Walkthroughs for Teachers Observing Peers

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By the end of this session, you will...

1. Become aware of the value and ways of involving teachers in walkthroughs.
2. Acquire strategies for getting started on teacher walkthroughs.

Basis of the Presentation
Visitors on accrediting teams tend to know more about a school than the teachers who work in that school.

Privacy of practice... produces isolation... isolation is the enemy of improvement.

Richard Elmore (2007)

The farther from the source of classroom data people are (district-level staff observing versus teachers observing in walkthroughs) the less impact they will have on changing classroom behavior.
Teachers who are part of a community of learning will be receptive to the idea of observing one another.

And just think, teacher walkthroughs are the best example of embedded professional development and largely cost efficient.

And why should I get into teacher walkthroughs?
Teacher Walkthrough Components

- Participants
- Protocols
- Focus & Look-fors
- Data-Gathering
- Follow-up

Purpose

 Protocols

- Frequency of walks
- Length of visits
- Teaching in room
- Notes taken
- Talking to students

Focus

are the general areas for collecting evidence of teaching and learning (e.g., student engagement; use of differentiated instruction)

Look-Fors

under the focus area are the explicit teacher and/or student behaviors observed during the walkthrough
Teacher Walkthrough Observation Form

While I was in your classroom today, I noticed...

Thoughts and ideas I came away with for changes in my own teaching....

What I wondered about....

Observation Date: _______________ Teacher: __________________
Grade/Subject Level: __________________
Activity/Lesson Observed: ________________________________

Common Core Walkthrough Observation Form

Date: ____________________________ Grade: ____________________ __
Subject Level: ______________________ Lesson Topic: ______________________

Common Core Content Standard ______________________ ______
____________________________________________________________________________________

Evidence of Learning

Environmental Ideas for Owning Teaching Thoughts for Sharing

Evidence in Teaching

Teacher Instruction/Responses

Student Activities/Responses/Assessment

Teacher Walkthrough Observation Form

Date: _______________ Subject _________ Grade Level _________
Focus Question: ______________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Observations

Questions—Clarifying and Probing
Action Plan Template

Beginning (date?): ___________________ the following teachers/staff will (do what?)
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
(how often?)
________________________________________________________
with (form? Statement? Report?)
being submitted to (whom?) ________________________as a measure of commitment.

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UNDERPINNINGS TO SUCCESSFUL TEACHER WALKTHROUGHS

Role of the Principal
- Supportive school culture
- Realization to address in teacher walkthroughs
- Teacher concerns

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL
Concerns with Teacher Walkthroughs

- Observers focusing on what I am not doing instead of what I am doing
- The lesson didn't go as intended

Four Levels of Concerns about Teacher Walkthroughs

1. Concerns about walkthrough process
2. Concerns about observations by fellow peers
3. Concerns about actual observations
4. Concerns about follow-up

Concerns about walkthrough process:
- Comparing me to other teachers
- Observers in the room in a “crisis moment”
- Observers engaging in gossip about me
- Observers focusing on what I am not doing instead of what I am doing
- Number of observers at one time
- What I want to be observed is not occurring at the time of the walkthrough

Concerns about observations by fellow peers:
- Concerns about actual observations
- Concerns about follow-up
Conduct Administrator/Teacher Walkthroughs

Provide Preparation for Teacher Walkthroughs

Arrange schedule and time for teachers to observe...

...and engage in reflective discussions.
Arranging Times to Observe/Converse

1. Floating substitute teachers
2. Principal, asst. principal, coaches, mentors, or aides cover classes
3. Combine classes to release teachers for walkthroughs.
4. Use department or subject, or grade level common planning time
5. Use individual teacher planning time
6. Use school staff and department meetings
7. Use late start or early release staff development days
8. Modify modular schedule to open times

Focus Observations on Student Learning
Start out slowly and keep the process simple in the beginning!

Avoid Judgmental/Evaluative Recordings/Conversations

Evaluate the Walkthrough Protocol
And so what do you think? Is there value in "teachers observing teachers" to expand their teaching knowledge and skills?

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ASCD book by Donald Kachur, et. al.
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