THE WALKTHROUGH OBSERVATION: SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' AND SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE WALKTHROUGH OBSERVATION TOOL

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Dedication

To my four beautiful daughters, I love you with you all of my heart! You mean the world to me! I want you to understand that as you go through life, it is not going to be easy. As you face challenges and obstacles you must meet them head on and have a positive attitude, believing that you can achieve anything. The whole reason that I pursued this degree was to demonstrate to you that your education is essential. Do not let anyone ever tell you, that you cannot do something; always think positive. Remember, "the one thing in life that no one can take away from you is your education." I love you girls!

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To my Pap, thank for you for always encouraging me to continue with my education. Your famous words to me have always been “the one thing in life that no one can take away from you is your education.” I may not have always acted that I was listening, but I was.

To my wife Heather, thank you for being the mother that you are to our four beautiful daughters. I know that you have the toughest job in the world as a mother and I appreciate all that you do.

To my internal chair Dr. Kevin Lordon, I truly appreciate your patience and guidance throughout this journey. I appreciate all of the time that you took to guide me along the way. To my external chair, Dr. Ashlea Rineer-Hershey, I appreciate all of the feedback and encouragement that you provided me with throughout this process. Next, Thank you Dr. Rick Walsh for your support and conversations throughout this journey.

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Abstract

This study explored the secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perception of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. A mixed method approach was utilized to collect data. A quantitative data approach was conducted through the use of pre-and post-intervention surveys. The quantitative data allowed for a complete understanding of the participants perception throughout the action research project. A Qualitative data approach was conducted to collect data through pre-and-post interviews. The qualitative data provided interview opportunities to examine if and how a participants perception may have shifted throughout the action research project. Findings indicate that the secondary principals' and secondary teachers perception of the Walkthrough Observation Tool improves instructional practices. Results indicate that secondary principals and secondary teachers believe that the Walkthrough Observation Tool has enhanced their instructional practices to promote professional growth. A common improvement between the secondary principals' and the secondary teachers' was that the Walkthrough Observation Tool may be refined to improve assessments.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

"The evidence collected from a classroom walkthrough can drive a cycle of improvement by focusing on the effects of instruction"

(Cervone & Martinez-Miller, 2007).

In education, we are responsible for providing a quality education to all students. Principals, assistant principals and central office administrators are looking for ways to increase the quality of instruction. For school leaders in a school district, it is crucial to know and understand the effectiveness of the feedback that they are providing to the teachers to improve their instructional practices. The goal of many school districts is to be a student-centered organization that seeks ways to continuously grow to improve student achievement and academic rigor to measure against the best school districts in their region.

With the continued challenges to improve professional development for teachers, it is critical to first identify any disconnect of what the teachers need and what the principals are providing. In an effort to continuously improve the quality of instruction, administrators must understand what the teachers need to develop more meaningful professional growth opportunities. To achieve this professional growth of teachers, the responsibility of school leaders is to provide the teachers with meaningful feedback to continuously improve instructional practices and identify areas for professional growth.

To promote the practice of continuous improvement and meaningful feedback, the Walkthrough Observation Tool is an excellent change agent. A classroom walkthrough is a brief, frequent, informal and focused visit to the classroom by observers for the

purpose of gathering data on instructional practices and engaging in some type of follow up (Kachur et al., 2013).

By utilizing the district walkthrough observation tool, it is important to know and understand how our teachers are using the data to improve their instructional practices.

Background

Secondary teachers' and secondary principals' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of professional growth is a topic that the researcher feels very passionate about. The researcher, a high school administrator in a midsize school district in western Pennsylvania, believes that instructional practice is a vital component of the process of improving student learning and academic achievement. In an effort to provide the most concise and meaningful feedback, administrators must understand the teachers' perceptions and how they match with the administrative team.

In the educational setting in which the research was conducted, the researcher serves the district as an assistant principal at the senior high school. The researcher is the assistant principal of the junior and senior class. The two classes combined number approximately 600 students. The total enrollment of the high school is slightly less than 1,200 students. In addition to serving the students, the researcher also is responsible for supervising approximately 85 staff members.

Identification of the Capstone Focus

Teachers are constantly being asked to challenge, personalize, and connect with their students to improve academic success. As administrators are asking this of their teachers, this researcher was interested in examining how school leaders are providing professional development opportunities to build teacher capacity to increase student

achievement. Researching secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool will allow administration insight into the relationship between the Walkthrough Observation Tool and improving instructional practices. This study is replicated after the dissertation study, *The Walkthrough Observation: The Elementary Principals' and Elementary Teachers' perception of the Walkthrough Observation Tool* (Walsh, 2014).

At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, the district in which this research was conducted implemented a new walkthrough observational tool. This new observation tool was created by a committee of school leaders and central administrators. The Walkthrough Observation Tool was introduced to the teachers at the start of the school year and applied throughout the school year, until the COVID-19 pandemic moved face-to-face instruction online. Because the district's focus shifted to serving their students and adjusting to COVID-19 guidelines, school leaders were never able to reflect on the walkthrough observational tool's implementation.

This research intended to afford the opportunity for administrators and teachers to learn and continuously improve instructional practices. To ensure that teachers are receiving adequate feedback on their efforts to improve instructional practices and to promote continuous professional growth, administrators must understand teachers' perceptions, specifically on how the Walkthrough Observation Tool is meaningful to their improvement of instructional practices.

The researcher implemented a descriptive, mixed-methods approach to conduct this study. The approach investigated secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the impact of the district Walkthrough Observation Tool on instructional

practices. Participants in this action research study included four secondary principals and 10 secondary teachers.

The goal was to identify the common themes in administrator and teacher perceptions of the feedback provided by the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. The purposes of examining these perceptions were (a) to provide administrators meaningful feedback on the tool, and (b) to gain insight into how the feedback that follows a walkthrough observation improves instructional practices and encourages teachers to seek professional growth opportunities and explore new instructional practices and learning experiences. Any discrepancies between teacher and principal perceptions of the tool will be explored.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study:

1. What are the perceptions of secondary teachers about the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
2. What are the perceptions of the secondary principals about the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
3. What are the perceptions identified by secondary teachers and principals on how the Walkthrough Observation Tool can be improved to promote growth of instructional practice?

Expected Outcomes

The initial action to begin this action research study was to request participation from all teachers and administrators at the secondary level early in the 2020-2021 school year, before any walkthrough observations had been conducted. In an effort to gain

participation, an initial email with a link to a Google Form was sent to all secondary staff members. If a participant selected "Yes" on the initial question, which asked if they consented to participate in the study, they were taken to the pre-intervention survey to share their perceptions of the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. From the initial pool of survey respondents, 10 randomly selected secondary teachers and all four secondary administrators were identified as those whose data would be included in this study. Next, pre-intervention interviews were conducted with all 14 participants (10 teachers and four principals) to gain each participant's in-depth perceptions of the feedback provided by the Walkthrough Observation Tool and its impact on improving student outcomes and teacher professional learning. After several months of applying the intervention (principals conducting walkthrough observations using the tool), a post-intervention survey and a post-intervention interview was conducted with each participant using the same survey and interview questions to determine if participants' perceptions changed.

The desired outcome of this study was to fully comprehend any gaps that may exist between one district's teachers' and principals' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. Doing so will allow the district to modify the Walkthrough Observation Tool in an effort to provide effective feedback to all teachers to enhance their instructional practices and professional growth, as well as using data to make informed decisions to benefit all teachers and learners. The feedback that teachers receive regarding improvement of instructional practices is a key component to improving instructional practices that support academic achievement.

Fiscal Implications

The budget for this research study was very simple. The tool that was evaluated already exists and is implemented in the district, so there were no costs to the intervention. The only cost associated with the research is the time of each professional employee. Each participant completed pre- and post-intervention surveys that were intended to take no more than 15 minutes to complete for a total of 30 minutes of survey completion time. In addition, those participants who were selected for pre- and post-intervention interviews were asked to devote an additional two hours of interview time. At the conclusion of the action research, a professional development opportunity will be provided to the teachers to explain what changes are being implemented as a result of the feedback gained from their participation in the study. The time to design and deliver the professional development was one additional time cost.

Summary

In summary, it is the belief of this researcher and other administrators at the site of this study that the Walkthrough Observation Tool is a key instrument to provide teachers and building leaders valuable information to improve instructional practices. The effort of this action research study will benefit the district to continuously improve instructional delivery to all students and to allow all professional staff members the opportunity to enhance their teaching skills.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

History of Teacher Certification

19th Century

At the start of the 19th century, schools began to grow at a fast pace. This created an opportunity for Horace Mann to create the first school in the United States for training teachers (Olivia & Pawlas, 2004). As the need for public education increased, schools developed new ideas regarding teacher supervision. During that time superintendents and principals took over the supervision duties, which had previously been performed by the clergy (Olivia & Pawlas, 2004). It was during this same era that the role of the principal formed within the school system. Spain et al. (1953), as cited in Alfonso et al. (1975) explains that one specific date has not been agreed upon for the emergence of the principalship; however, nearly 1800 responsibilities started to be centralized to some extent. Early reports of school systems contained references to the "headmaster, head-teacher or principal teacher." The initial position of the "principal" was viewed as a luxury and not a leadership role. The job of these principals was to maintain discipline, oversee the operations, regulate classes, organize the pupils, and develop rules and regulations (p. 24). This led to schools recruiting knowledgeable staff to oversee the schools. Supervisors began to grow skeptical of the teachers' ability to educate the students and essentially viewed them as incompetent and in need of direct monitoring (Glanz, 2000). Over time, teachers came under strict control of supervisors who inspected schools but did little to expand the pedagogical skills of teachers (Anderson, 1993; Cooper, 1982). At the time, principals were still following the directions provided by the

communities. This conflicted any opportunity for superintendents to provide guidance to the principals on teacher supervision.

In summary, during the 19th century, education was evolving and supervision of the schools was needed. At that time, the role of supervision by the principal and superintendent began to provide oversight of the schools.

20th Century

In the 20th century, supervisory practices of teachers began. At the beginning of the century, school administrators began to espouse business values (Berman, 1983). The scientific management theory of Frederick Taylor was implemented in businesses across the country as well as in educational institutions. Taylor advocated for (a) optimization and simplification of jobs within an organization in order to increase productivity and (b) cooperation between employees and managers (Caramela, 2018). A consistent approach among schools was created to focus on goals and objectives of the business model. At the middle of the century, supervisory practices adopted the part of Taylor's approach that emphasized collaboration and cooperation. This allowed for a more human relation supervision approach to be accepted within the leadership community. In the later part of the 20th century, supervisors viewed teaching in a more academic point of view, which led to clinical supervision becoming the preferred supervisory technique to develop teachers. Throughout the 20th century, teacher supervision constantly evolved. The focus shifted from the experience of the worker to including teachers in the teaching and learning process.

During the scientific management era from 1910-1930, Supervisors focused on "efficiency levels, standardized tests and scales, and the improvement of the teaching act

through criticism of instruction" (Barr & Burton (1926), as cited in Glickman, 2002, p. 6). The main focus during this time was efficiency, which stemmed from the work of Frederick Taylor. In the opinion of Rees (2001), Taylor was known as the father of scientific management and was an "efficiency expert." In Taylor's 1911 book *Principles of Scientific Management*, he describes the components of his management theory:

> • A Large Daily Task – Each person in the establishment, high or low, should have a clearly defined daily task. The carefully circumscribed task should require a full day's effort to complete.
>
> • Standard Conditions – The worker should be given standardized conditions and appliances to accomplish the task with certainty.
>
> • High Pay for Success – High pay should be tied to successful completion.
>
> • Loss in Case of Failure – Failure should be personally costly.
>
> • Expertise in Large Organizations – As organizations become increasingly sophisticated tasks should be made so difficult as to be accomplished only by a first-rate worker. (p. 9)

The adoption of this management theory in schools led to the view of teaching as a science, creating the notion that teachers were asked to follow a fixed set of rules to teach the curriculum. As this was taking place, supervisors were tasked with the responsibility of monitoring the instructional practices of teachers to ensure accountability and fidelity to the selected teaching principles. The scientific management theory led to the creation of the business age. Wiles and Bondi (1980) report that the business age, which occurred from 1920-1930, ushered in bureaucratic supervision. Glanz (2000) posits that educational supervisors began associating goals, objectives, and

specifications with teacher supervision. Eventually, supervision became counterproductive to its original role. It created the notion that teachers needed to adhere to the supervisor's expectations of inspection and authority, which led to the supervisors being known as "snoopervisors" (Wiles & Bondi, 1980).

According to Glickman (2002) the human relations supervision began in the late 1930s until the late 1950s. Alfonso et al. (1975) describe the enhancement in supervisory practices as being more "cooperative and democratic." Schools began following the business model by adopting a more democratic style of leadership (Wiles & Bondi, 1980).

By doing so, research focused on the instructional supervision and directives for change prevailed. The focus shifted from the traditional supervisory practices of inspection and control (Rossi, 2007). This led to relationships and connections with teachers becoming the focus to improve classroom instruction (Glickman, 2001).

In an effort to develop relationships and connections with teachers, Supervisors focused on working with teachers collaboratively to improve instructional practices. Throughout this time, collaboration between supervisors and teachers was essential and the inspection and control issues that were once prevalent started to minimize. Olivia and Pawlas (2004) stated that supervisors began focusing on the interpersonal skills for supervisors rather than the technical skills.

Collaborative relationships between administrators and teachers emphasized the idea that teachers' needs were the purpose of supervision, not the needs of supervisors. Throughout the mid-20th century, supervision became more collaborative and relationship based. As the human relations era extended, teachers began to appreciate the

supervision to improve instructional practices. Consequently, the 1960s brought yet another form of supervision: the behavior science approach (Glickman, 2001).

At this time, public education was inundated with researchers and publishers. The researchers and publishers were focused on ready-to-use curricula and materials for instruction. Throughout this time, Supervisors diligently attempted to maintain the collaborative and relationship techniques. While doing so, the ready-to-use curricula and materials were carefully monitored (Glickman, 2001).

In summary, during the 20th century supervision improved from an academic and accountability level. The supervision of schools was focused on improving the academic experience and delivery of instruction by teachers. The focus stemmed from the work of Frederick Taylor utilizing the scientific management theory. From the use of the scientific management theory, new instructional supervision models were created.

Late 20th Century

The report *A Nation At Risk* from the U. S. National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) gained immediate attention of the United States. The decade that followed saw the development of more specific teacher evaluation guidelines were developed. During the 1980s, a demand emerged from the American people and lawmakers from across the county for accountability and evaluation of schools and programs.

The focal point of this accountability era was teacher evaluation (Ellet, 2003). A great deal of supervisors' responsibilities shifted to focus on evaluation of teaching performance and the measurement of teaching behavior (White & Daniel, 1996). Although this shift resulted in increased teacher professional development, there was a

lack of focus, which resulted in a lack of consistency in teacher professional growth (Iwanicki, 2001).

Over the next twenty years, teacher supervision remained a regular area of interest of the American people. This led to administrators researching new teacher supervision models. The idea of creating a collaborative, rather than authoritative, model with supportive and descriptive feedback emerged. This led to new supervisory practices being implemented and accepted.

In summary, towards the end of the 20th century, the focus of supervision was geared towards the teacher's growth. The supervision was focused on how the teachers were strengthening their instructional practices and improving over time. In order to assist teacher growth, professional development for teachers became part of their professional responsibilities.

21st Century

At the start of the 21st century, national momentum began to increase for standards-based education, including high-stakes testing. The value of accountability and evaluation steered supervisory practices towards raising standards and creating a more uniform curriculum (Seguel, 1966). The impact on supervision from the standards-based demands began to influence the development of standards-based supervision (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). According to Sullivan and Glanz (2005), "principals and assistant principals are more accountable than ever to address prescribed core curriculum standards, promote teaching to the standards, and ensure higher student academic performance on standardized tests" (p. 24).

As accountability continued to grow, so did the pressure on administrators to

ensure that the technical competence of teachers was addressed in the implementation of supervisory practices (Sullivan & Glanz, 2009). Supervisors referred to guidelines to discover the degree of instruction that teachers were utilizing to meet the requirements of curriculum and instructional learning goals of each content area at all grade levels. At that same time, standards-based supervision had been likened to the supervisory practices that were popular during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

To meet the 21st century initiatives of Race to the Top grants and federal mandates from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and its successor, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states and districts across the United States are changing their policies toward teacher evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 2013). Each state requires teacher and supervisor evaluation in some capacity. Weiss (2012) documented that there was an inconsistent approach to supervision and professional development practices throughout the country. The National Council on Teacher Quality determined that the process of teacher evaluation has improved, it was not sufficient enough to fully guarantee that all students are receiving instruction by effective teachers (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013). Frase and Streshly (1994) found teachers across the United States held educator evaluation in low esteem; however, schools' requirement to evaluate teachers is not going away and districts must find ways to improve the process to make it more effective (Warren, 2014). It was determined by Weiss (2012) that an improved teacher evaluation system was needed to increase the value of instructional practices being utilized to deliver the classroom instruction.

Throughout the 21st century, accountability and demands from the public and lawmakers increased. The taxpayers demanded that their tax dollars were accounted for

in public schools. Data collection became a priority to measure student growth and achievement through standardized testing, teacher evaluation, and district reporting. Doing so allowed teachers and supervisors the ability to identify areas of growth and continuously build upon each for the betterment of instructional practices and student learning.

Supervision Models

Clinical Supervision

In an effort to enhance the student teaching experience, Morris Cogan explored the idea of a productive and meaningful experience. The clinical supervision concept was formed by Cogan and a group of Harvard University MAT students, namely Robert Goldhammer (Reavis, 1978).

The clinical supervision model is a procedure for observation in the clinic of the classroom (Reavis, 1978). Clinical supervision formalized the process of teacher/supervisor collaboration as more collegial than previous supervisory methods (Rossi, 2007). In the 1960s, clinical supervision was utilized throughout educational institutions. It focused on reflective problem solving, targeted individual classrooms directly, and focused on teachers as the change agent (Keruskin, 2005).

In this era, supervisors implemented a shared process of teachers and supervisors working together to improve instruction as a team (Alfonso et al., 1975). In order to effectively apply the clinical supervision model, five stages are needed (Marzano et al, 2011). The first stage is the pre-observation conference.

The pre-observation phase is designed to provide a complete framework to be used throughout the process, which can include the goal of the lesson to be observed, the

instructional strategies that will be employed, and evidence of student learning. In this phase, the teacher and supervisor discuss the classroom observation. The intent of the pre-observation conference is to reduce any anxiety towards the observation. The purpose of the pre-observation phase is to establish trust and collaboration between the teacher and supervisor (Goldhammer, 1969).

The second phase is the actual classroom observation. The purpose of this phase is for the supervisor to gain a complete understanding of what is occurring in the classroom. During the classroom observation, the supervisor will observe the classroom lesson and reflect on the framework established during the pre-observation conference. Throughout the classroom observation, the supervisor will document all aspects of the classroom lesson. Following the classroom lesson, the teacher and supervisor will discuss the lesson collaboratively.

In the third phase of the clinical supervision model, analysis and strategy occur. The first part of this phase is the analysis of the data collected during the classroom lesson. The supervisor will disseminate the data collected and prepare a strategic plan for the teacher to continuously improve. The supervisor is demonstrating to the teacher that the involvement in the analysis of his or her teaching demonstrates the degree of commitment to the teacher (Keruskin, 2005). At the conclusion of the data dissemination, the supervisor must determine the areas of improvement, organize the data accordingly, and develop the strategic plan moving forward. At the conclusion of this phase, the hope is to have teacher "buy-in." Goldhammer (1969) states "the hope is that the teacher's confidence in supervision is more likely to be inspired if he perceives that Supervisor has put a great deal of work into it than if Supervisor appears to be working off the cuff" (p.

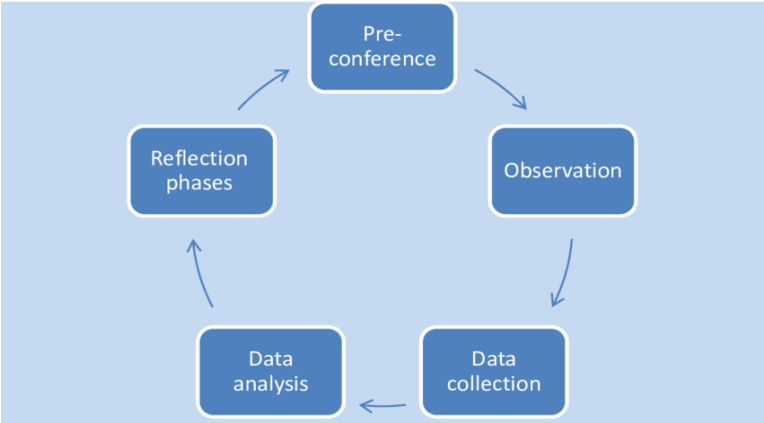
67).

The fourth stage is the supervision conference. In the supervision conference, the teacher and supervisor reflect and discuss the data collected during the observation. Generally, the supervision conference is positive and productive because it focuses on aspects of instruction previously identified by the teacher as areas of concern (Reavis, 1978). In addition, the supervision conference also permits treatable issues in the teaching and authenticates the existence of issues that the teacher may have sensed intuitively (Goldhammer, 1969).

The final phase is the post-conference analysis or the analysis of the analysis. The overall goal of the post-conference phase is to examine the effectiveness of the supervision along with the strengths and areas of growth. When examining during the conference analysis phase, the supervisor reviews actions taken in each of the preceding steps with regard to whether they facilitated improved instruction and teacher growth towards self-supervision, the two primary goals of clinical supervision (Reavis, 1978). The cyclical nature of the clinical supervision model is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The Clinical Supervision Model



The emphasis throughout the clinical supervision model is to create and foster a professional level of respect for the teacher in the supervisor-teacher relationship. Throughout the process, the teacher and supervisor work together as active participants in a collaborative manner to improve student learning and teacher instructional practices.

Developmental Supervision

The developmental supervision model is comprised of three simplified approaches. The three models are directive, collaborative and non-directive (Glickman & James, 1979). According to Glickman et al. (2001), the developmental supervision objective is to match the teacher's classroom experience, teaching ability, and positive characteristics with the most suitable supervision model.

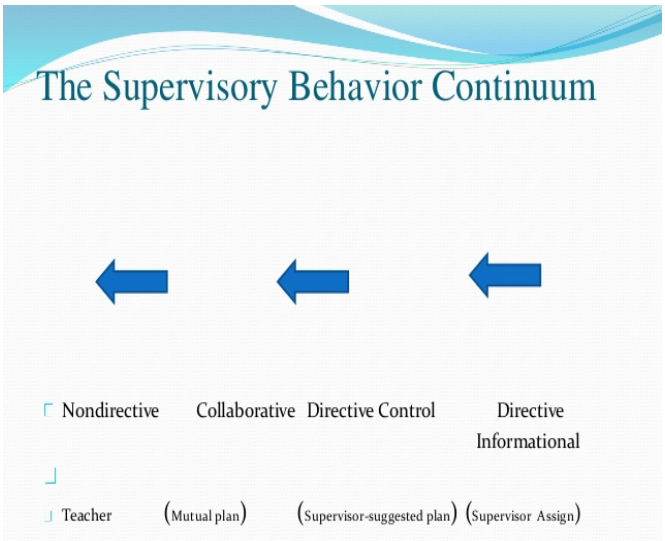
The first developmental supervision mode is the directive mode. Within this mode, the supervisor determines and enforces the teacher's standards and behaviors. This approach is accomplished through modeling, directing, and measuring proficiency levels (Glickman, 2001). This mode is thought of as the last resort, not the norm (Glickman, 2001).

The next developmental supervision mode is collaborative. The collaborative mode is considered a joint effort between the supervisor and teacher (Glickman 2001). Within this mode, the collaboration focuses on a mutual action plan. The collaborative mode promotes a shared responsibility of presenting, interacting, and contracting on mutually planned changes between the supervisor and teacher (Glickman, 2001).

The last developmental supervision mode is non-directive. The non-directive supervision mode is suitable for a teacher who is capable of reflecting upon their knowledge, skills, and expertise (Walsh, 2014). The focus of this mode, is the teacher supporting other teachers as well as students. The teacher may only need minimal influence (Glickman, 2001). The teacher understands what needs to be changed and can perform the task independently (Glickman et al., 2001). During this approach, the teacher guides their own action plan. The supervisor acts as facilitator and promotes reflection throughout the process. Figure 2 shows where each mode of development supervision appears along a continuum from heaviest to lightest supervisor control.

Figure 2

The Developmental Supervision Model Continuum



Differentiated Supervision

Differentiated supervision is an approach to supervision that provides teachers with options about the different evaluative tools that they can utilize (Glatthorn, 1997). According to Glatthorn (1997), "if teaching is to become more of a profession and teachers are to be empowered, then they must have more options for supervision" (p. 4). Glatthorn's model of differentiated supervision is focused on teacher development. The differentiated supervision model encompasses multiple essential elements of a successful approach. Differentiated supervision can be applied through four perspectives: the profession, the organization, the supervisor, and the teacher.

The perspective that Glatthorn (1997) examines first is importance of professionalizing teaching. Differentiated supervision operates on the belief that teaching is a profession (Glatthorn, 1997). This perspective is based on the concept that teachers will grow more professionally when they are provided a voice within the supervision model. Professionalizing teaching also emphasizes that teachers can gain meaningful feedback from colleagues or students. The feedback does not always have to come from the supervisor (Glatthorn, 1997).

The organization perspective is the second approach of differentiated supervision (Glatthorn, 1997). According to McLaughlin and Yee (1988), a collegial environment allows for organizational structures and supports that promote teacher-supervisor interaction and teacher-teacher feedback and support (Walsh, 2014). The most beneficial environment allows for teachers to feel comfortable to continue to grow through the assistance of their organization.

The supervisor's perspective of the differentiated supervision model is the third

perspective that is studied. As the professional responsibilities of principals continues to increase, a solution to finding time for highly effective supervision is needed. The increased demands on schools reaching standardized testing levels of achievement through the federally-mandated Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) creates a need to promote teacher growth while continuously improving student achievement and academic rigor. According to Glatthorn (1997), "differentiated supervision enables the supervisor to focus clinical efforts on those teachers needing or requesting them, rather than providing perfunctory, ritualistic visits for all teachers" (p. 9).

The final phase is determining the teacher's perspective (Glatthorn, 1997). Glatthorn believes that the teacher's preferences on professional development are dependent on the number of years of service. Typically, teachers with more years of service are focused on their needs for professional development. The teachers who seek out the intensive assistance of the clinical supervision model have minimal years of experience. Teachers with more years of service usually have developed the necessary skills to be successful in the classroom. This minimizes the necessity of an intensive development.

Components of Differentiated Supervision

Glatthorn's differentiated supervision model promotes continuous improvement to tenured and non-tenured teachers. According to Glatthorn (1997), teachers need to believe in their own professional development because it is instrumental in achieving overall school improvement. The differentiated supervision model carefully defines the difference between supervision and evaluation. In Glatthorn's opinion, his supervision model is most effective when supported by a differentiated system of teacher evaluation.

The differentiated supervision models of Glatthorn (1997) contains three main developmental options:

1. Intensive development
2. Cooperative professional development
3. Self-directed development

Glatthorn's (1997) model of supervision consists of two evaluation options:

1. Intensive evaluation
2. Standard evaluation

The three developmental options in Glatthorn's differentiated supervision model provide the teachers with a personalized approach to their professional development. The first selection that Glatthorn (1997) provides is intense development. This selection is related to the intense assistance of the clinical supervision model. Typically, nontenured teachers will be included into intense development along with tenured teachers who are struggling to improve their instructional practices. Within the intense development, the supervisor provides resources and observational feedback to improve the growth of the teacher's instructional practices.

The second selection that Glatthorn (1997) offers is cooperative development. This selection promotes teachers working in small groups to encourage professional growth. According to Glatthorn (1997), teachers "hold professional dialogues, conduct action research, observe and confer with each other, and develop curriculum and learning materials" (p. 7).

The final selection is self-directed development. In the self-development selection, teacher work independently with minimal feedback from the supervisor. The

accountability of the teacher's growth is on the teacher, without relying on the supervisor. The teacher determines goals of professional growth, collects feedback from students, and makes final assessment of the progress towards the goal (Walsh, 2014). For accountability purposes, the teacher typically submits the final assessment to the supervisor, who may choose to conference with the teacher to allow the teacher to reflect upon their growth.

According to Glatthorn (1997), the differentiated supervision model is most effective when utilized as two evaluation models: intense evaluation and standard evaluation. The intense evaluation must be supported by specific research-supported criteria in addition to several informal and formal observations. According to Glatthorn (1997), "the intensive evaluation is used to make high-stakes decisions: grant tenure, deny tenure; promote, not promote; and renew contract, not renew contract" (p. 7). The intense evaluation must also include conferences where best practices and observed instruction are discussed (Rossi, 2007). The other evaluation model is the standard evaluation. If teachers are not working in intense development, standard evaluation will be expected. The reason that is decided on experience and past evaluations to demonstrate effectiveness. Within this model, it is best practice to predetermine the focus and timing of informal observations. The differentiated supervision model that Glatthorn (1997) presents includes opportunities to promote all teachers' growth, based on need, with a voice for professional growth.

Historical Perspective – Walkthroughs

It was not common practice to have visible school leaders and business executives out of their offices and in the hallways, classrooms, and in the workspace years ago. As

time passed, educational researchers began to analyze what made certain businesses and schools effective. The terms walkthrough, Management by Wandering Around, learning walks, drive-bys, and the three-minute walks are all examples of a tool by which leaders and managers connect with the workers (Keruskin 2005). Peters and Waterman (1984) discovered that the leaders of the most successful companies stayed close to the people doing the work. These business leaders were involved with the daily routines of the business, frequently on the work floor where the real work was taking place. This presence allowed them to listen to and talk with workers trying to find any undercurrents, strengths, weaknesses, problems, and possible solutions to fix problems that workers were experiencing on a daily basis.

Effective leaders implemented Management by Wandering Around (MBWA) throughout the ages. This MBWA model dates back to President Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln spent time with the troops on the front line; he wanted to understand what was happening for himself. This was to show that he supported the troops because they were the ones fighting the fight. Taking a lesson from Lincoln, the first formal walkthrough process was initiated by a company named Hewlett-Packard (Trueman, 1991).

Hewlett-Packard developed a skills-based management training for the wandering around model to be implemented throughout the company. MBWA was formally introduced to administrators in education in 1990 (Frase & Hetzel, 1990). As the model was implemented, MBWA took off in research and in practice. Early on, minimal research was conducted on MBWA in schools; however, many educational leaders began to buy in based on its effectiveness for managers in the business field. Frase and Hetzel (1990) believe that teachers enjoy seeing their principals in their classrooms because their

presence validates the teachers' hard work.

In summary, the trend of walkthrough supervision has encouraged school leaders to emerge from their offices and become more visible. By doing so, school leaders began to better learn how the operations of the school function, provide the students and staff with the opportunity to interact with their leaders, and start to foster more meaningful working relationships.

What is a Walkthrough Observation?

A classroom walkthrough is a brief, frequent, informal and focused visit to the classroom by observers for the purpose of gathering data on instructional practices and engaging in some type of follow up (Kachur et al., 2013). The classroom walkthrough is not intended to be an evaluative tool. The purpose of the classroom walkthrough is to create a collaborative school culture to ensure that instructional practices and academic achievement are continuously improved. The purpose of a walkthrough is not to pass judgment on teachers, but rather to guide them to higher levels of performance (Pitler & Goodwin, 2009).

In summary, a walkthrough observation is a brief visit of the classroom that engages the teacher in a collaborative conversation to improve their instructional practices.

Why Walkthrough Observations Matter

Of all the approaches available to educators to promote teacher learning, the most powerful is that of a professional conversation (Danielson, 2009). In order to provide meaningful feedback, instructional leaders need to provide data. The classroom walkthrough observation is a tool that is intended to "drive a cycle of continuous

improvement by focusing on the effects of instruction" (Cervone & Martinez-Miller, 2007). Administrators spend a great deal of time making changes in the structure of the organization (Elmore, 2000). However, Elmore (2000) continues, higher student achievement is not impacted until administrators impact what is happening in the classroom (Gillespie & Jenkins, 2016). When performing frequent classroom walkthroughs, the observer has the opportunity to record information over time on features of classrooms including instructional materials and strategies, curriculum standards and lesson objectives, levels of cognitive interaction, student engagement, classroom resources and displays, as well as behavioral management (Kachur et al., 2013). Implementing classroom walkthroughs as part of the school culture provides the school administrator the ability to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day operation of the building (Kachur et al., 2013). In addition, it also provides the administrative team the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the instructional practices used to teach the curriculum, along with the amount of student engagement and questioning techniques that are used throughout the school. Finally, it allows the teachers and students to see the administrative team as visible, attentive and caring team members who value the educational process.

In order to make the classroom walkthrough process more meaningful, it is recommended that teachers are also included throughout the process. To develop an effective classroom walkthrough system, teachers should have input from the beginning stages of planning and development. Having teachers participate in classroom walkthrough observations of their colleagues enriches the amount of shared knowledge and professional conversations (Kachur et al., 2013).

According to Kachur et al. (2013), conducting classroom walkthroughs as a team has a number of positive effects for classroom teachers. Teachers gain new instructional practices, ease the fear to try something new, gain motivation to improve their craft, identify possible areas for their own professional development, identify areas of practice for reflective dialogue with colleagues, and accelerate improvement in student performance. By increasing the level of trust within the school faculty through a positive culture and frequency of walkthroughs, teachers ideally will have lower levels of apprehension when formal observations do occur (Marzano et al., 2011).

Overall, the walkthrough observation is meaningful in a several ways. Utilizing the walkthrough observation starts professional conversations with the focus on improvement of instructional practices. The walkthrough observation affords the opportunity for teachers to receive feedback, interact with the administrative team, and create a collaborate approach towards professional growth.

Walkthrough Models

Throughout time, various models have been implemented such as the Management by Walking Around (MBWA), the Walkthrough Tool, the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Tool, and even the Learning Walk. Various models with different titles or different variations are used throughout schools; however, one key element remains constant: all models contain a process to create organized visits throughout all learning spaces. Many of the models focus on strengthening instructional practices while addressing continuous improvement within the schools. Few of the models are used as a tool for teacher accountability; the main purpose of walkthroughs is to increase the understanding of instruction and learning to create staff development

programs. Among the models that are used in school districts across the United States are School Management by Wandering Around, The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough, the Learning Walk, and the Walkthrough Observation Tool from the Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania.

School Management by Wandering Around

Management by Wandering Around (MBWA) allows for all school community members to become united in a positive way to continue the search for excellence. MBWA provides teacher accountability, creating working relationships with all teachers, and it can promote growth or dismissal for teachers. In order for this system to work, the principal needs to "walk the walk" and have a strong belief in school improvement. According to Frase and Hetzel (1990), the principal who uses MBWA encourages and empowers teachers to create better schools (Keruskin, 2005). On the contrary, the principal who limits their interaction with the school community sends a negative message. By contrast, the MBWA principal is activity engaged within the school community on a daily basis. Their purpose as educational leaders is to promote a continuous improvement attitude, and they do so by gaining feedback to find areas of improvement in their school. MBWA is a simple idea to understand and has proven its effectiveness over time. Each moment that the principal is wandering around the school is sending a clear message to the school community: he cares enough to be involved.

According to Cohen (1988), effective schools are characterized by a distinct set of values: (a) a genuine caring about individuals, (b) a mutual trust, (c) an openness to differences in attitudes and feelings, and (d) a respect for the authority of expertise and competency. The MBWA principal demands that these values are not just words but are

actually present in all interactions with the school community. The MBWA principal walks the school with a positive attitude and expects a positive impact to occur. According to Frase and Hetzel (1990), the principal must create meaningful walks that have a specific focus.

The walks need to contain four key elements:

(1) “look-fors” in the classroom

(2) establishment of an orderly environment through appropriate discipline

(3) effective time management in the MWBA process

(4) development of a safe learning environment.

These four key elements will assist in generating high-quality professional development opportunities to develop effective instructional practices. Frase and Hetzel (1990) assert that by using MBWA, the principal will identify each teacher’s effective instructional practices and areas for potential growth through many classroom visits. When a principal identifies an area of growth for a teacher, it is the principal’s duty to develop a plan to assist that teacher. Knowing where teachers are strong and where they still need to grow allows the principal to offer professional learning to address areas of need, thus developing greater teacher growth that results in greater student growth. If a teacher is unable or unwilling to improve and therefore in need of dismissal, the principal will retain all documentation collected from MBWA data as justification for the dismissal, as it is likely that the principal will be required to provide evidence of the actions taken, or at least attempted, to help the teacher.

MBWA can be time consuming and can easily be set aside when other, sometimes more pressing, building management issues arise. However, Frase and Hetzel (1990)

emphasize that the principal must prioritize time to make MBWA effective. To support the research of strong leadership in MBWA, the principal needs to be constantly visible. Simply being visible is not enough, however. In order for MBWA to truly result in teacher growth and improvement, it is imperative the principal has a complete understanding of effective and ineffective instruction. This understanding will allow the principal can assist all teachers to become more effective through MBWA.

In summary, MBWA allows for the school community to work together in search of excellence. The MBWA walkthrough technique promotes supervisor visibility along with collaboration between students and staff to create positive changes throughout the school. Utilizing the MBWA approach sends the school community a clear message that teachers and administrators care about the school.

The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough

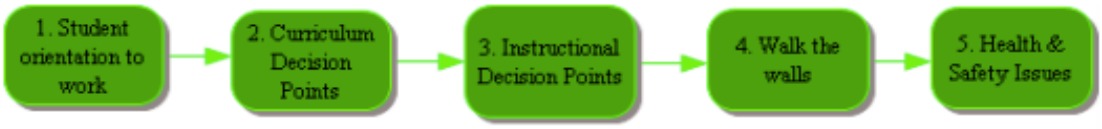
The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough (Downey et al., 2004) has continuously improved over time. This walkthrough model was created from the research by Madeline Hunter and Sue Wells Welsh on teacher effectiveness and evaluation. The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model is also known as the three-minute walkthrough model. This model is continuously re-evaluated and re-imagined, and the most recent stage in its evolution is the focus on teacher decisions rather than teacher actions (Rossi, 2007). The focus on teacher decisions provides principals and teachers to work together through the decision-making process.

The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model consists of five step process as shown in Figure 3. The goal is to gain data on a teacher's decision making within the three minutes. The first step will occur within the first few seconds of the walkthrough. In

this step, the goal is to collect data indicating whether or not the students appear to be oriented to the work. If it is noticeable that students are not completing the task at hand or interruptions are occurring, the goal is to solve why this is occurring (Downey et al., 2004).

Figure 3

The Five Stages of the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough



The second step of the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model takes the majority of the three minutes. The principal will document the learning objective through the instruction. To complete the step, the principal will define the purpose of the student learning. The need for step two is to compare the curriculum that is presented in the classroom to the district curriculum (Downey et al., 2004).

The next step of the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model requires that the observer examine the teacher's instructional practices. Once the learning objective is identified, the principal records data on the instructional practices that are being presented to apply the learning objective. In order to apply the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model correctly, it is imperative that judgements are withheld on specific instructional practices. The focus is on the instructional decisions of the teacher. In this model, it is not recommended that the principal provides feedback during or following each walkthrough. It is recommended that conversations on the data that the principal has observed occur after eight to ten visits. Although the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model does not recommend conversations after every walkthrough, there is flexibility for

a principal to address teacher need before eight to ten classroom visits have passed, especially if waiting could be detrimental to students. After the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model is implemented in a school, Downey et al. (2004) believe the culture of the school will change and become more of collaborative and reflective.

The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model consists of three types of follow up conversations: dependent (direct), independent (indirect), or interdependent (collegial). According to Downey et al. (2004), The goal of the follow up conversations is to assist the teaching staff to engage in reflective thinking. The conversation types are defined by Downey et al. (2004) below:

- The dependent or direct follow-up conversation is when the supervisor/coach gives feedback to the teacher and then teaches the teacher in the feedback conversation.
- The independent or the indirect follow-up happens when the supervisor/coach invites the teacher to reflect on the short segment of observed teaching, follows up on those teaching practices that the teacher brings up, and ideally completes the conversation with a reflective question.
- In the interdependent or collegial conversation, the supervisor/coach poses reflective question in a conversation and engages in further dialogue in the future if the teacher chooses.

The next step is known as “walking the walls.” In this step the principal is looking for indicators that support of previous content or content that may be taught in the future. Many curricular objectives and instructional practices can be observed by noting what is on the walls as well as in other classroom areas (Downey et al., 2004). In the final step of

the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model, the focus is safety or health issues. This step just happens naturally, as the principal enters and exits the classroom, the focus will shift to what you see pertaining to health and safety. A few examples include trip hazards, broken entryway thresholds, cluttered aisleways, dim lighting, inadequate traffic flow, and odors.

Downey et al. (2004) rationale is that by applying this walkthrough model, schools will evolve into inquiry-based systems. This walkthrough model is believed to improve the communication of the teachers and principals. In order to create inquiry-based collaboration between teachers and principals, two key factors must be present within the Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model: "frequent, short classroom visits, and conversations with teachers about how and why teachers make the decisions they do when planning, implementing, and evaluating their teaching" (Downey et al., 2004, p. 125).

In summary, the Downey Walkthrough Model is a three to five-minute classroom visit that is focused on five steps. The five steps include student orientation to work, curriculum decision points, instructional decision points, walking the walls and health and safety issues.

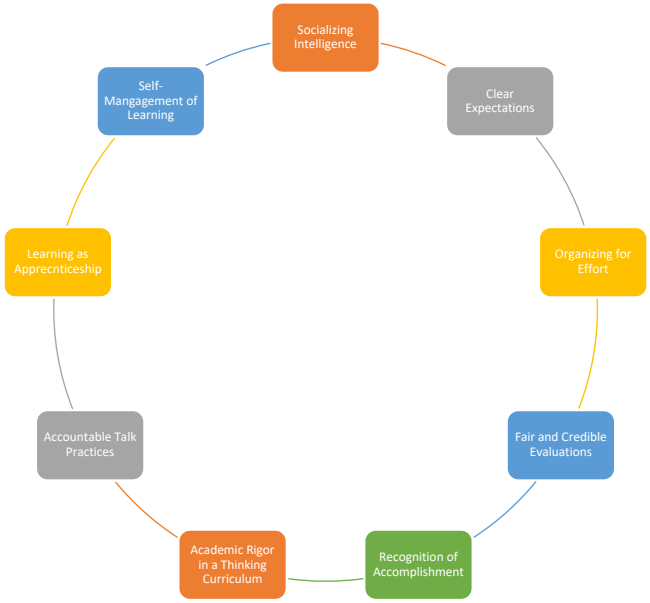
The Learning Walk

In 1997, the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning (IFL) developed a protocol to develop a learning community in schools called the Learning Walk routine. The Institute for Learning is part of the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh. IFL describes this walkthrough routine as a structured set of activities for the observation and interpretation of instruction and learning based on the

nine principles of learning as shown in Figure 4. These principles of learning include the following: Socializing Intelligence, Clear Expectations, Organizing for Effort, Fair and Credible Evaluations, Recognition of Accomplishment, Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum, Accountable Talk Practices, Learning as Apprenticeship, and Self-Management of Learning (Institute for Learning, 1999).

Figure 4

The IFL Learning Walk Routine's Nine Principles of Learning



The Learning Walk's focus is on the three instructional core elements of how teachers teach, how students learn, and what gets taught to them. The Learning Walk is a process that invites participants to visit several classrooms to look at student work and classroom artifacts. During the time, the participants are also encouraged to talk with students and teachers to gather feedback directly of the learning. Participants then review what they have learned in the classroom by documenting information and creating meaningful questions pertaining to the walkthrough (Institute for Learning, 1999).

At the end of the process, teachers are expected to become more reflective

thinkers of their teaching practices. The protocol used in the Learning Walk has the features a model that is committed to an effort-based concept of intelligence and education, through the lens of the nine principles of learning. The Learning Walk is not evaluative; rather, it is focused on student learning and instruction. Throughout the Learning Walk, feedback is based on evidence and is not judgmental.

The Institute for Learning (1999) developed five steps to implement their Learning Walk model, the first of which prepares the staff for a walkthrough. The principal describes the Learning Walk modes and the differences between them, and identifies which mode will be used in the school. The Institute for Learning (1999) describes three modes by which the Learning Walk can be organized: observational, collegial, and supervisory.

The observational Learning Walk is conducted by the building principal and a person from outside the school district who is familiar with the principles of learning, since they are the focus of the Learning Walk. To gain a new perspective, a partnership may be utilized to help identify any areas for improvement of instruction and student learning. The collegial type Learning Walk includes teachers who have a strong desire to improve instructional practices and student learning who visit their colleagues' classrooms in place of the principal. Allowing peer educators to conduct a Learning Walk will move a non-collaborative environment to a more collaborative environment. Finally, the supervisory Learning Walk involves the building principal and a central office administrator. The principal and the central office administrator work simultaneously to observe the teaching and student learning centered on the principles of learning. The Institute for Learning's goal for the Learning Walk model is for teachers to be able think

more deeply about their own teaching and student learning (Keruskin, 2005). The feedback presented through The Learning Walk must include positive messages, regardless of the mode. The third step is to relate the walkthrough questions to the principles of learning. The administrator's attention should be on the principles of learning, examples of which might be the academic rigor, high level thinking, and students engaged in strategic problem solving in the classroom (Keruskin, 2005).

The fourth step is to explain the participants' responsibilities during an observational. The Learning Walk experience needs to be thought of in a positive manner by the teacher and principals. The principal needs to share the purpose of the Learning Walk and to share how to be successful in the Learning Walk process. The principal should be very informative in the communication. The principal will explain what instructional practice should be observed throughout all classrooms.

The final step in The Institute for Learning's Learning Walk model is to provide appropriate feedback to the school staff (Keruskin, 2005). The feedback needs to be clear and immediate after a visit. A post Learning Walk letter is one suggestion. The letter should provide detailed observational feedback along with improvement suggestions for future lessons. There are other ways to communicate feedback such as a relaxed follow up conversation in the hallway or creation of collegial sharing groups as a follow-up debriefing session. The sharing groups will allow the principal to debrief several teachers and validate effective teaching practices by shared amongst each other.

In summary, The Learning Walk is a collaborative partnership between an external and internal member of the school district. Utilizing an external person provides a different perspective on the teaching and learning. Throughout The Learning Walk,

nine principles are applied to provide meaningful feedback to enhance the instructional practices being utilized throughout the school district.

Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania Walkthrough Observation Tool

The Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania was formed by two educators named Otto Graf and Joseph Werlinich. The Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania Academy developed a Walkthrough Observation Tool to collect data on teaching and learning. The Walkthrough Observation Tool contains seven objectives.

1. For principals and teachers to learn more about instruction and learning;
2. To focus teachers and the principal on student work and the learning process;
3. To validate effective teaching practice and ensure continued use;
4. To create a community of learners for adults and students;
5. To open the school and classroom to all staff;
6. To improve decision making about instruction and learning;
7. To design more useful professional growth opportunities (Rossi, 2007).

The Walkthrough Observation Tool includes opportunities to share perceptions and ideas with teachers. The premise of the walkthrough model is to provide a clear message that the priority of the school is to improve instructional practices and student learning. Graf and Werlinich (2002) believe that utilizing the walkthrough model will lead to a positive change to the culture of the school. This will occur through the collaboration between the principal and teachers to continuously improve the instructional practices that are implemented within each classroom. The integral part of this Walkthrough Observation Tool is that the students, teachers, and principal become part of the learning environment (Graf & Werlinich, 2002).

According to Graf and Werlinich (2002), the implementation of their walkthrough tool is a development process. The Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania suggests a 14-step process to conduct effective walkthroughs that allows for data collection on instruction, curriculum, and student achievement. The 14 steps of the Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania are the following:

1. *Conduct a preliminary walkthrough to gather baseline data.*

   The baseline data focuses on the teaching and learning that is occurring in the school. The baseline data will assist in identifying the instructional needs of the building.

2. *Conduct a preliminary meeting with staff.*

   This provides the principal with the opportunity to communicate clear expectations to the staff.

3. *Set guidelines for professional behavior.*

   The principal determines and clarifies the guidelines for teachers. When the walkthrough observations occur, strict confidentiality expectations must be adhered to by all teachers.

4. *Establish a focus for the walkthrough observations.*

   The teachers and principals collaboratively identify strategies that will be the focus of each walkthrough observation. Included in this step are the look-fors, which are to occur during all instructional practices.

5. *Align the look-fors with standards.*

The instructional look-fors are aligned with local, state and national standards. Implementing this step establishes a common language throughout the school. This will also identify curriculum gaps that exist.

6. *Create an agenda for the walkthrough and communicate it to the staff.*

   The principal creates a walkthrough schedule for the school. The teachers will know the look-fors in advance so they are prepared when the walkthrough observation takes place.

7. *Identify the data that will be collected during the walkthrough.*

   The teachers must have a clear understanding of the data being collected. The data may contain work produced by the students, learning goals, organization of the classroom, technology resources and classroom environment.

8. *Data collection.*

   The principal collects data to make connections on the implementation of the look-fors.

9. *Observe student work and student behaviors.*

   The signature component of the walkthrough is examination of the students' work and behaviors and how they reflect student learning. Creating dialogue with student learners on the learning process may afford the opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the instructional practices.

10. *Validate effective teaching.*

    To validate effective practices, principals need to communicate when quality instruction occurs and how it is related to the success of all students.

11. *Debrief with teachers.*

Providing teachers with feedback will demonstrate the importance and appreciation of effective practices and continuous growth. Various types of feedback can be utilized such as verbal or written during conferences, faculty meetings, or other methods.

12. *Debrief with staff.*

    In an effort to create a true learning community, the principal should debrief with the staff as a whole. Recognizing teachers' effectiveness is critical to the debriefing process with staff members. This debrief allows teachers share out what is working in their classroom, content, or grade level.

13. *Coach and engage teachers in the discussion about effective teaching.*

    The principal is the leader of the coaching, but he or she cannot do it alone. In order to create a meaningful change, the principal must also foster dialogue with other teachers about effective instructional practices.

14. *Make the walkthrough part of the culture.*

    To impact the culture, the principal must remain consistent with the Walkthrough Observation Tool. Consistency will lead to a collaborative and collegial process for all members of the school.

In summary, the Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania's Walkthrough Observation Tool is a 14-step process that is focused on data collection on instruction, curriculum, and student achievement. To utilize this Walkthrough Observation Tool effectively, it is essential that collaboration between the principal and teachers remains constant, thus allowing the students, teachers, and the principal become part of the learning environment.

The Teachscape Walk

The Teachscape classroom walkthrough (CWT) is an iterative process to collect and analyze data about the quality of instruction, the level of student engagement, and the rigor of the curriculum (Kachur et al., 2013). The CWT is designed to assist school communities in collecting and analyzing data that promote reflective dialogue about teaching and learning (Teachscape, 2020). The CWT promotes continuous improvement to ensure that data become actionable for making improvements and bridging the gap between the current state of the school and its ultimate potential (Teachscape, 2020). The CWT process consists of seven steps to effectively implement the walkthrough as shown in Figure 5:

1. *Planning with a focus*

   To begin the process, first step is to identify the focus of what the team wants to achieve as a result of conducting the walkthrough observations. In the planning, a focus of the look-fors will be identified.

2. *Collecting data*

   In the collecting data step, the team will begin to visit classrooms to collect the data that are identified as a focus.

3. *Analyzing data*

   After the data are collected, the team then disseminates the data to be analyzed by the team. In the analyzing data step, the team must correlate the data to the focus that was identified at the beginning of the process.

4. *Reflecting on the data*

Once the data is collected and analyzed, the team will reflect on the data as they relate to the focus of what is observed.

5. *Identification of the action plan*

   At the conclusion of the data reflection, the team creates an action plan to best address the needs of the data and how to improve.

6. *Acting on the plan*

   After the action plan is developed, the team begins to act on the plan. During this phase, communication and consistency are imperative for all stakeholders.

7. *Evaluating the action plan*

   The final step is to evaluate the action plan and reflect on how to continuously improve the walkthrough observation process to improve quality of instruction, the level of student engagement, and the rigor of the curriculum.

Figure 5

The Seven Steps of the Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough Process

In summary, the Teachscape Walk consists of seven steps to collect and analyze data about the quality of instruction, the level of student engagement, and the rigor of the curriculum. Throughout the process, the school culture is influenced by reflective

dialogue about teaching and learning to improve instructional practices that impact the students' achievement and educational experience.

#eWalkthrough

The #eWalkthrough was developed by Kelly Gillespie and Sue Jenkins of the Southwest Plains Regional Service Center in Kansas. The #eWalkthrough was created with the notion that effective staff development must be supported by collaborative dialogue, and that dialogue needs to be data driven (Gillespie & Jenkins, 2016). The #eWalkthrough is a customizable walkthrough model to promote teacher engagement in continuous improvement through data-driven feedback that focus on professional development. The #eWalkthough model is an efficient model to support district leaders, and building leaders to improve instructional leadership. The digital #eWalkthrough model is designed to collect, disaggregate, analyze, and record classroom data surrounding instructional practices. The #eWalkthrough model uses a unique approach to connect instructional leadership, excellent teaching, and student success. This approach is unique to provide meaningful feedback to students, staff and principals related to continuous improvement at the district level. To begin the #eWalkthrough process a team of teachers, administrators and teachers will develop the look-fors when the walkthroughs are conducted.

The look-fors will be related to five components as shown in Figure 6:

1. *Research based practices*

   What are the proven educational models or strategies being utilized throughout the instruction?

2. *History and culture*

The instructional practices being utilized related to the philosophy of the districts.

The culture of the classroom modes of operation and how the instructional practices have evolved over time.

3. *Educational initiatives and school improvement*

   Is the teacher meeting the priorities of the local, state and federal level as well as incorporating the community stakeholders?

4. *Stakeholder Expectations*

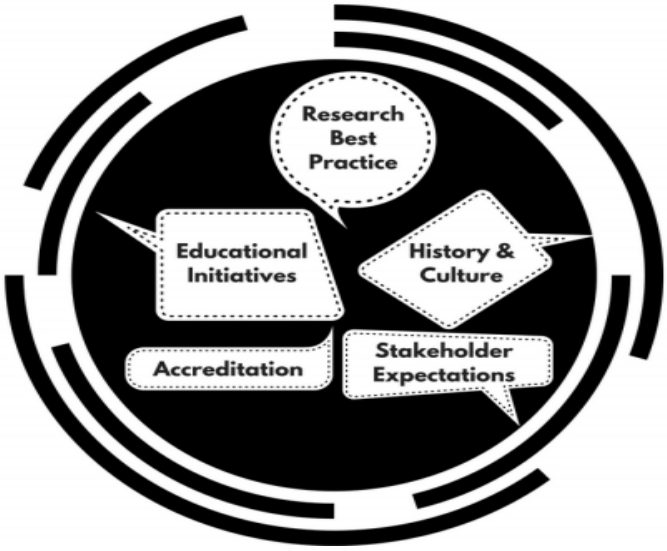
   How are the unique programs with specialized mission and vision of the district included in the instructional practices? Is there an emphasis on areas of identified need?

5. *Accreditation*

   What specific data requirements are being met? What unique variables or expectations are included within the students' learning experiences? This may also include comprehensive instructional expectations.

Figure 6

The #eWalkthrough Model (Gillespie & Jenkins, 2016)



To effectively collect the needed data to improve instructional practices related to the looks-fors, the team will need to follow the five guidelines to engage in professional conversations. The first is to conduct walkthroughs routinely throughout the school year, visiting every teacher's classroom regularly. The walkthroughs will be completed at various times of the week, the day, and class period. By doing so, the observer is able to generate a true picture of the instructional practices taking place. Next is for the team to analyze data regularly and promptly, which allows the team to identify areas of growth and refine professional learning needs for specific teacher groups. Data analysis is followed by identifying and prioritizing specific instructional areas in which teachers need support. These support areas will afford the opportunity to provide differentiated professional learning opportunities for teachers based on their needs. The final step is to schedule professional learning to address the identified needs. The ability to identify specific areas of support leads to concrete professional learning time to hold teachers accountable for their own growth.

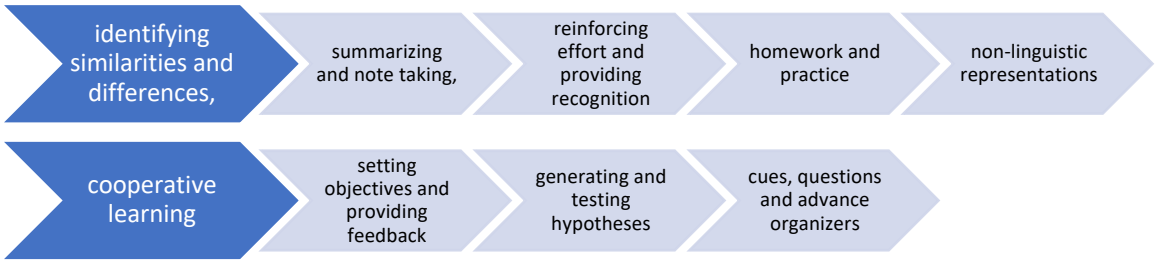
In summary, the #eWalkthrough consists of five steps to connect instructional leadership, excellent teaching, and student success. Throughout the process, the notion of effective staff development must be supported by collaborative dialogue, and that dialogue needs to be data driven. The data collected by the #eWalkthrough are used to identify specific areas of support leading to concrete professional learning time to hold teachers accountable for their own growth.

McREL Power Walkthrough

McREL power walkthrough provides an approach consisting of strategies to combine an informal observation with data to create a culture of reflective practice (Kachur et al., 2013). The focus and look-fors center on the extent to which teachers incorporate instructional strategies from Marzano et al., (2001) *Classroom Instruction That Works,* use of technology, level of student achievement, and level of instructional rigor as measured by Bloom's Taxonomy (Kachur et al., 2013). The McREL power walkthrough team consists of administrators and teachers who work as a team in their observations. The focus of the team as they conduct the walkthrough is on the student. The focus and look-fors are consistent with the nine strategies (Figure 7) from *Classroom Instruction That Works* (Marzano et al., 2001).

Figure 7

Strategies that Serve as the Look-fors in the McREL Power Walkthrough



Upon completion of each walkthrough, immediate data reports are presented. The data is made available to the team to enhance coaching conversations and promote reflective questioning for professional growth (Kachur et al., 2013).

In summary, when implementing this model is imperative to focus on the student. When implementing this walkthrough approach, the data are used to support and enhance coaching conversations and reflective questioning for professional growth on the instructional practices being utilized.

Teachers' Professional Growth

Walkthrough feedback provides meaningful data to assist administrators plan relevant professional development opportunities for either an individual or for the full faculty. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD, 2002) described professional development as any activity that is focused on helping teachers improve instruction or classroom practices with student achievement and the support of learning needs in mind (Warren, 2014). The purpose of professional development is to improve a teacher's ability to teach; however, many teachers feel that professional development trainings are often a waste of time and have little impact on their classroom

instruction (Annunziata, 1997). According to Annunziata (1997), teachers indicated that professional development activities are typically one-day deals that hype the latest faddish program, or professional development time is spent making foldables or listening to a hired consultant of some sort. When walkthrough observations are consistent, it allows the supervisor to observe whether or not professional development endeavors are impacting teaching behavior in the classroom (Downey & Frase, 2001).

As student achievement continues to increase nationwide, so does school accountability. Over the years, teachers and administrators have been tasked with implementing in depth professional development to improve instructional practices. The expectation has been to create a professional development system for rigorous professional growth strategies to be developed, promoting an increase in student achievement. Guskey (1995) states that a one-size-fits-all approach to professional development is not effective and can no longer be applied. In 2009, the National Staff Development Council pledged to improve the professional development system for teachers and administrators. It was determined that teachers need to receive feedback regarding their effectiveness from multiple sources of data that include self-assessments, peer observations, and walkthrough observations by the building principal (Marzano, 2009).

As the era of accountability continued, school communities were constantly attempting to build upon prior success and address failures to meet the mandates of No Child Left Behind (2001), the Race to the Top initiative of the United States Department of Education (2010), and, most recently, the federal mandates of the Every Student Succeeds Act (U. S. Department of Education, 2015). The Walkthrough Observation

Tool is an important resource to change teacher's feelings towards professional growth (Downey et al., 2004). Meaningful feedback should trigger areas for continual growth and goal-setting and an awareness of strengths and areas for improvement, followed by opportunities to learn (Warren, 2014). A method for school administrators seeking to increase teacher effectiveness and satisfaction is through frequent observations to classrooms (Andrew & Soder, 1987). Regular feedback allows teachers to view their principal as effective instructional leaders who advocate for producing solutions that enhance instructional problems (Blasé, 1987). As teachers receive meaningful feedback from their principal, it promotes the practice of self- reflection (Downey et al., 2004).

Dialogue and discussion are the primary components of growth (Vygotsky, 1962). By utilizing a Walkthrough Observation Tool, principals and teachers engage in meaningful professional conversations guiding professional growth. Incorporating teachers into the practice of their professional growth provides motivation to continuously improve their instructional practices in an effort to increase student achievement and academic rigor.

In an examination of 69 studies of 2,802 schools, effective leadership behaviors were identified as one of the most important factors in implementing change in schools (Marzano et al., 2005). The study identified the importance of the principal's awareness of the strengths and needs of faculty (Walsh, 2014). The two key indicators to create change within a school community were identified as monitoring and evaluating. According to Manasse (1985), "to be successful in managing the goal-setting process and achieving consensus and commitment among staff, a principal first must have a comprehensive understanding of the school and all of interacting parts" (p. 445). In the

process of applying the Walkthrough Observation Tool, the principal is to obtain data on the instructional practices and how they impact student learning. To be able to produce meaningful professional development, the principal will need to reflect upon the commitment, expertise, and needs of all teachers (Glickman, 2002; Reeves, 2004).

Summary

The purpose of the literature review was to provide a viewpoint of the history of supervision over the past few centuries. It has become evident over the past centuries that supervision has evolved from a summative to a more formative approach. Throughout the chapter, various teacher supervision models have been explored, as well as how supervision and evaluation promotes professional growth opportunities to support all teachers. To enrich the conversations with teachers on professional growth, the walkthrough observation is often implemented. The research discusses a number of walkthrough observation models to provide data and serve a specific purpose.

Classroom walkthroughs are brief, frequent, informal, and focused visits to the classroom by observers for the purpose of gathering data on instructional practices and engaging in some type of follow up (Kachur et al., 2013). The classroom walkthrough observation is a tool that is intended to "drive a cycle of continuous improvement by focusing on the effects of instruction" (Cervone & Martinez-Miller, 2007). One key element remains constant; all models contain a process to create organized visits throughout all learning spaces.

School Management by Wandering Around (MBWA) requires the principal to be very visible to the students and staff throughout the school day. By doing so, the building leader creates a positive change within the school community. The principal conducts

walkthroughs that contain four key elements:

(1) “look-fors” in the classroom

(2) establishment of an orderly environment through appropriate discipline

(3) effective time management in the MWBA process

(4) development of a safe learning environment.

By applying the four key elements while conducting walkthroughs, Frase and Hetzel (1990) conclude that the principal will identify effective instructional practices of each teacher through numerous classroom visits.

The Downey Curriculum Walkthrough Model consists of a five-step process that occurs over only three minutes. The goal is to collect data on the teacher’s decision making within the three minutes. The five steps are student orientation to work, curriculum decision points, instructional decision points, walk the walls, and health and safety issues. The overall goal of this model is to focus on the teacher’s decisions.

The Learning Walk is described as a structured set of activities for the observation and interpretation of instruction and learning based on the nine principles of learning. The principles of learning include the following: Socializing Intelligence, Clear Expectations, Organizing for Effort, Fair and Credible Evaluations, Recognition of Accomplishment, Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum, Accountable Talk Practices, Learning as Apprenticeship, and Self-Management of Learning. At the end of the process, teachers are expected to become more reflective thinkers of their teaching practices.

The Principals Academy of Western Pennsylvania Walkthrough Observation Tool includes opportunities to share perceptions and ideas with teachers. The premise of the walkthrough model is to provide a clear message that the priority of the school is to

improve instructional practices and student learning. The Walkthrough Observation Tool consist of a 14-step process: conduct a preliminary meeting with staff, set guidelines for professional behavior, establish a focus for the walkthrough observations, align the look-fors with standards, create an agenda for the walkthrough and communicate it to the staff, identify the data that will be collected during the walkthrough, data collection, observe student work and student behaviors, validate effective teaching, debrief with teachers, debrief with staff, coach and engage teachers in the discussion about effective teaching, make the walkthrough part of the culture.

There is one constant to all of the models that were included in this research. The one constant is that the need to continuously improve instructional practices is the primary goal. As instructional practices are improved, many other aspects of the students' educational experiences can also be positively affected. By the implementation of various initiatives by the federal and state government, it is evident that accountability within local school districts continues to increase. The expectation is that observation identifies professional development needs for continuous improvement, in order to assist and shape our teachers to become reflective practitioners who continuously seek to improve their practices to challenge their students and improve learning.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Through the review of literature related to the classroom Walkthrough Observation Tool, the researcher was able to gain a better understanding of the process of developing a more robust research methodology. This methodology contains the specific procedures that were used throughout the research study to identify, collect, and evaluate the data collected on administrators' and teachers' perceptions of the classroom walkthrough observation as a means of professional growth. The purpose of this methodology is to provide an in-depth explanation of the process that was used to throughout the research study to establish its credibility, reliability, and validity.

The focus for this study was the essentials of secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improved instructional practices within the school district in which the research was conducted. This chapter will begin with the rationale for the researcher's selection of the action research study topic, the action research goals, and the research questions that were used to guide the study. The research questions were designed to fulfill the purpose of the action research study.

As previously mentioned, the goal for the action research study was to gain a better understanding of how feedback from the Walkthrough Observation Tool promotes student achievement and teacher improved instructional practices at the secondary level through teacher and administrator perceptions of the tool. This study was necessary to provide district and building level administrators feedback on a new tool implemented in the district, as a reflection on its use was interrupted by school shutdowns due to the

COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to provide the context for the purpose of and need for the action research study, this chapter will provide an overview the environment of the school district along with the population of the selected participants, including how the informed consent was communicated and collected from each participant.

The majority of this chapter's content will consist of the research design, methods, and data collection. These are the sections that will describe the research design and the multiple forms of data that were collected to answer the research questions. It will elaborate on the idea of how the was received as well as the timelines that were utilized to gather the data. The data instrument as well as the storage and organization of the data will be discussed in-depth. Additionally, the use of various data points will be explained along with how that information relates to the research questions. To ensure to the ethical guidelines of the institutional review board an explanation will be provided to the process that was utilized for this action research study, as well as the institutional review board documentation to continue with the study.

To establish the credibility and validity of this action research study, a section on validity is included to promote the trustworthiness of this action research study. This section explains the steps taken to ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the results. To conclude the methodology, a summary of the chapter is provided.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study was to learn the secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perception of the Walkthrough Observation Tool feedback to improve instructional practices. In education, all stakeholders have a responsibility to

provide a quality education for all students; thus, it is imperative that educators continuously improve the quality of instruction. In order to continuously improve professional development for teachers, it is first necessary to identify any disconnect of expectations between principals and teachers. Administrators must learn what the teachers need before they can develop meaningful professional growth opportunities. One part of assisting teachers to improve their instructional practices is meaningful feedback to identify areas for professional growth. The district Walkthrough Observation Tool (Appendix A) has been established as an excellent instrument to promote the practice of continuous improvement through meaningful feedback.

The researcher proposed this action research study to gain insight on secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions on the usefulness of the feedback provided by the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. It is important for administrators to understand how teachers in the district use the data from the walkthrough tool to improve their instructional practices. At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, the school district implemented a new Walkthrough Observation Tool. It was introduced to teachers at the beginning of the school year and applied throughout the year, until the COVID-19 pandemic halted face-to-face teaching. Because the focus shifted to finding ways to serve students remotely and adjusting to COVID-19 guidelines, the district was never able to reflect on the walkthrough observational tool.

This research afforded district and school level leaders the opportunity to learn and continuously improve instructional practices in classrooms. To ensure that teachers are receiving adequate feedback on improving instructional practices and identify areas for professional growth, administrators must understand their perceptions of how the

Walkthrough Observation Tool is meaningful.

The researcher implemented a mixed methods approach to conduct this study. Mixed methods research utilizes qualitative and quantitative approaches and data within the research (Mertler, 2019). The approach will allow the researcher to integrate quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data in a holistic investigation of the perceptions of secondary principals and secondary teachers of how instructional practices are impacted by utilizing the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. Participants in this action research study will include ten secondary teachers from grades seven to 12 as well as four secondary principals from the junior high and high school buildings.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of secondary teachers about the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
2. What are the perceptions of secondary principals about the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
3. What are the perceptions identified by secondary teachers and principals on how the Walkthrough Observation Tool can be improved to promote growth of instructional practice?

Setting & Participants

The setting for this study was a suburban public school district located in southwest Pennsylvania, approximately 13 miles east of the city of Pittsburgh. The community encompasses 29 square miles and is the largest borough in Allegheny County. The population, according to the 2010 census, is approximately 27,000 residents. Based on the square mileage and the overall population, there are 951 people per square

mile.

The school district is a bedroom community that experiences minimal transient activity. It is a largely residential borough with few businesses, but commercial real estate has been increasing slowly over time. The school district operates on a budget in the mid $60 million range and taxes rely upon the 11,366 district households.

According to the most recent census data available, the community demographics are as follow. The per capita income is $38,461, and the median household income the community was $78,709. The gender population is 52% female to 48% male. The racial makeup of the borough is 93.6% Caucasian, 3.2% African American, 0.1% American Indian, 0.3% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian, 2.8% two or more races, and 1.2% Hispanic or Latino. Of the 11,366 households, 20.1% have children under the age of 18 residing in the household. The average person per household is 2.38, a majority of which are married couples (74%).

Looking at the overall ranges in population, 11% of the population is under the age of 10, 11% is 10-19 years old, 10% is 20-29 years old, 12% is 30-39 years old, 13% is 40-49 years old, 15% is 50-59 years old and 29% is over the age of 60. The median age is 45 years old. The median value of owner-occupied housing is $153,700, with 61% of home values ranging between $100,000-$200,000. In terms of educational attainment, 95.9% of residents have earned a high school degree or higher, and 36.8% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

The school district history and demographics are quite unique. The first schoolhouse in the school district was built in 1806. In 1940, the first high school was completed in October. The school district was comprised of approximately 1500 students

at the time. By the 1973-1974 school year, approximately 6000 students attended the district. Today, the district is operating five buildings. The district has three elementary schools, two of which are K-4 buildings and one of which houses grades 5 and 6; a 7th and 8th grade junior high building, and a 9th to12th grade high school.

The central administration team is located in the high school building and consists of a superintendent, deputy superintendent, business manager, and assistant superintendent. The annual budget is roughly $65 million. The total revenue from local sources is 54 % with the state contributing 45%. The federal government revenue is roughly 1% of the budget.

The school district colors are purple and gold. Its motto of "Exceptionally prepared for success" align with district's mission, to be a top performing school district by increasing levels of academic rigor and student achievement through the development and execution of best practices, accountability, the highest ethical standards, and an unrelenting commitment by ALL to embrace excellence and pride in everything that we do. The employees of the district consist of 235 teachers, 41 paraprofessionals, 55 transportation staff, 38 facilities department staff, 37 food service, 22 administrative assistants, six technology staff and 18 act 93 members.

The school district has a student population of 3,580. The percent enrollment by gender is 52.5% male and 47.5% female. Students in economically disadvantaged homes comprise 22.4%, English language learners number 0.6%, students receiving special education services include 14.9%, 5.0% are identified as gifted, 0.1% are in foster care, 0.8% are homeless, and 0.9% of students' families are military connected. Student ethnicities include 1.2% Asian, 6.0% African American, 1.0 Hispanic, 88.1% Caucasian,

and 3.7% of two or more races.

The district partners with Forbes Career and Technical Center where 96 high school students attend. Throughout the district, 76 students attend charter schools and approximately 300 are enrolled in the district's internal cyber program. This online program was created to fulfill needs of students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The district's four-year cohort graduation rate is 96.3% along with a 97.4% five-year cohort graduation rate. The district is a member of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3, located in Homestead, Pennsylvania.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 show the demographic breakdowns of students in each building in the district. One of the two elementary schools serving students in kindergarten through 4th grade, labeled in the tables as K-4a, has a student population of 481 students from kindergarten through fourth grade. The K-4b elementary school has a student population of 728 students. The 5-6 elementary school has a student population of 611 students. At the secondary level, there are 591 students in the junior high school (grades 7-8) and 1162 in grades 9-12 at the senior high school. All buildings have a larger population of male students than female students. A majority of students each building are Caucasian, with ranges from 82.5% to 90.1%. African American students are the second largest ethnicity, followed by students of two or more races. Asian and Hispanic students in each building comprise around 2% or less of the student population. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students ranges from approximately 20% to 25%, with the elementary K-4a school having the highest number (25.2%) and K-4b the lowest (20.6%). Elementary school K-4a also has the highest percentage of English language learners, at 2.7%, whereas all other buildings have less than 1%. Gifted

students across buildings range from 1.9% to 7.4%, and students with IEPs range from 13.5% to 17%. Less than 1% of students in each building are living in foster homes or identified as homeless. Finally, between 0.9% and 2.1% of students are in military connected families. See Tables 1, 2, and 3 for specific building population breakdowns.

Table 1

District Population

	District	9-12 Building	7-8 Building	5-6 Elementary	K-4a Elementary	K-4b Elementary
Grade Level	K-12	9-12	7-8	5-6	K-4	K-4
Student Population	3,580	1162	591	611	481	728
Male Students	52.5%	51.3%	52.1%	53.2%	53.0%	53.7%
Female Students	47.5%	48.7%	47.9%	46.8%	47.0%	46.3%
Gifted Students	5.0%	6.2%	5.3%	7.4%	1.9%	2.9%
Teaching Staff	235	74	37	40	35	49
Cyber Population	304	146	35	42	45	36

Table 2

District Race

	District	9-12 Building	7-8 Building	5-6 Elementary	K-4a Elementary	K-4b Elementary
Caucasian	88.1%	89.9%	85.6%	88.7%	82.5%	90.9%
African American	6.0%	6.1%	7.1%	5.6%	7.9%	3.7%
Asian	1.2%	1.5%	1.5%	0.7%	2.1%	0.3%

Hispanic	1.0%	0.6%	1.9%	1.6%	1.5%	0.1%
2 or more races	3.7%	2.0%	3.9%	3.6%	6.0%	4.8%

Table 3

District Student Groups

	District	9-12 Building	7-8 Building	5-6 Elementary	K-4a Elementary	K-4b Elementary
Economically Disadvantaged	22.4%	21.9%	23.0%	22.6%	25.2%	20.6%
English Language Learners	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	2.7%	0.0%
Special Education	14.9%	13.9%	15.9%	17.0%	15.0%	13.5%
Foster Care	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%
Homeless	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%
Military Connected	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	0.5%	2.1%	1.1%

The participants included in this study are 10 randomly selected teachers and all four secondary administrators in the school district. Each participant has taught a minimum of five years and had utilized the Walkthrough Observation Tool prior to participation in the study. To select the teacher participants for this study, a random selection process from a pool of those who voluntarily completed the pre-intervention survey was utilized.

Upon the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of California University of Pennsylvania (Appendix B), the researcher emailed each member of the

secondary principals (Appendix C) and all secondary teachers (Appendix D) requesting participation in the study. Included in that initial email was an informed consent statement and a link to a Google Form survey. If a participant selected "Yes" on the initial question, which asked if they consented to participate in the study, they were taken to the pre-intervention survey to share their perceptions of the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. Each secondary principal received a pre-intervention survey (Appendix E), and the voluntary principal participation rate was 100%. In addition, all 105 secondary teachers received a pre-intervention survey (Appendix F) asking them to voluntary participate in the study. The teacher participation rate of the pre-intervention survey was 30.4%. Upon the collection of the pre-intervention survey data, 10 randomly selected teacher participants and all four principal participants were selected as those whose data would be included in this study. Once the randomly selected participants were identified, each participant received an Informed Participant Consent Acknowledgment Form (Appendix G). Next, pre-intervention interviews were arraigned at the teacher and principal convenience. The principal participants were asked the questions listed in Appendix H. The teacher participants were asked the questions listed in Appendix I. This process was repeated with the teachers and principals during the second semester to gain additional feedback and perceptions after the intervention.

The researcher has worked in education for the past 14 years. The researcher has earned a bachelor's degree in health and Physical Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and continued his education at Gannon University to earn a master's degree in curriculum and instruction on his path to obtaining a Curriculum Supervisor certificate along with a Superintendents' Letter of Eligibility.

The researcher has unique experience in the district as a graduate of the school district, a former teacher in the district, and now an administrator. The researcher has a vested interest in this study, as he recognizes that some of the district's needs have been lagging when it comes to the Walkthrough Observation Tool and teacher evaluation. It is the researcher's purpose to conduct this action research project to assist the district in making informed decisions related to professional growth and development through teacher evaluation.

Research Plan

Over the past 50 years, the question of how to best guide teachers and principals to continuously improve and grow professionally has been researched. Through the process of reviewing relevant literature on the classroom Walkthrough Observation Tool, the researcher was confident that the same issues of teachers professional growth was not an issue limited to this school district.

Various research on feedback and professional learning over the years has been conducted from many perspectives, ranging from clinically-based research that focused on the structure, practices, and instructional views of professional growth to more developmentally-based theories that explore the emotional, physical and social aspects of the feedback that is provided and received.

Understanding past research encouraged the researcher to review various points of view of the miscommunications that often occur in providing and receiving feedback as a means of professional growth. The goal of using surveys and interviews allowed the researcher to compare and identify where the miscommunications and areas of improvement are in the secondary level of one school district utilizing the Walkthrough

Observation Tool.

The financial implications for this research study are very simple. The tool that is being evaluated already exists and is implemented in the district, so there were no costs associated with purchasing, developing, or implementing the tool. The only cost associated with the research was the time of each participating professional employee. The pre and post intervention surveys, which all secondary teachers and principals were asked to complete, were intended to take no more than 15 minutes to complete for a total of 30 minutes of survey completion time. In addition, those 14 participants (10 teachers and four principals) who were selected for pre and post intervention interviews were asked to devote an additional two hours of interview time. A total of fourteen participants (ten teachers and four principals) participated in the interviews. Participants' salary and time were calculated into the budget (see Table 4). Finally, at the conclusion of the research, a professional development opportunity will be provided to the teachers to learn what changes were made to the Walkthrough Observation Tool and how it will be implemented in the future.

Table 4

Research Study Budget

Account	Description	Budget
10-1070-111-000-00-25-000-00	Regular Salaries	$1,405.00
10-2271-122-000-00-25-000-00	Instructional Staff Development Services	$14,893.00
TOTAL		$16,298.00

In conclusion, the research study is being conducted to better understand what our teachers need from the administration to improve the quality of their instructional practices. By doing so, the researcher believes that this study will contribute to fostering

a more creative and rigorous learning environment for all students, with the final hope of increasing and applying the knowledge and skills from each course in which they are enrolled.

Research Design, Methods & Data Collection

Research Design

This study followed a mixed-methods research approach that utilized qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The qualitative data were collected through semi-structure interviews conducted with 14 participants (10 teachers and four administrators). The quantitative data collection was conducted through a Google Form survey distributed to all teachers and administrators in the secondary buildings. The goal was to discover the secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means to professional growth of instructional practices.

Methods

The principals' and the teachers' pre-intervention survey was distributed during the first semester of the 2020-2021school year. At the start of the second semester of the school year, the same surveys were administered to collect post-intervention data in order to gauge any change in teacher or administrator perceptions of the district Walkthrough Observation Tool. The principal surveys consisted of 13 closed-ended questions that produced quantitative data through responses on a 1-4 Likert-scale indicating participants' degree of agreement with the questions (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

The teacher surveys also consisted of 13 closed-ended questions that produced

quantitative data through responses based on the same 1-4 Likert-scale. Survey questions were based on perceptions regarding the Walkthrough Observation Tool that is utilized by the school district.

In an effort to gain additional data points, the researcher developed an interview protocol to guide the secondary principal and secondary teacher interviews. All four secondary principals and the 10 randomly selected teachers participated in a pre-intervention interview and a post-intervention interview as part of this action research study. The principals' and the teachers' pre-intervention interviews were completed during the first semester of the 2020-2021 school year, and then following the intervention, the principals' and teachers' post-intervention interviews were conducted at the start of the second semester. The principal interviews consisted of seven open-ended questions that produced qualitative data to reveal the participants' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. The teacher surveys consisted of 11 open-ended questions to gauge the participants' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool through their qualitative responses.

To triangulate the data, the researcher collected data through two methods, the quantitative pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys of the principals and teachers as well as qualitative data from the pre-intervention and post-intervention interviews. The data were analyzed to reveal themes from the secondary principals' and teachers' perceptions of the feedback provided by the district Walkthrough Observation Tool.

According to Danielson (2007), continuing professional growth is the mark of a professional educator and is never complete. Danielson's Growing and Developing Professionally framework is widely accepted as the "gold standard" for professional

growth for teachers and was utilized in this study as the framework to develop the interview and survey questions and to code the participants' responses. Danielson's (2007) rubric on Growing and Developing Professionally (Appendix J) was utilized during the data analysis to reveal the connections between the district Walkthrough Observation Tool and professional growth. Utilizing the Danielson rubric provided the opportunity to examine "how people learn and make sense of themselves and others" (Berg, 2009, p.8). According to Danielson (2007), three components or growing and developing professionally are enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill, receptivity to feedback from colleagues, and service to the profession. Data from each survey and interview were organized, categorized, and coded according to the three elements of Danielson's rubric. Then, the coded data were analyzed in relation to the use of the district Walkthrough Observation Tool to identify the relationship between the tool and the secondary principals and teachers' professional growth.

Data Collection

Once the Institutional Review Board approved the study to allow human subjects to participate, the researcher distributed the approved survey, along with the consent to participate statement that was submitted with the Institutional Review Board request, and applied the procedures to collect the data that were stated on the timeline and the Institutional Review Board request for approval form.

As stated in the IRB approval, the researcher was responsible to offer a survey that provided an equal opportunity for secondary teachers and principals to voluntarily participate in this study. The researcher created the pre- and post-intervention surveys in Google Forms and electronically sent them out to all secondary teachers and principals.

The Google Form included the informed consent information along with the survey questions to collect the quantitative data from volunteers who self-selected to participate in the study. In an effort to reduce anxiety to the eligible volunteers, it was clearly stated that participation was strictly voluntarily, survey responses would be kept anonymous, and results would not be shared outside of this study. Each eligible participant was afforded the time and opportunity to seek any clarification from the researcher pertaining to the study. The researcher also communicated that any participant would be provided a copy of the study upon completion.

Each survey question was a Likert-scale item that asked participants to rank their degree of agreement, from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The same survey was administered before the intervention and again after. The pre- and post-responses to each question were combined and examined by the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool.

The researcher sent out the survey on September 9, 2020 and allowed all secondary teaching staff and administrators one week to voluntarily participate in the survey. At the end of each week, a reminder was sent via email to all secondary teachers and principals requesting that they complete the survey if they desired to participate in the study. Of the possible 109 eligible teacher and principal participants, only 36 or 33% elected to complete the survey. The survey was closed on September 16, 2020.

Once the pre-intervention survey window closed, the researcher randomly selected 10 teachers who completed the survey and all four principals who would serve as the study's sample. The survey and interview data from only these 14 participants are included in this study. Pre-intervention interviews were scheduled with these 10 teacher

participants and all four principals. Between September and October 2020, each participant completed an interview that was recorded by audio to ensure accurate responses.

To collect the post-intervention data, the same process was utilized by the researcher. The researcher sent the 10 secondary teacher participants and the four principal participants the post-intervention survey on January 20, 2021. The post-intervention surveys remained open for completion until February 4, 2021. Once the participants completed their survey, post-intervention interviews were scheduled and conducted. The post-intervention interviews occurred in the month of February 2021.

To ensure that all data were collected in an organized manner, a Google Sheet was created to record each participant's responses. The Google Form and the Google Sheet was selected as the tools to collect and compile the data based on these tools' convenience and organization to enable the researcher to analyze accurate data. The reliability and versatility of the Google Sheet ensured that the data were protected while allowing the researcher the flexibility to organize data effectively to determine themes and trends. The Google platform was selected for a variety of reasons. The first is that the researcher's school district is a Google Reference District, which is a certification that demonstrates excellence and leadership through the use of the Google platform and products. Thus, the researcher has access to the Google tools and is adept at using them. The second reason is that all participants are familiar with Google products, so the survey was developed using a user-friendly tool. The final reason is the ease of collecting, recording, and organizing accurate data results for the researcher. The analysis of the survey data provided answers to the study's problem statement and research questions,

enabling the researcher to develop an action plan moving forward.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study was the sample size. The results of this study have limited generalization surrounding the perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool to enhance professional growth of instructional practices compared to other populations. The next limitation was the location threat. The study's setting was a limitation based on the fact that all participants taught in the same district. In addition, teacher participants were evaluated by various principals, who may vary slightly in their use of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. These variations may impact teachers' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. The concluding limitation is the bias of the researcher toward the study. The researcher is employed as an administrator in the district where the study was conducted. To decrease the impact of this limitation, at all times the researcher has remained professional and respectful of the participants' opinions and made every effort to be objective in collecting and analyzing the data.

Timeline

The timeline listed below was implemented by the researcher to efficiently and effectively collect data for this research study.

- September 2020: Survey sent out to all secondary staff members requesting participation. Participants were randomly selected.
- September 2020: Pre-intervention survey was administered. Pre-intervention survey data were organized.
- October 2020: Pre-intervention interviews were conducted. Pre-intervention survey data were organized.

- November 2020-January 2021: Pre-intervention survey data were analyzed. Pre-intervention interview data were analyzed.
- January 2021-February 2021: Post-intervention survey was administered. Post-intervention survey data were organized.
- February 2021-March 2021: Post-intervention interviews were conducted. Post-intervention survey data was organized.
- March 2021-April 2021: Post-intervention survey was analyzed. Post-intervention interview data were analyzed.

Ethical Concerns and Institutional Review Board

Because this research project involved human subjects, the Instructional Review Board's approval was needed prior to the start of the project. On June 18, 2020, a final proposal for the research plan was submitted to the researcher's Doctoral Capstone Committee for review and approval. Once the plan was approved, the Instructional Review Board application was completed.

On July 27, 2020, the researcher submitted, by email, the Instructional Review Board request forms to the Instructional Review Board for approval. On August 26, 2020, the researcher received notification that the proposal had been accepted by the Instructional Review Board and that the application to conduct the research study was approved. The researcher was notified that the research must be submitted by August 25, 2021.

To protect participants from ethical violations, an informed consent statement was included with the pre-intervention surveys. The informed consent allowed participants to choose whether to participate in the study voluntarily, permitted them to withdraw from

the study at any time, and ensured anonymity of survey results and confidentiality of interview responses. Survey responses were submitted electronically without any identifying information, and interview participants were assigned a code to keep their identities confidential.

Validity

In an effort to promote validity and trustworthiness to the research, the researcher has implemented multiple strategies. With the research being conducted between the researcher and his colleagues, the school district secondary teachers and principals, an anonymous survey format was chosen so that all participants would feel comfortable in providing honest, open responses that were not influenced by the researcher or any other member of the school district.

The pre- and post-intervention surveys for teachers and principals that were utilized in the study were vetted through multiple avenues prior to being sent out to the participants. To start the vetting process, the researcher discussed and presented the survey to the school district's central administration staff.

Next, the researcher reviewed the survey with the Internal Doctoral Capstone Committee member. Finally, the survey was vetted through the researcher's Doctoral Capstone Committee to ensure that the statements and questions used were not misleading and did not contain researcher bias.

To ensure the credibility of the study, the researcher did not directly collect or the record the quantitative data. In an effort to ensure accurate and honest data, the survey was administered electronically through a Google Form. Doing so eliminated any errors in documenting or recording of the data to ensure accurate responses. For the qualitative

interviews, the researcher was directly involved in conducting the interviews but took steps to ensure accurate and unbiased interviews. Specifically, the researcher utilized a set of structured interview questions for accuracy. When analyzing the interview data, the researcher carefully analyzed only what the interviewees said and did not impose his interpretations of what they may have meant.

The data collected triangulated using four methods: pre-intervention survey data, post-intervention survey data, pre-intervention interview data and post-intervention interview data of the principals and teachers. These data points provided an in-depth review of the perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool. Within these points, the researcher was able to determine the relationships between the principals' and teachers' perceptions. The results of this study intended to inform improvement efforts to enhance the district Walkthrough Observation Tool and opportunities for professional growth of teachers and principals.

Summary

This action research study explored the secondary teacher's and the secondary principals' perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool in an effort to improve instructional practices. The mixed-methods study focused on identifying the gaps that exist between the secondary teachers' perceptions and the secondary principals' perceptions of the feedback provided by the tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional strategies. The quantitative and qualitative data were coded and analyzed for themes. The goal was to gather accurate perception data and utilize effective analysis techniques to draw conclusions, suggest common themes, and find connections to inform continuous improvement.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis and Results

This chapter will consist of the analysis of the results obtained from this mixed-methods action research study. The data were collected from the surveys and interviews of principals and teachers. The quantitative survey data were collected from a Likert rating scale for 10 questions for the secondary principals' survey (Appendix E) and secondary teachers' survey (Appendix F). These 10 items asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with statements about the walkthrough observation tool to improve professional growth. The qualitative interview data were gained from the secondary principals answering seven open-ended interview questions and the secondary teachers responding to 11 questions. The questions gathered the participants' perceptions of how the walkthrough observation tool has improved professional growth and requested feedback for the school district to develop an action plan to improve the walkthrough observation tool to assist in professional growth.

The data analysis was completed methodically by analyzing each survey question and interview responses to identify common themes. All quantitative results will be presented in tables. The qualitative data have been summarized in a narrative form to describe the common themes that have emerged. At the completion of the data analysis, the findings were utilized to answer each of the research questions that guided this action research study.

Data Collection

As discussed in the methodology chapter, this action research study utilized a mixed-methods approach to collect the data. The data collected were geared toward each

participant's perception of how the walkthrough observation tool served as a means of professional growth. In an effort to collect meaningful data, the quantitative component utilized a Likert scale. The Likert scale comprised of four options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree to gather results. The four-point Likert scale was specifically used to gather each participant's true perception.

Two different sets of open-ended interview questions comprised the qualitative data collection. One set of questions guided the secondary principals' interviews (Appendix H) and a different set was used for the secondary teachers' interviews (Appendix I). The qualitative data collected were then coded to identify common themes. The open-ended questions allowed each participant to express their perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to gather strengths and areas of growth to continuously improve the walkthrough observation tool.

Possible Limitations with the Utilization of the Likert Scale

The researcher strategically implemented a four-point Likert scale for the quantitative data collection process. In doing so, the researcher understands that there may be limitations with the Likert Scale utilized for a variety of reasons. The first bias that may occur is that the participant is forced into selecting a specific response (strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree). The researcher felt that this would allow the participant to make a decision based on their true perception without having the option to pick a "neutral" middle selection. Next, a Google Form was utilized to collect the responses. The software interface for a multiple-choice question in Google Forms uses a vertical selection format compared to a traditional left to right format for a Likert scale question. This format could provide the opportunity for the participant to select a

category further up or down than they truly believed to represent their true perception. The final tendency that participants may have discovered through their completion of the survey was that their selections became repetitive, which would not allow them to fully and accurately express their true perception. This could lead to participants selecting responses known as social desirability effect (Miller, 2011). The effect of social desirability is when participants select responses based on what they perceive is the most desirable outcome.

Results

This section will present the results from the principal and teacher surveys and interviews. For survey results, tables display the results from each question, with the pre-intervention and post-intervention data presented in each table. In an effort to explain the data, each survey item is provided. Along with the data presented in tables is a narrative description of the results for each survey question. The data are explained from the secondary principals' perceptions first followed by the secondary teachers' perceptions.

In addition, the qualitative interview results are presented, organized in relation to each of the three research questions. The interview data collected have been analyzed and coded, from which three themes related to professional growth and development emerged, which correspond with the three elements of Danielson's (2007) Growing and Developing Professionally rubric. The first element is Enhancement of Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Skill. The second is Receptivity to Feedback from Colleagues. The final element is Service to the Profession. According to the Growing and Developing Professionally rubric by Danielson (2007), educators engaged in these three elements will continue to grow and develop in a professional manner. The data collected

from and suggestions provided by the sample population will heavily influence the district in its continued use of the walkthrough observation tool at the conclusion of this action research study.

It is important to note that, as the research was conducted in the 2020-2021 school year, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a prolonged period of time providing remote instruction to students. At the time of the pre-intervention data collection, in September 2020, the secondary buildings were operating fully remotely. In January 2021, when the post-intervention survey was distributed, a hybrid model was in place. As the district's walkthrough observation tool was created to provide feedback on in-person instruction, the shift in instructional delivery and the numerous challenges of the school year may have impacted principals' ability to conduct walkthrough observations as well as both administrators and teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool.

Survey Results

Tables 5-15 present the principal participants' survey responses, categorized by survey item. Following the presentation of principal data are survey responses from teachers, in Tables 16-25.

Principal Responses

The data in Table 5 reflect the secondary principal responses to survey item 1, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "Since the walkthrough observation tool was implemented last year, new instructional practices have been shared with the teachers." The pre-intervention data reflect that 25% strongly agreed and 75% agree that the secondary teachers have implemented new instructional strategies based on feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-

intervention data reflect that 100% agreed. The results indicate that principals perceive the walkthrough observation tool as having a positive impact on the implementation of new instructional strategies.

Table 5

Implementation of New Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%

The data in Table 6 reflect the secondary principal responses to survey item 2, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool provides impactful instructional feedback." The pre-intervention data reflects that o100% agreed that the secondary teachers have implemented new instructional strategies based on feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data reflect that 75% agreed and 25% disagreed. The results indicate that secondary principals perceive the walkthrough observation tool's feedback having a positive impact on instructional practices.

Table 6

The Impact of Feedback from the Walkthrough Observation Tool

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	75%	25%	0%

The data in Table 7 reflect the secondary principal responses to survey item 3,

which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, “The walkthrough observation tool is meaningful towards teacher professional growth.” The pre-intervention data indicate that 100% agree that the secondary teachers have professionally grown based on feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data reflect 25% strongly agree and 75% agree. The results conclude that secondary principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has a positive influence on a secondary teachers’ professional growth.

Table 7

Meaningful Teacher Professional Growth

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

The data in Table 8 present the secondary principal responses to survey item 4, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, “The walkthrough observation tool provides feedback to improve assessments.” The pre-intervention data indicate that 75% agree and 25% disagree that secondary teachers have improved assessments based on feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data reflect 25% strongly agree, 50% agree, and 25% disagree. The results conclude that most principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed the secondary teachers to improve their assessments.

Table 8

Improving Assessments from Walkthrough Observation Tool

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	75%	25%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	50%	25%	0%

The data in Table 9 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 5, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "Since utilizing the walkthrough observation tool, more meaningful learning goals have been created by the teachers." The pre-intervention data reflect that 100% or principals surveyed agree that the secondary teachers have created more meaningful learning goals based of feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data did not change, also reflecting 100% agreement. The results conclude that secondary principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed the secondary teachers to develop more meaningful learning goals.

Table 9

Improvement of Learning Goals

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%

The data in Table 10 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 6, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, The learning goals and learning activities are better aligned based off of the walkthrough observation

tool feedback." The pre-intervention data reflect that 100% agree that principals perceive the secondary teachers as having better aligned learning goals and learning activities based on feedback provided by the Walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data reflect one participant (25%) strongly agrees and 75% agree. The results conclude that principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed the secondary teachers to better align the learning goals to the learning activities.

Table 10

Alignment of Learning Goals and Learning Activities

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

The data in Table 11 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 7, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The strengths and weaknesses identified on teacher walkthroughs have allowed you improve instructional practices for teachers." The pre-intervention data reflect that 100% agree that the walkthrough observation tool identifies strengths and weaknesses of the secondary teachers, allowing principals to improve instructional practices. The post-intervention data indicate that one principal (25%) strongly agrees and 75% agree. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed the secondary principals to gain a better understanding of the secondary teachers' strengths and weaknesses to improve instructional practices.

Table 11

Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

The data in Table 12 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 8, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool feedback is used to plan future PLC meetings." The pre-intervention data reflect that 50% agree and 50% disagree that future PLC planning is based on feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. The post-intervention data reflect 25% agree and 75% disagree. The results conclude that with few exceptions, the walkthrough observation tool feedback has not allowed the secondary principals to better plan future PLC meetings.

Table 12

Planning of PLC Meetings

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	50%	50%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	25%	75%	0%

The data in Table 13 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 9, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The feedback that you get from the walkthrough observation tool is valuable." The pre-intervention data reflect that 100% agree that the feedback received from the walkthrough observation

tool is valuable. The post-intervention data remained the same, also reflecting 100% agreement. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed the secondary principals to gain a better understanding of the secondary teachers' strengths and weaknesses to improve instructional practices.

Table 13

Feedback Data as a Valuable Tool

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%

The data in Table 14 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 10, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The instructional practices that you observe are related to feedback received through the walkthrough observation tool." The pre-intervention data reflect that 100% agree that the instructional practices that are observed reflect the feedback that was received. The post-intervention data reflect 25% strongly agree and 75% agree. The results conclude that the principals perceive that instructional practice reflects walkthrough observation tool feedback.

Table 14

Observation of Instructional Practices Related to Feedback

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

Finally, the data in Table 15 display the secondary principal responses to survey item 11, which asked participants for their degree of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool has improved instructional practices throughout the building." The pre-intervention data reflect that 25% strongly agree and 75% percent agree that the building-wide instructional practices have improved. The post-intervention data reflect 100% agree. The results conclude that principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has improved the instructional practices building-wide.

Table 15

Improvement of Building Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%

Teacher Responses

The data in Table 16 present the secondary teachers' responses to the first survey item, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "Since the walkthrough observation tool was implemented last year, you gained new instructional strategies to apply to your daily instructional practices." The pre-intervention data reflect that 10% of teachers strongly agree, 40% agree, and 50% disagree that they have applied new strategies to their daily instructional practices. The level of agreement increased slightly on the post-intervention survey, with 60% agreeing and 40% disagreeing. The results conclude that the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool resulted in new strategies applied to daily instruction for about half of the teachers surveyed.

Table 16

New Instructional Strategies Applied to Daily Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	40%	50%	0%
Post-Intervention	0	60%	40%	0%

The data in Table 17 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 2, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool provides impactful instructional feedback." The pre-intervention data reflect that 10% strongly agree, 70% agree, and 20% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool has provided impactful instructional feedback. The post-intervention data reflect 20% strongly agree, 50% agree, and 30% disagree that they have received impactful instructional feedback. The results conclude that most teachers surveyed perceive that the walkthrough observation tool has provided feedback that impacts instruction.

Table 17

Impactful Instructional Feedback Provided

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	20%	50%	30%	0%

The data in Table 18 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 3, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool is meaningful towards your professional growth." The pre-intervention data reflect that 90% agree and 10% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool has

meaningfully contributed to their professional growth. The post-intervention data reflect 10% strongly agree, 70% agree, and 20% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool is meaningful towards professional growth. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool has provided meaningful professional growth for a majority of the secondary teachers surveyed.

Table 18

Meaningful Professional Growth from the Walkthrough Observation Tool

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	90%	10%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

The data in Table 19 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 4, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool has provided feedback to improve assessments." The pre-intervention data reflect that 10% strongly agree, 40% agree, 40% disagree, and 10% strongly disagree that the walkthrough observation tool's feedback has led to improvement of assessments. The post-intervention data reflect 50% agree and 50% disagree that feedback has been used to improve assessments. The results conclude that the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool has helped half of the teachers surveyed to improve their assessments, while the other half did not find the feedback useful to impact assessments.

Table 19

Assessments Improved from Walkthrough Observation Tool Feedback

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	40%	40%	10%
Post-Intervention	0%	50%	50%	0%

The data in Table 20 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 5, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "Since utilizing the walkthrough observation tool, more meaningful learning goals have been created for the students." The pre-intervention data reflect that 80% agree and 20% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool has provided feedback to create more meaningful learning goals for the students. The level of agreement decreased on the post-intervention survey, with 20% strongly agreeing, 40% agreeing, and 40% disagreeing that the walkthrough observation tool has led to the creation of more meaningful learning goals for the students. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool has assisted most of the secondary teachers surveyed in generating more meaningful learning goals for the students, although fewer post-intervention than pre-intervention.

Table 20

Learning Goals Are More Meaningful

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	80%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	20%	40%	40%	0%

The data in Table 21 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 6,

which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, “The learning goals and learning activities are better aligned based off of the walkthrough observation tool feedback.” The pre-intervention data reflect that 30% strongly agree, 20% agree, and 50% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool’s feedback has better aligned the learning goals and student learning activities. The post-intervention data reflect a slight increase in agreement, with 60% agreeing and 40% disagreeing that the walkthrough observation tool has better aligned the learning goals with the learning activities. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool has improved alignment of the learning goals and learning activities for slightly over half of the secondary teachers.

Table 21

Alignment of Learning Activities and Learning Goals

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	30%	20%	50%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	60%	40%	0%

The data in Table 22 present the secondary teachers’ responses to survey item 7, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, “The strengths and weaknesses that have been identified on your walkthroughs have allowed you improve instructional practices.” The pre-intervention data reflect that 10% strongly agree, 70% agree, and 20% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool has identified strengths and weaknesses to improve instructional practices. The post-intervention data were identical: 10% strongly agree, 70% agree, and 20% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool has identified strengths and weaknesses to improve instructional practices. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool’s feedback has

identified strengths and weaknesses to improve instructional practices for a majority of secondary teachers surveyed.

Table 22

Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

The data in Table 23 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 8, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, "The walkthrough observation tool feedback is used to plan future lessons." The pre-intervention data reflect that 70% agree and 30% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool feedback is utilized to plan future lessons. The level of agreement decreased slightly on the post-intervention survey, as 60% agree and 40% disagree that the walkthrough observation tool feedback is utilized to plan future lessons. The results conclude that most of the secondary teachers surveyed use the walkthrough observation tool feedback to plan future lessons.

Table 23

Feedback Implemented to Plan Future Lessons

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	70%	30%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	60%	40%	0%

The data in Table 24 present the secondary teachers' responses to survey item 9,

which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, “The instructional practices that you apply are related to feedback received through the walkthrough observation tool. The pre-intervention data reflect that 70% of teachers surveyed agree and 30% disagree that the instructional practices they apply are related to the Walkthrough observation tool feedback. The post-intervention data reflect 60% agree and 40% disagree that their application of instructional practices is related to the Walkthrough observation tool feedback. The results conclude that most teachers surveyed have applied instructional practices based on feedback from the walkthrough observation tool.

Table 24

Feedback Applied to Future Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	70%	30%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	60%	40%	0%

The data in Table 25 present the secondary teachers’ responses to survey item 10, which assessed their level of agreement with the statement, “The walkthrough observation tool has allowed you to improve your instructional practices.” The pre-intervention data reflect that 10% strongly agree, 70% agree, and 20% disagree that instructional practices have improved from the Walkthrough observation tool feedback. There was no change on the post-intervention data, again with 10% strongly agreeing, 70% agreeing, and 20% of teachers disagreeing that they have improved their instructional practices from the walkthrough observation tool feedback. The results conclude that the walkthrough observation tool feedback has allowed most of the secondary teachers surveyed to improve their instructional practices.

Table 25

Improvement of Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

Interview Results Correlated to the Research Questions

Interview Responses Related to Research Question One

Q1. What are the perceptions of secondary teachers about the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a means of improving instructional practices?

The first research question focused on the perceptions of the secondary teachers about the walkthrough observation tool as a means of improving instructional practices. The purpose of the question was to identify ways that secondary teachers' professional growth was enhanced when their principals conducted walkthrough observations. The researcher used interview questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 to collect data for the first research question. The Growing and Developing Professionally rubric by Charlotte Danielson was used as the theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the secondary teachers' responses. Throughout the interviews, three themes from Danielson's framework emerged: enhancement of content knowledge, receptivity to feedback from colleagues, and service to the profession.

Theme 1: Enhancement of Content Knowledge. During the interview data analysis, the first theme to emerge was that the walkthrough observation tool enhanced their content knowledge. The majority of the participants spoke about how the walkthrough observation tool has assisted in their professional growth and development

as an educator, discussing how current professional development opportunities as well as professional learning topics suggested by administrators as part of the walkthrough feedback process have assisted in the growth of their content knowledge and pedagogical skill. One teacher spoke about the accountability to continuous professional growth that the walkthrough observation tool provides:

> "I think it does make you more aware and helps you to stay on target. I think it's just good to have some accountability in any job and in any task. It's good to have somebody alongside you to make sure that you're hitting your targets."

In relation to the research question, 70% percent of the participants' responses conveyed how the walkthrough observation tool has enhanced their content knowledge or pedagogical skills. In addition, the educators did report that they would seek out professional growth opportunities based on the walkthrough observation tool feedback.

Theme 2: Receptivity to Feedback. As the interview data were analyzed, a second theme emerged from the participants, that the walkthrough observation tool allowed educators to gain feedback from colleagues. Interview responses demonstrated that the secondary teachers sought feedback from both supervisors and colleagues during professional learning community time. What stood out was that this emerged through the educators' doing. Teachers' shared that the feedback seeking was done informally; however, the conversations and sharing of information was occurring. A sample answer that was provided by one of the participants was the following:

> "Typically, I ask them [my colleagues] what areas that they were strong in, and what areas they need to work on, and then ask them if they have any advice on what I can do. But it can also lead to further discussions of trying to find out new

ways to teach a concept or new ways to meet their learning needs. So, it can actually add to collaboration in the end."

Each of the participants stated that they believed that the walkthrough observation tool provides a framework to receive additional feedback from their colleagues. In addition, many of the participants welcomed the idea that visiting classrooms to view other teachers' instruction would be beneficial.

Theme 3: Service to the Profession. The third theme emerged from the participants' interview responses was that the walkthrough observation tool allowed for educators to mentor one another with professional growth and development, which is related to service to the profession, one of the elements of Danielson's (2007) Growing and Developing Professionally rubric. This rubric element includes contributing to a learning community and presenting and attending workshops and conferences. In their interviews, many teachers discussed that as the walkthroughs occur, the building principal is the observer providing feedback to the teachers. Then, throughout the school year, walkthrough observation data are collected and presented to staff as a professional development opportunity. For example, a teacher who is incorporating distinguished practices is asked to share a method or strategy during professional learning community time. One such teacher shared how this practice has been beneficial to continuous teacher learning:

"All the time. I am consistently asked to share something in a PLC that they informally seen or even formally seen through an observation. But I am always asked, 'Do you mind sharing this or what you've done here?' The furniture in my room actually came from an observation comment. So, once that came around and

> the need to get students collaborating and stuff – it got everybody talking and me talking to other people about how I use that furniture now versus how not having them together, or having them not in pairs, or in my case – it was groups of four. How having them separated in Math was really doing kind of a disservice to them."

The interview questions 1 through 6 were developed to gain an understanding of the connection related to the walkthrough observation tool and the educators' professional growth educators. The majority of the secondary teachers' responses related to themes of enhancement of content knowledge, receptivity to feedback and service to the profession as a means to professional growth from the walkthrough observation tool.

Interview Responses Related to Research Question Two

Q2. What are the perceptions of the secondary principals about the walkthrough observation tool as a means of improving instructional practices?

The second research question focused on the perceptions of the secondary principals on the walkthrough observation tool in connection with improving instructional practices of secondary teachers. The researcher used the secondary principal interview questions 5, 6, and 7 to collect data for the second research question. Similarly, to the analysis of teacher interview data, the Growing and Developing Professionally rubric by Charlotte Danielson was the conceptual framework used to guide the analysis of the secondary principal interview responses. The objective of the research question was to discover principals' perceptions of how the walkthrough observation tool enhances the professional growth of the secondary teachers. Throughout the interviews, three themes of Charlotte Danielson's framework on Growing and Developing

Professionally emerged. The themes were enhancement of content knowledge, receptivity to feedback from colleagues, and service to the profession.

Theme 1: Enhancement of Content Knowledge. As the principal interview data were analyzed, first theme to emerge from the principal participants as the walkthrough observation tool provides feedback that can lead to enhancing the content knowledge and pedagogical skills of the secondary teachers. All four principals shared that the walkthrough observation tool provided an opportunity for professional conversations to occur. In addition, principals discussed how the data collection promoted professional growth opportunities through those professional conversations, whether they are teacher-teacher or teacher-principal conversations. A sample answer that was provided by one of the participants was the following:

> "I really feel the tool itself is a great springboard as it gives the teachers a common understanding what we're looking for. It gives us as administrators across the entire district a common look-for, but we have to be consistent. Even between my assistant principal and myself, we have some inconsistencies, and that's why we've been doing a lot of joint walkthroughs for that interrater reliability. But, like I said earlier, it's more so about those conversations. It's about once you give that feedback, whether it's positive or an opportunity for improvement, it's about what's the teacher doing and how am I as an instructional leader pushing them, providing them some feedback, providing them examples, and continue to help them grow as educators."

Each of the secondary principals stated that they perceived the walkthrough observation tool as valuable to provide secondary teachers with opportunities for professional growth.

Administrators at the secondary level view the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool as valuable in the district's goal of enhancing teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Theme 2: Receptivity to Feedback. As the principal interview data were analyzed, the second theme that emerged was the walkthrough observation tool provided an avenue for feedback from administrators and colleagues through professional conversations. The secondary principals indicated that the secondary teachers are moving in the direction of seeking out feedback from their supervisor and colleagues following walkthrough observations. One of the principals stated:

> "Some of our other teachers, though, I would say that are a bit more seasoned – they are engaging as well. As we provide feedback and provide that tangible example like I talked about earlier. I know sometimes they want more. And the other pieces – it's been a little bit beautiful in this building, and it's not fantastic yet, but it's good that we have teachers now that are getting that resource from us, and they're digging deeper themselves. And they're sharing with their colleagues and PLCs, which is pretty powerful. So, we see a behavioral change in that capacity as well. But again, it's not where I'd love it to be, but it's definitely an improvement."

All of the secondary principal participants believed that the walkthrough observation tool has allowed the secondary teachers to receive feedback from their colleagues. While this practice may not be occurring with all teachers, principals see movement towards the middle school and high school buildings becoming true learning communities in which teachers seek feedback on their practices from colleagues and supervisors to enhance

their instruction and impact student learning. Principals see the walkthrough observation tool as an important piece of the learning community.

Theme 3: Service to the Profession. The third theme that emerged from the principal interviews was related to the service to the profession element of Danielson's (2007) rubric for Growing and Developing Professionally. The secondary principals indicated that the walkthrough observation tool data have been vital in planning professional development opportunities for their teachers. Additionally, the principals emphasized that the walkthrough observation tool has allowed for professional conversations to occur that promoted secondary teachers to assist their colleagues. Specifically, the secondary principals indicated that they would encourage teachers utilizing best practices to showcase their skills at professional learning community meetings. One participant shared the following:

> "Yeah, as in I think, again, examples being provided to teachers – being mindful like highlighting some teachers' efforts where they have strengths in certain areas of the walkthrough model, how they're doing it, how they venture out of the faculty meeting or a PLC in an effort to spark some of that conversation and collegiality between colleagues. So, I think given the fact that I'm not sharing the direct feedback in the form – but highlighting the positives, making sure the staff member is comfortable, and then having them as an avenue to their colleagues share out any shares and the exemplar practices."

Principal interview questions 5 through 7 were data collection points for the secondary principals' perceptions of how the walkthrough observation tool supports their teachers' professional growth. The themes of enhancement of content knowledge,

receptivity to feedback and service to the profession as a means of professional growth emerged from the secondary principals' perspectives on the walkthrough observation tool's feedback.

Interview Responses Related to Research Question Three

Q3. What are the perceptions identified by secondary teachers and principals on how the Walkthrough Observation Tool can be improved to promote growth of instructional practice?

The third research question focused on the connection between the walkthrough observation tool and Danielson's (2007) rubric for Growing and Developing Professionally. The secondary principal and secondary teacher interview questions were utilized to discover principal and teacher perceptions. Responses once again fell within three themes from Charlotte Danielson's rubric on Growing and Developing Professionally: enhancement of content knowledge, receptivity to feedback from colleagues, and service to the profession.

In addition to coding participant responses in relation to the three themes, the researcher also aligned participant responses with the Danielson rubric's four proficiency levels: distinguished, proficient, basic, and unsatisfactory. Doing so gained additional insight into how the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool impacts teachers' professional growth in the areas of enhancement of content knowledge, receptivity to feedback, and service to the profession. Presented in the sections that follow are the participant interview responses, followed by the rubric alignment, for each theme.

It was discovered that the majority of secondary teachers provided a response that they perceived their enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skills to be

related to the proficient domain of the Danielson rubric. Of the ten total responses, eight secondary teachers responded with an answer that met the proficient domain or above. Of the total responses, two met the criteria for distinguished and two responses were categorized in the basic domain. The second theme of receptivity to feedback also emerged. During the data analysis of the second theme, the research revealed that nine of the ten secondary teacher responses met the criteria for proficient or higher. Of the total responses, two met the criteria for distinguished, and one met the criteria for basic. The final theme of service to the profession was met with nine of the ten teacher responses in the proficient or higher domain. The one secondary teacher response that did not meet this proficient or higher domain was an unsatisfactory response. The data to support this data analysis is listed in the table below (Table 26 and 27).

Theme 1: Enhancement of Content Knowledge. As the secondary teacher interview data were analyzed, the first theme to emerge from the interview results was that the walkthrough observation tool enhanced teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills. A number of teachers indicated that the walkthrough observation tool's feedback provided an opportunity for professional development to increase the content knowledge and instructional practices. These responses promoted the concept of using data from the walkthrough observation tool to seek professional development opportunities in order to increase their content knowledge and pedagogical skills and subsequently improve their instructional practices. A sample answer that was provided by one of the participants was the following:

> "As I've said before, my instructional practices – I do believe I'm much better as far as asking the deeper questions on a daily basis because that was pointed out to

> me in the walkthrough. My lesson plans are stronger because that's one of the other look-fors. They're looking at your written lesson plans as well. And they want to make sure they walk into your room that you're teaching what you said you were going to be teaching that day. Because back in the day, I'll be honest with you, if you weren't exactly where you were, it wasn't the biggest deal in the world. But now, it has helped. And I sit down every Friday afternoon and grid out my following week. So, I think through the walkthroughs, it has been easier to short-term plan."

When the interview responses were aligned with the proficiency levels in Danielson's rubric, eight of the 10 teacher responses met the criteria for proficient or distinguished. Those eight teacher responses revealed the walkthrough observation tool did allow for opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skills. One teacher responded how the feedback provided an opportunity to conduct make a systematic effort to conduct action research, a response which aligns with the distinguished level of Danielson's rubric. Two of the secondary teachers' responses revealed that the Walkthrough observation tool provided professional growth opportunities to a limited extent when it is convenient, a response that aligns to the basic level. Table 26 and table 27 presents summaries of participants' responses and their accompanying Growing and Developing Professionally rubric level.

Table 26

Theme 1: Enhancement of Knowledge - Teacher Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Teacher	Summary of Responses	Danielson Rubric Rating and Description
A	Presented at a state conference. The presentation topic developed through a walkthrough observation tool comment.	**Distinguished** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research.
B	Attends PLC meetings as they are required.	**Basic** Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.
C	I have a board filled with all of the skills that we have done and all of the different things we've read just in these nine weeks.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
D	I embrace the usage of technology. And during walkthroughs, they have seen my use of technology, and especially in the lab areas and so on, with AP chemistry. But I do know colleagues that have been using extensions and all this other stuff that have led to us having departmental PLCs because other people wanted to know how to use them.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
E	I had something in my walkthrough that was making me question what I do I discuss with a colleague how they deal with that particular situation.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
F	I had a walkthrough before that said that some of the students weren't as engaged in the	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out

	discussion as they could have been. So, I tried to find topics, even in French, that's more relatable to them to talk about.	opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
G	I think increasing the level of technology use. So, using the SAMR Model – going more from augmentation to modification, trying to make that jump. It's made me more aware of it and look for ways to do that through the lessons.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
H	I do when they are assigned.	**Basic** Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.
I	I have looked at adding and implementing technology and implementing engaging discussions.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
J	I think that it provides me with feedback, and I can take that feedback as I wish.	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.

Table 27

Theme 1: Enhancement of Knowledge - Principals Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Principal	Summary of Responses	Danielson Rubric Rating and Description
A	Absolutely. We're trying to constantly connect them with different pieces.	**Distinguished** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic

		effort to conduct action research.
C	I do have faculty members who, once we've given them feedback, will continue to dig, and then they'll come to us with information and say, "Hey, I understand what you're saying now."	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.
B	I'm not aware if they've gone outside of the district to look for professional development, but they have implemented the recommendations and requests that I put in there.	**Basic** Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited extent when they are convenient.
D	Yeah, I think we've had good meetings after walkthroughs where teachers have said, "I want to equip myself to do a little better in that area."	**Proficient** Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.

Theme 2: Receptivity to Feedback. The second emergent theme from the secondary teacher responses was that the walkthrough observation tool contributed to teachers' receptivity to feedback. According to Danielson's rubric, this theme indicates that the educator attempts to gain feedback on instructional practices from their colleagues and supervisors. One participant response that reflected this theme was the following:

> "Yes, I've been asked to share materials. I have a board filled with all of the skills that we have done and all of the different things we've read just in these nine weeks. And she was saying, 'I want to do that in my classroom.' It's a little thing the kids can see, too, and go, 'Oh, yeah. Yeah, I remember citing text evidence.' And so, unless you see it in action, even though somebody might say, 'Hey, will you share this and this and this with so-and-so?' 'Absolutely! Yes!' But until you

actually observe how it's used in the classroom, I'm not sure it always… And a lot of times, too, people do want to hear, Hey, 'I have something great to tell you.' It helps to build a collaborative working environment."

When the interview responses were aligned with the proficiency levels in Danielson's rubric, it was determined that nine of the ten secondary teacher responses met the proficient or higher level for receptivity to feedback. Of these nine responses, two met the criteria to be categorized as distinguished. One of the responses met the criteria for the basic level. Overall, most secondary teachers provided responses that suggest that the walkthrough observation tool provided an opportunity to gain insight and knowledge from colleagues. Table 28 and table 29 presents summaries of participants' responses and their accompanying Growing and Developing Professionally rubric level.

Table 28

Theme 2: Receptivity to Feedback - Teacher Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Teacher	Summary of responses	Danielson Rubric Rating and Description
A	To keep my instruction from becoming stale. And I think every year, there's another component that we're asked to focus on. So, it just builds onto what's already a really great classroom. I am always asked, "Do you mind sharing this or what you've done here?"	**Distinguished** Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.
B	I tend to ask that colleagues for advice. Even the administrators at times. I would be more vulnerable speaking to colleagues than administrators also.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
C	Outside of my department, discussions occur to teach various things – I do not always agree with the point of view, but I respect the conversation.	**Basic** Teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback on teaching performance from both supervisors and

		colleagues.
D	It might alert me to something, "Oh, yeah, I don't really do that either." So, that's something that I better… in case for the next time they come in and to see me.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
E	I made sure that my learning goals are there every day that they are meaningful, that they're measurable.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
F	If I see that a lesson maybe didn't go so well or didn't have the outcome that I thought, I don't keep doing it. I find seek feedback to help make the instruction better.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
G	Use conversation starters with other colleagues or administrators as to how to improve, or something that was good, and talk more about that and elaborate.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
H	I would just go ask them what they think about a certain idea that I have. But again, especially now, I mean, it's going to be a very short conversation.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
I	I would say just anything generally speaking towards the instruction implementation. And being able to use that feedback from another perspective and being able to modify for future lessons.	**Distinguished** Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.
J	I've never been asked to share anything with colleagues, but I'll be receptive to that. If anybody thought that I was doing something right, I wouldn't have a problem explaining to them what I do.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.

Table 29

Theme 2: Receptivity to Feedback - Principals Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Principal	Summary of responses	Danielson Rubric Rating and Description
A	To be honest, it's unique that most are very positive. We've had a lot of teachers thank both myself and the assistant principal for the instructional shift and instructional change because we are pretty relentless relative to that.	**Distinguished** Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.
B	I would say overwhelmingly positive. The majority certainly is and folks that maybe aren't as receptive to the feedback have asked for more information.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.
C	Typically, we have just a conversation about what I saw, what I liked, and especially if I have any concerns.	**Basic** Teacher accepts, with some reluctance, feedback on teaching performance from both supervisors and colleagues.
D	They will provide meaningful feedback to myself based on what they've done in there. Things that I may have not observed at the time of the walkthrough, they will clarify it for me.	**Proficient** Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues—either when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.

Theme 3: Service to the Profession. The third theme, service to the profession, according to Danielson rubric, indicates that the educator participates actively in assisting other educators. Nine of the 10 secondary teachers commented that they collaborate with colleagues in an effort to build the collective content and pedagogical knowledge of their department or of the faculty. One participants stated:

"My colleagues have been very collaborative with me; I find myself pretty good

with technology being that I'm on the twilight end of my career. But I've kept up with it, I utilize it, especially now more than ever. I embrace the usage of it. And during walkthroughs, they have seen my use of technology, and especially in the lab areas and so on, with AP chemistry. But I do know colleagues that have been using extensions that have led to us having departmental PLCs because other people wanted to know how to use them."

When the interview responses were aligned with the proficiency levels in Danielson's rubric, it was determined that nine of the ten secondary teacher responses met the proficient or higher level for receptivity to feedback, three of whom met the criteria for distinguished. One teacher's responses met the criteria for the unsatisfactory level. With that one exception, the secondary teacher participants overall perceived that the Walkthrough observation tool provided an opportunity to participate actively in assisting other educators or initiate important activities to contribute to the profession. Table 30 and Table 31 presents summaries of participants' responses and their accompanying Growing and Developing Professionally rubric level.

Table 30

Theme 3: Service to the Profession - Teacher Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Teacher	Summary of responses	Danielson Rubric Rating & Description
A	The furniture in my room actually came from an observation comment. So, once that came around and the need to get students collaborating and stuff – it got everybody talking and me talking to other people about how I use that furniture now versus how not having them together,	**Distinguished** Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.
B	Discussions with my colleagues from discipline to techniques to the latest technology to how they're implementing and	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other

	new policies	educators.
C	I've been asked to share materials; I have a student-teacher.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
D	I got one about questioning techniques and practices. So, after I got that comment on the walkthrough – I went and did do a little research about different questioning practices and which ones are most effective.	**Distinguished** Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.
E	I've pushed myself to improve because I think that's the kind of person that I am. I have shared information at PLC of strategies that I have researched.	**Distinguished** Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.
F	I look for people that are utilizing technology and utilizing and I know implementing rigor into their curriculum. I would go to them and say, "Hey, what are you doing? What are you doing to get both the kids at home and in the classroom engaged and excited feedback in this way?" I think you know who those people are, and I would seek out advice.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
G	In the hallways in between classes, and before the day starts, the end of the day but just very informally to help each other out with ideas and lessons.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
H	I have had student teachers who I have worked with in the past.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
I	As the department head, I share new ideas, strategies and articles with the department.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
J	I don't really talk to my colleagues that much.	**Unsatisfactory** Teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.

Table 31

Theme 3: Service to the Profession - Principals Perceptions Aligned with Danielson Rubric

Principal	Summary of responses	Danielson Rubric Rating & Description
A	Absolutely…..I've actually a couple of teacher-leaders that have stepped up and looked at SAMR relative to examples that can be implemented at a 7-8 building.	**Distinguished** Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.
B	A lot of feedback we were getting from teachers was that they wanted to share resources, online resources during the pandemic.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
C	More of a building-based initiative in an effort to have shared ownership of our data, and have shared ownership in taking responsibility in closing some of these gaps for our students.	**Proficient** Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.
D	And they're sharing with their colleagues and PLCs, which is pretty powerful. So, we see a behavioral change in that capacity as well.	**Distinguished** Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.

Overall, the secondary teachers demonstrated that they appreciate the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool, as it provides a focus for their professional growth. The interview results that were shared provide evidence of the participants' willingness and eagerness to grow and develop as professionals in the areas from Danielson's rubric that emerged as themes.

Summary

In conclusion, in this chapter the researcher provided data that were collected from the secondary principal and secondary teacher participants. The qualitative interview data and quantitative survey data provided the researcher with participants'

perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth. The responses were collected and coded into themes according to Danielson's (2007) rubric for Growing and Developing Professionally. The three themes that emerged from this action research study are Enhancement of Content Knowledge, Receptivity to Feedback and Service to the Profession. The majority of teachers believe the feedback received from the walkthrough observation tool has enhanced their professional growth. It was determined that the majority of secondary teachers' and secondary principals' perceive that the walkthrough observation tool enhances professional growth and empowers teachers to strengthen their instructional practices.

Moving forward, the research questions can be assessed further in an effort to provide conclusions and recommendations in relation to the action research. The next chapter will reflect on the data analysis information. The information will determine conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the adjustments needed for the Walkthrough Observation Tool.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

The intention of this action research study was to determine one western Pennsylvania school district's secondary principals' and secondary teachers' perceptions of the district's walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices. The focus was on the secondary teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool, the perceptions of the secondary principals of the walkthrough observation tool, as well as the areas identified from all participants to improve the walkthrough observation tool for the district.

The district applies a student-centered approach to continuously improve student achievement and academic rigor, while being fiscally responsible by keeping the creation and improvement of the walkthrough observation tool in-house rather than paying an outsourced contractor. In an effort to continuously improve, the researcher believes that it is imperative to gain feedback on the processes that are utilized throughout the district. The researcher believes that the results of this action research study will enhance opportunities as a school district to provide students with effective instructional practices that will increase academic rigor and result in improved student performance.

In this chapter, the conclusion about the effectiveness of the intervention will be presented, along with limitations of the study that may have had an impact of the findings and recommendations for future research. In addition, the chapter will demonstrate how the research questions, the review of literature, and the methodology relate to the perceptions of the secondary principal and secondary teacher participants' use of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth that aims to improve

instructional practices.

This action research study utilized a mixed-methods approach to determine the participants' perceptions on the use of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practice. By utilizing this approach, the researcher was provided the opportunity to determine "how people learn and make sense of themselves and others" (Berg, 2009, p. 8). The goal of this approach by the researcher was to gather data from a quantitative perspective as well as a qualitative perspective to gain a deep understanding of participant's perspectives. The combination of survey and interview data not only allowed multiple data sources to be collected but also promoted detailed interpersonal responses from the participants and the researcher. The researcher attentively considered the three research questions in addition to the previous literature to establish the importance of the collected data.

The following action research questions guided this study.

1. What are the perceptions of secondary teachers about the walkthrough observation tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
2. What are the perceptions of the secondary principals about the walkthrough observation tool as a means of improving instructional practices?
3. What are the perceptions identified by secondary teachers and principals on how the walkthrough observation tool can be improved to promote growth of instructional practice?

Conclusions

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of secondary teachers about the Walkthrough Observation Tool

as a means of improving instructional practices?

The purpose of question 1 was to determine to the secondary teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool to improve instructional practice. At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, the district that served as the site for this study developed a new districtwide walkthrough observation tool for observations of all teachers. As this walkthrough observation tool was implemented in its first two years, it was important to the researcher, a secondary administrator in the district, to gather administrator and teacher perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as way to improve the tool. Additionally, administrators with the goal of continuously growing their teachers' professional skills must understand their teachers' perceptions of the feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool. To effectively engage the secondary teacher in the growing and developing process, it must be understood how they view the data that they are reviewing. Without the buy in from the secondary teachers to grow, the data they receive may not be as meaningful.

To collect data on the teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices, all secondary teachers were invited to complete a pre-intervention survey. Ten respondents were randomly selected for pre-intervention interviews. These 10 teachers comprised the teacher sample used for this study. After the intervention, which was being observed by a building-level administrator using the walkthrough observation tool, the 10 teachers completed a post-intervention survey and post-intervention interview. The findings of the data analysis revealed that the majority of secondary teachers perceived the walkthrough

observation tool as meaningful to enhance their professional growth and strengthen their instructional practices.

Throughout this process, the researcher was able to identify areas identified by the teachers that are stronger than others. The data revealed that teachers perceived the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool as impactful to enhance professional growth and pedagogical skills. The survey data supports that that the secondary teachers feel that the walkthrough observation tool's feedback enhances their content knowledge and pedagogical skill in the following areas:

- More meaningful professional growth (Table 32)
- Creating meaningful learning goals (Table 33)
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses (Table 34)
- Improving their overall instructional practices (Table 35).

Table 32

Meaningful Professional Growth from the Walkthrough Observation Tool

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	90%	10%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

Table 33

Learning Goals Are More Meaningful

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	80%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	20%	40%	40%	0%

Table 34

Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

Table 35

Improvement of Instructional Practices

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%
Post-Intervention	10%	70%	20%	0%

The weaker areas, i.e., the areas with a lower percentage of teacher agreement on the survey, allowed an opportunity for administrators to discuss improvements to the walkthrough observation tool at the district level. The area identified the most as an opportunity to grow was feedback on assessments. The data reflected that only 50% of the secondary teachers believe that walkthrough observation tool has provided the opportunity for feedback to improve their classroom assessments.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of the secondary principals about the walkthrough observation tool as a means of improving instructional practices?

The purpose of this research question was to determine the perceptions of the secondary principals of the Walkthrough Observation Tool and its impact on improving teacher instructional practices in their building. Throughout the review of literature, a common theme was teacher receptivity of walkthrough observation feedback from the

supervisor. The results of this research allowed the researcher to determine and analyze the secondary principals' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool and how its feedback has affected instructional practices in the junior high and high school buildings. All four principals from these two buildings agreed to participate, and initially completed a pre-intervention survey and interview. Then, after several months of conducting walkthrough observations using the walkthrough observation tool, participated in a post-intervention survey and interview.

Overall, the secondary principals' perceptions of how the Walkthrough Observation Tool has served as a means of improving instructional practices within the secondary buildings were very positive. Through data analysis, it was very clear that the secondary principals perceived that the feedback from the walkthrough observation tool was improving the instructional practices within the building. The secondary principals' survey data revealed that the feedback provided has enhanced the following instructional practices:

- Improved learning goals (Table 36)
- More meaningful professional growth opportunities (Table 37)
- Increased alignment of learning goals to the learning activities (Table 38)
- Identification of strengths and areas of improvement (Table 39)

Table 36

Improvement of Learning Goals

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table 37

Meaningful Teacher Professional Growth

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

Table 38

Alignment of Learning Goals and Learning Activities

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

Table 39

Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Pre-Intervention	0%	100%	0%	0%
Post-Intervention	25%	75%	0%	0%

In addition to the improved instructional practices indicated in Tables 36-39, secondary principals perceived that their teachers' receptivity to feedback and service to the profession had also improved through informal conversations between the secondary teachers and secondary principals following walkthrough observations. The literature asserted that conversations about professional practice occurring within the building was a display of effectiveness of the walkthrough observation method.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions identified by secondary teachers and principals on how the walkthrough observation tool can be improved to promote growth of instructional practice?

The purpose of this research question was to determine the perceptions of the secondary teachers and principals of the walkthrough observation tool that can be used to improve the tool and allow its feedback to continuously improve instructional practices. In order for the walkthrough observation tool feedback to make a positive change in teachers' instructional practices and allow the secondary principals to provide more meaningful feedback, the tool's strengths and weaknesses must be determined.

From the secondary teachers' survey and interview responses, the first point that emerged as an area of improvement to the walkthrough observation tool was feedback to improve secondary teachers' assessments. Only half of the teacher participants believed that their assessments have improved through the walkthrough observation tool feedback. This is an area that the district will need to address in an effort to improve the walkthrough observation tool.

Additionally, secondary teacher data revealed that teachers do not apply the walkthrough observation tool feedback to their daily instruction and planning for future lessons. Though the data support this area of improvement for the secondary principals, the data also suggest a willingness of the secondary teachers to improve their instructional practices to enhance their students' learning experiences. District leadership can examine the extent to which the walkthrough observation tool provides feedback on

routine instructional practices and make adjustments as necessary so that teachers feel compelled to employ the tool's feedback to their daily planning and teaching.

Interestingly enough, the data analysis revealed a common theme among secondary principals of the need to better use the walkthrough observation tool to plan professional learning communities for the secondary teachers. The responses clearly indicated that the secondary principals perceive that the walkthrough observation tool's data are underutilized for planning professional learning and can better assist with planning future professional learning communities. Both teacher and principal responses suggest that an area of need in the secondary buildings is more meaningful professional learning communities, and, based on secondary teacher responses, a place to begin is with PLCs that focus on effective lesson planning and assessment practices. PLCs that directly align with areas of need identified in walkthrough observations increases teacher engagement in meaningful professional learning that directly improves their instructional practice.

These findings present an opportunity for increased collaboration and communication in two respects: (a) between secondary principals and teachers, and (b) among the faculty members. First, a collaborative effort of principals and teachers working together to modify the walkthrough observation tool will result in positive changes to the tool, building teacher buy-in and ultimately impacting instructional practices. Applying a team approach will give the secondary teachers a voice in the growth process of not only themselves but also the school district as a whole. Second, allowing teachers to examine feedback from their walkthrough observations and join PLCs based on their areas of professional growth will result in increased

communication and collaboration among the faculty. These collaborative efforts provide a collective approach to improving instructional practices through meaningful data from the walkthrough observation tool.

Financial Implications

The complete budget for this action research study was $16,298. The total budget amount consisted of indirect costs, including the principals' and teachers' salaries for the time to complete the survey and participating in planning future professional development related to the findings of this action research study. The future professional development that the secondary teachers may participate in planning are in-service sessions on instructional practices and analyzing walkthrough observation feedback to continue to grow professionally. In addition, the budget included time allotted for the secondary principals to plan more meaningful PLCs to promote teacher growth. Fulfilling these recommendations will happen within the regular work day, so there will not be any direct costs to the district. The budget amount reflects the teachers' and principals' salary and benefits provided by the school district for the estimated amount of time spent participating in the study.

Limitations

During this action research study, several limitations may have influenced the interpretation of findings. The first limitation that could be have impacted the findings was the setting in which the walkthroughs were conducted. This study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the district was fluctuating between fully remote and hybrid instructional models. A fully remote learning environment refers to instruction being delivered from teachers to students physically separated by distance through

asynchronous and synchronous models. Asynchronous instruction provides learning materials and content for students to work through at their own pace. The teacher provides the instruction through a communication tool such as a learning management system and the students complete the tasks provided. Synchronous instruction occurs live, requiring that teachers and students join a videoconference simultaneously, during which the teacher provides students instruction in real time. The district in which this action research study was conducted utilized Google Classroom to house remote instructional content and Google Meet as the videoconference tool for synchronous instruction.

During the hybrid instructional model, in order to decrease the number of students physically present in school at any time, half of the students were present in school two days per week (for example, Mondays and Tuesdays), with the second half of the students attending school remotely by joining their teachers and classmates synchronously. Then on Thursdays and Fridays, the students who had attended remotely on Monday and Tuesday were present in school while the other half received synchronous remote instruction. Wednesdays were fully remote days for all students.

Principals conducted walkthrough observations when teachers were simultaneously teaching students physically present in the classroom as well as remote students. This was determined to be a limitation that potentially impacted teachers' perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool feedback, based on the learning environment and the number of challenges that teachers and students experienced during this time.

A second limitation to the action research study was the sample size and the

number of walkthrough observations that a participating teacher received. The small sample size of 10 teachers and four principals limits the generalizability of the results, Additionally, due to the challenges of operating schools and teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, principals did not conduct as many walkthrough observations as they would have in a typical school year. Having a teacher provide their perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool based on a minimal number of walkthrough observations could have an impact on their perceptions of the tool and its feedback as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices.

Another limitation that has potential to affect the action research study is the human bias factor. It is important to recognize that participants may not have provided complete and accurate feedback. Participant bias, when participants respond based on what they think is the "right answer" or what is socially acceptable rather than what they really feel, is possible in any qualitative research. The researcher disclosed that he is in a supervisory position in one of the two buildings in the participating school district and acknowledges that teachers and even principals may have responded in a way that they believe correspond with what the researcher was looking for. Any incomplete or inaccurate feedback could have possible effects throughout the data. The researcher attempted to control for participant bias by stating that the information would remain confidential and reassuring participants that their open and honest feedback was valued and would not be used against them in any way.

The final limitation could be the number of years of service a teacher has been employed within in the district. A teacher with more experience would have gathered more walkthrough observation feedback on their instructional practices. Over the years,

more experienced teachers have gathered more feedback compared to a teacher with fewer years of teaching experience. As the years go on, the amount of feedback received may have a greater impact on instructional practices.

In an attempt to address limitations that may exist and add credibility, several study safeguards were put into place. The first safeguard was the guarantee of confidentiality of all information shared during the action research study, in an effort to reduce participant bias. The second safeguard to enhance the credibility of the study was that the participants were randomly selected upon their voluntary consent to participate in the study. With this safeguard in place, participants were able to feel welcomed to the study and eager to share their information. The final safeguard implemented was the simplicity of the data collection questions. Simple and clear survey and interview questions minimized any possible misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the questions.

Recommendations for Future Research

The opportunity for a team of administrators and teachers to engage in reflective planning based on results and conclusions is an opportunity for the district to grow from this action research study. The findings of this action research study have revealed some areas to extend the research in the future to continue enhancing the professional development of the staff. The first area that was acknowledged by the researcher was the secondary principals' effort to use the walkthrough observation tool data to offer and plan future PLC meetings. As building principals review walkthrough observation data for common areas of improvement, they can design PLCs to address those areas of need and thus provide teachers with meaningful opportunities to engage with other teachers to grow their content knowledge and pedagogical skill. As discussed in the review of

literature, collaboration and clear communication among the administration and staff is essential. The presentation and discussion of the data at PLC meetings shall provide a variety of benefits to the school community. It will provide the opportunity for the principals to share with the teachers in the form a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. The presentation of the data in the form a SWOT will promote a team approach to analysis of instructional practice. The team members will be able to collaborate and communicate their thoughts and voice into the process.

Another area of future research relates the secondary teacher assessments. The survey data revealed this as an area for improvement of the walkthrough observation tool. A team approach, as mentioned above, will assist in the improved assessments. In the interviews, teachers made it clear that they want to improve their assessments but are lacking the feedback to achieve this goal. Allowing teachers to participate in changes to the walkthrough observation tool to generate better feedback on assessment practices will give them a voice in the improvement process. Then, creating a PLC specifically devoted to improving assessment practices based on walkthrough feedback will empower teachers to collectively start the process of improving assessments.

Future research related to this study might focus on a correlation between the amount of teaching experience and teacher perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices. The researcher believes that the amount of teaching experience, and thus more feedback received over the course of years of teaching, could provide interesting insight into different perceptions of the value of walkthrough observation

feedback as a means of professional growth.

Finally, an area of future research may be to compare the perceptions of elementary school principals and teachers to secondary principals' and teachers' perceptions. The application of this future research recommendation would provide the school district with district wide perception data in an effort to continuously improve.

Each suggestion for future research indicates a need of closer examination and may generate a new round of research questions. Exploring each future research topic may lead to different perceptions of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices. A closer examination may also lead to more detailed findings that will further help to identify areas of growth.

Summary

The intention of this action research study was to determine the effectiveness of the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth to improve instructional practices to the secondary principals and secondary teachers in one school district in western Pennsylvania. The district in which this study was conducted employs a student-centered approach to continuously improve. According to Blasé and Blasé (1998), supervision is a process that engages teachers in ongoing dialogue and reflection for improving teaching and learning. By conducting this action research study, the researcher believes that its results will enhance the opportunities as a school district to provide the secondary teachers with improved instructional practices to increase student achievement and academic rigor.

The results of this action research study revealed mainly positive perceptions

from the majority of secondary principals and secondary teachers of the feedback provided by the walkthrough observation tool as a means of professional growth. At the conclusion of this action research, the results demonstrated that there are minor areas of growth to be addressed. Overall, the secondary principals and the secondary teachers do believe that their professional growth to improve instructional practices is enhanced by the walkthrough observation tool's feedback.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

District Walkthrough Observation Tool

Name:

Date:

Grade Level:

Building Department:

Observer:

1. Were learning goals clearly displayed or communicated?

   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Observed (due to timing)
   - Not Applicable

   Optional notes about the display of learning goals…

2. Were learning goals understood by the learners? (Query Students)

   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Applicable

   Optional notes about the display of learning goals…

3. Were learning activities aligned with learning goals?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not Applicable

Optional notes about the display of learning goals…

4. What was the design of the lesson?

    - Whole group-same content/process/product
    - Differentiated-variation in content/process/product
    - Not Applicable

    Optional notes about the display of learning goals…

5. At what level were the learners engaged?

    - Wander-evidence of off-task behavior
    - Watch-passive observation
    - Work-active reading, writing, discussion, etc.
    - Learn-active behavior with evidence of thinking/learning
    - Not Applicable

    Optional notes about the engagement of learners…

6. Was technology being used by?

a. Teacher Only
b. Students Only
c. Teacher and Students
d. Not Applicable

7. At what SAMR level was technology being used?

a. Substitution-direct tool substitute with no functional change
b. Augmentation-direct tool substitute with functional change
c. Modification-tool allows for significant task redesign
d. Redefinition-tool allows for new tasks previously inconceivable
e. Not Applicable

Optional notes about technology…

8. What type of assessment was observed?

a. Formative-assessment for learning within instruction; results guide instruction
b. Summative-assessment of learning; results indicate proficiency levels
c. Diagnostic-assessment for learning before instruction; results guide instruction
d. Benchmark-assessment of learning at periodic intervals; results monitor progress over time

e. None Observed
f. Not Applicable

9. Was there evidence that classroom procedures, routines, and/or behavior expectations were established?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not Applicable
d. Optional notes about classroom routines, etc.…

10. Is there evidence that positive student/teacher relationships have been developed? For example, was there evidence that the teacher knew more about students than just names?

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

Optional notes about student/teacher relationships…

Appendix B

IRB Approval

Institutional Review Board
California University of Pennsylvania
Morgan Hall, 310
250 University Avenue
California, PA 15419
instreviewboard@calu.edu
Melissa Sovak, Ph.D.

Dear Adam,

Please consider this email as official notification that your proposal titled "The Walkthrough Observation: The Secondary Principal's and Secondary Teachers' Perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool" (Proposal #19-070) has been approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board as submitted.

The effective date of approval is 8/26/20 and the expiration date is 8/25/21. These dates must appear on the consent form.

Please note that Federal Policy requires that you notify the IRB promptly regarding any of the following:

(1) Any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented)

(2) Any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects

(3) Any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

(4) To continue your research beyond the approval expiration date of 8/25/21 you must file additional information to be considered for continuing review. Please contact instreviewboard@calu.edu

Please notify the Board when data collection is complete.

Regards,

Melissa Sovak, PhD.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix C

Principal Invitation

Dear _____:

I am currently a doctoral student working under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Lordon at California University of Pennsylvania. I am conducting a qualitative research study on the perception of the walkthrough observation effect on the secondary teacher's professional growth.

I am requesting permission to interview you and request that you give me permission to inquire your staff for participants. Of course, they would have to agree to participate in this study. My goal is to schedule the interviews during the few months, depending on the COVID 19 circumstances.

The interviews will last less than one hour. If the interview extends beyond one hour, we can continue with the participant's approval or reschedule for another time. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Once the researcher receives information that the participant request to withdraw, all documents from the participant will be destroyed. The information obtained from this study will be strictly confidential. The name of the participants, secondary school building, and school district will not be disclosed.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Upon completion of the study, the results will be available to the participants upon request. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call (412-798-6311) or email (sza1841@calu.edu).

Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration in participating in this research study.

Sincerely,

Adam Szarmach

Appendix D

Secondary Teacher Invitation

Dear _____:

I am currently a doctoral student working under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Lordon at California University of Pennsylvania. I am conducting a qualitative research study on the perception of the walkthrough observation too effect on the secondary teacher's professional growth.

My goal is to schedule an interview during the next few months depending on COVID 19 circumstances. The interviews should last less than one hour. If the interview extends beyond one hour, we can continue with the participant's approval or reschedule for another time. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Once the researcher receives the request that the participant wants to withdraw, all documents from the participant will be destroyed. The information obtained in this study will be strictly confidential. The name of the participants, secondary school building, and school district will not be disclosed.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Upon completion of the study, the results will be available to the participants upon request. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call (412-798-6311) or email (sza1841@calu.edu).

Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration in participating in this research study.

Sincerely,

Adam Szarmach

Appendix E

Survey Questions–PRINCIPALS

1. Building:

2. Years of service in the district:

3. Since the walkthrough observational tool was implemented last year, new instructional practices have been shared with the teachers.

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

4. The walkthrough observation tool provides impactful instructional feedback?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

5. The walkthrough observation tool is meaningful towards a teacher professional growth?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

6. The walkthrough observation tool provides feedback to improve assessments?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

7. Since utilizing the walkthrough observation tool, more meaningful learning goals have been created by the teachers?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

8. The learning goals and learning activities are better aligned based off of the walkthrough observation tool feedback?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

9. The strengths and weaknesses identified on teacher walkthroughs have allowed you improve instructional practices for teachers?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

10. The walkthrough observation tool feedback is used to plan future PLC meetings?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

11. The feedback that you get from the walkthrough observation tool is valuable?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

12. The instructional practices that you observe are related to feedback received through the walkthrough observation tool?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

13. The walkthrough observation tool has improved instructional practices throughout the building?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

Appendix F

Survey Questions–TEACHERS

1. Building:

2. Years of teaching in the district:

3. Content Area:

4. Since the walkthrough observation tool was implemented last year, you gained new instructional strategies to apply to your daily instructional practices?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

5. The walkthrough observation tool provides impactful instructional feedback?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

6. The walkthrough observation tool is meaningful towards your professional growth?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

7. The walkthrough observation tool has provided feedback to improve assessments?

    A. Strongly Agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly Disagree

8. Since utilizing the walkthrough observation tool, more meaningful learning goals have been created for the students?

    A. Strongly Agree

B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

9. The learning goals and learning activities are better aligned based off of the walkthrough observation tool feedback?

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

10 The strengths and weaknesses that have been identified on your walkthroughs have allowed you improve instructional practices?

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

11. The walkthrough observation tool feedback is used to plan future lesson?

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

12. The feedback that you get from the walkthrough observation tool is valuable?

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

13. The instructional practices that you apply are related to feedback received through the walkthrough observation tool?

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

14. The walkthrough observation tool has allowed you to improve your instructional practices?

A. Strongly Agree

B. Agree
C. Disagree
D. Strongly Disagree

Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

The Walkthrough Observation: The Secondary Principals' and Secondary Teachers' Perceptions of the Walkthrough Observation Tool.

Dear _____

You are cordially invited to participate in a study to be conducted by Adam Szarmach under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Lordon, education professor in the Administration and Leadership Studies Program at California University of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of secondary principals' and secondary teachers' experiences with the Walkthrough Observation Tool as a meaningful tool for improving instructional practices for secondary teachers. This qualitative research study is to examine the impact of the Walkthrough Observation Tool on the secondary teachers' instructional practices. To participate in this study, each teacher and principal will be asked to complete a pre intervention survey. At the completion of the pre intervention survey, ten responses will be randomly selected to continue the research study. The ten randomly selected participates of the pre intervention survey will be asked to complete a pre and post interview along with a post intervention survey.

All willing participants will be asked to complete a fourteen question pre and post intervention survey. The survey should take no more than fifteen minutes to complete. The questions in the survey will be used to collect data pertaining to your perceptions of the walkthrough tool. Specifically, what aspects of the walkthrough tool are meaningful to you as an educator to improve your instructional practices. In the survey, you will be asked demographic information that will provide a clear understanding of the building you teach in, the content area and how many years of service you have worked with the children of our district.

In addition, you will be asked to participate in a pre and post intervention interview. Each interview should take approximately 1 hour to complete. Each interview will consist of eleven questions focused on the perceived experiences of your participation with the walkthrough observation tool. Your participation in this study is of course voluntary and minimal risk is involved. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time. Even if you chose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the project coordinator or the primary researcher identified below. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence. Additionally, any identifiable information about you or your secondary school will be kept private. The information obtained in this study may be published or presented at conferences, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential. In addition, all data will be retained for at least three years in compliance with federal regulations.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the included voluntary consent form provide it to the researcher at the interview site. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have concerning participating in this worthwhile study.

Sincerely,

Adam Szarmach

Primary Researcher
Adam Szarmach
Doctoral Student
California University of PA
Sza1841@calu.edu

Committee Chairman
Dr. Kevin Lordon
Keystone Hall, Room 415
250 University Ave.
California, PA 15149

Informed Consent Form (continued)

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM: I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this Informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

_____
Name (PLEASE PRINT)

_____
Signature

_____
Date

Phone number Email

_____
Best days and times to reach you

_____
Current Position

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

_____ _____
Date Investigator's Signature

Approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board. This approval is effective 08/31/2020 and expires 08/02/2021.

Appendix H

Principal Interview Questions

Interview Question for Secondary Principals

1. How many years has your school utilized the Walkthrough Observation Tool?
2. What are your procedures when you implement the Walkthrough Observation tool?
    a. How do you schedule walkthroughs?
    b. How do you validate effective instruction in your building?
3. How often do you conduct walkthrough observations?
    a. How many walkthroughs do you conduct in a day, week, month?
    b. How often do teachers join you during the walkthrough?
4. When conducting the walkthrough observation, what are the "look-fors"?
    a. Can you tell me how the "look-fors" were developed?
    b. What data do you collect during the walkthrough?
5. Do you believe using the Walkthrough Observation Tool improves instructional practices within your teachers?
    a. After you debrief your teachers, have they ever pursued opportunities for professional growth to enhance their content knowledge or pedagogical skill?
    b. Have your teachers ever participated in action research? If so, who initiated to research?
    c. How do your teachers respond to your feedback after a walkthrough?
    d. After you provided feedback, tell me about a time a teacher requested more information, clarification, or research?
    e. After debriefing your teachers, do the teachers ever work cooperatively to assist

another teacher?

f. Can you tell me about a time that your feedback initiated a building and/or district professional development activity?

6. How do you provide feedback to your faculty after completing a walkthrough?

a. How do you debrief your teachers after a walkthrough?

b. How do your teachers respond to your walkthrough feedback?

7. Do you have any artifacts on how the Walkthrough Observation Tool data was used to provide professional development to your staff? This may include observations forms, faculty meetings agendas, list of "look-fors," and in-service day agendas.

a. Have you ever shared an instructional practices, strategies or artifact for a walkthrough observation?

b. Have you ever provided training to teachers at a faculty meeting or in-service based on walkthrough observation data?

Appendix I

Secondary Teacher Interview Questions

1. How has your instructional practices been enhanced by the use of the walkthrough observation?

2. What feedback did you receive from the walkthrough observation that has caused you to explore more information?

3.What feedback did you receive from a walkthrough observation that has enhanced your skills in the classroom?

4. How do you discuss your walkthrough observation feedback with your colleagues?

5. Tell me about a time that you received feedback from your colleagues from a walkthrough observation.

6. Based on feedback from the walkthrough observation tool, were you asked to share or demonstrate practices with your colleagues? Please explain.

7. What are the building/district walkthrough observation “look-fors”?

    a. How were the “look-fors” developed?

    b. What are the “look-fors” for your classroom?

8.How have the building/district “look-fors” affected your lesson planning? Your instructional practices?

9. What does the Walkthrough Observation Tool mean to you?

10. What advice would you give a principal that was about to implement the walkthrough observation tool in their district?

11. Tell me about your instructional practices before and after your district implemented the Walkthrough Observation Tool?

    a. Compare and contrast - How you discussed teaching and learning with you colleagues?

    b. Compare and contrast - How you would seek feedback on your teaching with

colleagues or the building principal.

c. Compare and contrast – Since the Walkthrough Observation Tool was implemented, what has changed with instructional practices?

Appendix J

Danielson Growing and Developing Professionally Rubric

ELEMENTS	UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
Enhancement of content knowledge	Teacher engages in no professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skills.	Teacher participates in professional activities to a limited convenient.	Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill.	Teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research.
Receptivity to feedback from colleagues	Teacher resists feedback on teaching performance from either supervisors or more experienced colleagues.	Teacher accepts, with some reluctance feedback on teaching performance from both supervisor and professional colleagues.	Teacher welcomes feedback from colleagues when made by supervisors or when opportunities arise through professional collaboration.	Teacher seeks out feedback on teaching from both supervisors and colleagues.
Service to the profession	Teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.	Teacher finds limited ways to contribute to the profession.	Teacher participates actively in assisting other educators.	Teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.