Classroom Walk Through

What is it? An observation technique that allows the observer to record "snapshot" information on the effective elements of a classroom including instructional strategies, standards-based objectives, aligned instructional materials, level of cognitive interaction, classroom displays and resources, student engagement, and more.

Why are we doing it? Classroom Walk Through (CWT) provides a powerful tool for instructional leaders to gather information for the purposes of coaching, program planning, and professional development. It is part of the State of Florida's DELTA Leadership program. It is thoroughly research based, and it's effectiveness has been well documented. CCPS has implemented CWT to improve instruction, increase student performance, identify professional development needs, and provide data for instructional decision making from the classroom level to the district level.

What are they looking for in an observation? The CWT observation focuses on the following components:
Teaching Objective/Learning Expectation - Is the objective/expectation appropriate and aligned with state standards/district curriculum? Is the objective/expectation communicated to the student in "student-friendly" language verbally or visually? Is the teacher teaching to the objective/expectation?
Target - Is the lesson on target for the grade level/ needs of the students (if below or above grade level)?
Taxonomy- At what level of Bloom's Taxonomy of Knowledge are students working? Is the level(s) appropriate to the learning objective(s)? Is there a balance of high and low order questions/cognitive tasks?
Text & Materials - Are the materials and related classroom resources appropriate and supportive of the learning objective(s)? Are the materials differentiated according to student needs?
Instructional Strategies - What is the teacher doing? Whole group, small group, or individual approaches? Direct or facilitated approaches? Integrating technology? Modeling? And much more
Learner Engagement - What are the students doing? Are they conscious of the learning objective/expectation? Are they actively engaged or passively compliant?
Learning Environment - What does the classroom look like? Are there displays, word walls, etc. that support the learning activities? Are there displays of student work? Are there resources, technology, classroom libraries, etc.?

Why did I receive a question after the observation? About half the time, the observer may provide a "reflective prompt" question to the teacher. The purpose of the prompt is to help the teacher think about (reflect) on his/her own professional practice. This reflection causes conscious thinking about specific actions in the classroom, and empowers the teacher in his/her own professional development.

Is it evaluative? Classroom Walk Through is a formative observation process. The difference between Formative (coaching) and Summative (evaluative) observations is provided below:

	FORMATIVE	SUMMATIVE
Role of Observer	Coach/helper	Judge/evaluator
Purpose	Identify strengths and developmental areas/ to make individual and small group level decisions	To differentiate by "grade" or "rank"/to make systems level decisions
Use of Results	Professional development, program adjustments, allocation of resources	Personnel appraisal, program effectiveness (keep/don't keep)
Primary Methods of individual observations/feedback	Clinical Coaching observation (including Peer Teacher processes), informal coaching observation, CWT (focus is primarily group level)	Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS) observation
Pre/Post conferences	Individual for clinical methods, individual or group for CWT	Individual (required)

Will I be provided feedback after a CWT observation? Because of the short duration of a CWT observation, observers should make several observations before providing feedback. Also, feedback may be provided at the group level if general developmental themes are evident for all members of a group (school, grade level, department, team, etc.)

Will CWT observations be used in my evaluation? No, the CWT observations are used for coaching/formative purposes only. The personnel appraisal system of CCPS utilizes the FPMS summative observation in the regular program, and the alternate appraisal program for those that qualify.

What research supports Classroom Walk Through? The research-base and history of CWT is extensive and can be divided into two areas:

Content: CWT is focused on the research of effective classrooms, effective instruction, and learning. The primary focus is around Marzano's "high yield" instructional strategies, Bloom's "Knowledge Taxonomy", Lezotte's principals of learning, and more.

Process: The CWT process is also research-based, extending from the "Manage By Walking Around (MBWA)" approach. The process also has deep roots in Goldhammer's clinical coaching model, data collection/analysis techniques, and research into instructional leadership. On a spectrum of observation/coaching processes, CWT lies between summative/evaluative processes (such as the FPMS process), and informal

observation/coaching. While formative, it provides focus to the observation, as well as a means to collect data on research-based practices and strategies.

Additional research areas include Principal as Leader, Supporting Instruction, and Reflective Practice.

Finally, the impact of the entire CWT process has been (and continues to be) researched. Numerous studies point to the improvement in classroom instruction, benefits of reflective practice, and the impact on student achievement.

A full list of references is provided at the end of this document.

How can I learn more about Classroom Walk Through? CWT will be provided as a CAPE course in the near future. As well, many schools have begun local professional development around the "high yield" strategies of Robert Marzano's research (*Classroom Instruction that Works)* and the "Quadrant D" lesson approach of Bill Daggett's work. Principals were provided with an orientation powerpoint presentation which will also be available on the PDA website in the near future (www.yourcharlotteschools.net/pda). Finally, if you would like to see a CWT observation first hand, please talk with your principal.

Classroom Walk Through References
(titles in **bold** are provided to CWT training participants)

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