In the early state of Michigan’s enactment of new educator evaluation statutory requirements, there is an opportunity to examine the readiness of Michigan’s principals to adapt to the new evaluation models and processes. By engaging a sample of administrators who are in the process of adapting to both new teacher and new administrator evaluations, we can potentially get out in front of emerging patterns of impeding factors and reinforce enabling factors that impact the adaptation and transition process and impinge upon the potential for enactment of new educator evaluation models and processes to actually result in acceleration of the growth and success curve for students.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the experiences of 12 principals, as players in the work of school reform and renewal, and how they have experienced the shift from static and disjointed educator evaluation models to a model that is framed around growth, development, research and evidence based. Specifically, this study was designed to give voice to principals, as full partners in the pursuit of continuous growth and improvement, and how they are actually experiencing these performance evaluation systems and what the shift to one of the new systems means to them.
This study desired to understand and gain a deeper understanding of the readiness of principals and their need for ongoing engagement with the evaluation tool to become better able to connect the performance indicators with their day-to-day work. In essence, principal performance evaluation and feedback is one means by which principals could receive valuable guidance and support for their growth and development in the role of an Instructional Leader.

This study revealed that participants wanted to be the best instructional leader to impact their teachers, students and the whole school community. The participants in this study vocalized the need for further training and coaching but it must come from a supervisor or coach who has been trained and has a working knowledge of the adopted evaluation tool. Principals are the fulcrums of all school improvement efforts and deserve a performance review process that, not only utilizes a research-supported and well-vetted performance review instrument, but also utilizes a process where they can concentrate on a few high priority performance growth areas at one time.