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♦ **TEACHER APPRAISAL** ♦

CONTROL OR EMPOWERMENT

Responses from New Zealand Secondary Schools

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Educational
Administration at Massey University**

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Abstract

As a result of recent legislative changes, Boards of Trustees and, through them, the principal, are now responsible for the appraisal and professional development of their staff.

This research aimed to contribute towards an evaluation of current teacher appraisal programmes by:

1. Providing an overview of teacher appraisal programmes which currently exist in Auckland secondary schools, in particular to find out what percentage of secondary schools in the Auckland region have current on-going teacher appraisal programmes and, where these schools, which have a current teacher appraisal programme rank on summative - formative dimensions. The answers to these questions were obtained from a questionnaire which was sent to all Auckland Secondary Schools.
2. Providing an in-depth study of six schools which have an on-going teacher appraisal programme with elements of both summative and formative appraisal. A focused interview with selected staff from each of the six schools was used to enable the writer to ascertain why and how each appraisal programme was developed. The interview was also used to identify any problems which had been encountered in developing the programme and to ascertain how the school had attempted to meet both legislative requirements and teacher development needs.
3. Providing as an action component, a description of the appraisal programme which the writer is currently trialling in his school and, which is a direct result of the research undertaken for this thesis.

The major findings of this research were:

Section One

Seventy three percent of secondary schools in the Auckland region were trialling or using appraisal programmes and, while there was a huge diversity of appraisal systems in operation, the majority involved more formative than summative

dimensions. In particular, all schools saw appraisal in terms of helping to improve teacher standards through increased professional development.

Section Two

The common reason given by the six schools for developing a teacher appraisal programme was to give staff an opportunity for professional development. Four of the six schools which participated in the second part of the research had experienced problems in attempting to introduce teacher appraisal programmes, while other problems which the six schools experienced centred around lack of time and staff resentment about "yet another" administrative requirement. Teacher suspicion about the 'real' nature of appraisal, although mentioned, was not a major factor.

Self appraisal was the dominant method of teacher assessment as it was seen to be a crucial factor in four schools and desirable in the other two. Only one school produced any evidence of staff training in appraisal techniques.

All six schools had developed two appraisal systems; one in which all staff participated and which was largely formative; another which was used when necessary and which involved competency procedures. The teachers interviewed were adamant that the two systems were and had to be kept completely separate.

Section Three

While a teacher appraisal programme has been operating in the writer's school since 1990, the results of this research have caused the programme to be modified to include: a focus on self rather than external appraisal; the inclusion of senior management and non-teaching staff in the appraisal process and; an emphasis on training in appraisal procedures and techniques for all staff.

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