TEACHING SUPERVISION AND EMPLOYEE COACHING
IN A REAL-WORLD SETTING: BEYOND SIMULATION

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Abstract

In an effort to develop supervisory skills of students in a principal preparation program, graduate students participated in a clinical supervision cycle with teacher interns at a Professional Development School associated with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. During a day-long experience, pre-service administrators acted as instructional coaches for teacher interns as a part of an instructional supervision class. Reflective feedback from participants indicated that administrative interns gained a better understanding of the supervisory process in a more authentic setting. While the experience improved upon other simulations and field experiences, data from this study indicated that more intensive opportunities for developing supervision and coaching skills for pre-service administrators are needed.

KEYWORDS: Instructional supervision, coaching, mentoring, instructional leadership, school principal preparation

INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges of professional schools, such as business, law, and education, is to move students’ experiences beyond the academic classroom to practical applications in authentic settings. Case studies and simulations are strategies that assist students in applying knowledge to specific problems and situations, and internships provide students opportunities to actually experience a given professional setting.

However, advanced degree programs, such as educational leadership programs that prepare teachers for administrative positions, are primarily populated by part-time students who work full-time and cannot participate in full-time internships.

While many field experiences that apply classroom concepts to real world problems can be integrated into such programs, the area of teacher and employee supervision is difficult for students. Further, best practices in teacher supervision require skills in coaching and mentoring and an ability to assist teachers in reflective practice that leads to personal goal setting and motivates teachers to improve.

In an effort to develop supervision, coaching, and communication skills of aspiring school principals in real, yet safe, settings, university faculty in educational leadership at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) joined forces with UNLV’s Professional Development Schools to pair pre-service administrators with pre-service teachers in an authentic school setting that would more closely mirror the actual practice of teacher supervision. Professional Development Schools, much like teaching hospitals, provide extended internships for pre-service teachers through full year placements with mentor teachers in real
classrooms. The focus of Professional Development Schools is to allow pre-service teachers to practice their skills, to provide in-service teachers with the opportunities for professional growth, and to involve university and public school educators in research that will contribute to the educational knowledge base.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

In the mid-1980's, the term Professional Development School (PDS) emerged from the work of organizations such as the Holmes Group and the National Network for Educational Renewal [NAPDS, 2008]. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) gave credibility to PDSs by creating and publishing standards in the late 1990's/early 2000's [NAPDS, 2008]. The standards, elements, and corresponding descriptors could be used to evaluate and develop plans to improve existing PDSs. The standards focus on (a) creating a positive learning environment that supports professional development and children’s learning, (b) upholding professional standards for teaching, (c) developing a university-school community with shared responsibility, (d) ensuring that professionals are prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, and (e) providing resources and structures that support the partnership work [Walker, Sorensen, Smaldino, & Downey, 2008, p. 7]. In addition, in 2007, the Executive Council and Board of Directors of the National Association for Professional Development Schools developed nine required essentials that defined what a PDS is. These essentials included:

- A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community
- A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community
- Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need
- A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants
- Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants
- An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved
- A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration
- Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings
- Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures [NAPDS, 2008, p. 2-3].

Professional Development Schools represent a partnership between professional education programs and PreK-12 schools. PDS partnerships have a four-fold mission of preparing new teachers, faculty development, inquiry directed at the improvement of practice, and enhanced student achievement [NCATE, 2001]. PDSs are collaborations between school districts and universities where teaching staff and university staff work together to improve the preparation of future educators and add to the knowledge of the profession [Abdal-Haqq, 1992b]. Restructuring is a key aspect of PDSs. These schools, which are considered to be exemplary, focus on improving learning for students through improving teaching practices [Abdal-Haqq, 1989, 1992a].

PDSs are often compared to teaching hospitals in that they both require a sound academic program and intense clinical preparation [NCATE, 2001; Teitel, 2003]. PDSs serve as a clinical setting for the preparation of teacher candidates and provide opportunities for faculty to develop skills as mentors.

Teitel [2003] noted that student learning is enhanced in at least three ways in a PDS partnership:

- through better preparation of interns and their enhanced roles inside and outside the classroom with PreK-12 students
- through professional development and other experiences that the faculty, staff and administrators at the school, university, and partners have, engaging and focusing them on student learning
- through the direct engagement of the PreK-12 students in an improved learning environment—improvements in curriculum and instruction as well as enhanced relationships inside and outside of class with intern, teacher and other adults [p.xix].
TEACHER INTERNS

Teacher interns who train at PDSs are considered to be prepared in a rigorous setting and, therefore, have a higher level of confidence than those who did not train in this type of setting [Abdal-Haqq, 1992b]. A study by Castle, Fox and Souder [2006] indicated that there are significant differences between PDS programs and non-PDS programs. They concluded that PDS teacher interns performed at higher levels in the areas of instruction, management and assessment. Their findings also suggested that these higher performance levels connected with their ownership of their teaching and their understanding of the relationships between teaching and practice. They found that factors such as length of time in the internship, interns’ experiencing an entire school year (including beginning and ending) and more intensive supervision and feedback from university supervisors and course instructors contributed to interns’ higher instructional expertise.

The University of Nevada Las Vegas teacher preparation programs and Professional Development Schools follow the standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). These are used to evaluate teacher interns' understanding and implementation of content and pedagogy. INTASC standards provide expectations that graduates of teacher education programs understand their discipline; understand how children develop; are able to differentiate learning for a variety of students; use instructional strategies that promote thinking and problem solving; are able to develop a positive learning environment; use appropriate assessments; and are reflective practitioners who collaborate with colleagues [CCSSO, 1992]. These standards mirror the standards upon which teachers in the school district are evaluated, including areas of planning and preparation, assessment, learning and environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities.

PRINCIPAL PREPARATION FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION

One of the most important aspects of a school principal’s role is that of instructional supervisor. According to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom [2004], “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” [p. 3]. Thus, developing pre-service school administrators’ leadership skills in working with teachers to improve classroom instruction is essential. Leadership in this arena requires the ability to promote inquiry, reflection, and collaboration [Zepeda, 2007]. In order to develop teachers’ skills and professional growth, leaders must build a climate of trust and be adept at promoting dialogue about instruction through coaching [Costa & Garmston, 2002; Stotko, Pajak, & Goldsberry, 2005; Zepeda, 2007].

Coaching for reflection and trust building not only requires one to have conceptual knowledge, but also requires substantial skill in communication, questioning, and active listening. The measure of an effective instructional leader is not in what he/she knows, but in his/her skill in applying that knowledge with teachers and other employees. In the sense that coaching, communication, trust building, and human relations are applied skills, their development can be compared to the growth of any applied skill, such as musical performance, dancing, or carpentry. Thus, classes in instructional leadership and other employee supervision should be considered as performance classes.

The Instructional Supervision class in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Nevada Las Vegas is a required course for school administration certification and for a master’s degree in Educational Leadership. Its primary purpose is to introduce students to various aspects of supervision, emphasizing the relationships among in-classroom supervision, teacher evaluation, and ongoing professional development. A major focus is the use of a clinical supervision cycle intended to provide specific instructional and professional coaching for teachers.

The first part of the semester-long course provides students a conceptual background in supervision, including philosophical orientations, building a culture of trust, career stages, and developmental and differentiated supervision. These concepts lay the groundwork for introducing students to specific coaching and communication skills necessary to develop an effective instructional staff. The latter half of the course is devoted to student application of skills, using a model of questioning to promote teacher reflection and self-directed learning, known as cognitive coaching [Costa & Garmston, 2002]. Instructional supervisors who use cognitive coaching provide support for teachers through a non-judgmental process in which they encourage teacher to reflect upon their practice (craftsmanship); their power to produce
desired outcomes in students (efficacy); their ability to change and adapt to various situations (flexibility); their awareness of purposeful planning and reflection (consciousness); and their productive collaboration with other professionals (interdependence).

In order to provide opportunities for students to practice coaching skills and reflective questioning, faculty teaching Instructional Supervision have used in-class simulations of conferencing and clinical supervision and limited field experience in classroom observation and data collection with colleagues at students’ school sites. While valuable, these activities do not represent genuine supervisory experiences. They lack the authenticity of the principal-teacher relationship, that of “boss-employee”. Thus, it was decided to take advantage of our Professional Development Schools, where pre-service teachers are involved in year-long internships, and required our graduate students in the Instructional Supervision class to participate in a day-long experience as a cognitive coach to teacher interns and complete a full clinical supervision cycle. Clinical supervision involves a continuous cycle of pre-observation conferencing, classroom observation, feedback conferencing, and evaluation [Acheson & Gall, 1997; Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer, 1969].

**PRACTICING SUPERVISION IN AN AUTHENTIC SETTING: A NEW COURSE REQUIREMENT**

Ten pre-service administrators in the Instructional Supervision class worked in pairs throughout a full day in the Professional Development School, taking turns as an active supervisor and a passive observer. Students were paired so that they could receive peer feedback regarding their skill development in conferencing, observation, and feedback.

During both pre-observation and feedback conferencing, student “supervisors” were expected to establish a safe and secure environment for the teacher, practice active listening and paraphrasing, ask probing questions, and provide reinforcing praise. During the pre-observation conference, supervisors were to have teachers identify learning objectives for the lesson to be observed; elicit teachers’ reflections on the classroom environment; ask teachers to describe expected student outcomes; and mutually determine a focus for the observation. In the feedback, or post-observation, conference, supervisors were to ask teachers to reflect upon the lesson observed, share objective data collected during the observation, seek teachers’ inferences and “lessons learned”, and ask teachers to develop a plan to improve upon instruction.

Students in the Instructional Supervision class tape recorded their conferences with teacher interns and were required to listen and reflect upon these recordings. Then they were to write a paper in which they detailed the entire clinical supervision cycle, provided examples of specific performance criteria, and evaluated their own performance and skill development. Table 1 shows the rubric used for grading students’ written reflection.

**TABLE 1**

**CLINICAL SUPERVISION CYCLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Observation Summary</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Identified one or more (but not all) of the following: content, process, resources to be used in lesson</td>
<td>Identified content, process, and resources to be used in lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Environment</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Identified one of the following: characteristics of learners and culture/climate of classroom</td>
<td>Identified characteristics of learners and culture/climate of classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Identified one of the following: how teacher will monitor learning; what assessments will be used</td>
<td>Identified how teacher will monitor learning and what assessments will be used</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus for Observation</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Identified focus of observation generally</td>
<td>Identified specific area for focus of observation, including what specific teacher behaviors were to be observed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation and Data Collection</strong></td>
<td>Not present</td>
<td>Data collected were primarily evaluative in nature</td>
<td>Data collection reflected a mix of evaluative statements with objective data</td>
<td>Data gathering technique appropriate to contract, collected data objectively, and sufficient amount of data collected to synthesize/analyze</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post Observation Conference</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's Reflection on Lesson</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Noted its absence, but gave no plan for improvement</td>
<td>Summarized use of element or noted its absence with plan for improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation Data</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Noted its absence, but gave no plan for improvement</td>
<td>Summarized use of element or noted its absence with plan for improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's Inferences</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Noted its absence, but gave no plan for improvement</td>
<td>Summarized use of element or noted its absence with plan for improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Plan</td>
<td>Not identified or discussed</td>
<td>Noted its absence, but gave no plan for improvement</td>
<td>Summarized use of element or noted its absence with plan for improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Conferencing Techniques</strong></td>
<td>Not overtly identified or discussed</td>
<td>Discussed generally, but did not specify by example</td>
<td>Discussed and gave specific examples of at least 3 of the following elements: Safe and secure environment; active listening; paraphrasing; chaining and probing; positive reinforcement</td>
<td>Discussed and gave specific examples of at least 4 of the following elements: Safe and secure environment; active listening; paraphrasing; chaining and probing; positive reinforcement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Coaching</td>
<td>Did not overtly identify or discuss</td>
<td>Identified absence of cognitive coaching</td>
<td>Discussed in general terms, but did not give examples</td>
<td>Discussed use of cognitive coaching techniques; cited specific examples, and classified examples as leading toward efficacy, flexibility, craftsmanship, or consciousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 1 (Continued)

| Self Evaluation | Not present | Student reflection does not include personal skill assessment, concepts/theories related to supervision, or areas for personal growth/improvement | Student reflection includes one of the following: personal skill assessment, concepts/theories related to supervision, or areas for personal growth/improvement | Student reflection includes two of the following: personal skill assessment, concepts/theories related to supervision, or areas for personal growth/improvement | Student reflection includes all of the following: personal skill assessment, concepts/theories related to supervision, or areas for personal growth/improvement |

ANALYSIS OF FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES

Administrative interns were assigned to conduct a full clinical supervision cycle with one teacher intern, a pre-service teacher who was in the third month of the year-long internship. In order to evaluate the usefulness of this activity, feedback was solicited from both teacher and administrative interns regarding the following topics: (a) teacher interns’ reflection on practice; (b) instructional focus of supervision; (c) questions and dialogue about instruction during conferencing; (d) data used to guide reflection about instruction; and, (e) general benefits of the clinical supervision activity.

REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

Table 2 indicates questions and responses regarding administrative interns’ skill in encouraging teacher interns to reflect about their instruction.

TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Interns</th>
<th>Administrative Interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Conferencing helped them think more about</td>
<td>Conferencing helped them think more about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Intern:</td>
<td>• How they would do things differently</td>
<td>• How they would do things differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways did conferencing with the administrative intern encourage you to reflect on your practice?</td>
<td>• Questioning strategies</td>
<td>• Questioning strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Intern:</td>
<td>• Modeling</td>
<td>• Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways did the teacher intern reflect upon his/her practices?</td>
<td>• Classroom management</td>
<td>• Classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Their teaching</td>
<td>• Growth as a teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Their students’ personalities and abilities</td>
<td>• Impact of actions on classroom environment and learning experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sequencing their instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, teacher interns felt that the conferencing helped them think more about their teaching. In one instance, a teacher intern indicated that the conference with her coach helped her focus on things other than her immediate lesson, such as the students’ personalities and abilities. Specific instructional strategies that were discussed during conferencing included questioning, modeling, classroom management and movement patterns.

Two major categories emerged from the administrative interns’ responses. The first, and most frequent response, was that teacher interns reflected upon how they would do things differently, both in their instruction and classroom management. One teacher intern indicated that she would consider the questions she asked more carefully. In another response, the teacher intern told her “coach” that she felt better about the way she had modeled brainstorming than she had the day before. In the area of
classroom management, four administrative interns reported that the teacher intern reflected on how they dealt with classroom management of the whole class or individual students. Specifically, one teacher intern reported to her “supervisor” that she was beginning to see how her actions impacted the classroom environment and the learning experiences. A second broad category that administrative interns reported was that teacher interns specifically discussed their own professional growth.

PROVIDING SUPERVISION THAT FOCUSES ON INSTRUCTION

Table 3 reflects questions and responses to elicit respondents’ perceptions about how coaches used pre-observation conferencing to focus intern teachers on specific areas in which data would be collected during a classroom observation.

**TABLE 3**

**FOCUS ON INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Interns</th>
<th>Administrative Interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Intern: How did the administrative intern help you focus on a specific instructional area that you were concerned about?</td>
<td>The focus of the observation was determined collaboratively in the preconference with the following results: • Questioning • Teacher’s movement patterns • Visual display of questioning o Boys vs. girls o Front of room vs. back of room • Physical responses to questioning • Needed assistance in determining focus of observation</td>
<td>The focus of the observation was determined collaboratively in the preconference with the following results: • Classroom management • Teacher directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Intern: In what ways did you help the teacher intern focus on a specific instructional area?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the pre-observation conference, each administrative intern assisted an intern teacher in identifying a specific focus for the classroom observation. Both teacher and administrative interns reported that this was done collaboratively. Focus of observations included questioning patterns, teacher movement patterns, teacher responses, teacher’s directions, and classroom management. Administrative interns reported that they asked teacher interns to identify specific behaviors to observe; however, teacher interns reported that they needed direction from their “coach” in identifying a specific focus for observation.

QUESTIONS AND DIALOGUE ABOUT INSTRUCTION

Feedback was solicited from both teacher interns and administrative interns regarding the post-observation conference. Participants were asked to recall the questions and dialogue that took place after the classroom observation regarding the instruction that was observed. Table 4 summarizes that data.
TABLE 4  
QUESTIONS AND DIALOGUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Interns</th>
<th>Administrative Interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Teacher Intern:**  
During the post observation conference, what questions were posed by you and the administrative intern? As a result of these questions and dialogue, will you change anything about your instruction? | Reflective questions that were posed addressed the following areas:  
• Purpose for questioning and questioning strategies  
• Something that happened in the classroom  
• Specific behavior of a child and how she could assist that student  
• Purpose for movement within the classroom | Reflective questions that were posed addressed the following areas:  
• Increasing consciousness of who answered questions  
• Variety of ways that they could change their instruction  
• Small group vs. whole group instruction  
• Providing different instructional strategies  
• Incorporating different skills  
• Classroom management |
| **Administrative Intern:**  
During the post observation conference, what questions were posed by you and the teacher intern? As a result of these questions and dialogue, did the teacher intern come up with a plan for changing instruction? | |

Three of the five teacher interns could not identify specific questions posed to them by the administrative intern. One teacher intern stated that she was asked if she intentionally asked each student a question during the lesson. Another teacher intern stated that the administrative intern commented on something that happened in the classroom or a specific behavior of a child and ask what she thought and how she could change the situation or assist the child. In another situation, the administrative intern asked the teacher intern for her purpose of questioning and questioned her movement around the class. She also asked him for his advice and opinions on her movement patterns.

Each of the teacher interns identified things they would change. These included providing more praise, planning questioning strategies, identifying actions that are more proactive, and working on positive redirection. All agreed that they would take the comments into consideration in future lessons.

Administrative interns’ reflections about the questions they asked revealed that questions varied from general questions about the observations to specific questions that addressed the focus of the observation. Table 5 shows the different type of questions that were asked.

TABLE 5  
EXAMPLES OF REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS POSED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Questions</th>
<th>Specific Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel the lesson went?</td>
<td>How many boys vs. girls did you call on during the lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you notice in your students’ behaviors that indicated success?</td>
<td>What do you think you could do to slow the pace down?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What factors contributed to the success of the lesson?</td>
<td>Are these the level of questions you wanted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you do anything different?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did the students perform?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Administrative interns reported that teacher interns discussed a variety of ways that they would change their instruction. Some examples included changing from small group instruction to whole group instruction, providing different strategies to teach two and three digit multiplication, incorporating
adjectives into a lesson, and being more conscious of calling on boys and girls and students without hands raised.

DATA USED TO GUIDE REFLECTION ABOUT INSTRUCTION

Both teacher and administrative interns were asked to reflect how data collected during the classroom observation were used to guide the post-observation conference. Table 6 summarizes their responses.

Table 6: Using Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Interns</th>
<th>Administrative Interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher Intern: How were the data collected by the administrative intern during the classroom observation used to guide the development of the post-observation conference? | Data provided specific evidence of what occurred during the lesson:  
- T-Charts depicting questioning of boys vs. girls  
- Quadrant chart depicting questioning in front vs. in back of the room  
- Layout of desks to identify teacher movement  
- Lists of questions asked  
- Narratives | Data provided specific evidence of what occurred during the lesson:  
- Kept focus on the specific teacher behavior  
- Allowed discovery of strategies used  
- Allowed discovery of new strategies to implement  
- Confirmed what was expected  
- Provided guidance for discussion |
| Administrative Intern: How were the data you collected during the classroom observation used to guide the development of the post observation conference? | | |

Teacher interns indicated that when administrative coaches provided a visual display of data collected during the observation, that this was most helpful. Examples of data provided to teacher interns were the numbers of boys versus girls who were called on in class and patterns of calling on students by location, e.g. front or back of the classroom. While administrative interns generally reported that they used observation data to guide the post-observation conference, teacher interns did not always recognize this was being done unless the “coach” provided them a graph, table, or other visual display.

The administrative interns indicated that the data provided specific evidence of what occurred during the lesson to focus the post-observation conferences. If the teacher and/or administrative intern got off track, the data tended to bring the focus back to specific teacher behavior. In some instances, showing the data allowed the teacher intern to discover some of the strategies that she was already using without really realizing it, as well as using it to help her think about new strategies to implement. When the data confirmed what was expected, it was used to discuss what could be improved. In several instances, probing questions were asked for the teacher intern to make discoveries individually.

GENERAL BENEFITS OF THE CLINICAL SUPERVISION CYCLE

Finally, participants were asked to reflect upon the overall benefits of participating in this field experience. Perspectives from teacher interns and administrative interns are displayed in Table 7.
### TABLE 7
**BENEFITS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teacher Interns</th>
<th>Administrative Interns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher Intern: How do you feel you benefited from this process? | Benefits from this process included:  
  - Having “different eyes” observe what was happening  
  - Having a say in what was being observed  
  - Received specific information when asked for  
  - Required them to think about their procedures and actions | Benefits from this process included:  
  - Practicing strategies in a real world setting  
  - Took them out of their comfort zone  
  - Learning the importance of creating trust in order to discuss new ideas and accept criticism  
  - Sometimes they needed concrete feedback  
  - Reflecting on own practices was very powerful |
| Administrative Intern: How do you feel you benefited from this process? |  |

All teacher interns felt that they benefited from this process to different degrees. Overall, they felt that it was helpful to have “different eyes” observe what was happening in the classroom. They also appreciated having a say in what was being observed. In most cases, they asked for specific information and received it. This process required them to think about their procedures and actions.

Five of the administrative interns indicated that they were able to practice what they had learned throughout the semester in a real world situation. Two of the administrative interns felt they benefited from this activity because it took them out of their comfort zones. Three of the administrative interns indicated that they learned the importance of creating trust with the teacher intern so they would be comfortable enough to discuss new ideas and take criticism. One administrative intern realized that even when guiding a teacher to reflect sometimes he/she wanted concrete feedback or suggestions. Overall, they felt that asking questions to get teacher interns to reflect on their own was very powerful.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Both the teacher interns and the administrative interns felt that their participation in the supervisory cycle was beneficial. Specifically, the teacher interns indicated that “different eyes” were helpful. The administrative interns indicated that this activity allowed them to practice what they had learned in a real world setting. In both groups, the reflection process allowed them to look at their own practices and think about how they would do things differently the next time.

Data from this initial pilot project indicate that the activity can be improved with more careful and specific instruction for the administrative interns and a more specific briefing for teacher interns. Teacher interns needed to have a better understanding of the supervision cycle before they experienced it. Not only did they need to know what to expect in the coaching process, but also what was expected of them during the clinical supervision cycle. Specifically, they needed to be aware of their role in determining what would be observed, what data would be collected, and how to share their own reflections.

The administrative interns would provide more useful information about the observation if they provided visual graphs or tables that synthesized data collected during the observation to the teacher interns. While this was an expectation for administrative coaches, it was apparent that additional instruction may be necessary for this particular aspect of the clinical supervision cycle. Data that were shared, such as a schematic of the classroom with the teacher intern’s movements or questioning, a chart indicating levels of questioning, and even scripted narrative, were useful to the teacher interns. In addition, pre-service administrators needed more specific instruction on differentiating coaching for novice, pre-service teachers. For instance, administrative interns tended to ask general, rather than specific questions. Teacher interns, who are still learning about instructional strategies, need more
guidance and direction from a coach. Specific questions which delve into the actual lesson provide more appropriate focus for the novice teacher. While these are also issues of skill development for the administrative interns, it is important for university instructors to be cognizant of difficult areas so that appropriate guidance and feedback can be given to the administrative interns.

There are limitations to this type of activity. First, understanding and implementing the supervision cycle is very complex and requires extensive practice before it can be used effectively to improve teaching and, therefore, student achievement. Ultimately, it would be beneficial if the administrative interns could practice the supervisory cycle multiple times and with teachers who have different skill levels. The teacher interns were at the beginning of their teaching careers and, therefore, required more guidance in foundational areas such as classroom management, questioning, and giving directions. Working with teachers who are highly skilled requires a different type of interaction that allows teachers to evolve through their own self-discoveries.

Another limitation is the inability to have a university supervisor monitor each supervisory cycle in order to provide feedback to the administrative intern. At the time of this activity, time commitments and lack of personnel prevented this from occurring. If implemented, this would result in the administrative intern having a deeper understanding of the supervisory cycle, thus building their confidence as prospective administrators.

Even with these limitations, this day-long experience in a real school setting more closely proximates actual administrative supervision than do in-class simulations or “field experiences” with students’ colleagues in their own school setting.

REFERENCES


