Student Voice in Teacher Evaluations

NAESP 2014
Brenda Burr
My Personal Passion for Student Voice

CATALINA'S STORY
WHERE IS YOUR SCHOOL AT?
BACKGROUND
21st Century Paradigm Shift

Instructional paradigm puts the teacher and instruction at the center of teaching.

Learning paradigm puts the learner at the center of teaching.

(Calkins & Micari, 2010, p. 14)
For sixteen years, Chris Unger (2003) worked at the Harvard Graduate School of Education in *Project Zero*. He noted that much of the receptivity of student input depended on whether or not the school had created a safe and positive environment for teachers as well as for students.
BUILD SCHOOL CULTURE - TALK - TRAIN

Culture Building: A great culture begins with great teamwork.
THE POWER OF THE REVIEW

How did we do?
Thank you for your feedback!

Seating: 1 2 3 4 5
Food quality: 1 2 3 4 5
Menu variety: 1 2 3 4 5
Service: 1 2 3 4 5

Angie's list
2012
Super Service Award

How do our customers rate us?

Check Out Our Customer Reviews

Recommend us on Facebook

Real People. Real Reviews.

Customer Testimonial

We love Customer Feedback

Amazon.com Customer Review Scores

Customer Reviews
Walk It Out

279 Reviews

5 star: (193)
4 star: (62)
3 star: (13)
2 star: (5)
1 star: (6)

Average Customer Review

Create your own review

tripadvisor
ZAPPOS’ STORY

Zappos.com
POWERED BY SERVICE
This is our students’ world!
This is their parents’ world!
This is our world!

RATERS GONNA RATE

Our clothes are made for you. Whatever you've got to say, we want to hear it. Let Topman know your thoughts and rate our products now!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Want to share a review?
Simply find your product and click 'Write A Review'.
I'm so angry, I can't wait to write a review!
INCENTIVES - REVIEW DISTORTION

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Review your latest purchase and you could win a $500 Gift Card!*
CUSTOMER CONCERNS IN EDUCATION

No Child Left Behind has been replaced by the reality of not leaving America behind.

PISA Scores 2012 - Published December 2013
Math - 26th in the world
Science – 21st in the world
Reading – 17th in the world
*Calls for the skill of critical analysis and collaborative thinking.
INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
IMPROVE QUALITY INSTRUCTION
EVALUATIONS OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE
BASED ON MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

- Principal “drive-by” → Carpool with Stakeholders
On February 9, 2012, **Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan** launched a five million dollar proposal entitled the **RESPECT Project** (Recognizing Educational Success, Professional Excellence, and Collaborative Teaching) calling for teacher evaluations based on the 360 method or multiple perspectives and multiple stakeholders (U. S. Department of Education, 2012).
Call for multiple perspectives including the student perspective

“The average student knows effective teaching when he or she experiences it” (MET Project 2010, p.5).
In October 2011, the U.S. Department of Education organized a series listening tours. Over 94% of students stated the need for including student feedback in teacher evaluation (Brenchly, 2011).
Fullan (2001) notes that Adults rarely think of students as participants in a process of change. . . . Unless they have some meaningful role in the enterprise, most educational change, indeed most education, will fail. (p. 151)
STUDENT EVALUATIONS A NORM IN HIGHER EDUCATION. . . HOWEVER
Numerous studies have focused on multiple student, instructor, and classroom factors that indeed have the potential to influence the accuracy of course evaluations. Class size, instructor rank, instructor sex, student sex, student class year, required vs. elective courses, standard vs. pass/fail grading, major vs. minor courses, and expected grade have all been studied (Farreras, 2012).
HISTORY OF STUDIES SUPPORTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT INPUT IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING

- Kratz (1896)
- Knight (1922)
- Light (1930)
- Flinn (1932)
- Remmers (1934)
- Medley & Mitzel (1959)
- Blanchard (1968)
- Davidoff (1970)
- Peck, Olsson & Green, (1978)
- Masters (1979)
- Ebmeier, Jenkins and Crawford (1991)
- Fullman (1992)
- Hart (1992)
- Fielding (2001)
- Perry, Hladkyj, Reinhard, Clifton, and Chipperfield (2005)
- Mitra (2006)
- Perry, Hladkyj, Reinhard, Clifton, and Chipperfield (2005)
- MET Project (2010)
- Boser & Rosenthal (2012)
Current Districts / States with Student Feedback Initiatives

(Stefanakos, M., Kesselheim, C. & Kostin, M. 2012)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Evaluation of Teacher Effectiveness</th>
<th>Value-Added</th>
<th>Classroom Observation</th>
<th>Analysis of Artifacts</th>
<th>Portfolios</th>
<th>Teacher Self-Reports</th>
<th>Student Ratings</th>
<th>Other Reports</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find out whether grade-level or instructional teams are meeting specific achievement goals.</td>
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<td>Determine whether a teacher's students are meeting achievement growth expectations.</td>
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<td>Gather information in order to provide new teachers with guidance related to identified strengths and shortcomings.</td>
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<td>Examine the effectiveness of teachers in lower elementary grades for which no test scores from previous years are available to predict student achievement (required for value-added models).</td>
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<td>Examine the effectiveness of teachers in nonacademic subjects (e.g., art, music, and physical education).</td>
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<td>Determine whether a new teacher is meeting performance expectations in the classroom.</td>
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<td>Determine the types of assistance and support a struggling teacher may need.</td>
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<td>Gather information to determine what professional development opportunities are needed for individual teachers, instructional teams, grade-level teams, etc.</td>
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<td>Gather evidence for making contract renewal and tenure decisions.</td>
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<td>Determine whether a teacher's performance qualifies him or her for additional compensation or incentive pay (rewards).</td>
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<td>Gather information on a teacher's ability to work collaboratively with colleagues to evaluate needs of and determine appropriate instruction for at-risk or struggling students.</td>
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<td>Establish whether a teacher is effectively communicating with parents/guardians.</td>
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<td>Determine how students and parents perceive a teacher's instructional efforts.</td>
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<td>Determine who would qualify to become a mentor, coach, or teacher leader.</td>
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CHILDREN OFTEN UNCOVER A MAGICIAN’S SECRETS BECAUSE THEY VIEW THEM BY LOOKING UP—LITERALLY FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE
Being the primary consumers of education and spending so much time in the classroom make students prime candidates to be evaluators of their learning experiences. Our education determines our future; let us have a say in our futures” (Boston Student Advisory Council, 2011, p. 154).

Students of Youth on Board
Boston Public Schools
“Unless we engage our students – unless we get them to care – not much else will matter” (Beaudoin, 2005, p. 5).
“Increasing student voice in schools also has been shown to help to re-engage alienated students” (Mitra, 2003, p. 289).
There is evidence that motivation and student learning can increase with a sense of control or say or voice (Perry, Hladkyj, Reinhard, Clifton, and Chipperfield, 2005).
It seems that crucial information on how to improve our nation's school system might reside with those who will benefit the most—the students themselves (Boser & Rosenthal, 2012).
So Why- Teacher Fear?

Job security based on the whims and momentary moods of children and adolescents.
Teaching is personal - so it is hard to not take it personally!

Student Critical Comments
Feedback
Constructive Criticism
Evaluation
Parent Input
Ratings - Rankings
Performance Assessment
Judgment
Valuation
Teachers agree that the quality of instruction matters, but they question the methods used to quantify quality. They are afraid that formulas will put the blame solely on teachers for poor student performance.
COUNTS? HOW?
Campbell’s Law

“A MEASURE THAT PERFORMS WELL IN A LOW-STAKES SETTING WILL INEVITABLY BE DISTORTED WHEN THE STAKES ARE RAISED” (ROTHSTEIN & MATHIS, 2013, P.2).
In fact one of the arguments questioning the conclusions of the MET project findings (Rothstein & Matis, 2013) states that the data was obtained in a relatively low stakes setting. In other words, the teachers participating in the MET project research submitted to the evaluations with no specific consequences for fairing poorly.
Too often, SET (Student Evaluation of Teaching) systems have been compulsory, publicly displayed, uncontextualised, unsupported, simplistic and interpreted in isolated ways, features which render SET’s punitive bureaucratic tools rather than supportive mechanisms through which enhanced learning environments can be created and sustained. (Moore & Kuol, 2005, p. 148)
Onwuegbizie et al. (2009) found that student evaluations have an important assessment function if used as a formative measure by faculty looking to improve their teaching skills and course design.
It is time to turn questions from whether and how evaluation tools may or may not be telling the truth to how evaluation can be conducted in more meaningful ways” (Calkins & Micari, 2010, p. 14).
WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WEREN’T AFRAID?
MAKE IT SAFE TO as John Daley (1999) stated in an article in the NEA Higher Education Journal that if administered fairly, “I believe enough in the student evaluation’s diagnostic potential to risk the impertinent and the downright nasty in order to glean a few useful insights”
States must not respond with quick-fix measures to address teacher quality by simply imposing rigorous evaluation standards, which will result in the disaffection of teaching professionals (Oon-Seng, 2012, p. 76).

Strunk (2012) warns against the rush to implement new multiple perspective teacher evaluation policies which could undermine their potential benefits, advocating instead allowing time to learn from initial implementations in a no- or low-stakes setting.

This research study examines one implementation study in just such a setting.
Utah House Bill 64 requires that an administrator’s evaluation of teacher effectiveness include student achievement, parent, student and employee input, and an evaluation employee performance (lines 860-867),
Can student evaluations of teacher performance access the power of student voice and inform and improve teacher practice?
**THE PROCESS**

**ELEMENTARY SETTING**
- **Year 1**
  - Faculty Meeting Training
  - Teachers discuss possible questions for their grade level during PLC
  - Final Question list created K, 1-3, 4-6th
  - Administrator conducted surveys in each classroom
  - Evaluations given to teachers
  - Teachers take survey on their perspective of the results
  - Goal setting exit interview with principal end of the year
- **Planned Year 2**
  - Planned faculty meeting to re-train and re-collaborate on questions for upcoming year
  - Implement student training on how to give feedback
  - Use collaboration to create parent survey

**HIGH SCHOOL SETTING**
- **Year 1**
  - Faculty Training Meeting
  - Collaboration Committee to develop questions
  - Administrator administers surveys using Survey Monkey on portable Chromebook labs
  - Teachers take survey on their perspective of the results
  - Prepare a goal for exit interview with principal
- **Year 2**
  - Collaboration committee meets again to discuss teacher input and adjust questions. Parents included in school community council discussion.
  - Student training on how to give feedback
  - Same procedure 2nd time
- **Year 3**
  - Same procedure
  - Additionally athletic teams took survey to give input to their coaches.
  - Additionally added questions about administrators.
Play Video Clip – WHAT DO THEY THINK?

OUR STORY
The Results

Researcher Observation

- All teachers, elementary and secondary, felt anxious to some extent (male, female, new, veterans, all subjects, all grades) during the process.
- All students, elementary and secondary, demonstrated excitement about being part of the process.
Secondary Year 1 – Overall, I found the student survey process valuable.
Secondary Year 2 – Overall, I found the student evaluation process valuable.
Overall I found the student survey process valuable

- 62% Value
- 16% Unsure
- 21% No Value
Secondary Year 1- I will make changes in my instruction based on student evaluations.
Year 2  I made changes in my instruction due to last year's student evaluations
Elementary I will make changes in my instruction based on student input

- 67% Change
- 8% Unsure
- 25% No Change
Secondary Year 1 - Student evaluations facilitated reflection on my practice.
Year 2  Student evaluations have caused me to reflect on my teacher practice
Elementary  The student survey facilitated reflection on my practice

- 71% Reflected
- 12% Unsure
- 17% No Reflection
I wondered what I might say or how I might act that would make some of my students think that 'My teacher likes being a teacher'. I LOVE being a teacher and I felt like many times throughout the year I would say how much fun it was to be a teacher and how much I loved it. But, there must have been something lurking behind my words that made some of them feel otherwise.
I was surprised at how many students felt like they did not receive help when they needed it. I need to make sure I am clear on what to do if they need help.

Students are watching all of the time.

I don’t think I have ever done anything that has caused more reflection including looking at test scores.

I’m not going to do ______ projects again (really, I already knew this, but it confirmed what I thought).
IDEAS FOR CHANGES IN INSTRUCTION
SECONDARY

add daily review
improve classroom management (noise, downtime)
add enrichment
give more quizzes
update grades more often
watch my frustration level
show them I care about them as individuals
make objectives clear
give more examples
more activities – hands on
IDEAS FOR CHANGES IN INSTRUCTION

Elementary

Review how students can get help. (Over half of teachers mentioned this needed change)
Be more prepared at the beginning of the day, board work written, Daily Five ready.
Show enthusiasm for being a teacher. Look for ways to do this other than just my words.
Watch my frustration level.
Add accountability piece for centers and independent work
Work on consistency of discipline, especially for students off task.
Plan more hands-on, interactive work.
Build a relationship with each child, especially those who seem to dislike class.
Be careful with favoritism.
Implement a class meeting.
Spend less time chatting about how they are doing. Students see this as a waste of time.
On-line survey, have a place for examples for each answer for upper grades.
Have administrator make a plan ahead of time to answer student questions by repeating the answer or giving them the option of leaving the questions blank.
Add training for students on giving feedback
Give earlier in the year.
Have a colleague administer.
Review of questions again. Reduce number? Reword some?
Add prompt for open comments. What was your favorite learning activity? What is one thing your teacher can do better to help students learn?
Add questions about principal.
Student evaluations give students a chance to experience leaving behind a legacy. Other students will benefit from their contributions. Thus, they learn how to become part of a democratic society investing in the common good.

THANK YOU CATALINA!