



Tool 4b: Walkthrough Data

Purpose

Principals and other staff members engage in focused, data-driven walkthroughs to support great teaching and learning. The purpose of these walkthroughs should be to collect data on high-leverage strategies identified in your SIP. Walkthroughs should be friendly and based on a collaborative spirit and not used to critique individual teachers.

For walkthroughs to have the greatest possible impact on enhancing great teaching and learning, the walkthrough process must involve trust and buy-in throughout your school. Therefore, it is important to gauge attitudes and receptiveness throughout your school, rather than jumping into walkthroughs early in the year. Consider moving onto walkthroughs after your SBLT has been established and is functioning well as a vehicle for school improvement. Effective communication about walkthrough results is an important way to make sure that walkthroughs are not seen as threatening, but rather as a valuable tool for school improvement.

When to Use

The purpose and timing of walkthroughs should depend on data review and analysis. Consider establishing your first walkthroughs based on what your SBLT saw in the data you reviewed to create your SIP. Then, as more data becomes available during the year, use that data and the strategies you outlined in your SIP to guide the purpose of future walkthroughs.

How to Use

Consider the questions below.

What should a walkthrough protocol look like?

The focus of your walkthroughs should be dependent on data and connected to your SIP, and because every school has flexibility within their SIP, there is no guideline for exactly how a walkthrough protocol should look. Different approaches are appropriate in different contexts, so your SBLT should work together to come up with a protocol that works for your school.

Who should participate in walkthroughs?

The Principal and members of the SBLT will be consistent walkthrough participants. You also should consider including members who play a critical role in work related to the focus of the walkthrough or have particular expertise in that area.

How do we make sure our data is consistent and useful?

It is important to work toward collecting walkthrough data that is consistent and comparable across participants. For example, if two walkthrough participants disagree about what gradual release of responsibility looks like, they could see the same teacher do the same lesson but describe it very differently, making the data they collected potentially misleading. Consider starting the walkthrough process with a short



walkthrough involving all participants to calibrate using the protocol and make sure everyone is on the same page about the practices you are looking for. Also, make sure that the data you collect on walkthroughs is based on facts and things you can observe during the walkthrough, rather than on judgments or prior knowledge and beliefs.

How should we communicate about walkthrough data?

Both before and after walkthroughs occur, staff should understand that walkthroughs are about identifying larger trends, not about identifying individuals who need to improve their practice. Work on being as open and transparent as possible about the walkthrough process. Consider sharing walkthrough protocols with your staff so they understand exactly the processes that will occur during the walkthrough and distributing the aggregated data after the walkthroughs are complete.

How can we use walkthrough data?

You should consider integrating walkthrough data into all of your data analysis processes, just as you would with quantitative data like standardized test scores. Qualitative data like data collected from walkthroughs or Deep Dives can provide valuable context and enrich discussions around quantitative data.

At what level should we present walkthrough data?

Walkthrough data is useful for identifying trends across classrooms that are related to progress on the SIP. Be careful to avoid presenting walkthrough data that singles out individual teachers for critique. Even if you do not use a teacher's name, if the data you present would allow your SBLT to know immediately what individual you are talking about, consider taking a step back and presenting the data at a higher level.