidence-based, the reflection is likely to be a distorted image. No national system of rigorous internal evaluation which includes not only general school performance, but also the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning, is known to exist in the absence of a criterion-based external evaluation process. Under such conditions, the external evaluation provides a model for the internal evaluation.

To secure mutual trust and professionalism within the school community, external evaluators should be brought onto an internal school evaluation panel, if applicable, for a short time period. Such combination capitalizes on the respective strengths of internal evaluators with their deeper understanding of the school-specific issues and challenges, while the external evaluator(s) act as mentors and add professional, comparative and objective evaluation expertise. It also provides an opportunity for school-based staff to develop greater professional evaluation expertise (Grubb 2000).

2. Evaluation of performance or evaluation for improvement?

Many school inspections systems are designed to audit the strengths and weaknesses of schools and to generate a process of school improvement. It is assumed that schools benefit from an evaluation of their performance because this is a generative process of school improvement. Yet Hopkins (1995) and his colleagues argue that it is important to distinguish between two different kinds of school evaluation.

The first kind is the evaluation OF school performance, which collects information on the school's performance, its pockets of excellence, strengths and weaknesses. Such school evaluation is often based on a standardized evaluation instrument, with pre-specified performance areas and explicit criteria to allow for a comparison of school performance across the system.

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The second kind of evaluation is **FOR** school improvement and aims to identify the institution-specific priority problems to assist with that school's improvement goals and strategies. It is difficult to combine the two in one system as each of these evaluations has a different purpose, logic and instrumentation.

It might be helpful to view the first category as monitoring (how good the school is) and the second as evaluation (why it performs as it does and how it could improve). Evaluation values the school and carries not only judgmental but explanatory authority.

The Ofsted system of school inspection in the United Kingdom has often been criticized for claiming to be about 'improvement through inspection' (Hopkins *et al*, 1995). However, after many years of changing and improving the Ofsted inspection schedule, by 2004, significant evidence of improvements exist in the observed quality of teaching and learning, educational standards, and leadership and management, especially in the weaker schools which had been inspected (Matthew and Sammons 2004).

The same authors confirm that one of the biggest levers for school turnaround, as well as one of the most significant factors associated with school failure, is the quality of the principal (Matthews and Sammons 2005).

3. Evaluation for school support or performance monitoring?

It is often the case that high-performing school systems have split the two functions of school support and monitoring between different authorities and people, with the support pillar being done at district level and the accountability/monitoring pillar at provincial or national level (Middlewood and Cardno 2001). Such separation, however, led to problems of coherence between the support and monitoring interventions, especially when recommendations of the inspection units were found to be largely ignored by the departmental units in charge of school support. Working too often in silos, developmental units would organise their own support activities targeted at different aspects of school/teacher performance (Hopkins *et al*, 1995, Fitzgerald, 2001).

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As a result, resentment and frustration with this situation spread among schools and teachers who felt confused by the different messages and focuses of the two units.

There are different ways of dealing with this challenge. The first is to improve the collaboration between the people/units in charge of school/teacher monitoring and school/teacher development and ensure a correspondence between the two, as one could easily dominate the other (Darling-Hammond, 1998). Thus, it was not the separation *per se* of these functions in different departmental units which was seen as the solution, but rather a better coordination and balance between the two.

However, another way to deal with the tension was put forward by scholars such as Middlewood and Cardno (2001) and Piggot Privine and Cardno (2005) who argue that the fusion of school/teacher accountability and development functions in one system with one instrument could enrich and complement one another and have a greater impact on schools and teachers (Bartlett, 2000). However, they also acknowledge that further tensions were likely to arise with such a fusion and that the leadership (at school or district level) had to ensure they could manage and mediate these tensions and ensure that accountability and support work together to assist schools to improve.

For example, a typical tension in this combination derives from school monitors/supervisors at district and school level being expected to act as both players and referees at the same time. This could lead to some form of collusion which could, in turn, undermine the rigour of the school evaluation processes. Only with highly professional evaluators could such a system work effectively.

In an unequal and immature schooling system, such as in South Africa, one could argue that such combined system presents predictable problems as it is too advanced for the dire operational realities and existing capacities of schools and districts (de Clercq, 2008). An additional problem in combining teacher appraisal for development and performance monitoring in one system is that some teachers would be tempted to comply with the sole desire of satisfying the rewards system attached to the performance appraisal component. Teachers could manipulate the system to qualify for

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a pay increase or progression, instead of identifying their weaknesses and developmental needs.

This is why in any evaluation system it is important to monitor the evaluators and the professionalism of their work, as well as the school cultures within which such evaluation is to unfold.

4. Focus versus coverage?

An important consideration in appraisal and evaluation is what exactly is to be evaluated. A comprehensive evaluation schema usually consists of a series of inputs, processes or outcomes, the selection of which often reflect the main evaluation purpose. Evaluation areas are not ends in themselves but serve a purpose. They also are important because of their relationship to, and impact on, other school variables. Too often evaluation items make up a long list of variables or checklist which does not provide much insight on what is going on [or not] in a school.

The international literature is also clear that school evaluation should not be cumbersome and time-consuming but should focus directly on the essential factors that explain how and with what effects schools teach their students. Hopkins and McGilchrist (1998) argue that the school improvement research (Henneveld and Craig, 1996) shows that the core function of schooling—teaching and learning—needs to be the main focus of evaluation. Sinnema (2005) confirms that effective school evaluations are those which encourage teachers to examine classroom practices and learner activities by having explicit evaluation questions about the link between teaching and learning. Katz *et al* (2003) go further and recommend that school evaluation should start with learners' achievement results and that teachers should use these as a basis from which to reflect on and assess what exactly in their teaching needs improvement in order to impact positively on academic results.

Current practice in England requires the school to maintain a self-evaluation process and record the findings on a 'school evaluation form' (SEF) which is updated annually.

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Not only do all staff contribute evidence-based evaluations to this composite picture, but the views of students and parents must also be sought. The SEF provides the basis of the SIP and plays an important role when the school is inspected. Most schools now consider the SEF to be a useful management tool.

The discussion of what to monitor in schools cannot be complete without an understanding of the possible causes for poor performance. Schools and their teachers are located inside a nested system and are not alone in influencing student learning. Although they are most directly responsible for learning achievements, there are also other factors that have a bearing on learning attainments such as the parent community, the district and province, and the national education department. An evaluation schedule or instrument should therefore be comprehensive enough to allow evaluators to assess these spatial variables that impact on academic achievement in the classroom. In other words, evaluation is not about simply accounting for achievements up and down the chain of influences on classroom behaviours; it is about relating the chain of influences to that single most important variable: learner achievement.

5. Expertise or inclusion?

The success or failure of school evaluation depends on the professional quality and rigour of the inspectors and their reports (Matthews and Sammons, 2006). This touches on the important dimension of the credibility and legitimacy of an evaluation report. Schools are likely to accept the evaluation and its results if they respect and recognize the professionalism, competences and authority of the evaluators.

External evaluators have the advantage of having accumulated evaluative experiences across different schools, whereas internal evaluators will understand more rapidly the context of the school and its learners. As indicated earlier, by allowing external and internal authorities to operate side by side, it is more likely that these evaluations will have an impact on schools (Grubb, 2000).

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Inspections in England currently include some dual observations of lessons involving the principal or other senior staff and the inspector, the latter taking responsibility for the quality and accuracy of the teachers' observation. Inspection is depersonalised as far as possible, focusing on teaching rather than teachers. Wherever possible, processes such as teaching and leadership are evaluated in terms of their impact on learning achievement rather than for their own sake. Schools who use the same criteria for self evaluation are becoming increasingly adept at making good judgments about teaching and learning.

6. Accountability or Support?

Another important question concerns what kind of mix of accountability and support schools need to change and improve (Fullan, 1991, 2003). The idea of school evaluation is never a practice that is easy for schools and teachers to embrace. This is because school evaluation is often perceived as a form of external accountability and departmental control.

It is therefore important to impress on schools the need to account for what they do and offer to students by showing them the concrete benefits that could derive from accountability-based improvement. Schools should be shown that such monitoring or evaluation is not simply about their employers checking on what they do and produce.

Schools should be convinced that evaluations are there to be followed-through with some kind of support or mobilisation of support capacity to assist schools in the identified areas in which they need to develop and improve. As Barber and Phillips (2000) argue, there should be an appropriate balance of school accountability and support. Too often, school evaluations or inspections claim to be generative of school improvement processes but often stop there because they do not conceptualize follow-through support as a critical element of the accounting plan. Apart from learning about their strengths and weaknesses, schools should be able to see how evaluation can lead to more appropriate and focused forms of school support.

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Various kinds of evaluation follow-up action apply in the United Kingdom. In Scotland, inspectors re-visit the school a year later to assess progress against recommendations made. In England, all schools indicating concern are followed up by an HMI[2] every six months until they are deemed to have improved to at least a satisfactory level.

Support interventions, which are the responsibility of the education department, have to be designed with the schools' main issues in mind. Since no 'one-size-intervention-fits-all-schools' (Hopkins and Levine, 2001), the support will have to target each school with the right mix of variables for turning around poor academic performance.

7. Tradition or change?

Reviewing the quality assurance systems in selected countries, different legacies, cultures and traditions are evident. Cyprus, for example, with its centralised state education system, has a teacher evaluation scheme, or an annual process conducted by inspectors together with the head teachers, which aims at teacher promotion rather than teacher improvement (Kyriakides and Campbell, 2003). In Hong Kong and New Zealand, where the education system is quite decentralised, the education department guides and trains school leaders, while requiring each school to design its own staff appraisal system whereby teachers are evaluated for their administrative duties for promotion rather than for improvement of their classroom teaching practices.

In other relatively decentralised schooling systems, such as the Netherlands, the teacher functions are split: teacher evaluation is performed by principals while the inspectorate is in charge of school evaluation (Reetzigt *et al*, 2003). In the UK, teacher evaluation is also done by head-teachers as an internal process, although there have been attempts in the last decade at introducing nation-wide teacher evaluation schemes, some of which link teacher evaluation to pupil outcomes (Reynolds *et al*, 2003).

Thus, in most of these developed countries, teacher evaluation systems are mainly designed for accountability or promotion purposes and are therefore not explicitly

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[2] Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools

linked to teacher improvement. This could be a consequence of different histories and struggles located within national cultures. Teacher trade unions usually resist the links between teacher evaluation and improvement and some scholars even argue that such a link between the two is tenuous because teaching is a craft that does not lend itself to quick scientific measurement and resolution.

What is clear from this literature is that changes to existing evaluation and monitoring systems is enabled or constrained by the history of such practices within particular national cultures. This does not mean radical or transformative changes cannot happen; it simply means that leadership plays a crucial role in terms of what is possible in shifting evaluation and monitoring cultures in radically different directions.

Conclusion

These tensions must be read within the context of a broader set of literatures on what makes schools effective. Indeed, a wealth of school effectiveness research in the last 20 years has illuminated factors which contribute most to school improvement and the achievements of learners.

In a major review of the literature commissioned by Ofsted, England, Sammons (1995) and his team identified eleven key factors:

1. Professional leadership (leading professional, participative approach, firm and purposeful)

2. Purposeful teaching (efficient organization, structured lessons, adaptive practice, clarity)

3. Concentration on teaching and learning (maximizing learning time, academic emphasis, focus on achievement)

4. Learning environment (an orderly and attractive working environment)

5. Shared vision and goals (unity of purpose, consistency of practice, collegiality and cooperation)

6. Positive reinforcement (clear and fair discipline, feedback)

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7. High expectations (for all – educators and learners, communicating expectations, providing intellectual challenge)

8. Pupil rights and expectations (raising learner self esteem, positions of responsibility, control of work)

9. Monitoring progress (monitoring learner progress, evaluating school performance)

10. A learning organization (school-based staff development)

11. Home-school partnership (parental involvement)

This line of research has been internationally influential. For example, a vigorous drive to raise educational standards in Victoria, Australia, adapted the eleven characteristics and assigned priority to professional leadership, a focus on teaching and learning and purposeful teaching.

McKinsey's (2007) authoritative and topical international review of what makes the difference between the performance of different education systems recognized that "in many cases, extraneous factors hold back change and these problems need to be tackled first to enable the school system to implement policies and processes that will improve student performance."

But the McKinsey review identified three guiding principles on which to base change:

'1. the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers;

2. the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction; and

3. achieving universally high outcomes is only possible by putting in place mechanisms to ensure that schools deliver high-quality instruction to every child.'

This suggests that the quality of teaching and learning, school leadership, and the capacity to improve, should be at the heart of whole school evaluation.

Some education systems, such as those of South Korea and Singapore, have focused on these principles and turned their schools around in a remarkably short time; others have made little impact. Change is not, however, simply a matter of levels of investment in education. Singapore spent less on primary education than 27 of the 30 countries in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) states. The USA, by contrast, increased public spending per student by 73% after allowing for inflation and reduced class sizes substantially; yet here the reading scores of 9 year-olds, 13 year-olds and 17 year-olds remained the same in 2005 as they had been 25 years earlier (McKinsey).

Conclusion

Having offered a critical description and review of national policies concerned with school and teacher evaluation and development, and having placed this discussion in comparative and international contexts, the Report now turns to the key findings to emerge from the evidence collected in the course of this study.