

Taking the Right Steps

Using Learning Walks to Improve Instruction

Office of School Improvement Conference
June 12, 2019



Christie Hatten

Professional Development Coordinator
Christie.hatten@mdek12.org

VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

State Board of Education Goals

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2016-2020

1

All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



2

Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



3

Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program



4

Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders



5

Every Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes



6

Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher



Training Signals



WALK &



TALK



Session Goals



1

Identify and understand the value, process, tools, and implementation of an effective Learning Walk and how it can strengthen and enhance instructional leadership

2

Link the instructional Learning Walk with other critical components of school improvement

Learning Walks

The What?

Learning Walk Defined

Discussion: MS CCRS Writing Shifts

THINK
TIME!



1. What is a Learning Walk?

2. What is the purpose of a Learning Walk?



What is a Learning Walk

- A **Learning Walk** is a brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what students are **learning, learning strategies, student interaction with the content, and student engagement.**
- A **Learning Walk** is **NOT** an evaluation. A **Learning Walk** obtains a “snapshot” of the learning at the school.

Evaluative

Learning Walks

The Why?

The Purpose of Learning Walks

Activity: List the Benefits

- In your group, using the chart paper provided, create a four square graphic organizer.
- In the first square, write the word "Benefits".
- With your group, generate a list of the possible benefits of conducting regular instructional walk-throughs and record your responses in the first square.

LEARNING WALKS	
Benefits	

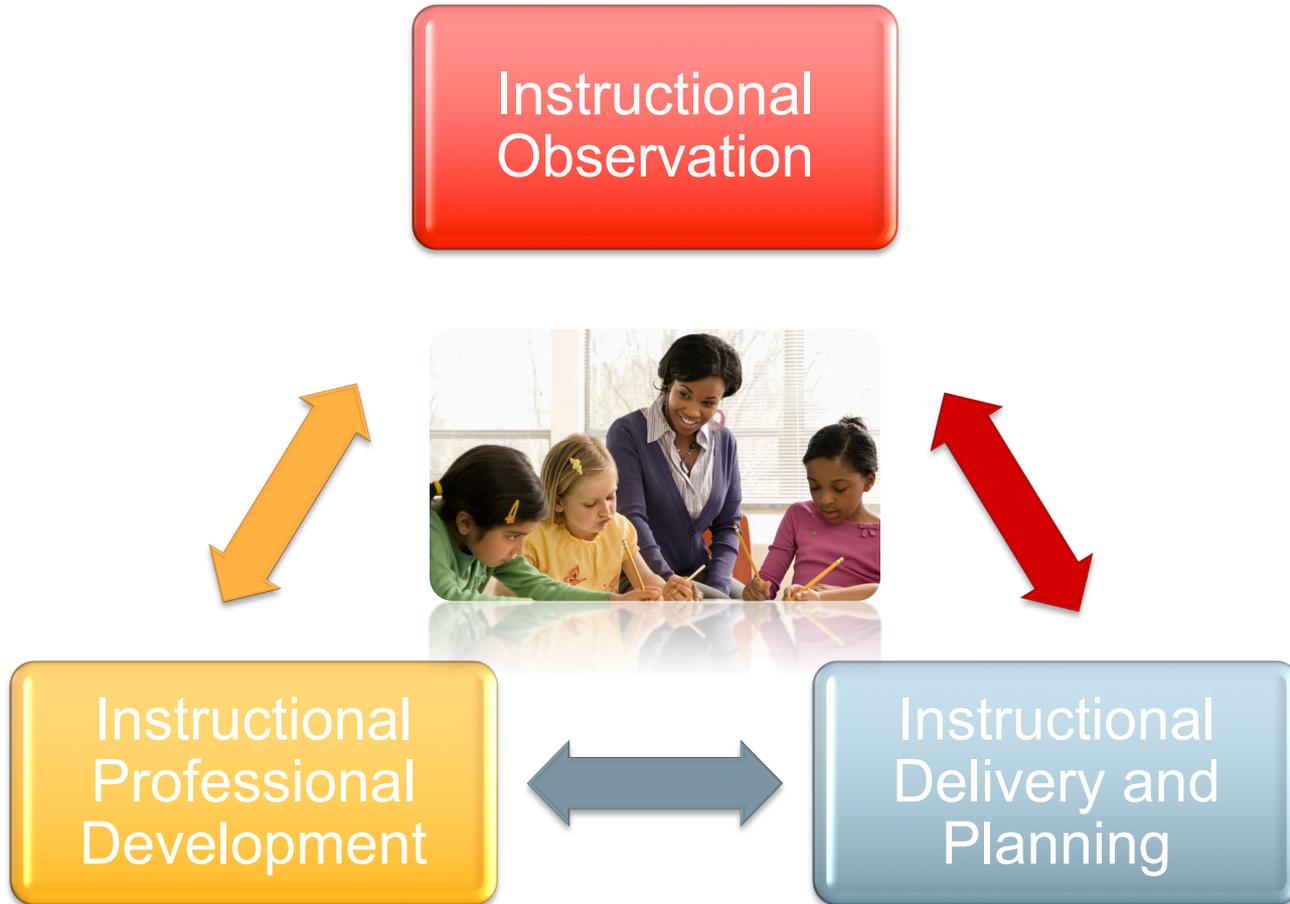
Why Have Learning Walks?



Why Have Learning Walks?



Achieving Instructional Success



Learning Walks

The Who?

Who conducts a Learning Walk?

Who Conducts a Learning Walk?

- A Learning Walk is conducted by a group of people who are both external and internal eyes of a building.
- A team consists of 3-4 teachers who rotate on and off the team, working with the principals and external observers.

Determining a Focus

- The school determines the focus of the Learning Walk.
- A school that wants to conduct a Learning Walk, should have deep conversations about what teachers will do to improve student achievement.
- Principals need to ensure that teachers are provided with professional learning opportunities to help them make necessary changes.

Activity: Where's My Focus?

- In your group, using the four-square chart previously created, label the second square “Areas of Focus”
- With your group, discuss what are some important areas of instruction and your school’s practices as a whole would be important to focus on your Learning Walk.
- Record your responses in the second square.

LEARNING WALKS	
Benefits	Areas of Focus

Learning Walks

The When?

How often should Learning Walks be conducted?

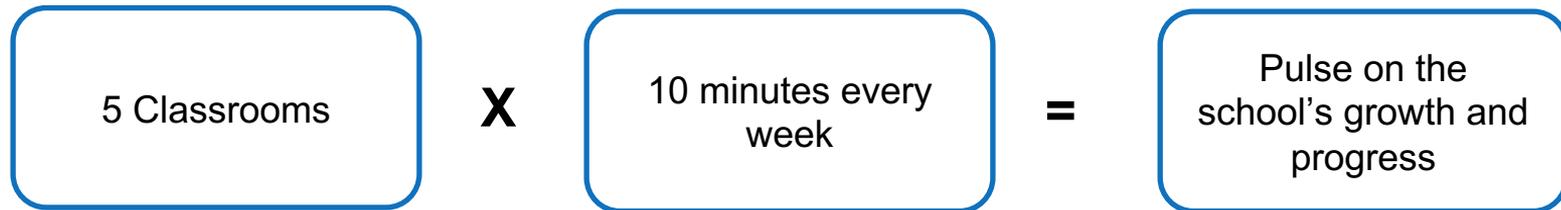
When?

- When the instructional team decides
- Frequently



How often should I conduct a Learning Walk?

- Formal Learning Walks should be held at least once a month; however, the principal within the building should conduct informal learning walks or 5 x10s every week.



Learning Walks

The How?

How do I get started?

Activity: Problems to Solve

- In your group, using the four-square chart previously created, label the third and fourth square “Barriers” and “Solutions”
- With your group, discuss some possible barriers that may keep you from being able to conduct Learning Walks with frequency.
- Then think of possible solutions to eliminate those barriers.
- Record your responses in the second square.

LEARNING WALKS	
Benefits	Areas of Focus
Barriers	Solutions

Learning Walks

The Process

What happens before, during, and after a Learning Walk?

Before the Learning Walk

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

- Assemble members of the Learning Walk teams
- Administrator and teams identify the Learning Focus for the Walk, classrooms which will be visited, and why these classrooms have been selected.
- The principal or teacher leader guides the discussion to identify the evidence needed to support the focus.
- Team members determine who will for each type of evidence.



During the Learning Walk

Learning Walk: 50 minutes (5 x 10)

- 5 classrooms for 10 minutes
- Team members (working in teams of two) enter the classrooms at the same time.
- Ensure a student-centered focus
- Make notes about assigned focus areas or “look fors”
- After 10 minutes, leave the classroom and meet together for a short debriefing.



After the Visit

Debriefing- Outside the Classroom: 5 minutes

- Move down the hallway and away from the observed room
- Quickly and quietly share observations with team members
- Proceed to the next classroom



After the Visit

Debriefing- Final: 45 min to 1 hour

- Assemble in meeting place
- Everyone shares his/her observation providing evidence collected and an overview of what was seen
- Principal makes notes on the discussion and collects the feedback.
- Discuss and offer recommended next steps for the school
- Findings are presented to the staff for discussion and the next steps for the school are determined as a whole to meet the school's learning goals.



Learning Walks

The Tools

What are some observation forms that can be utilized during a Learning Walk?

Learning Walk Observation Forms

- School Leader's Literacy Walkthrough Checklist (Florida)
http://www.fcrr.org/Curriculum/principal_RWT.shtm
- Principal's Reading Walk-Through K-3 Checklist (MDE)
http://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/OAE/Literacy/ResourcesForAdmin/k3-principal's_walk-through-checklist.pdf
- Building Capacity RTI <https://buildingrti.utexas.org/resource-pages/instructional-walkthrough-tools>

Activity: “Look-fors” in Action



- With your group, choose one section of the sample Walk-through Observation form assigned to your group.
- Discuss with your group exactly what each component would look like in the classroom.

Powerful Process for Classroom Walk-Throughs



Exit Ticket

- Answer the following questions on the sticky notes provided and leave your responses on the chart provided as you exit.
1. **How do you feel the Learning Walk will be beneficial to the improvement of your school?**
 2. **Do you have any concerns regarding the Learning Walk?**
 3. **How can I help you as you embrace this concept as an opportunity to refine the instructional practices in your school?**

References

- Bessellu, F. (2008). *Providing Instructional Leadership Through Classroom Walk-Throughs. Reading First*. Nashville: Reading First.
- Gibson, K., & West, J. (2019). *Leadership/Administrator Look for Essentials. 2019 Literacy Symposium*. Jackson: Mississippi Department of Education.
- Research, T. F. (2019, June 10). *Principal Reading Walk-Through Checklist*. Retrieved from The Florida Center for Reading Research:
https://fcrr.org/resources/resources_checklists.html

Resources & Publications for Teachers



Literacy Focus of the Month

Literacy Focus of the Month

(Transdisciplinary: Grades PK – 12)

Kellogg Grant Exemplar Lesson & Unit Plans

(ELA and Math, Grades PK – HS)



Instructional Scaffolding Document

(ELA & Math: Grades PK-8)



English Learner Videos and Resources

Implementing Evidence-based Literacy

Practices

(Grades K-12)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

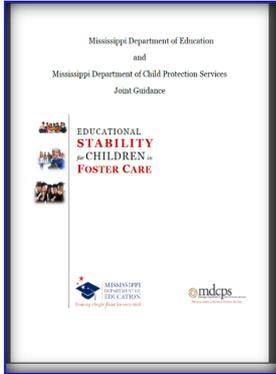
(Transdisciplinary, Grades PK-12)

Integrated Kindergarten Centers

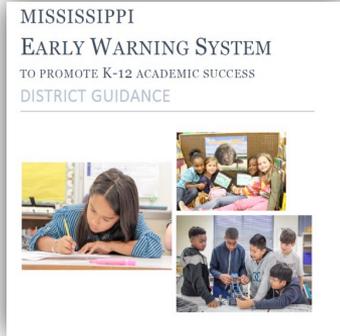
Activities

(Transdisciplinary, Kindergarten)

Resources & Publications for Administrators



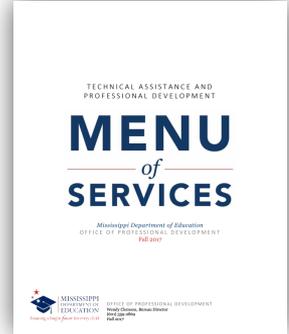
Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care
(Foster Care Guidance Document)



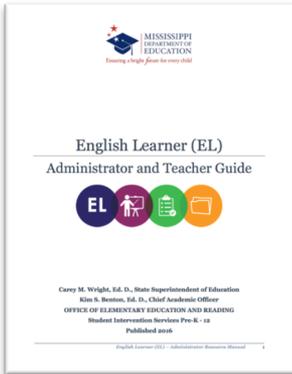
Early Warning System
(College and Career Readiness Data Guidance Document)



Early Learning Collaborative Act
Establish, Expand, Support, and Facilitate
Early Childhood Education Services



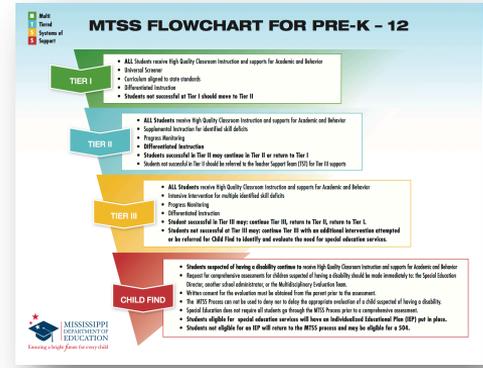
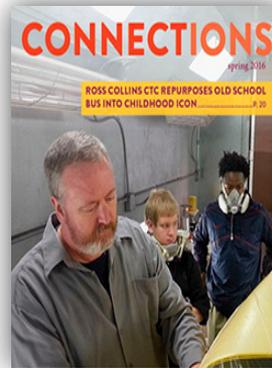
Professional Development Menu of Services



English Learner Guide

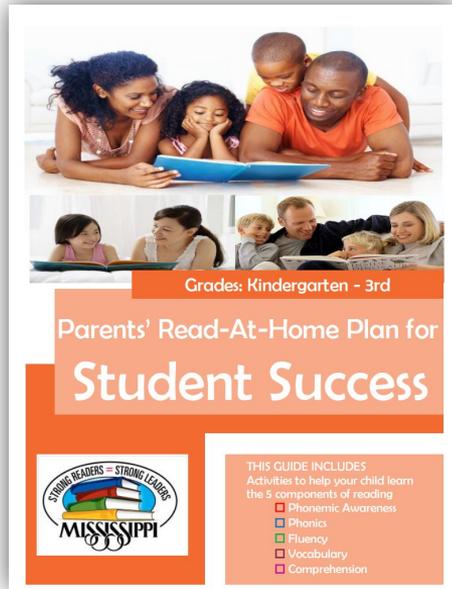


A Glimpse into Mississippi K-12 and CTE Classrooms
(Transdisciplinary: Grades K-12)

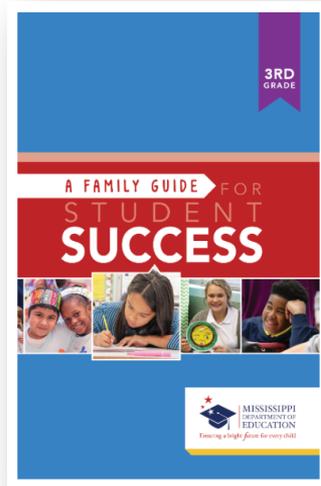


Multi-Tiered System of Support

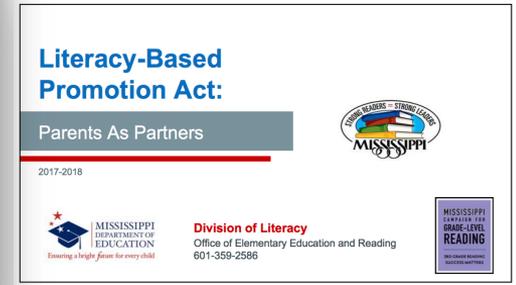
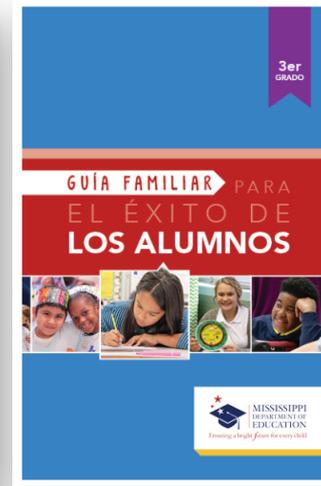
Resources & Publications for Parents



[Parents' Read-At-Home Plan](#)
(Literacy-Based Promotion Act
Parent Document)



[Family Guides for Student Success](#)
(Reading & Math: Grades PK-8)



[Parents As Partners: An Overview of the 3rd Grade Assessment and the LBPA](#)
(Literacy-Based Promotion Act
Parent Presentation K-3)



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright *future* for every child

Christie Hatten

Professional Development

Coordinator

Christie.hatten@mdek12.org