

**Question #1: Examine the evolution of supervision of curriculum and instruction in public schools. Include an example from your own experience.**

Merriam-Webster defines supervision as the action or process of supervising, including critically watching and directing (Supervision, n.d.). Through the years, supervision has gone through many transformations and as times changed so did expectations and responsibilities. As stated by Pawlas and Oliva (2008), "School curriculum not only reflects but is a product of its time" (p. 99). This essay will discuss historical changes and perspectives on supervision that have occurred through the years, beginning in the late 1600s and continuing to present day. The author will also share personal experiences in the classroom observation process.

Not until the development of organized schools was there a need for school supervisors. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a law, the Old Deluder Law of 1647, requiring communities with 50 or more families to establish a grammar school (Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). As schools were developed, supervisors gave direction, checked for compliance with teaching techniques, and evaluated results of instruction. According to Pawlas and Oliva, these authoritarian supervisors set strict requirements, observed teachers to see how closely they complied with specific instructions, and dismissed those who failed to comply. In these early years, schools were simply a one-room schoolhouse with one teacher who taught students of all ages and grade levels. Pawlas and Oliva stated that, during this time, it was fairly easy to determine what should be taught in the classroom, but more difficult to align curriculum with multiple schools because one teacher was responsible for the entire curriculum of the school.

In the 1800s, supervision was the responsibility of principals and superintendents and the purpose of the supervisor was to simply inspect and make instructional improvements (Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). Further, Pawlas and Oliva stated that the supervisor monitored the rules and was responsible for helping teachers improve their teaching strategies and effectiveness in the classroom. According to The committee of ten: main report (n.d.), the National Education

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Association appointed a committee in 1892 to establish a standard curriculum and the result was that the committee recommended eight years of elementary education and four years of secondary education, with four different curricula being defined as appropriate for high school. This standardization of the curriculum led to a need for more direct supervision and documentation.

In the early 1900s, the type of supervision shifted from inspection and instructional improvement to a scientific and bureaucratic approach (Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). According to Pawlas and Oliva, this type of supervision presumed, if one used a scientific model following established principles of efficiency, that student achievement would be high. Thus, the bureaucratic model demonstrated a hierarchy of authority and responsibility. Ultimately, the purpose of this supervision era was to improve instruction and proficiency. At this time, supervisors included principals, special central-office supervisors and superintendents (Pawlas & Oliva).

According to Pawlas and Oliva (2008), during the mid-1900s, supervision moved toward more of a human relations or democratic approach with the purpose of supervision being to improve instruction. The supervisors at this time were principals and central office supervisors. Additionally, according to Pawlas and Oliva, there was a shift in the purpose of supervision toward not only improving instruction but also increasing teacher satisfaction and expanding students' understanding of classroom instruction.

Today, supervisors in the school system continue to include principals and central-office supervisors and the purpose of the supervisor is to improve instruction, increase teacher satisfaction, create learning communities, and analyze cultural and linguistic patterns in the classroom (Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). As a result, the process of supervision is more complex and supervisors aspire to lead by example, viewing themselves as a resource for others within the school.

As stated previously in this essay, requirements change with the time. The author of this paper has seen a change in supervisory requirements, practices, approaches, and expectations.

During the first observation experienced by this author, the principal entered the classroom, sat at the back of the room, and scripted detailed notes of the lesson, student involvement, and classroom appearance. Thus, the observation was a simple narrative of everything that happened. After the observation, the principal and the author met so that the principal could report on the observation and make recommendations for improving classroom activities, student behavior, and teaching methods.

Today, that process has changed. For example, during an evaluation year, the author identifies a focus area or areas for self-improvement or growth. Also, prior to a classroom observation, the principal schedules a pre-observation meeting to discuss the lesson and the focus areas to be addressed during the observation. During the observation, the principal enters the room with a computerized checklist and, following the observation, the author and principal engage in a post-observation dialog.

Supervision has gone through changes, beginning with the strict requirements of the 1600 and 1700s, the inspection phase of the 1800s, the scientific approaches of the early 1900s, and the human relations approaches of the mid 1900s (Pawlas and Oliva, 2008). Today, supervision is more than just observation and evaluation of teacher practice. Instead, supervision is viewed as a multi-faceted process with many variables. Glanz stated (as cited in Pawlas & Oliva), “Educational supervision aims to inspire and encourage teachers to excel” (p. 111). This author agrees with Pawlas and Oliva as well as Glanz in viewing the supervisor today as a daily presence in the school who helps teachers to become highly effective in the classroom. Today’s supervisor understands that it is through relationships and trust that one becomes a successful supervisor.

References  
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## References

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