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WICOR WALKTHROUGHS AND TEACHER PRACTICE

Christie L. McMullen

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WICOR WALKTHROUGHS AND TEACHER PRACTICE:

A PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT

Christie L. McMullen
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of
Doctor of Education
in the Foster G. McGaw Graduate School

National College of Education
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This document was created as one part of the three-part dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership EdD is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership Plan
- Policy Advocacy Document

For the Program Evaluation candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the Change Leadership Plan candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the Policy Advocacy Document candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

Works Cited


4.21.14
ABSTRACT

Watching experts execute their craft allows for learning. In four schools, this type of learning, teachers watching one another teach, was made available and the feedback from those interviewed showed positive results. This paper explains the process each school used for allowing teachers to watch others teach and the results that they got in the process. This program evaluation was designed to provide guidance to principals on some specific ways to ensure that they can avoid pitfalls if they were to employ a similar strategy with their staff. Teachers using high yield strategies with confidence in their classrooms has the potential to improve student achievement and open opportunities beyond high school as well. This paper outlines that process.
PREFACE

As the Project Systems Coach for an Innovations grant, I worked with 8 secondary schools and a college to determine how implementing CRS strategies at all levels 6th grade through college could potentially improve student learning. While working in that capacity, I studied four schools, two middle and two high to see if allowing teachers to observe one another teaching would increase the use of high yield strategies in the classrooms in those buildings. I found that confidence and morale increased for the teachers through this process.

My passion for teaching and learning was fueled by this project. I had the opportunity to try a new way of work in four schools and then watch that new way of work impact teaching and learning in those schools. Each principal implemented the walkthrough process in a slightly different way, yielding a variety of results. My hope is that this paper will aid principals in implementing similar processes in their schools to continue improving teaching and learning. Choosing to implement this process of allowing teachers to see one another teacher has the potential to create improved learning experiences for students.

This process was filled with leadership lessons, all of which influence my writing and learning for the other two projects. I learned that creating a culture of safety and learning determines the success of any change project. I also learned that creating this type of culture requires ongoing work and intentional effort. This project also brought to light the need for open-mindedness at the administrative level for new initiatives to be successful.
Since the completion of this project, I have had the opportunity to work with several other school systems to implement similar systems for teaching and learning. In each instance, the knowledge I gained from this project has given me insight into improving the process and getting more significant results. I feel confident that I could implement a successful walkthrough system as an administrator or as a consultant working with an administrator at the middle or high school level in any school system.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My family made it possible for me to complete this process. To my husband, Jason, thank you for the constant support, thoughtfulness, understanding, and cheerleading. To my daughter, Chloe, thank you for working so hard in everything you do and reminding me that learning is a process that takes time to master. To my son, Jackson, thank you for making me laugh loud and often and giving me reasons to strive to be my very best. To all my parents, through birth and marriage, thank you for believing in me more than I believed in myself.

My friends gave me strength in this process. Kristen, thank you for walking this journey with me, step by step, and helping me to “check the box.” Mark, Louisa, and Rachel, thank you for building me up and telling me that I could achieve my dreams. Robert, thank you for giving me opportunities to build my leadership skills. Robin, thank you for reading my papers and editing my work while building my character. To everyone who asked me how it was going or paved the way before me, thank you for helping me find my wings.

My professors created in me a desire to be my best self. To Dr. Burg, thank you for pushing me to find the real me and helping me accept the learning process as just that, a process. To Dr. Buckman, thank you for always finding the positive, no matter the situation. To Dr. Schott, thank you for shaping me into a better educator.
DEDICATION

To my family, for believing in me from start to finish.
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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Three rural districts in the Southeast were selected to work with a College Readiness System (CRS, a pseudonym) and a federal grant designed with two major projects in mind: the implementation of CRS at an accelerated pace to the entire student body, and the creation of vertical teams partnering middle schools, high schools, and the local state college in this region to promote cohesiveness of learning for the parties involved. The grant began in January 2013 and concludes December 2017.

As a major part of both CRS and vertical teaming, teachers at all levels have been taught strategies through the framework of WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading), and through national and local training have been tasked with shifting their instruction to using a balance of these activities to create active learners. As part of the process of learning to use these strategies, schools allow teachers to complete WICOR Walkthroughs in one another’s classrooms, both on their own campus and on other campuses involved in the grant. The walkthroughs and the debrief discussions which follow them provide live professional learning for all the teachers involved.

Historically, teachers do not implement strategies learned in trainings because they are unable to observe them used with students engage in actual practical application of new skills. According to an article in Educational Leadership, traditional professional development falls flat because, “teachers have little say in what they learn, transferring learning from training to the classroom is difficult, and there are few opportunities to practice and refine strategies” (Grimm, Kaufman, & Doty, 2014, p.24). Transferring learning from training to the classroom has been made a reality for these schools through
the incorporation of classroom walkthroughs with teachers, and creating opportunities for
teachers to discuss their practice with their peers and their administrators. Having the
opportunity to see these practices in action increases the likelihood of teachers using high
engagement strategies, creating a more positive learning environment and increased
student engagement (Putnam and Borko, 2000).

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

When the grant was implemented in 2013, the goals were set but the route to
reach the goals was yet to be determined. The grant is developmental in nature and
therefore, by design, changes directions based on the needs of the participants. The
training provided to the schools was outlined in the grant application and included a CRS
Summer Institute (a three-day, subject specific training for a group of educators including
teachers, counselors, and administrators on each campus), PATH to School wide training
(a two day, cross content training offered to a different cohort of teachers specifically),
and individualized trainings as determined by each principal. The strategies taught to the
teachers in the professional learning opportunities offered through the grant align with the
five components of WICOR, and require the students to be active learners in the
classroom. As the Project Systems Coach for CRS Center, I, along with the principals of
the grant schools, and the CRS District Director, (a district level employee who oversees
CRS implementation for the district) quickly identified an important monitoring issue:
accountability of use of the strategies. If the use of a balance of WICOR strategies,
meaning seeing an equal amount of writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and
reading in classrooms was not monitored, chances were high the teachers would not
implement the strategies with fidelity in their classrooms. In the past, professional
learning did not have the desired effect because the principals and administrative teams, as well as the teachers, did not know what these practices would look like with students. After some discussions, the principals and I decided that periodic walkthroughs to look for elements of WICOR being used to instruct the students would increase the frequency of the strategies being utilized.

After the first few walkthroughs were conducted, we began discussion about the power of having not just administrators and coaches walking classrooms, but instead having teachers join in the walkthrough process. Teachers often want to do things the “right” way even when there is not one specific “right” way. Seeing someone else in action helps reinforce that what they are doing in their classrooms mirrors what is happening in other classrooms. Prior to the 2013 school year, teachers, within the district I studied, had never been allowed to see one another teach at all. Every school approached the walkthrough process with a slightly different plan but by the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, all four schools in this study had walkthroughs scheduled.

In this study, I evaluated the different ways that the schools involved with the grant have chosen to incorporate the teacher walkthrough process into their professional learning plan and determined what benefits exist within the various approaches. Each school involved in the grant embraced the idea of teachers walking one another’s classrooms, but the implementation for the process varied. ABC Middle School made sure that every teacher walked at least once in the 2014-15 school year with the school’s literacy coach and they did so in groups of two or three. LMN Middle School required teachers to walk specific classrooms during their planning periods in exchange for attendance at a full faculty meeting. In turn, the teachers debrief what they saw during
their walkthrough in department meetings. ABC High School conducted walkthroughs with their on-site coaches and teachers walking together regularly. LMN High School only conducted a few walkthroughs with teachers, limiting the number of teachers who got to participate. Some schools only showcased the best teachers on campus, while others allowed teachers to select who they visited. Still others strategically took observers to great teachers as well as teachers in need of improvement. What takes place during the walkthrough process looked the same in all four schools, with the same questions asked and the same debriefing process taking place. It was the audience and timing that varied.

In the grant schools, principals seldom saw the implementation of strategies in classrooms prior to the WICOR walkthroughs because the accountability levels for using the strategies was very low. The walkthroughs that they did conduct were always evaluative in nature. If walkthroughs are only evaluative and never formative, teachers do not improve their craft (Grimm, Kaufman, &Doty 2014). Since formative discussions allow teachers to hone their craft rather than just finding ways to avoid penalties for improper execution, the principals needed to be trained in what to look for in classrooms. They also need to be trained in how to coach the teachers towards success in those areas instead of just using an evaluation tool to penalize teachers for not doing something on the list of strategies. However, the principals had never seen the strategies being used correctly themselves and therefore were at a loss as to how to coach or evaluate the teachers based on what the students were doing. This caused frustration on the part of the teachers who were trying something new.

Once the grant began, in January 2013 and the teachers were trained in WICOR strategies at the CRS Summer Institute in 2013, the expectation was that the teachers
would use the strategies they learned in training regularly. The concern by the administrative teams and the CRS District Director, a district employee supporting the implementation of CRS from within was that without follow up and continuous learning, this training would be no different from the training they had received in the past. In some cases, with CRS implementation, the training stops after Summer Institute and no follow up is officially monitored by the school’s administrative teams. The WICOR walkthrough process became an avenue for observing which strategies were being utilized by teachers. It also gave teachers who were not yet comfortable incorporating the strategies a place to observe the strategies being implemented with students.

In a survey given to all the teachers at the four schools in this study, the teachers reported their use of WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading) strategies for three years. The first year, the survey was completed before the teachers had been exposed to the WICOR strategies specifically, then the survey was given each subsequent May. I looked at all three years of survey data to determine if teachers reported a shift in the use of WICOR strategies.

Previous professional learning at these schools prior to WICOR training occurred in isolation in these schools for many years, as was confirmed by the district director. The incorporation of the WICOR walkthrough process, where teachers got to observe one another using the strategies learned in the trainings, had the potential to allow the strategies to become practical and “real” for the teachers. By seeing a colleague attempt a strategy with students from one’s own school, the statement of “that will not work with my students” become less valid. Teachers saw the strategy with their own students in
their own school and then had one another as an instant resource to work through the learning of the process themselves.

My goal for this study was to advise schools on the various approaches to incorporating the WICOR walkthrough process with teachers and help guide them to determine which approach would be the best fit for their own schools. Using the exact same system in every school typically fails because schools are as different individual as the students in them. This study describes a couple of different implementation options for schools, allowing for the uniqueness of the school’s needs, and in turn potentially increasing positive results. I will increase awareness of the walkthrough process for others, encouraging them to adopt these strategies in their own schools.

**Rationale for Selection**

As a lifelong educator, my passion lies in excellent instruction. For the last eight years I have trained hundreds of teachers and administrators in the art of instruction through the use of WICORized lessons. “WICORized,” a coined word that does not appear in Webster’s Dictionary, means a lesson that requires the students be active in their learning through the use of a balance of Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading strategies (source not listed for anonymity). Until I became the Project Systems Coach for the grant, much of my interaction with the teachers and administrators ended after the workshop, training, or professional learning opportunity I facilitated. Once I started working with the grant, I became more intimately involved with the process of implementing the strategies that the teachers learned in the workshop.

WICOR walkthroughs, where observers look to see whether a balance of WICOR strategies is used, show administrators, coaches, and now teachers what excellent
teaching looks like with students. This technique provided accountability for the implementation of research based learning at the middle school, high school, and even college level. I have witnessed first-hand an accelerated implementation of CRS with fidelity in the schools in this study. This is evidenced by the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms throughout each building. Knowing that administrators both recognize what these strategies look like when executed, and willingly let teachers watch one another execute them with students opens the door for school wide change. Since these secondary schools and a local college saw positive results, I want other schools to experience the same. Conducting this investigation gave me the platform to show educators nationally what can happen if teachers can learn by seeing and then doing.

The process of having teachers walk through one another’s classrooms happens in other schools, but it really is not a widespread practice (Cohen, 2014). The schools I worked with in this study had never done anything like this before spring of 2014, and yet the results observed in one short year has boosted morale, changed teaching practices, and created teaching and learning centers rather than just schools. I want this success to be replicable in any school across the nation and believe that it can be done with very minor coaching, making it economical and practical for all schools. This paper could provide a blueprint for school wide change that will enhance the experience students have in secondary schools through the implementation of active learning, professional growth on the parts of the teachers and educational growth of the students.

According to *The Widget Effect*, “a teacher’s effectiveness is not measured, recorded, or used to inform decision-making in any meaningful way” because the majority of teachers are rated as effective or highly effective using our current system.
(Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009, p. 3). If teachers were required to watch one another and learn from one another, the accountability to be truly effective would increase exponentially, which would in turn raise student achievement, teacher morale, and the success of the school overall (Grimm, Kaufman, & Doty 2014). A principal or fellow teacher should be able to determine how effective a teacher’s delivery of information can be in the classroom through viewing that teacher and seeing what he or she does with students in a classroom setting. This would create a strong understanding among stakeholders of the elements of excellent teaching. This type of vulnerability must start in a safe arena, which does not include evaluation, but instead affirmation and validation of what works in a classroom and what could be improved.

Each district involved in the innovation grant (pseudonym) serves a similar population and has similar demographics. The population served in the grant districts is rural, impoverished, and isolated. The walkthrough process can potentially provide ongoing professional learning regardless of funding or outside support, creating a sustainability plan that will support the teachers beyond the grant funding. This learning took place in classrooms with actual students in real time, removing the typical excuse of “that will not work with my students,” that has been made by the teachers in this area in the past. Prior to the implementation of peer walkthroughs, the teachers had not ever had a chance to see students in their school engaging in active learning.

The more we break down the classroom walls in a building and create an environment of collaboration and cohesiveness, the more likely teachers are to try new things and use new strategies (Tomlinson, 2014). The use of new strategies, particularly ones that require the students to be active in their learning will positively impact student
achievement and develop lifelong thinkers (Wagner, 2008). If this district finds success in utilizing the walkthrough process and that success is corroborated by the self-reported survey results and the observation data, then other districts will have the foundation necessary to try these same practices in their districts. These schools do not suffer from unique instructional issues in their classrooms, and their solutions could make significant change in schools across America affordably, effectively, and efficiently.

Evaluating this educational practice gives perspective on the types of results that a school can tie back to the walkthrough process. By delving into the practices that these schools have employed for walking classrooms and real-time professional learning, the schools individually and the district as a whole can make informed decisions about future professional learning opportunities. These choices can then be designed specifically to meet the needs of the staff, rather than making decisions based on what they think might be happening in schools.

Every school has a unique culture and specific needs for its students and teachers. A single process for walkthrough sessions will not work everywhere. It is my hope that the results of this project will guide educators down the path that most logically serves their needs based on demographics, teacher needs, location, and desired outcomes.

A few different stakeholder groups will benefit from this research. The teachers will be given explicit opportunities to hone their craft and learn from one another, potentially improving their evaluations (Weisberg et al., 2009), as well as their morale (Rossi, 1997) as educators. The administrators will be better equipped to coach teachers, because of their opportunity to walk with a trained coach. They will successfully increase accountability in their schools by having internal coaches throughout the building in the
form of fellow teachers, thus potentially improving the morale of the entire staff. This could in turn allow principals to give more focused feedback with their deeper understanding of what the use of WICOR strategies should look like in classroom settings. Students will also benefit as their teachers facilitate instruction that shifts them from passive to active learners. The district will benefit by retaining more teachers, due to the built-in support system they will develop with their colleagues.

**Goals of the Program Evaluation**

My primary goal was to improve student achievement through the use of more effective teaching strategies. In order to know how to implement effective teaching strategies, teachers should be given the opportunity to see excellent teaching in action (Swanson, 2014). Strong research based teaching strategies designed to require the students to be active learners must be modeled in classrooms throughout a school with consistency and continuous improvement. By evaluating the various ways that schools allow teachers to learn from one another, it is my hope that teachers will learn tips and ideas about how to replicate the success of these schools by reading this study. Administrators will have the opportunity to improve embedded professional learning in their buildings through the findings in this paper. District level administrators will also find ways to adopt new practices around providing embedded professional learning throughout the school year at a minimal cost.

Professional learning (or professional development) for teachers most often occurs in large group settings, and the use of the strategies taught at these learning opportunities frequently goes unmonitored (Weisberg et al., 2009). By conducting regular walkthroughs, and allowing teachers to go on those walkthroughs with administrative
teams, teachers are held accountable for the use of the learned strategies. Looking for the use of the learned strategies by all the members of the walkthrough team, and allowing observing teachers to see the strategies implemented in real time with students should increase the understanding and use of the strategies in all classrooms. By publishing the results found in this study, I hope to show how the various ways that walkthroughs are conducted yield results such as increased student engagement, growth in active learning by students, and overall rise in student achievement.

A key strategy of my program evaluation was to inform schools of options for conducting walkthroughs, by outlining the various ways that walkthroughs have been utilized in the grant schools. To this end, I studied and shared the different types of walkthroughs. I reviewed the types of results that resulted from these walkthrough practices. A survey was given to these schools at the end of each school year, beginning with the year prior to CRS implementation. The survey asked participants, specifically teachers and administrators, about their use of specific WICOR strategies and was completed by at least 80% of the faculty each year for 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15.

Another key strategy of my study was to give schools a variety of options for how schools may wish to incorporate the walkthrough process. This would allow them to use an approach fit for their own environment to improve instruction and student achievement. The overall ideas are not unique but the implementation plan relates directly to leadership on the campus. One size does not fit all in a public education setting.

Culture, although not studied specifically for this paper, was a key factor contributing to my findings, as you will see in later sections. In addition to the execution
of the walkthroughs, the culture set by administrators around the purpose and value of the walkthrough process will impact the success of the process. If administrators have created a culture of safety and learning, the teachers will feel empowered by the walkthrough process. If not, the walkthroughs can feel punitive and intimidating for those involved.

I gathered and analyzed the walkthrough data collected by the schools’ staff and me (as the Project Systems Coach) on several occasions throughout the year. I tracked and compared the number of times specific strategies occurred in classrooms. I then compared the results over time. Reviewing the data allowed me to determine how the varying implementation strategies and walkthrough explanations impacted the school. I saw that school leaders played a very key role in the improvement of schools as well as the acceptance of a new way of work by the staff.

**Curriculum Framework**

Tony Wagner believes that there are Seven Survival Skills that should be taught to every student every day, which include critical thinking and asking students to be active learners (Wagner, 2008). We were looking for active learners who think critically during our walkthroughs. One of the main questions asked during the debrief process of the walkthroughs was “Who was lifting the weights in that classroom, the teacher or the students?” If teachers were using WICOR strategies to teach content, then the students were the ones “lifting the weights” and being active learners.

The administrative team members and I structured the walkthroughs around a specific debrief process, which included a chance for teachers to discuss what they saw in the classroom and how it could potentially impact their own classrooms. Settlage and
Johnston developed *The Crossroads Model* (2014) and discussed the opportunity for teachers to have structured conversations about learning, following a protocol designed to provoke thinking (Settlage & Johnston, 2014). Protocols like the ones used by Settlage and Johnston helped inform the protocol we utilized in the walkthroughs in these schools, and yielded very strong conversations about learning practices in classrooms.

Van Tassell in *The Trouble with Top Down* (2014) discusses a group of teachers who were encouraged when they started learning from one another. They started having informal walkthroughs in one another’s classrooms, and their learning as well as their excitement for teaching increased considerably (Van Tassell, 2014). However, learning shifted in Van Tassell’s work when the administrators took the process out of the hands of the teachers who started it and made this type of learning mandatory. The autonomy that the teachers enjoyed in his work was replaced with a mandate, making it less authentic. I do not want this type of negative situation to take place in the grant schools, and am working to ensure that the walkthroughs remain a positive experience.

*The Widget Effect* discusses the evaluation system in a variety of schools throughout the country and attempts to determine whether or not teachers are completely interchangeable. The authors talked specifically about the fact that administrators rarely give teachers formative feedback which could positively impact their teaching (Weisberg et al., 2009). The authors speculated that the reason might be that the administrators did not know how to give constructive feedback. If teachers are giving fellow teachers formative feedback, both the teacher observing and the teacher teaching would have the opportunity to grow as an educator. School leaders, who need to know how to give helpful feedback, might also learn from overseeing this type of activity in their schools.
The feedback given in these walkthroughs is timely and authentic, modeling the type of feedback that would best influence teaching practices.

**Primary Exploratory Questions**

In determining how best to tackle this research project, several questions rose to the surface. These questions guided my research, and also played a role in how these walkthroughs continue to occur in these schools. I designed this investigation to be formative and developmental, informing next steps for those closest to the work.

My four primary research questions were:

What do teachers at 4 current CRS school sites and the District Director (DD), employed by the district and trained by CRS Staff in the WICOR walkthrough process, report as working well with the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies?

What do participants (teachers and the CRS District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites report as not working well with the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies?

What do participants (teachers and the CRS District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites report as major obstacles in the implementation of the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies?

What do participants (teachers and the CRS District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites suggest as ways to improve the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies?

The evidence has the potential to show whether allowing teachers to walk one another’s classrooms will have a positive effect on teaching practices. In addition to
determining if it had positive or negative effects, I linked which approach produced the most positive results on a campus, in terms of increasing the use of the WICOR strategies as evidenced by the survey, walkthroughs, and interviews.

**Secondary Exploratory Questions**

The secondary exploratory questions helped me determine the perceptions of the participants in the walkthrough process, and allowed me to decide if the walkthroughs are having the intended results. My secondary questions were:

What are the perceptions of the teachers at 4 current school sites regarding the walkthrough process?

What are the perceptions of the district director for the 4 school sites regarding the walkthrough process?

What major successes have resulted because of the implementation of a walkthrough process on campus?

By learning the answers to these questions, I will be able to help guide school leaders, the CRS District Director (DD), and other key district level personnel into implementing a process for replicating WICOR walkthroughs with teachers on their own campuses. I could also do this throughout the district on other campuses accounting for the lessons learned by the schools in this study.

In addition to the questions I sought to answer in my study, it became very apparent that culture plays a significant role in the success of this type of walkthrough process. Administrators can create a safe space for learning or a culture of evaluation, and those two different cultures will yield different results in this process. I have noted in
sections four and five my findings on the most effective type of culture for this process to be effective.

**Conclusion**

I designed and conducted this research project to help guide school leaders, the DD and teachers through the process of recognizing and celebrating excellent teaching. The act of teachers watching other teachers teach can be an exceptional learning tool, yet it is seldom utilized in educational settings (Cohen, 2014). I showcased the difference that implementing this simple process of observing teaching in action can make on the use of high-yield strategies school wide. Teaching is a craft which must be honed and shaped continuously. One way to improve the teaching craft comes from seeing both effective and ineffective examples of how it should be done, and then having an opportunity to discuss the learning with colleagues in a safe environment (Protheroe, 2009). Through this investigation, I determined the relationship between the type of walkthrough process a school implements and the frequency of high yield strategy usage, and whether that connection had a positive influence on student success.
SECTION TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Embedded professional learning, utilizing strategies observed at workshops in classrooms on a regular basis and monitoring the use of those proven to work well for students, require a firm understanding of excellent teaching and a place to see it modeled. “What works always depends on where, when, and with whom. But if we begin with the end in mind and plan backward, we can take many of those context-specific elements into consideration, making success much more likely.” (Guskey, 2014 p. 16) Professional learning must be individualized and the walkthrough process allows for that individuality.

Schools have often implemented professional learning without knowing what they hoped to accomplish. By analyzing the walkthrough data and looking at which strategies are being used versus which ones are missing, schools can clearly determine which strategies need to be reintroduced based on what is and is not seen during the walkthroughs. The need for training on those particular strategies becomes a clearer need to the teachers when they have participated in the walkthrough process and seen the evidence of gaps first hand. Covey speaks of this in one of the habits of highly effective people. He states, “begin with an end in mind,” allowing for a clear destination to cut down on unnecessary detours in learning for the teachers and the students (Covey, 1989, p.11).

Definition of Terms

Theory of the Walkthrough Process

Walkthroughs have been described as a tool to “drive a cycle of continuous improvement by focusing on the effects of instruction.” (Cervone & Martinez-Miller, 2007, p.1). Rossi (1997) used a walkthrough observation process as the basis for
dissertation research. In his research, conducted at the elementary level, he found that staff members believed that walkthroughs had impacted instruction with positive outcomes. These include: teachers sharing best practices, increased student time on task, increased principal awareness of what is happening in classrooms, better understanding by the principal of curriculum gaps and inconsistencies, better understanding by the principal of professional development needs, improvement in the quality of student work, improved quality of conversations about instruction by teachers, and development by teachers of a common language around instruction (Rossi, 1997, p. 92-94).

In the walkthrough process utilized in the grant schools, although conducted in secondary schools rather than elementary, we have experienced positive outcomes mirroring those observed by Rossi (1997). The teachers share best practices, principals and teachers know what happens in classrooms, teachers focus on student learning, and the quality of student work is beginning to improve. The additional benefit of the walkthrough process used in the schools in my study is the teachers learning from one another through their participation in the walkthrough process.

Protheroe (2009) researched various types of walkthroughs and determined that there are specific elements that make the walkthroughs more effective. Those elements include keeping the walkthroughs brief (approximately 3-5 minutes), and giving those who are observing specific focal points for their observation. In the study schools, the walkthroughs were kept brief and observes had a focus, allowing for more efficient observations.

Walkthroughs can carry both positive and negative connotations among educators. If walkthroughs are more about compliance, success of the process is more a
myth than a reality (DeWitt, 2016). However, if the teachers and school leaders work together and have agreed upon things to look for during the walkthrough, learning can happen for both the teachers and the leaders (p. 1). Relational trust must be built for teachers to be able to trust the process of other teachers walking into their classrooms to observe (p. 2). This type of trust can be earned through collaborative planning and designing of the walkthrough process. In the WICOR walkthroughs conducted in this study, the teachers being observed and those doing the observing were shown what to look for prior to the walk, and they were always given a chance to discuss what they saw after the walk.

Walkthroughs can bring about deep learning on the part of the students, teachers, and leaders, if done collaboratively and authentically (DeWitt, 2016, p. 3). To be done authentically, those observing must have a clear focus and examples of what exemplary teaching should be. Ultimately, what we see in classrooms should be positively impacting student learning. If we do not see authentic student learning, that is the issue that must be addressed.

Peer Observations

Grimm, Kaufman, and Doty (2014) wrote about flipped peer observations which lead to job-embedded teacher learning in an article titled “Rethinking Classroom Observation.” This slightly altered yet similar approach required the teacher being observed to select something specific for the observers to document, track, and observe. Much like the process used in the rural schools of my study, the teachers involved with the process felt more confident in their teaching and improved their craft by observing one another teaching students.
This process asked teachers to select a focus question based on classroom data, which would answer something the teacher could not answer on his/her own. The teachers doing the observations would all focus on the question and write descriptive, not evaluative, notes. The observers were not analyzing the information they collected, instead the analysis was done by the teacher being observed in a non-threatening debrief session, complete with scripted questions and peer guidance.

No evaluation takes place during these teacher-led discussions, and judgment is replaced with guidance. The teachers’ voices are activated through the exploration of learning from one another and the chance to discuss what great teaching looks like, feels like, sounds like, and produces (Grimm, Kaufman, & Doty, 2014). This flipped approach to peer observation may allow for yet another type of teacher observation in the schools.

These observations run parallel to the walkthroughs conducted in my study, in that they were non-evaluative, teacher-led, and growth focused. The teachers in this study being observed did not ask that the observers look for any specific strategies or techniques, but they were given the WICOR walkthrough sheets ahead of time so that they would know what the observers would be looking for while in their rooms. The WICOR walkthrough sheets outline the strategies, concepts, and environment looked for during the walkthrough process.

Those in the study also follow a protocol to guide the conversation in the hallway after the observation, but only on a few instances has the teacher who was being observed been a part of those conversations. Next year, the plan is to structure the walkthrough schedule so that the observed teachers have planning after the observations so that they also can be a part of the conversation, extending the learning to the teacher being
observed. Currently the teacher being observed does receive written feedback, but the added conversation could enhance learning exponentially.

Learning from fellow teachers continues to be the most powerful professional learning available (Swanson, 2014). Edcamp, the brainchild of a cohort of teachers, grew through social media and sheer determination. These camps provide a venue for teachers to learn from teachers without a set agenda other than better serving students. It began back in 2010 and has been growing ever since. In these camps, teachers come together and learn from one another, but no set schedule of events happens ahead of time. Instead, the learning occurs organically, out of just having time for conversations (Swanson, 2014). The walkthrough process allows for teachers to have the same type of organic conversations around what they observed in the classrooms they visited, and then take the best practices they observed back to their own classrooms to attempt with their own students.

RigorWalk (Carter & Reeves, 2015), a new measurement tool for teacher growth and learning, provides a framework for educators who walk classrooms to diagnose whether the rigor level observed in the classroom appropriately matches the skill levels of the students and the standards of the course. In this process, there is a pre-visit introduction, an on-site visit where classrooms are observed, a debrief that includes an analysis of the RigorWalk pillars, and then next steps for growth. This practice takes our walkthrough process to a much more calculated level, giving benchmarks for growth, but it misses the key element of including teachers in the walkthrough process.

It would be interesting to compare a RigorWalk debrief to the debriefs conducted in this study to see if the process mirrors the process used in the grant schools That part
of their process is not outlined in their materials (Carter & Reeves, 2015). According to the WebEx training I attended, the power of this process comes in the action plan created after the classrooms are observed. This action plan involves administration, but not classroom teachers. The teachers’ involvement would exponentially increase the usefulness of this tool (Carter & Reeves, 2015).

Research completed by Putnam and Borko highlighted cognition as having social dimensions, saying, “interactions with people in one’s own environment are major determinants of what is learned and how learning takes place” (2000, p. 5). Teachers complained that the professional learning they received was too far removed from their everyday classroom experiences and was not relevant to what they needed. The focus became the context in which they received the learning. In my study, the teachers are learning in the context of classrooms in their own buildings with their own students, rather than the traditional setting of a workshop or conference.

The classroom provides the place where true learning takes place for the teachers and the students, giving rise to the need to see one another teach (Putnam & Borko, 2000). Multiple contexts for teacher learning are needed for the practices in the classroom to change and improve. In my study, I presented the College Readiness System training in a workshop setting initially, revisited it with in house professional development, and then walked classrooms with teachers to look for the use of the strategies taught in the professional learning opportunities, allowing for the variety of contexts that Putnam and Borko (2000) promoted in their study. Teachers greatly benefit when allowed to walk one another’s classrooms. Learning that is social in nature tends to have more positive and sustained results.
Real Time Professional Learning

Education Week posted an article and blog in May 2015 that caught my attention, mostly due to its title, “3 Reasons Why Your Observations May Be a Waste of Time.” The author challenges administrators to be intentional with observations so that the needs of teachers are met and not just assumed. “Observations have always been at risk of something you have to get done…instead of something to get done right” (DeWitt, 2015, p.1). They do not have to be that way. The article highlights the need to use observations as formative assessments for teachers to hone their craft, not something to check off an administrator’s list. The walkthroughs we conduct provide specific feedback for the teacher being observed, as well as for the teachers doing the observing. Learning takes place on the part of administrators and teachers and the students are the ones who reap the benefits (DeWitt, 2015).

Small changes will not be enough. Educators need to work collaboratively to make professional development relevant and teacher driven. Teachers are taking on more coaching roles and have been given the opportunity to venture out of their classrooms in the walkthrough process adopted in these rural areas. This approach supports the ideas outlined by Palo Alto Unified School District (Cohen, 2014) through the adoption of Edcamps and the ongoing approach to professional development. In addition to encouraging dialogue, teachers were given opportunities to visit schools within their district to learn from one another, similar to the way the administrators, DD, and I have created a collaborative structure in these rural schools in my study. The teachers are encouraged to visit classrooms on their feeder campuses as well as in neighboring districts also involved in the grant. Palo Alto found renewed excitement in teaching and
the incorporation of best practices more widely after being given the chance to talk to one another about teaching. The walkthrough process with teachers also creates collegial conversations and real time professional learning (Cohen, 2014).

Just because we know change will be positive and is needed does not mean that implementing it will be easy. In Differentiated Coaching, the author talks about change being “hard work, even when we want to change and are convinced it’s worth the effort” (Kise, 2006, p.4). With the walkthrough process, we are asking teachers to change their practice in their classrooms, which for a passionate teacher equates to asking someone to change their religion (Hall & Simeral, 2008). In order to get the desired results, teachers in these schools needed to change their practices in the classrooms. Seeing other people in their building making bold changes has given a level of comfort to the teachers that has encouraged new ideas and ultimately brought about change.

“Teachers become more effective, efficient, and joyful when they have time to plan, observe, coach, and learn together” (Routman, 2014, p.2). The walkthrough process used in this study allows for teachers to observe, coach, and learn together, while giving feedback and asking teachers to step out of their comfort zones to try new things. A culture of high trust, collaboration, and authenticity requires support from the top down, the superintendent, the administrators, and the teachers must all see the value in trusting one another to do what best serves students, and working together to find new approaches to doing so.
Why Walkthroughs?

The walkthrough process allows for teachers to learn from one another in a setting that includes students. Walkthroughs can be done on any campus with a relatively small financial investment for the school or district. The power, however, lies in the coaching which takes place in the debrief process.

In June 2015, I had the opportunity to attend an Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) conference conducted by Pete Hall, co-author of *Building Teachers’ Capacity for Success; A Collaborative Approach for Coaches and School Leaders*. The training, based on the book, gave practical advice for coaching teachers towards better instruction. Pete stated in his book and his training that “Teachers are the field agents of educational change” (Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 13). His statement stems from what he deems the X-factor: teachers. Without great teachers, learning will not take place. You can remove everything else from the classroom, technology, books, supplies, and learning can continue, but if you remove the teacher learning stops (Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 12).

Hall & Simeral, a principal and instructional coach who have written a book about building capacity in teachers, claim that there are four facets to a collaborative approach to growing teachers. The facets are: 1. individual relationships, 2. daily, intentional supervision, 3. reflective feedback, and 4. development and evaluation. According to their research, daily, intentional supervision is facet 2 of Strength-Based School Improvement and the honing of teachers’ skills. It takes place through two primary means: rounds and walkthroughs. The walkthroughs Hall & Simeral (2008) reference involve administrators walking through classrooms on campus regularly, leaving specific,
formative feedback for the teacher’s professional growth. These regular walkthroughs allow teachers to see administrators as instructional leaders rather than just building managers. Allowing teachers to walk with administrators adds an additional layer of learning for the administrators, the observing teachers, and the teachers being observed. The administrators become more visible, and the teachers learn what lens the administrators use. Even though the administrators eventually evaluate the teachers, these walkthroughs are non-evaluative and are meant for formative use.

A Continuum of Self-Reflection provides the basis for learning for teachers’ growth in Hall and Simeral’s book. The continuum helps teachers, administrators, and coaches determine a starting place for “diagnosing” teachers so that differentiated help can assist with growth in learning. The four stages, Unaware, Conscious, Active, and Refinement, describe where teachers might fall in their journey of learning.

Each stage brings with it a different type of coaching to help the teacher grow into better educators. The walkthrough process in my study coaches the teachers as well, asking them the same reflective questions about their practice and their learning. The reason we have asked teachers to walkthrough one another’s classrooms blossomed out of a desire to model expectations to stimulate growth. Hall & Simeral’s (2008) model asks teachers the same questions we ask in the debrief process, and although we have not identified our teachers according to the continuum, we have coached them in a very similar and aligned way. Next school year, we will be using this pointed type of questioning to further enhance the walkthrough process. One piece of coaching that can be found in all four stages of the continuum is modeling, which teachers experience with every walkthrough.
The idea that teachers are the center of the universe certainly is not new, but sadly often gets overlooked. In 1909, the American Association for the Advancement of Science knew that teachers were key: “Given a good teacher, and locate him in a cellar, an attic, or a barn, and the strong students of the institution will beat a path to his door. Given a weak teacher and surround him with the finest array of equipment that money can buy, and permit the students to choose, as in the elective courses, and his class room will echo its own emptiness” (American, p. 787). Teachers have to be our focus!

As with our students, teachers’ needs vary vastly. “It is the equivalent of educational malpractice for us to usher all our teachers into neat rows, robotically interacting with them with nary a thought to the gifts they bring to their classrooms” (Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 13). Walkthroughs allow for differentiation, real time instruction and learning, and formative growth, creating an environment for educational growth and change.

Conclusion

Multiple studies have all pointed to similar conclusions: when coupled with feedback and purpose, walkthroughs (i.e. brief visits in classrooms to determine use of teaching strategies, student engagement, and learning) improves teaching practices. The inclusion of teachers on these walkthroughs allows for the professional learning opportunity to extend from the teacher being observed to those doing the observing as well. Typically, the feedback provided has the ability and potential to enhance classroom practices and student achievement. In order for improvement to take place, administrators and teachers must work together to determine the goals of the
walkthroughs, the needs of the students based on the data, and the use of best practices determined by the needs of students.
SECTION THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design Overview

The majority of my educational career has been spent attempting to improve the results of those around me. As a classroom teacher, my target audience, the students, took top priority, and I worked to enhance their learning. When I became a district level employee, the teachers became my goal audience, and I pushed them to think about how their students learn. As an assistant principal, I worked with teachers to be the best they could be for their students. As CRS’s Project System’s coach, I worked daily to ensure that the teachers and administrators use high yield teaching strategies laid out before them to see gains. Now as a Division Liaison, I work to push CRS’s internal staff to coach our external partners towards transformation with excellence. One of the most effective ways I have found to push people towards excellence is to show them what excellence looks like in action. Allowing teachers to watch best practices being utilized with students in their own school breeds excellence.

Traditional professional development involves a group of faculty members sitting in a room, learning together how to better deliver information. The walkthrough process allows teachers to see students doing the activities taught in professional development and to orchestrate their learning. I researched whether the use of these strategies in schools and classrooms has increased since the implementation of the walkthrough process. By triangulating the walkthrough data gathered on observations at the schools with the self-reported teacher survey information about the use of these same strategies, and interview data gathered from teachers who have participated in the process, I was able to begin making connections. I saw connections between the frequency of the
reported use of strategies, what was actually observed, and the perceptions of those for whom the process was built. The goal of this study was to provide a basis for other principals and district level officials to build their professional learning tool belt to best serve their teachers and their students in the future.

In order to adequately answer my research questions, I needed to know what the teachers believed happens as a result of the walkthrough process, what the survey data said about how teachers are using WICOR in their classrooms, and what was observed when walking classrooms throughout the 2014-15 school year. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection provided an understanding of what works well with the established process and what still needs more tweaking. Spreading the research over the four rural schools which are similar geographically and demographically yet different in philosophy and approach enabled me to study a variety of schools in implementing a similar process. The feeder patterns for the middle schools and the high schools in this study exclusively serve the same students, increasing the potential for widespread change with proper implementation. Through the three methods of data collection, I was better equipped to give educationally sound advice to principals about what these processes could do for their schools as well.

By having three different sources of data, I determined the impact of the WICOR walkthrough process on the campuses. The surveys were self-reported, which had a large amount of subjectivity, but when compared to the observation data done at those same schools in the classrooms of the teachers who completed the surveys, I was able to determine usage of strategies that the teachers reported and how they correlated with the self-reported data. Interviewing the teachers involved in the process, both as observers
...and those being observed gave the honest perspective of the stakeholders, allowing qualitative data to support the quantitative data. Interviewing the CRS District Director, who participated in walkthroughs on all four campuses, brought perspective to the differences and similarities of the process, and helped determine which processes were most effective based on his perspective. I coupled his perspective with the survey data and the walkthrough data to see if what we observed and what the teachers who observed reported matched his and the teachers’ perception of the teachers involved in the WICOR walkthrough process.

**Participants**

The four schools I selected to be used in this study are in pure feeder school patterns, meaning that students from ABC Middle School attend ABC High School and the students from LMN Middle School attend LMN High School. The schools are located in a similar region and serve a similar rural population of students. The schools are comparable in size and demographics and adhere to the same state standards. All four schools participated in a grant which brought in an outside consultant to assist them in this walkthrough process to enhance professional learning.

The participants for each portion of the study were all employed at the aforementioned schools in the 2014-15 school year. In the next few paragraphs, I will describe how I selected the participants for each portion of my study, the survey, the walkthroughs and the interviews. The participants for the survey consisted of teachers employed at each of the schools. The survey, which was given by CRS Center in May of 2013, 2014 and 2015, was completed by teachers, guidance counselors, instructional coaches, and administrators; however, for my purposes, I looked at the teacher responses
only. Every teacher at each of the four schools completed the Survey, as it was a requirement of the grant. The schools had somewhere between 75% and 100% participation by their teachers on the Survey each year. The teachers were allowed to remain anonymous for this survey, but they did give information on the number of years they have taught and the subjects and grade levels they primarily taught in that school year.

The WICOR walkthroughs the DD and I conducted throughout the school year monitored the use of strategies in classrooms, specifically monitoring the teacher’s actions. Sometimes instructional coaches joined us on the walkthrough process as well, but there are not coaches at all four schools. One of the teachers interviewed at ABC High also plays the role of instructional coach.

The principals selected the teachers who were observed on the walkthroughs. These teachers varied in years of experience, grade level, content, and years at the school, and had only been exposed to WICOR strategies for one year. If the teacher was observed more than once, one of the observations was used in the data collection, since not all teachers at the school were observed on more than one occasion in the semester. Depending on the school, some teachers knew they were going to be observed and others did not, but all the teachers knew that WICOR walkthroughs would be taking place on that day, they just did not all know that their classroom would be observed. The decision to inform the teachers rested on the principal.

The classrooms visited for the purpose of the WICOR walkthroughs and the teachers who walked through those classrooms were selected by the principal. Each principal approached the task with a slightly different focus: ABC Middle wanted
equality for all teachers, but all principals did begin the year allowing the newest teachers
to walk and see some more veteran teachers. ABC High selected teachers to walk with
an on-campus coach. LMS asked for volunteers to walk and selected specific classrooms
to feature based on their ability to engage students; and LHS only selected four teachers
to walk, but based who we saw on the schedule of the day and not what we might see.
The CRS District Director walked with me as the Project Systems Coach for every
walkthrough in this district, giving me a global perspective of what takes place in these
schools.

The principal selected the participants for the interview based on their
involvement in the walkthrough process. The interviewees hold a variety of roles on
campus, including coach, teacher, resource teacher, department chair, and CRS
coordinator. The number of years of teaching varies from two years to twenty years. I
conducted interviews with three teachers from each school who were involved in the
walkthrough process, either as an observer or a teacher being observed. In addition to
interviewing the teachers, I interviewed the CRS District Director, who participated in
every walkthrough done in this district.

The teacher perspective was of particular value as they are the people who are
most directly influencing the learning of the students. The common thread for those
interviewed is that every one of these teachers participated in WICOR Walkthrough
during the 2014-15 school year either as a person observing or a person being observed.
In all but one case, the teachers had done both. They had also all been trained in CRS
strategies, either through CRS Summer Institute, CRS Path to School wide training, or
local CRS training conducted by me.
The teachers that the principals selected for the interview have been involved in the process either as a teacher observing classrooms or as a teacher being observed. Whenever possible, the teachers participated in both roles, to give a more well-rounded perspective. I asked the teachers selected to participate, and I gave the participants the opportunity to decline without any hardship. I worked with these teachers prior to my study as their coach and then transitioned to working alongside them in the process of determining the WICOR walkthrough validity. Over the last two and a half years in my role of Project Systems Coach, I made efforts to foster my relationships with the teachers and I feel strongly that the participants felt comfortable either accepting or declining to answer the questions presented in the interview.

**Data Gathering Techniques**

I used three types of data gathering techniques for this study: A survey, which was administered by the innovation grant and CRS Center to every teacher, administrator, and guidance counselor in each of the four schools three times over the last three years; WICOR Walkthrough data that I collected during the actual walkthroughs conducted on each of the campuses throughout the 2014-15 school year to look for use of the WICOR strategies throughout the school; and interviews with teachers and the District Director who participated in the walkthroughs to determine their thoughts and interpretations of the process and its impact.

**Survey Data**

I asked the teachers in all four of the schools I studied to participate in a survey in the spring of 2013, 2014, and 2015. The items on the survey addressed their teaching practices. The survey focused on the specific use of WICOR strategies. The baseline
survey data was gathered in May of 2013 by CRS Center through the use of Survey Monkey, with subsequent data collected in May of 2014 and May of 2015. At least 75% of the teachers in the building answered the survey. I did not analyze individual teacher data, as it was anonymous, but instead whole school data. I looked for changes from year one, to year two. In year two, the administrative teams implemented the walkthrough process. These teams consisted of the principals and assistant principals, academic coaches, CRS coordinators, and me.

I assisted in designing this survey at the beginning of the grant to measure what the teachers knew before training, with the hopes of showing gains in the use of these strategies. I utilized the data to determine if the growth of the self-reported use of these strategies correlated to the incorporation of WICOR strategies in the walkthrough process. I determined if one approach to the execution and frequency of the walkthroughs yielded bigger results. In studying these data points, I have set up a process to inform other building level leaders of specific practices which should lead to increased learning in their own buildings.

The teachers and administrators had one month to complete the survey, with a reminder and update on the total percentage completed sent to the principals each Friday during that month. The survey included additional questions which I did not utilize for my study, as they do not impact the research questions I plan to explore. There are 19 questions that I utilized from the original survey. Five of the 19 questions are demographic type questions, and the other 14 are about specific classroom practices. The specific survey questions and answer options are in the Appendix B. Teachers remained anonymous in these surveys so that they would feel free to answer honestly, and they
were allowed to choose not to answer specific questions by selecting “decline to answer”. The questions have a range of options from which the participant could choose.

**Walkthrough Data**

I used the walkthrough data I gathered when I was on each campus conducting walkthroughs with teachers to inform my study. I collected these data on a project management system called Smartsheet (Appendix A). I only looked at the 2014-15 school year data, since that is when this process was adopted in these four schools. The Smartsheet has 347 entries for these four schools; of them, 115 I conducted personally. After getting rid of observations that reflected data from observations on the same teacher twice in one semester, uneven amounts of observations done in different semesters at the same schools, and duplicate entries on the same observation due to a glitch in the project management system, I used 68 observations for the purpose of analysis. I sorted the entries in a variety of ways to help determine how the schools are utilizing the strategies and where the most significant changes took place in each building.

I focused on the impact of the WICOR walkthrough on the use of high yield strategies with my research questions. The use of WICOR strategies are measured in both the survey and the walkthrough data. I also discussed the use of strategies with the teachers and CRS District Director during the interview process. Through the conversations with the teachers and the comparing of the survey and walkthrough data, I was able to determine whether allowing teachers to see one another in action had an impact on the teachers’ alteration of behaviors in their classrooms in terms of using WICOR strategies. It was my intention, if I could identify an increased use of the strategies, to share the value of utilizing this process with administrators nationally.
I want teachers to be the best they can possibly be. Having a chance to watch other people teach, particularly in their own building with their students’ increases understanding about how strategies can be utilized. I wanted to know if the growth in the use of the strategies is related to the walkthrough process.

In terms of ethical concerns, the walkthrough process is not used to evaluate the teachers. The teachers have the walkthrough document prior to the observers walking classrooms, and they receive a copy of the completed walkthrough document within two hours of the actual walkthrough. In these walkthroughs, the observers are validating that teachers are using the practices and the principals do not use the information from these walkthroughs on the teachers’ evaluations. Instead, if the feedback is favorable, the teachers can elect to use it as evidence to show the good things they are doing in their classrooms. The information from these walks can only help the teachers, not harm them.

The teachers in each building received training on WICOR strategies. The training came from either internal campus trainers, external CRS trainers, or a combination of both and was designed to help them in their classrooms.

I communicated the feedback to the teachers I observed in a timely fashion so that the teachers never had to wonder about the information gathered, and I kept the communication lines open for the teachers to ask questions of me via email and follow up visits. Each time I left feedback, I encouraged the teachers to reach out to me if they had any questions or wanted any additional information. I, as well as all the teachers, the CRS District Director and administrators who walked the classrooms, always left a “nice note” which thanked them for opening their room or commented on a specific positive feature. In an effort to guide the observed teacher toward continuous improvement, I also left at
least one question as formative feedback on the walkthrough form for the teacher to reflect on. The expectation was that the administrators would circle back around with the teachers to see if they needed any additional coaching about the questions I left. The teachers, administrators and instructional coaches stepped out into the hallway after each walkthrough and discussed the following questions:

1. What did you see? The open-ended nature of this question intentionally allowed for a variety of responses, depending on the viewpoint of the observer.

2. How could this lesson go from good to great? The walkthroughs are designed to help teachers think about continuous opportunities for improvement and this question guided that conversation.

3. What can you steal? The goal of the walkthroughs revolves around the increased use of effective teaching strategies. By asking teachers this question, we encouraged the observers to transfer what they saw into practical classroom practices that they could replicate.

Asking this series of questions allowed for those who were observing to process and internalize what they saw and what they should do with the information they learned from the observation. The discussion that the teachers had in the hallway after the observation may have been the most valuable part of the walkthrough process because it allowed the teachers to determine next steps for applying what they saw in their own classrooms.
**Interview Data**

In order to best investigate the impact of the walkthrough process on teachers and instruction, I interviewed teachers who have been through the process. I interviewed 3 teachers at each school for a total of 12 teachers (Appendix C). The teachers I interviewed all participated in the walkthrough process either as an observer or as a teacher I observed. I interviewed a range of teachers in terms of their number of years teaching and their subject areas taught to add variety to the results, which is reported in Section 4. The process for implementing the WICOR Walkthroughs varied in each of the four schools. In Section 4, each process used is outlined. The process used by each school impacted the number of teachers eligible to be interviewed.

I conducted the interviews at each school with the teachers individually. I spent roughly 45 minutes with each teacher at a designated time agreed upon by the principal and met the coach. The interviews ranged from 37 minutes to 51 minutes in length. In the interviews, I asked the same interview questions (Appendix C), along with probing inquiries when needed to receive complete answers. I interviewed the teachers individually and they all signed consent forms to participate.

I also interviewed the CRS District Director (Appendix D) for 50 minutes, since he joined me on every walkthrough of the 2014-15 school year. In addition to the questions I posed to the teachers, I also asked him questions about the varying approaches to the walkthrough process and his perceptions of the different results that each approach yielded (Appendix D). I asked both groups to elaborate on their experience with the WICOR walkthrough process, and their perceptions of its purpose and usefulness with respect to trying new strategies in their own classrooms. I addressed
their opinions of the success of the walkthroughs on their own campus and how the process could be improved in the future in Chapter 4. I also asked the CRS District Director to compare the different walkthrough processes at each of the four schools, which I hoped would help determine which approach was most impactful. I also wanted to know what changes in the atmosphere of the classroom took place because of the walkthroughs.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

For this study, I had three different types of data; survey, interview, and walkthroughs. The survey data came from all the teachers at the four schools, the interviews occurred with four teachers from each school and the CRS District Director, and the walkthroughs occurred with a variety of teachers on each campus throughout the 2014-15 school year. In this section, I give an overview of how I collected and analyzed the data for each of these three processes.

**Survey Data**

The innovation grant had already collected the survey data for all three years and shared it with me in raw form through CRS Center. I sorted these data to determine if the specific strategies used have increased, decreased, or stayed the same from 2013-14 to 2014-15. I analyzed each question separately and correlated them to the walkthrough data gathered from the same schools. I analyzed the data gathered in 2014 and 2015 using descriptive statistics. I analyzed the answers to the questions from the teachers who responded to the survey at the four schools to find relevant trends or changes. I presented the data in a chart with narration in Section Four and looked for evidence of changes in the use of strategies as self-reported by the teachers.
Walkthrough Data

I gathered the walkthrough observation data throughout the 2014-15 school year during the scheduled walkthrough visits. The data currently exists in a spreadsheet on the Smartsheet server, and I analyzed it to look for increased uses of specific strategies over the course of the school year. I determined trends in the observation data, and I compared the observation data to the self-reported survey data to see if there was significant growth or decline in any area of WICOR strategies as reported by the teachers.

I analyzed the Smartsheet walkthrough observation data by comparing each walkthrough against the next in chronological order. I was able to review an equal number of teachers in first semester and second semester to help equalize my analysis, since my number of observations (and therefore participants) was fairly small. The number of observations ranged from 6 to 10 teachers depending on the school. I attenuated the earliest and latest observations to cut down variability. If I observed a teacher more than once in the same semester, I used the observation that happened later in the first semester and earlier in the second semester. Again, this was done to reduce variability since I did not observe every teacher in the study more than once.

When I participated in the walkthroughs, I collected data on a form called Smartsheet. That information automatically uploaded onto a spreadsheet which I could then sort according to the school, teacher, date, or what was seen in the classrooms. I looked for increased observed use of the strategies and compared those results to the self-reported results on the survey. I noted the descriptive statistics and displayed the data via charts in which I found the variance and standard deviation for the overall observations.
for each discipline of WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading). The interviews provided the qualitative data to corroborate the survey and walkthrough observation data, determining if the quantitative results and the interview results tell the same story.

**Interview Data**

In each teacher interview, I asked the same series of questions. I transcribed their answers by listening to their recorded interviews, and typing their responses. I did have permission to record the interviews. After compiling the transcribed information, I analyzed all thirteen responses to each question, categorizing their responses into common themes. I recorded the consistency of the occurrence of the themes to show the commonalities and their strength in responses at the schools as a group. After completing this process for each question, I found overarching themes and shared those in my findings as well.

**Ethical Considerations**

The surveys were low risk for the teachers, because I never asked the teachers to identify themselves and the surveys were not tied to any type of job evaluation. When the grant team distributed the survey to the participants, they explained the purpose of the survey and that taking the survey involved no risk beyond that of everyday life. The principals gave verbal consent for CRS Center to survey the data and CRS Center gave me permission to use the data for my study. No minors were surveyed for this study, therefore there were no ethical issues pertaining to minors. I received written permission from CRS Center to utilize the surveys for my study, and that consent form can be found in Appendix E. The participating principals from the four schools in the study also gave
me permission to utilize the walkthrough data. The consent forms can be found in Appendix H.

I assured minimal risk and protected the anonymity of the interviewees, since their participation was voluntary, and I protected the identity of the teachers through the use of pseudonyms. I received written informed consent forms from each of the teachers interviewed as well as from the district director and those forms can be found in Appendix F. The questions that I asked the teachers are in Appendix C and the questions I asked the district director are in Appendix D. The responses of the teachers remain anonymous, and I protect them in a password protected file on my computer.

The principals only selected teachers who have participated in the walkthrough process, and the questions did not in any way single them out or harm their work relationships. I provided the questions to the principals prior to conducting the interviews to be sure they did not have any issue with the questions I asked. I also obtained the Informed Consent form (Appendix H) signed by each principal and the district. I gave the interview questions to the principals and the teachers prior to each actual interview.

The principals selected 3 teachers per campus and interviewed an intentional variety of race, gender, teaching experience, and tenure in the school. This was easier in the schools where multiple teachers had the opportunity to walk one another’s classrooms. In the schools where only a select number of teachers went through the process, I was still able to interview a variety of males and females and at least two races were represented. The interviews I conducted did not interfere with the duties assigned to the teachers and was done on their campuses to reduce any inconvenience. I
interviewed the District Director at a convenient time and location that did not interfere with his daily duties.

Conclusion

I compared the data collected for this study through the survey, walkthroughs, and interviews to determine if the walkthrough process had a significant impact on the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms at the four schools. Each school approached walkthroughs differently, and I analyzed the data and used the knowledge of how the walkthroughs were conducted to correlate the use of the strategies with the walkthrough process. Teachers have verbally expressed their excitement for the walkthrough process and the impact it has had on the use of strategies in their own classrooms. I now have a better understanding of how to consult with other schools in the future on the use of walkthroughs with teachers, and these data will help me support my claims.
SECTION FOUR: FINDINGS & INTERPRETATION

Findings

Overview

In this section, I analyzed and grouped walkthrough data, survey data, and information from interviews according to significance for the study. I have included some initial interpretation of the data. Each section had some very interesting findings, which coincided with my observations in the district for my study throughout the school year.

Survey.

In May of 2014 and May of 2015, the teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors at all four of the schools in this study completed an anonymous survey, which asked questions about their use of WICOR strategies. At least 75% of the faculty members at each of the schools completed the survey, with 100% participation at ABC High in 2014 and ABC Middle in 2015. The surveys did contain additional questions that did not pertain to my study, and I did not report on those responses.

I compared the survey answers for the 2014 questions that were relevant to my study (See Appendix B) to the answers for the same questions in 2015, to look for statistically significant changes in the responses. The responses involved a 1-7 scale of answers: 1 Never, 2 Once per term, 3 At least once a month, 4 More than once a month, but not weekly, 5 Once a week, 6 More than once a week, but not daily, 7 Daily. The scale allowed the teachers to be honest about their usage, and talking to the teachers in the interviews did reinforce the answers on the survey.
To analyze the survey data collected from the teachers at each of the four schools, I used a Mann Whitney U test for the following reasons: I measured the dependent variable (the response to the prompt on the Likert scale) at an ordinal level, and I had a distribution of scores of independent variables that was similar for both groups of the independent variable. The questions in the survey were categorized into five sections; Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading. Teachers completed a series of questions about each topic, and I reported on each set of questions for the section and its significance when compared year over year.

**Writing.**

The teachers at the four schools answered three questions on the survey in regard to writing. I combined questions 17A-17C because all those questions related specifically to Writing. Regarding survey questions #17A-C, which asked “how often during a term did you ask students to revise their notes and/or create a summary of their notes (from readings, classroom lectures, etc.); (17A), how often during the term did you ask students to write a summary sentence in order to synthesize a passage (17B); and how often during the term did you ask students to write in journals or logs reflecting on what they have been learning in their classes, as well as how they are doing and/or what goals they have for themselves?” (17C). (For the entire survey, please see Appendix B.) I analyzed the data for those questions together. I will report on the Writing questions for each school independently.

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about these three Writing questions in the survey. The Mann-Whitney two
sample rank-sum test is a non-parametric alternative to the independent samples t-test and does not share the independent samples t-test’s distributional assumptions. For ABC High School there were 58 responses to the Writing questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1376, z=-0.796, p=0.426. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.506 in 2013-14 and 3.760 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Writing strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Writing strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. These strategies would not necessarily be appropriate to use daily, and a couple of times a month means that the students are being exposed to this type of learning on a consistent basis at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=671, z=-0.405, p=0.686. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.556 in 2013-14 and 3.694 in 2014-15 indicating a similar situation to ABC High School. LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 40 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=558, z=-1.512, p=0.131. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.991 in 2013-14 and 3.400 in 2014-15, indicating a drop in self-reported usage of the writing strategies, which is consistent with the walkthrough results in the next section. At LMN High School the administrative team did not look for WICOR strategies throughout the school year, indicating to the teachers that using them was not an expectation; however the teachers still reported using them a little more than once a month. LMN Middle School
had 31 responses in 2013-14 and 34 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were not significant, U=519, z=-0.105, p=0.916. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.774 in 2013-14 and 3.745 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using Writing strategies one or more times a month, but there was not an increase in the use of strategies overall from one year to the next as was self-reported in this survey.

Table 1

Survey results for writing questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.506</td>
<td>3.760</td>
<td>1376</td>
<td>-0.796</td>
<td>0.426</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.556</td>
<td>3.694</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>-0.405</td>
<td>0.686</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.991</td>
<td>3.400</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>-1.512</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.774</td>
<td>3.745</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>-0.105</td>
<td>0.916</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although none of the four schools saw a significant increase in the use of writing strategies between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the fact that the teachers reported using the writing strategies one or more times a month was encouraging. Prior to their training, many of these teachers were not intentionally using writing strategies in their classrooms at all. The fact that they reported on average using the Writing strategies one or more times a month means that they are incorporating the Writing strategies into their lesson plans on a regular basis. To get an entire school to report using any WICOR strategy daily would not likely ever happen, because different subjects and different lessons require different approaches to teaching.
Inquiry.

For the Inquiry strategies, I asked a series of five questions on the survey in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. I posed these questions to the entire faculty at each of the four schools. The questions were answered on a Likert scale of 1=Never, 2=Once per term, 3=At least once a month, 4=More than once a month, but not weekly, 5=Once a week, 6=More than once a week, but not daily, 7=Daily. The overarching question read, “The next series of questions concern Inquiry strategies you might use in your classroom. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you do the following: ask students to agree/disagree with a prompt where one student speaks at a time going back and forth from the pro to the con? (14a); how often in a term did you do the following: ask students to work in small groups, asking each other questions about the subject matter or texts to discover answers to questions as a group? (14b); how often in a term did you do the following: ask students to apply what they have previously learned to what they are currently doing in your class? (14c); how often in a term did you do the following: ask students to work in small groups on a product with a rubric of expectations? (14d); how often in a term did you ask students to debate a statement or question in written form only, utilizing chart paper? (14e).

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Inquiry questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2015-16. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1268, z=-1.575, p=0.115. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.597 in 2013-14 and 4.097 in 2014-15, indicating
that the teachers reported consistently using Inquiry strategies more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Inquiry strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. These strategies would not necessarily be appropriate to use daily, and a couple of times a month means that the students are being exposed to this type of learning on a consistent basis at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the Inquiry questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=695, z=-0.158, p=0.875. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.611 in 2013-14 and 3.684 in 2014-15 indicating a similar situation to ABC High School.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.697</td>
<td>4.097</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td>-1.575</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.611</td>
<td>3.684</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>-0.158</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.973</td>
<td>3.940</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.607</td>
<td>4.499</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>-2.468</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 40 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=681, z=-0.207, p=0.836. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.973 in 2013-14 and 3.940 in 2014-15, indicating a consistent reporting of using the Inquiry strategies more than once a month. At LMN High School the administrative team did not look for WICOR strategies throughout the
school year indicating to the teachers that using them was not an expectation. The teachers did still report using them more than once a month. LMN Middle School had 31 responses in 2013-14 and 34 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were significant, U=339, z=-2.468, p=0.014. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.607 in 2013-14 and 4.499 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using Inquiry strategies more than once a month, and at LMN Middle they saw significant growth in the use of Inquiry strategies. It is noteworthy that Inquiry strategies are often more abstract for teachers to incorporate into lessons and LMN Middle School made clear growth in teachers providing these learning opportunities for students on a regular basis.

**Collaboration.**

For the Collaboration strategies, I asked a series of three questions on the survey in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. These questions were asked to the entire faculty at each of the four schools. The questions were answered on a Likert scale of 1=Never, 2=Once per term, 3=At least once a month, 4=More than once a month, but not weekly, 5=Once a week, 6=More than once a week, but not daily, 7=Daily. The overarching question read, the next series of questions concern **Collaboration** strategies you might use in your classroom. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you ask students to work in small groups, and ask students to ask each other questions about the subject matter or texts to discover answers to questions as a group? (14b*); how often in a term did you ask students to apply what they have previously learned to what they are currently doing in your classroom? (14c*); and how often in a term did you have students participate in Socratic seminars - that is, engage in
collaborative dialogue about the text through the use of higher level questions? (19b*).

Question 14b and 14c also factored into the results of the Inquiry questions and question 19b factored into the results of the Reading questions.

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Collaboration questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the Collaboration questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1256, z=-1.652, p=0.099. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.283 in 2013-14 and 3.776 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Collaboration strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Collaboration strategies but that the frequency of use did not change significantly from one year to the next. These strategies would not necessarily be appropriate to use daily, and a couple times a month means that the students are being exposed to this type of learning on a consistent basis at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the Collaboration questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=702, z=0.840, p=0.933. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.308 in 2013-14 and 3.194 in 2014-15 indicating a slight drop in reported use of Collaboration strategies at ABC Middle School. The teachers still reported that they use Collaboration strategies at least once a month, but the average hovered closer to once a month than more than once a month. LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 40 responses in 2014-15.
The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, \(U=676, z=-0.256, p=0.798\). The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.391 in 2013-14 and 3.567 in 2014-15, indicating a slight increase in self-reported usage of the Collaboration strategies, with the average use showing somewhere between once a month and more than once a month but not weekly.

Table 3

*Survey results for collaboration questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.283</td>
<td>3.776</td>
<td>1256</td>
<td>-1.652</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.308</td>
<td>3.194</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>-0.084</td>
<td>0.933</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.391</td>
<td>3.567</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>-0.256</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.776</td>
<td>3.231</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>-2.446</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LMN Middle School had 31 responses in 2013-14 and 34 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were significant, \(U=342, z=-2.446, p=0.014\). The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.776 in 2013-14 and 3.231 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported a significant drop in the use of Collaboration strategies between 2013-14 and 2014-15. I was surprised by this drop, because observing the teachers at this school showed an increase in collaborative seating in classrooms, but the teachers clearly did not feel that they were using Collaborative strategies in their rooms consistently. It is still noteworthy that the average response stated that they use these strategies at least once a month.
For the Organization strategies, I asked a series of nine questions in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. I posed these questions to the entire faculty at each of the four schools. The questions were answered on a Likert scale of 1=Never, 2=Once per term, 3=At least once a month, 4=More than once a month, but not weekly, 5=Once a week, 6=More than once a week, but not daily, 7=Daily. The overarching question read, “The next series of questions concern Organization strategies you might use in your classroom. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you ask the students to use three ring binders to keep work in and to keep it orderly? (12a); how often in a term did you ask the students to complete assignment logs to record work and grades on that work? (12b); how often in a term did you ask the students to complete an agenda or calendar to record due dates, homework, and your expectations or assignments? (12c); how often in a term did you ask students to use spiral notebooks for recording notes in an interactive format (i.e. lecture notes and handouts on one side, and student generated work on the other)? (12d); and how often in a term did you ask students to take notes chunked into three categories/columns of questions, facts, and steps? (12e).

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Organization questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the first set of organization questions in 2013-14 and 53 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1441.5, z=-0.712, p=0.477. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.974 in 2013-14 and 4.136 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Organization
strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Organization strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. These strategies were a specific focus for 9th grade teachers but not for the entire school. To have an average score of once a month for the entire school shows that the strategies were being used at least some in all grade levels at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=687.5, z=-0.231 p=0.817. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.815 in 2013-14 and 4.019 in 2014-15 indicating a similar situation to ABC High School, in that the teachers were using the strategies more than once a month. ABC Middle did not choose to use binders (an organizational system) school wide, but instead only used it specifically in the CRS Elective. The CRS Elective course only involved one teacher and roughly 75 students. The fact that the teachers on average reported using Organizational strategies at least once a month shows strong implementation of this portion of WICOR. LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 41 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=645.0, z=-0.757, p=0.449. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.391 in 2013-14 and 4.056 in 2014-15, indicating a slight decrease in the use of Organization strategies. At LMN High School the Organizational system of binders was only adopted by the CRS Elective teacher and not school wide, so knowing that teachers reported using Organizational strategies at least once a month encouraged me that other teachers saw value in helping the students get more organized. LMN Middle School had
33 responses in 2013-14 and 34 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were not significant, $U=439.5$, $z=-1.526$, $p=0.127$. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.877 in 2013-14 and 4.394 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using Organization strategies one or more times a month, but there was not a significant increase in the use of strategies overall from one year to the next as was self-reported in this survey. This particular school did implement school wide use of binders in 2014-15, but were still learning how to make the binder use a true practice in the school.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significant or Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.974</td>
<td>4.136</td>
<td>1441.5</td>
<td>-0.712</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.815</td>
<td>4.019</td>
<td>687.5</td>
<td>-0.231</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>4.391</td>
<td>4.056</td>
<td>645.0</td>
<td>-0.757</td>
<td>0.449</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.877</td>
<td>4.394</td>
<td>439.5</td>
<td>-1.526</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Organization questions had two categories. The first category asked the teachers questions about what they asked the students to do. The second category involved more assessment related organizational skills, including rubrics, and typically these types of activities are more daunting to implement due to the need for pre-planning.

This set of survey questions (#13) concern strategies of Organization you might use with your students to help them organize their work, thoughts, and/or time. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you use the following organizational tools in your classroom; rubrics or other clear guidelines to explain expectations for assignments including the point value of specific components, which is
given to the students when an assignment is made. (13a); how often in a term did you ask students to use “foldables” that is folding paper to help students organize and record information into categories? (13b); how often in a term did you ask students to use essay planning where students first formulate and state a clear thesis and organize details and facts to support that thesis prior to writing (13c); how often in a term did you ask students to use a form for writing assignments to assist students with organizing the fact/details to use, identify a thesis statement, etc.? (13d)  I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Organization questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the organization questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1468.5, z=-0.388, p=0.698. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.151 in 2013-14 and 3.332 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Organization strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Organization strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. Essay writing, while a focus of English classes really was not a focus school wide in all content areas. To have an average score of once a month for the entire school shows that the strategies were being used at least some in courses other than English at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=698.5, z=-0.116, p=0.908. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.076 in 2013-14 and 3.186 in 2014-15 indicating
a similar situation to ABC High School, in that the teachers were using the strategies more than once a month. ABC Middle did not choose to ask students to work on essays in all classes. The fact that the teachers on average reported using Organizational strategies specific to organization in writing at least once a month shows strong implementation of this portion of WICOR.

Table 5

Survey results for organization questions series 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.151</td>
<td>3.332</td>
<td>1468.5</td>
<td>-0.388</td>
<td>0.698</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.076</td>
<td>3.186</td>
<td>698.5</td>
<td>-0.116</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.464</td>
<td>3.369</td>
<td>684.5</td>
<td>-0.165</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.208</td>
<td>3.493</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>-0.978</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 40 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=684.5, z=-0.165, p=0.869. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.464 in 2013-14 and 3.369 in 2014-15, indicating a slight decrease in the use of Organization strategies. At LMN High School the Organizational system of essay organization was only adopted by the CRS Elective teacher and not school wide, so knowing that teachers reported using Organizational strategies at least once a month encouraged me that other teachers saw value in helping the students organize their thinking in their writing. LMN Middle School had 32 responses in 2013-14 and 34 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were not significant, U=468, z=-0.978, p=0.328. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.208 in 2013-14 and 3.493 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using
Organization strategies one or more times a month, but there was not a significant
increase in the use of strategies overall from one year to the next as was self-reported in
this survey. This particular school did implement school wide use of organization in

Reading.

For the Reading strategies, a series of nine questions total were asked on the
survey in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. I asked these questions of the
entire faculty at each of the four schools. The questions were answered on a Likert scale
of 1=Never, 2=Once per term, 3=At least once a month, 4=More than once a month, but
not weekly, 5=Once a week, 6=More than once a week, but not daily, 7=Daily. The
question read, “The first series of questions concern Reading strategies you might use in
your classroom. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you
ask students to read complex texts in your classroom? (18a); how often in a term did you
spend time helping students learn the meaning of new words? (18b); how often in a term
did you have students number the paragraphs, circle key terms, underline author’s claims,
and use this information to engage in activities about the text? (18c); how often in a term
did you use guided reading techniques that assist students in determining the meaning of
the passage and the author’s purpose, either as a class or small group? (18d); and how
often in a term did you ask students to employ close reading techniques that allow for the
students to repeat and/or fill in the blanks as the class reads together? (18e). There was a
total of five parts to this reading question.

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there
were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to
2014-15 about the Reading questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1410.5, z=-0.730, p=0.465. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.007 in 2013-14 and 4.235 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Reading strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Reading strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. These strategies would not necessarily be appropriate to use daily, and a couple times a month means that the students are being exposed to this type of learning on a consistent basis at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 33 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=667.5, z=-0.441, p=0.660. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.430 in 2013-14 and 4.226 in 2014-15 indicating a slight decrease in the reported use of Reading strategies at ABC Middle School. This decrease, although not significant, does show that the self-reported use of Reading strategies dropped but that teachers were still using the strategies more than once a month. LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 41 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=667.5, z=-0.441, p=0.660. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.406 in 2013-14 and 4.137 in 2014-15, indicating a drop in self-reported usage of the Reading strategies, which is consistent with the walkthrough results in the next section. At LMN High School the administrative team did not look for WICOR strategies throughout the school year indicating to the teachers
that using them was not an expectation. The teachers did still report using them a little more than once a month, however. LMN Middle School had 31 responses in 2013-14 and 33 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were not significant, U=494.5, z=-0.229, p=0.819. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.568 in 2013-14 and 4.606 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using Reading strategies more than once a month, but there was not a significant increase in the use of strategies overall from one year to the next as was self-reported in this survey.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>4.007</td>
<td>4.235</td>
<td>1410.5</td>
<td>-0.730</td>
<td>0.465</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>4.430</td>
<td>4.226</td>
<td>667.5</td>
<td>-0.441</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>4.406</td>
<td>4.137</td>
<td>647.0</td>
<td>-0.736</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>4.568</td>
<td>4.606</td>
<td>494.5</td>
<td>-0.229</td>
<td>0.819</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second series of survey questions concerning specific reading strategies that you might use in your classroom was analyzed separately. The question read, during the 2013-14 and 2014-2015 school year, how often during a term did you do the following: use rereading techniques that require students to read a passage more than once, with a different focus each time, to ensure comprehension? (19a); have students participate in Socratic seminars – that is, engage in collaborative dialogue about the text through the use of higher level questioning? (19b); Ask students to summarize texts, pulling out the most important information in a concise wrap up? (19c); Ask students to use tables,
graphs, or pictures to organize the information in the text into a more understandable form (such as Venn Diagrams, Acrostics, Spider Diagrams, Timelines, etc)? (19d).

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Reading questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, U=1388.5, z=-0.861, p=0.389. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.356 in 2013-14 and 3.591 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported consistently using Reading strategies between once a month and more than once a month. These results indicate that teachers are consistently using Reading strategies but that the frequency of use did not move significantly from one year to the next. These strategies would not necessarily be appropriate to use daily, and a couple of times a month means that the students are being exposed to this type of learning on a consistent basis at ABC High School.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 31 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=582.5, z=-0.923, p=0.356. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.737 in 2013-14 and 3.426 in 2014-15 indicating a decrease in the reported use of Reading strategies at ABC Middle School. This decrease, although not significant, does show that the self-reported use of Reading strategies dropped but that teachers were still using the strategies more than once a month. LMN High School had 34 responses in 2013-14 and 39 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=560.0, z=-1.142, p=0.253. The
mean response on the Likert scale was 3.743 in 2013-14 and 3.427 in 2014-15, indicating a drop in self-reported usage of the Reading strategies, which is consistent with the walkthrough results in the next section. At LMN High School the administrative team did not look for WICOR strategies throughout the school year indicating to the teachers that using them was not an expectation. The teachers, however, still reported using them a little more than once a month. LMN Middle School had 29 responses in 2013-14 and 32 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann Whitney were not significant, U=411, z=-0.768, p=0.442. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.810 in 2013-14 and 3.743 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers were consistently using Reading strategies more than once a month, but there was not a significant increase in the use of strategies overall from one year to the next as was self-reported in this survey.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.356</td>
<td>3.591</td>
<td>1388.5</td>
<td>-0.861</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>3.3737</td>
<td>3.426</td>
<td>582.5</td>
<td>-0.923</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.743</td>
<td>3.427</td>
<td>560.0</td>
<td>-1.142</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>3.810</td>
<td>3.743</td>
<td>411.0</td>
<td>-0.768</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers reported a more frequent use of strategies at ABC High School and LMN Middle School, and they reported a lower frequency of use at ABC Middle School and LMN High School. The results showed no statistically significant differences.
Culture.

Although Culture is not one of the five strategies of WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading) it is an integral part of school-wide change and incorporation of new ways of work. I did not ask about culture in my research questions; however, I included these results to show the value of culture in this walkthrough process’s success. I asked the teachers at the four schools a series of questions about the culture of their school in terms of professional development that I believe bring value to this study. The following questions were asked of the teachers about the culture of their professional learning environment: How strongly do you disagree or agree with the following statements about your school: the teachers, administrators and staff at your school have a shared understanding of what each student should know when they enter and leave each grade level at your school (43a); at your school, teachers have time during the school day to speak with other teachers about their teaching (43b); the professional development offered at your school has helped you to be successful (43c); teachers at your school have the resources they need to perform to the best of their ability (43d); and teachers and other staff are supported and respected in their professional learning (43e).

I conducted a Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test to examine whether there were significant differences in the self-reported results of the teachers from 2013-14 to 2014-15 about the Reading questions in a survey. For ABC High School there were 59 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 52 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were not significant, $U=1436$, $z=-0.584$, $p=0.559$. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.271 in 2013-14 and 3.376 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers reported that they somewhat agree that the culture statements were true.
of their school. These culture statements address the ability for teachers to learn from one another and have relevant professional learning. The kind of culture set by administrators can impact the level of success of the use of any new process for improving instruction. At ABC High School the results were not significant, but the teachers did report, via interview, feeling a shift in the culture of their school towards collaboration with their peers.

I used the same process to analyze the data for the other three schools. ABC Middle School had 32 responses to the writing questions in 2013-14 and 43 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were significant, U=294, z=-4.252, p=0.000. The mean response on the Likert scale was 2.717 in 2013-14 and 3.270 in 2014-15 indicating a significant increase in the teachers feeling that they were given time to collaborate and work with their peers. LMN High School had 35 responses in 2013-14 and 39 responses in 2014-15. The results of the Mann-Whitney were not significant, U=626, z=-0.620, p=0.535. The mean response on the Likert scale was 3.103 in 2013-14 and 2.972 in 2014-15, indicating a drop in self-reported drop in the agreement that teachers are given opportunities to learn from one another in a professional learning setting.

This is noteworthy because LMN High School as a whole struggled with embracing this collaborative approach to professional learning from the administrators down. At LMN High School the administrative team did not look for WICOR strategies throughout the school year indicating to the teachers that using them was not an expectation. The teachers did report that they somewhat agree and somewhat disagree that they are given these opportunities to learn from one another consistently. LMN Middle School had 32 responses in 2013-14 and 35 in 2014-15. The results of the Mann
Whitney were significant, U=299, z=-2.222, p=0.026. The mean response on the Likert scale was 2.993 in 2013-14 and 3.470 in 2014-15, indicating that the teachers felt significantly more supported in their professional learning opportunities. This was possibly due to an administrative change and a conscious effort to allow teachers to learn from one another.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean Response 2013-14</th>
<th>Mean Response 2014-15</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC High</td>
<td>3.271</td>
<td>3.376</td>
<td>1436</td>
<td>-0.584</td>
<td>0.559</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Middle</td>
<td>2.717</td>
<td>3.270</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>-4.252</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN High</td>
<td>3.103</td>
<td>2.972</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>-0.620</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMN Middle</td>
<td>2.993</td>
<td>3.470</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>-2.222</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all the questions asked of the teachers, the most significant increase in positive responses were seen in these culture questions. The teachers felt as if they are given more specific opportunities to grow and learn from one another than they were prior to 2013-14. The survey results also indicate that this shift has been a positive one.

Walkthroughs.

I was not the only observer on the walkthroughs in this study, but because the other observers varied with each event, my observations are the only ones included in my study. Because there was a different set of teachers and administrators each time we observed, the inter-rater reliability was not established. For a detailed description of how the walkthroughs were conducted refer to Chapter 3.

Each walkthrough lasted roughly 6 minutes with a 2-5 minute debrief in the hallway after each observation. At ABC High School I observed 6 teachers each
semester, at ABC Middle I observed 10 teachers each semester, at LMN High School and LMN Middle School I observed 8 teachers both semesters. I used the same observation form in all classrooms (Appendix A) during each walkthrough, and the teachers observing and being observed had access to the forms prior to the walkthroughs. I captured the observations on the Smartsheet form based on what I saw in the classroom. I captured data for the 5 categories of Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization and Reading for each of the four schools.

I will report on the walkthrough data categorically by each school rather than by each type of individual activity observed, because it was never the expectation that every individual activity would increase. Instead, I was looking to see whether teachers incorporated more strategies from each category overall. I will also report on the mean number of observations within each category, by school. Each time I observed in a classroom there were 7 strategies I could have seen in Writing. If I observed 10 teachers, I could have seen writing 70 times. I am reporting the mean number of times I saw writing out of the possible 70 times. There were 9 Inquiry strategies, 11 Collaboration strategies, 5 Organization strategies, and 6 Reading strategies that I could have observed as well. I have included the breakdown of which strategies I specifically observed in the appendix, but for the purposes of my reporting, I am sharing the categorical data.

When conducting the observations, I had to consider a few factors. In addition to the CRS District Director and me, various teachers joined us for the walkthroughs. The teachers did not always know that people were coming to do observations, and if they did, they were not given a set time for the walkthrough to occur. In addition, some lessons are more conducive to including WICOR strategies than others, so depending on
the topic for the day and the lesson plans, some had more of the WICOR strategies embedded than others. That said, the eventual goal is that at least one component of WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) be incorporated into every lesson so that the students are being active learners. The walkthrough observation form did not include questions about culture, but the survey and interviews did. The observations only lasted 5-7 minutes so we may or may not have been in the room when the strategies were being used. I would revisit any shortcomings in my observation strategy and revise the process if I conducted these walkthroughs again.

I also conducted a one tailed t-test for each of the categories (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading) for each school. The t-test gave me the one-tail P for each of the categories. I reported those numbers below after each mean and stated whether my null hypothesis was accepted or rejected for each category.

**ABC High School.**

The walkthroughs at ABC High School took place once in the fall and once in the spring of the 2014-15 school year. On both walkthrough days, I observed six teachers. I did not observe any of the teachers both semesters. I captured the data for these walkthroughs on a Smartsheet for all the observations conducted to provide a consistent list of things to be observed and a single place to capture the information.

The Writing category contained 7 possible WICOR writing strategies that the teacher could have implemented in the classroom activities. These included: focused Cornell notes with questions in the left margin and a summary at the end; pre-writing activities/quick writes to develop thinking; learning logs, summaries, reflections, interactive notebooks; graphic organizers; writing process; and CRS writing curriculum
(Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The entire list of strategies as well as the complete observation form can be found in Appendix A. The mean number of WICOR writing strategies I observed for ABC High School was .571 in the first observation and 1.286 in the second observation. These data show that the mean increased by .715 from one observation to the next ($P=.150$), which was not significant.

My null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant change in the number of strategies used. At ABC High, in writing, that null hypothesis was accepted even though the overall mean of observed strategies did increase. This increase shows that more writing strategies were observed the second time I observed than I observed during my first visit. This increase coincides with what I saw at this school on a regular basis. WICOR Writing strategies were being used in pockets of classrooms, but I did not necessarily visit only WICOR trained teachers who had attended an CRS Summer Institute or CRS Write Path training on our walkthroughs. Even though all the teachers had not been specifically trained on the CRS writing strategies, they were using them, which indicates that the teachers were learning using the strategies even without formal training.

The Inquiry category contained 9 items. These were: academic task analyzed and expectations articulated; information processed and connections made; info synthesized into new understandings; information evaluated, hypothesis made; application of learning; questions asked to seek clarification or additional information; problem solving; and questions to self-regulate (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Inquiry strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.500 and 2.125 in the second observation ($P=.364$), which was not significant. These
data showed that the mean, which depicts the number of times an inquiry strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by .375 from the first observation to the second. The way I found the mean was to add up the number of inquiry strategies on the sheet and multiply by the number of visits. The mean was found by dividing the number of times I did see the strategy by the total number of times I could have seen the strategy. My null hypothesis for the use of inquiry strategies was accepted because the change in use of strategies was not significant. The teachers did not alter what they were doing in their classrooms because of our walkthroughs. They did not always know that we were conducting walkthroughs on that day. I saw fewer inquiry strategies being used on our second day of observation, when compared to the first day of observation.

The Collaboration category contained 11 items. They were: strong sense of mutual respect and support; products create and/or problems solved together; rigorous academic discourse; challenge one another to think deeply about the task at hand; focus on the content and build on each-others’ thoughts; Socratic questioning or Seminar or Philosophical Chairs; jigsaw activities; collaborative research; room configuration; think pair share, table talk, and shoulder partners (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Collaboration strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.500 and 1.300 in the second observation (P=0.110), which was not significant. The null hypothesis for collaboration was accepted. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times a collaboration strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by 1.200. This drop surprised me because I did frequently see collaboration happening in classrooms at
ABC High School. I believe that this decrease could be due to the lesson plans on that particular day not being designed to be collaborative in nature intentionally. There was certainly a significant decrease from the first observation to the second. I will discuss the limitations of the observation technique in the interpretation section of this paper.

The Organization category contained 5 items. They were: organized binders/tool; up-to-date planners for assignments; homework, in and out of school activities, long-term projects; tools to track progress and grades; and graphic organizers (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Organization strategies I observed in the first observation was 0.800 and 1.400 in the second observation (P=0.291), which was not significant. The null hypothesis for organization was accepted, as no significant change in the number of organization strategies was observed. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an organization strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, increased by 0.400. This increase could have been due to the school deciding to start using binders, an organizational strategy with all 9th grade students, increasing the occurrence of organizational tools observed during walkthroughs.

The Reading category contained 6 items. These were: pre-reading activities, KWL, vocabulary mapping, “mark the text,” numbering, highlighting, underlining, circling, interacting with text; Cornell notes, SQ5R, concept mapping, reciprocal teaching, metacognitive discussions, beyond the text; and summarize and reflect beyond the text (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Reading strategies I observed in the first observation was 1.800 in the first and second observation, showing no change. The Reading category contained six items and
the mean was 1.800 in the first and second observation, showing no change (P=.500) which was not significant. The null hypothesis here was also accepted. The same amount of overall reading strategies was observed the first and second time I conducted observations. Reading strategies are often something that is not seen at all in walkthroughs. The fact that both observations showed a consistent number of reading strategies used told me that reading strategies are a priority for the teachers. The data is summarized in Table 9 below.

**Table 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WICOR Strategy</th>
<th>Mean Observations Fall</th>
<th>Mean Observations Spring</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Statistically Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>2.500</td>
<td>2.130</td>
<td>-0.370</td>
<td>0.364</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>2.500</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>-1.200</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ABC Middle School.**

The walkthroughs at ABC Middle School took place once in the fall and once in the spring of the 2014-15 school year. On both walkthrough days, I observed a total of ten teachers and I observed five of those teachers both semesters. I captured the data for these walkthroughs on a Smartsheet for all the observations conducted to provide consistency. The categories and strategies for the walkthroughs at this school were the same as they were for the other three schools.

The Writing category contained 7 possible WICOR writing strategies that the teacher could have implemented in the classroom activities. They were: focused Cornell notes with questions in the left margin and a summary at the end; pre-writing
activities/quick writes to develop thinking; learning logs; summaries; reflections; interactive notebooks; graphic organizers; writing process; and CRS writing curriculum (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The entire list of strategies as well as the complete observation form can be found in Appendix A. The mean number of WICOR writing strategies I observed for ABC Middle School was .7143 in the first observation and 2.000 in the second observation (P=0.0485) which was significant. My null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant change in the number of strategies used. At ABC Middle, in writing, that null hypothesis was rejected and the overall mean of observed strategies did increase. These data, which depict the number of times a strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, show that the mean increased by 1.2857 from one observation to the next. This increase shows that more writing strategies were being used the second time I observed than was occurring during my first visit. This school really focused on everyone using WICOR strategies more frequently and they allowed every teacher to walk classrooms at least twice. Writing strategies were beginning to be used in multiple classrooms.

The Inquiry category contained 9 items. They were: academic task analyzed and expectations articulated; information processed and connections made; info synthesized into new understandings; information evaluated; hypothesis made; application of learning; questions asked to seek clarification or additional information; problem solving; and questions to self-regulate (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Inquiry strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.125 and 4.625 in the second observation (P=0.0570) which was not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted for Inquiry but an increase in strategy use was observed.
These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an inquiry strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, increased by 2.500 from the first observation to the second. It is important to note the school wanted to see teachers using more WICOR strategies on a regular basis, and made that focus a priority in their professional learning opportunities for staff.

The Collaboration category contained 11 items. They were: strong sense of mutual respect and support; products create and/or problems solved together; rigorous academic discourse; challenge one another to think deeply about the task at hand; focus on the content and build on each-others’ thoughts; Socratic questioning or Seminar or Philosophical Chairs; jigsaw activities; collaborative research; room configuration; think pair share, table talk, and shoulder partners (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Collaboration strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.800 and 3.200 in the second observation (P=0.404) which was not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted. The Collaboration category contained 11 items and the mean was 2.800 in the first observation and 3.200 in the second. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times a collaboration strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, increased by 0.400. Collaboration is becoming a more common practice in ABC Middle School, because they encourage teachers to arrange their rooms in collaborative groups and teach the students how to work together to solve problems. The total amount that it increased was not statistically significant, but it was observable.

The Organization category contained 5 items. They were: organized binders/tool; up-to-date planners for assignments; homework; in and out of school activities; long-term
projects; tools to track progress and grades; and graphic organizers (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Organization strategies I observed in the first observation was 1.400 and 1.400 in the second observation (P=0.500) which was not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted for Organization. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an organization strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, remained the same in both observations. Organization strategies remain a focus at ABC Middle, but is often more difficult to observe than some of the other strategies. Because I am only in the room for 5-7 minutes during an observation, I often do not get to take the time to observe student binders unless that is something that the principal asks me specifically to do. Instead I focused my energy on what the teachers and students are doing while I am in the room. Observing organization requires interaction with the students, which is not always possible during a walkthrough, if the students are supposed to be listening. I will write more on this topic in the interpretation section.

The Reading category contained 6 items. They were: pre-reading activities, KWL, vocabulary mapping; “mark the text,” numbering, highlighting, underlining, circling, interacting with text; Cornell notes, SQ5R, concept mapping, reciprocal teaching; metacognitive discussions, beyond the text; and summarize and reflect, beyond the text (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Reading strategies I observed in the first observation was 0.600 in the first observation and 2.600 in the second observation, showing an increase of 2.000 (P=0.00383) which was significant. The null hypothesis was rejected for Reading.
indicating the increase in the observation of reading strategies being used was significant.

These data show that the teachers we observed were making a concerted effort to increase
the reading strategies they were using in their classrooms, which is notable because of all
the strategies I observed in all the schools, reading was most often not seen.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WICOR Strategy</th>
<th>Mean Observations Fall</th>
<th>Mean Observations Spring</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Statistically Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>0.0485</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>2.130</td>
<td>4.630</td>
<td>2.500</td>
<td>0.0570</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>2.800</td>
<td>3.200</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>2.600</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>0.00383</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LMN High School.**

The walkthroughs at LMN High School took place once in the fall and once in the
spring of the 2014-15 school year. On both walkthrough days, I observed eight teachers
and four of the teachers were observed both semesters. I captured the data for these
walkthroughs on a Smartsheet for all the observations conducted to provide consistency.

The Writing category contained 7 possible WICOR writing strategies that the
teacher could have implemented in the classroom activities. They were: focused Cornell
notes with questions in the left margin and a summary at the end; pre-writing
activities/quick writes to develop thinking; learning logs, summaries, reflections;
interactive notebooks; graphic organizers; writing process; and CRS writing curriculum
(Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The entire list of strategies as
well as the complete observation form can be found in Appendix A. The mean number of
WICOR writing strategies I observed for LMN High School was 1.290 in the first
observation and 1.000 in the second observation (P=0.333) which is not significant. My null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant change in the number of strategies used. The null hypothesis was accepted for Writing. These data, which depict the number of times a strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, show a decrease of observations by 0.290. At this school, I discovered that walkthroughs were not well explained to the staff, nor was the use of WICOR strategies emphasized as an expectation; this might explain the drop in these data.

The Inquiry category contained 9 items. They were: academic task analyzed and expectations articulated; information processed and connections made; info synthesized into new understandings; information evaluated, hypothesis made; application of learning; questions asked to seek clarification or additional information; problem solving; and questions to self-regulate (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A).

The mean number of WICOR Inquiry strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.500 and 1.875 in the second observation (P=0.250) which is not significant. My null hypothesis was accepted. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an inquiry strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by .625 from the first observation to the second. In addition to not explaining the value of teachers observing other teachers, the administrative team did not look for the use of WICOR strategies on any of their walkthroughs. People might have been more likely to try new strategies at the beginning of the year, but as they realized that no one was going to hold them accountable for using the strategies, perhaps their motivation waned.
The Collaboration category contained 11 items. They were: a strong sense of mutual respect and support; products create and/or problems solved together; rigorous academic discourse; challenge one another to think deeply about the task at hand; focus on the content and build on each others’ thoughts; Socratic questioning or Seminar or Philosophical Chairs; jigsaw activities; collaborative research; room configuration; think pair share; table talk; and shoulder partners (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Collaboration strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.900 and 1.800 in the second observation. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times a collaboration strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by 1.100 (P=0.158) which is not significant. The null hypothesis was rejected. I determined collaboration was not encouraged by the administration consistently, and it is likely that the teachers stopped using the strategies because no one was holding them accountable.

The Organization category contained 5 items. They were: organized binders/tool; up-to-date planners for assignments; homework; in and out of school activities and long-term projects; tools to track progress and grades; and graphic organizers (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Organization strategies I observed in the first observation was 1.000 and 0.600 in the second observation (P=0.228) which is not significant. My null hypothesis was accepted. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an organization strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, remained the same in both observations. I determined organization has not been a specific focus at LMN High School. The use of binders did not become an expectation for any students outside
of the CRS Elective, which means that only about 75 students in the school were expected by faculty to carry a binder. It does not surprise me that very few teachers were using organizational strategies.

The Reading category contained 6 items. They were pre-reading activities; KWL; vocabulary mapping; “mark the text,” numbering, highlighting, underlining, circling, interacting with text; Cornell notes, SQ5R, concept mapping, reciprocal teaching; metacognitive discussions, beyond the text; summarize and reflect, beyond the text (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Reading strategies I observed in the first observation was 2.000 in the first observation and 0.400 in the second observation, showing a decrease of 1.600 (P=0.0725) which is not significant. These data show that the teachers we observed decreased their use of reading strategies by 1.600 and the null hypothesis was accepted. This decline coincides with the declines in other categories. At this school, I found that using WICOR strategies was not an expectation, and that lack of expectation showed in the observation results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WICOR Strategy</th>
<th>Mean Observations Fall</th>
<th>Mean Observations Spring</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Statistically Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-0.290</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>2.500</td>
<td>1.880</td>
<td>-0.620</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>2.900</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>-1.100</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>-0.400</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>-1.600</td>
<td>0.0725</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall decline of WICOR strategies observed at LMN High School speaks directly to the fact that the administrative team did not support or encourage the use of these strategies. I determined that it was clear to the teachers that they were not expected to
utilize WICOR strategies. Even in the rooms we observed, of trained teachers who had attended CRS Summer Institute, there was no evidence that the administrative team expected use of the strategies and these teachers had stopped using the strategies regularly.

**LMN Middle School.**

The walkthroughs at LMN High School took place once in the fall and once in the spring of the 2014-15 school year. On both walkthrough days, I observed eight teachers and four of the teachers were observed both semesters. I captured the data for these walkthroughs on a Smartsheet for all the observations conducted to provide consistency.

The Writing category contained 7 possible WICOR writing strategies that the teacher could have implemented in the classroom activities. They were: focused Cornell notes with questions in the left margin and a summary at the end; pre-writing activities/quick writes to develop thinking; learning logs, summaries, reflections, interactive notebooks; graphic organizers; writing process; and CRS writing curriculum. (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The entire list of strategies as well as the complete observation form can be found in Appendix A. The mean number of WICOR writing strategies I observed for LMN Middle School was 0.857 in the first observation and 0.857 in the second observation (P=0.500) which is not significant. My null hypothesis stated that there would be no significant change in the number of strategies used. The null hypothesis was accepted for Writing. These data, which depict the number of times a strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, show that there was no change in the number of times I saw writing strategies used. At this school, walkthroughs were one of several new initiatives that the administrative team brought in when they took over the school during the summer of
2014. Although the staff did appreciate getting to see other people teach, they were not always clear as to the expectation placed on them in their classrooms regarding using the WICOR strategies.

The Inquiry category contained 9 items. They were: academic task analyzed and expectations articulated; information processed and connections made; info synthesized into new understandings; information evaluated, hypothesis made; application of learning; questions asked to seek clarification or additional information; problem solving; and questions to self-regulate (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Inquiry strategies I observed in the first observation was 3.000 and 3.125 in the second observation (P=0.450) which is not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an inquiry strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by 0.125 from the first observation to the second. The overall use of these strategies was relatively high when compared to other schools though.

The Collaboration category contained 11 items. They were: a strong sense of mutual respect and support; products created and/or problems solved together; rigorous academic discourse; challenge one another to think deeply about the task at hand; focus on the content and build on each-others’ thoughts; Socratic questioning or Seminar or Philosophical Chairs; jigsaw activities; collaborative research; room configuration; and think pair share, table talk, shoulder partners (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Collaboration strategies I observed in the first observation 3.300 and 2.300 in the second observation (P=0.215) which is not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted. These data show that the mean, which
depicts the number of times a collaboration strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by 1.000. Collaboration is becoming a more common practice in LMN Middle School, but on the second round of walkthroughs, I was intentionally taken into a few classrooms where the teachers were struggling to implement WICOR strategies, so that I could help coach them. I believe this might be the reason for the drop in collaborative strategies being used. It could have also been the point in the class period when I was in the classrooms, and the lesson plans for the day.

The Organization category contained 5 items. They were: organized binders/tool; up-to-date planners for assignments, homework, in and out of school activities, and long-term projects; tools to track progress and grades; and graphic organizers (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Organization strategies I observed in the first observation was 1.200 and 0.800 in the second observation (P=0.307) which is not significant. The null hypothesis was accepted. These data show that the mean, which depicts the number of times an organization strategy was observed divided by the number of times it could have been observed, decreased by .400. Organization is a specific focus at LMN Middle, but was not necessarily observed when I was in the classrooms. I did not always have the opportunity to interact with the students so that they could show me their organizational system, which may have caused this low and decreasing number.

The Reading category contained 6 items. They were: pre-reading activities, KWL, vocabulary mapping; “mark the text,” numbering, highlighting, underlining, circling, interacting with text; Cornell notes, SQ5R, concept mapping, reciprocal
teaching; metacognitive discussions, beyond the text; and summarize and reflect, beyond the text (Adapted from CRS Walkthrough form in Appendix A). The mean number of WICOR Reading strategies I observed in the first observation was 0.800 in the first observation and 0.800 in the second observation, showing no change (P=0.500) which is not significant. These data show that the teachers I and the other observers observed did not change their practice much from the first observation to the second.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WICOR Strategy</th>
<th>Mean Observations Fall</th>
<th>Mean Observations Spring</th>
<th>–Net Change</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Statistically Significant or Not Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>3.130</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>3.300</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>-1.000</td>
<td>0.215</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>1.200</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>-0.400</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher Interviews**

I interviewed 12 teachers for the purposes of this study, each for 45 minutes on their school campuses. I interviewed 6 middle school teachers and 6 high school teachers. I conducted the interviews either during the teacher’s planning period, or before or after school to minimize the impact their participation had on their job. The teachers signed a consent form (Appendix F) prior to the interview, and I assured them that although I recorded the interviews I would be the only one who would ever have access to the tapes or transcripts.

The principals selected the teachers that I interviewed based on the teacher’s participation in the walkthrough process in the 2014-15 school year. All the teachers interviewed had participated in from one to several walkthroughs in their own buildings.
Each principal took a slightly different approach to selecting teachers to participate in walkthroughs throughout the school year, causing the list of teachers for interview to vary from school to school.

The thirteenth person I interviewed holds the role of CRS District Director for all the schools in the district. The CRS District Director (DD) works to ensure that CRS is implemented with fidelity as outlined in a certification process around 11 Essentials. In this case the DD holds other roles in the district as well, including grant specialist and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) coordinator. He has been the DD since the beginning of the grant in 2013.

In interview question 1 and 2, I asked the participants: “What role(s) do you play on campus and what roles have you played in the WICOR walkthrough process and in your school?” Of the twelve interviewed, all but one was observed by another teacher in the 2014-15 school year. The one teacher who did not get observed served as a dean on campus in addition to teaching two classes. I interviewed him as a teacher because he participated and even led multiple walkthrough sessions on campus. All of the teachers interviewed observed other teachers in action. One third (33%) of the teachers serve in an academic coaching role in addition to their teaching role. One third (33%) of the high school teachers teach collegiate level courses, including Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement. One middle school teacher teaches gifted students. Of the twelve teachers interviewed, four teach social studies, two teach reading, three teach the CRS elective, three teach math, and two teach science. This is a balanced sampling of teachers in these schools in terms of content and roles represented.
When I asked question #3, “Describe the WICOR walkthrough process for your school. What do you like about the process? Dislike?” I received a variety of answers based on the teacher’s home schools. I asked the teachers to describe the WICOR walkthrough process and tell me what they liked and disliked about the process at their school. Since each school has a slightly different process, I grouped the answers by school. I also asked a similar question to the DD, who accompanied me on every walkthrough at all four schools. He had specific opinions about each school’s process which aligned with the teacher’s perceptions as well. He reinforced the teacher’s likes and dislikes as well.

**ABC High School.**

At ABC High, the coordinator and administrators selected teachers for walkthroughs based on specific desired outcomes for individual teachers. Sometimes teachers were selected because they needed a little support in a particular teaching area, and other teachers joined the walks so they would feel encouraged that what happened in their own classrooms was exemplary based on the teaching of their peers. The process of interviewing the teachers was described as non-evaluative, safe, beneficial, and informative.

The walkthroughs at ABC High were staggered throughout the school year and a variety of teachers participated. Although they usually knew about the walkthroughs before they took place, they also appeared to be comfortable with unannounced observations. The teachers who participated at this school kept the mindset of, “What can I steal to use in my own classroom?” during these walkthrough opportunities. The significance of this description lies in the comfort level of the teachers being observed.
They had confidence in their ability to teach well and allow others to learn from them. This confidence did not exist prior to their implementation of the walkthrough process.

For interview question #3, “Describe the WICOR walkthrough process for your school. What do you like about the process? Dislike?” for ABC High School, three emergent themes appeared in the first part of this question: gained understanding and knowledge, positive feedback, and building relationships. These teachers liked being the teacher observing so that they could gain new knowledge and understanding. The positive feedback that the observers left in the form of post it notes in the classroom further built their confidence. They also appreciated seeing the kids in different environments and to see how behaviors differed in other classrooms with other teachers. As a result of analyzing these data, it appears that this walk-through process built relationships between teachers, and opened up discussions that had not previously happened in their building. One teacher specifically stated, “I have completely changed the way I teach because I know that someone could come in at any time to learn from me. I need to be on my game.”

Prior to this walkthrough process, teachers did not have an opportunity to see one another teaching students. It is significant to note that the teachers were open to learning from one another once they saw how it could impact what they do in their classrooms. The relationships that have emerged between teachers gives both parties confidence to try new teaching strategies in their classrooms.

When asked what they disliked three themes also emerged. They included feeling overwhelmed when multiple people come in the room, having time away from their own classrooms, and always being on the list to be observed. It can feel over-whelming to
have a group of people observe in their classrooms, especially if the teacher is new to the profession. Training and experience with multiple people in the room would help with this issue. Time away from their own classroom could become an issue, and they were mixed on whether that time away was worthwhile.

     One of the teachers felt it was not worth the missed class time and the other two felt that it was a worthwhile trade off. One of the teachers who agreed it was worthwhile also mentioned that she did not like having subs in classrooms to make it happen. She plans to use planning time next year to avoid this issue. One teacher mentioned that she disliked the fact that she was almost always on the list to be observed. She said it made her classroom feel like she lived in a bubble, making authenticity of learning difficult at times. She mentioned that a remedy for this situation would be to alter who got observed so no one classroom was overtaxed.

     To use the walkthrough process successfully, the administrator needs to carefully select the teachers involved, and limit the number of visits to those teachers to a mutually agreed upon amount of visits. Allowing the teachers to be a part of the scheduling could also alleviate some of the concerns about time spent out of their own classrooms. The overall feeling from the ABC High School teachers was positive, and they all had ideas on how to take things to the next level and improve the process. Their administrator listens well to suggestions and they have already met with him to improve the process for next year. The open communication and the continuous improvement model that this school practices in all they do, should allow this process to be refined and improved each year.
In regards to interview question #3 at ABC High, the District Director said that he liked that a variety of classes were visited and the fact that we saw teachers who had been to training and teachers who had not. The participants got to see both trained teachers through the CRS Summer Institute and those who were not, and all the teachers who participated had the opportunity to have authentic conversations in the hallways about what seemed effective with the students and what did not. This reinforced the theme that the teachers discussed about gained understanding of what great teaching should look like.

The themes from this question brought to the surface the importance of laying a firm sense of purpose for staff as to why walkthroughs are being done and how they can be helpful to teachers individually. It is also important to be flexible with the process, allowing input from both those being observed and the observers to shape the direction of the practice. Once the process begins, tweaking it to suit the needs of the practitioners can make it more relevant, accepted, and useful.

**ABC Middle School.**

ABC Middle School’s process involved the walkthrough dates being put on a calendar at the beginning of the school year. Teachers conducted observations in groups of 4-6 people and it always included a literacy coach. Administrators did not always accompany the teachers on the walks, but the three teachers I interviewed said they would have liked for them to do so. When people walked into a classroom, they had a WICOR walkthrough form that the observing teachers filled out. The coach gave the teachers who were observed a list of the strategies that the teachers saw during the observation for affirmation. The walkthroughs at ABC Middle took place every
Wednesday for at least 3 class periods. The school used grant money and Title 1 dollars to fund the substitutes for the teachers while they observed. In addition to every teacher getting to observe, every teacher in the building was also observed by peers at least once.

The common response to interview question #3 (what they liked about the process) by ABC Middle School teachers was they got to have a say in the classrooms they observed. This was unique to this school’s process and was not seen in the other schools. One teacher said he appreciated that he got to see a PE teacher in action. This teacher tended to be silly outside the classroom, but the teacher observing realized that he did an incredibly good job teaching his students. The teacher may never have seen him in action had this process not been in place. One of the teachers came from an elementary background and really appreciated the chance to see other teachers work with sixth grade students like she did. It eased her mind and gave her new ideas.

The District Director liked the fact that every teacher in the building got to participate in the walkthrough process at least twice in the school year. He felt that by ensuring that every teacher participated in classroom walkthroughs, the strategies were better understood on a school wide level. He also commented on the fact that the administrative team clearly supported this initiative and saw value in allowing their teachers to see one another teach. He encouraged other schools in the district to adopt this model of walkthroughs.

Due to the transparency of this process at ABC Middle School and the involvement of every teacher, the likes outweighed the dislikes. The teachers appreciated the chance to see other people teach, and they felt it had a positive impact on their
learning. The District Director also found this process to have a positive impact on teachers and their practice.

Two themes emerged when asked what they disliked. They included that the walkthroughs were too short in each classroom and that they wanted to walk with their department peers. They would have liked more time in each classroom so that they could see more of the lesson. It also would have been appreciated if the teachers could have walked with other people from their department to share ideas.

The only dislike for this process from the DD stemmed from sustainability. He felt it would be difficult to continue the practice of every teacher doing observations once the grant funding ended. The difficulty would be for the school to continue to pay for substitutes while the teachers walk classrooms. They may need to look at a different model involving planning periods. His concern is warranted, since the grant funding will soon end, but he is proactively seeking alternative options to continue the process. His proactive response demonstrates the value he sees in allowing teachers to participate in these walkthroughs.

ABC Middle allowed every teacher in the building to observe in classrooms at least twice in the school year, using the opportunity for school wide professional learning. They framed their purpose for the walkthroughs in multiple faculty meetings and at the beginning of each observation. Their clear sense of purpose unified their likes and dislikes a little more than I saw at other schools. These teachers did have input on which classrooms they visited, and they did not miss more than two class periods of teaching time. This system of implementation addressed some of the concerns other schools had about the walkthrough process.
The CRS District Director (DD) also mentioned that ABC Middle School experienced a complete change in their administrative team in 2014-15, which changed the culture of the school considerably. When CRS originally got introduced to ABC Middle, the principal made it feel exclusive and did not allow all teachers to learn about the teaching strategies. When the new administrative team came in, they opened all the doors in the building and required teachers to learn from one another. This is an example of how the culture created by the administrators positively impact this process. The new administrators built a culture of safety and learning for their staff prior to implementing this walkthrough process. The outcome was positive according to the teachers who were interviewed.

At ABC Middle in 2014-15, every single teacher had an opportunity to walk through other teacher’s classrooms, alongside a literacy coach and at least one other teacher. In my observations, administrators played a key role in the success of this walkthrough process. The fact that the new administrative team chose to be transparent and all-inclusive with the walkthrough process greatly impacted the acceptance of the process by the teachers in the building. The teachers felt safe to participate and saw value in the learning opportunity.

ABC Middle School embraced this process and decided that it was something every teacher in the school could benefit from experiencing. The teachers and the District Director saw value in the process and liked the way it enhanced their understanding of good teaching. Although sustainability concerned the District Director, the teachers already are thinking of ways to complete the walkthroughs during planning periods to save money.
**LMN High School.**

LMN High described the process of being observed more than they described the process of observing, since the observations by teachers only happened once. They mentioned they did not know how the administrators selected the teachers who were observed. They said that when they got observed there were usually a small group of people and that those people left feedback for them, which they appreciated. When they each had the opportunity to observe, all three mentioned enjoying the chance to see other people in action in their classrooms. However, they noted they felt a little anxiety about being there.

When I asked the teachers at LMN High School what they liked about the process (interview question #3) two themes emerged. They were: positive feedback for the teacher being observed and positive accountability. Positive post it notes were left in classrooms after each walkthrough, and the observed teachers found that to be affirming. A newer teacher realized after observing other teachers that he was on target and doing good things in his own classroom. Another teacher felt that knowing people were going to observe her made her more accountable for her actions in the classroom thus improving her teaching.

The CRS District Director liked the fact that although it took more convincing than it did at the other schools, by second semester, teachers were allowed to participate in the walkthroughs. Only 3 teachers were allowed to do so, and they said it was very beneficial to them. The DD also liked the positive affirmations that the other observers and I left for the teachers to help build their morale. He mentioned that the teachers felt
valued after the walkthroughs because we took the time to praise them, which is a simple, free way to boost morale in a building as long as it is honest, specific affirmation.

The teachers disliked a few parts of the process, more so than at the other 3 schools. The teachers felt frustration with the walkthroughs because the process was not well established. The teachers said they had a feeling that they were being judged, whether they were observing or being observed. They even mentioned that they would rather conduct walkthroughs on a different campus than their own because the culture at this school breeds judgement. The culture at LMN High School is one of competition rather than collaboration, making this type of learning difficult. One teacher also mentioned anxiety that she might fall short of expectations of others. According to the CRS District Director, the administrative team did not establish a safe culture around the walkthrough process; the purpose was not well set or explained. This lack of purpose resulted in anxiety for the teachers involved, as evidenced by their interview responses, and ultimately made the teachers want to conform to the rest of the building instead of trying new strategies in their classrooms.

According to the DD, LMN High School’s principal and assistant principal did not embrace allowing teachers to walk one another’s classrooms quite like ABC schools did resulting in a few dislikes. At the beginning of the year, no teachers were allowed to walk classrooms. By the end of the year, only three had the opportunity to walk and those were the three that I interviewed. There were some strong cultural issues that caused teachers to feel threatened instead of empowered to have the chance to see other teachers in action. The DD said that there was a disagreement over implementing CRS that caused a divide in the teachers, and the administrators chose to ignore the divide.
Based on my research data and information, I suggest that, if the administrative team does not support an initiative, then the teachers, regardless of its usefulness to their practice, will not support it either. I saw this in action at LMN High School through the walkthrough process.

The fearful feelings from the teachers could have and should have been handled at the administrative level but they were ignored. According to the DD, who has been a member of that community for over 50 years, the administrative team knew that the feelings against CRS were there due to a misconception of the purpose of the system at the school. However, instead of addressing them by establishing a common purpose and making sure everyone understood the process and what it could do for them, they ignored them. Ignoring their feelings exacerbated their concerns and caused them to second guess their abilities. Teachers did not feel safe to learn from one another on this campus.

**LMN Middle School.**

LMN Middle School teachers described the walk-through process as ongoing and continuous. At LMN Middle three or four teachers walked together with the CRS coordinator and debriefed together in the hallways several times a year. Walkthroughs typically took place during planning periods at this school. Certain classrooms were opened as model classrooms during each period and all teachers are expected to spend 20 minutes in one of the model classrooms during their planning period. The teachers had to write answers to three questions and turn the answers in to exchange this experience for attendance at a faculty meeting.

LMN Middle School also had a complete administration change from 2013-14 when CRS implementation began to 2014-15 when the walkthrough process took shape.
The District Director felt that the new administration worked to build a culture where every classroom door was open and teachers learned from one another. The coordinator was given a leadership role in the process and always accompanied teachers on walks. In lieu of a faculty meeting, the teachers were asked to walk classrooms during their planning period and then turn in follow up answers to strategic questions about their learnings. This process created a ripple effect pushing teachers to want to “step up their game.”

When asked what they liked about the walk-through process (interview question #3), the teachers had 2 themed thoughts. They thought the time was well spent and the efforts to build morale among the staff were appreciated. One teacher specifically mentioned that it was “not a waste of their time, like meetings often are.” The process built morale among the staff, through the use of nice notes and compliments. One teacher described the process as a “fantastic way to get out of our own four walls and learn from others.”

The teachers said the walkthroughs were friendly and the “nice notes” that the teachers left in their rooms made them feel safe on both sides of the process. One of the teachers described this as the most frequent form of professional development implemented during the school year, saying that it replaced faculty meetings with something fruitful. Overall, the teachers appreciated the opportunity to safely learn from one another.

In summary, the teachers felt valued at LMN Middle because their time was not wasted. Instead, the teachers were given the opportunity to learn from others, building confidence and broadening their knowledge base. Teachers felt safe to learn from one
another at this school, which improved the use of this process. This level of trust allows for creative learning and growth, because the fear of being evaluated or judged disappears. This school’s administrators and lead teachers built trust quickly and made sure it positively impacted the learning of the teachers. Teachers now willingly observe in one another’s classrooms, taking opportunities to learn and grow as educators.

The dislike list at LMN Middle was fairly short. Only one negative statement about the walkthroughs being time consuming was made. The teacher who mentioned the fact that the walks can be time consuming, followed up with “but it is time well spent.” Another answered with “nothing, I think it is great.” The third said, “I like everything about this process, I just wish it could happen more often.” The fact that only one dislike emerged from the teachers interviewed was significant, because under the previous administration, this campus was incredibly negative about everything. Teachers felt threatened by one another, and were not willing to try new things for fear that the veteran teachers would complain to the principal. In one short year, the administrative team created a safe environment where learning for teachers and students was the sole focus.

The CRS District Director did not have any dislikes about this process. As was the case with ABC Middle School, LMN Middle School spent time at the beginning of the school year making sure everyone in the school understood the purpose of the walkthroughs and how they were going to be used. The walkthroughs were non-evaluative opening up space for learning from one another. Since the previous administration at this school stifled collaboration between colleagues, the fact that the
walkthrough process was so well received is a testament to the importance of a strong administrative team who creates a culture of learning.

For the rest of the interview questions, I will be reporting on the answers as a total, rather than by school. Analysis of the first two questions could best be done reporting by school. The rest of the questions were about the benefits and issues with the walkthroughs themselves, and can therefore be reported effectively as total responses rather than by individual school.

When I asked what was working well with the WICOR Walkthrough process (question #4), the three most frequently reported themes between all the teachers from all the schools were gaining resources, open communication including getting and giving feedback with peers, and seeing WICOR in action. These themes significantly impact teaching because they open access for teachers to be continuous learners in their buildings. This type of professional learning can happen in house, and can be ongoing at school sites rather than occurring off campus and being isolated.

Half of the teachers interviewed specifically mentioned that gaining resources was the most valuable part of the walkthrough process. Teachers mentioned several specific items. They were knowing where to go when they needed help, having lesson plans that include WICOR and then being able to see the WICOR strategies in action, having a chance to see things from a different point of view, and being allowed to collaborate with other teachers about the delivery of instruction in their classrooms. Having a chance to gain new ideas and strategies for teaching from one another in a real time setting at their school showed the teachers that the strategies could work with their students. I noticed a
strong sense of excitement from the teachers when they talked about how their confidence was significantly bolstered by what they learned during walkthroughs.

The teachers were hungry for the chance to talk to one another. One teacher said, “This was the first time in my entire teaching career that I was able to observe other teachers, and it has changed the way I teach.” The open communication that the walkthrough process allowed resonated with multiple teachers as evidenced in the interviews, and that theme also came up as a response to what they liked about the process.

Teachers expressed appreciation for the open communication this process brought forth, allowing them to both get and give feedback on what was seen. Three teachers from three different schools mentioned their gratitude for the opportunity to see the feedback form ahead of time, saying, “I knew exactly what people were going to look for so it felt safe.” and “Having the form helped me know what to look for in the classrooms.” The feedback that they received, because of the understanding of the form made the visit formative, changing their practice in a positive way. They also found value in knowing how to improve what they do in their classrooms daily. One teacher said, “This process took the guess work out of incorporating these strategies into my classroom”. Seeing other people execute the strategies with students allowed teachers the freedom to take risks and “know where to go if I need help”.

Teachers also mentioned that having a chance to see WICOR in action gave them new ideas that they classified as “worth stealing” for use in their own classrooms. They appreciated having the opportunity to see WICOR strategies live rather than sitting in a meeting talking about WICOR. They also captured new ways to present information and
were encouraged that other teachers were doing innovative things in their classrooms. I found these thoughts to be note-worthy because this type of learning increased teachers’ willingness to try new things in their buildings. The teachers I interviewed accepted the challenge of new learning and received professional development opportunities on their own campus for a relatively low cost, making it sustainable and repeatable.

The CRS District Director reported that what worked well with the process for all four schools was the authentic nature of the process. Teachers and students did not alter what was happening in their classrooms when visitors came in, but instead, it became a way of work. He was amazed at how quickly the process became natural and a normal expectation because prior to the College Readiness System training, very few walkthroughs took place on their campuses. I find it significant that according to the DD, administrators and the school board members see value in this process and are pushing it to happen throughout the district, not just at these four schools. The DD said, “Several board members and principals have joined us on walkthroughs and they want to see it happen at all schools, including elementary schools.” I noticed a high level of trust between the teachers formed in a relatively short amount of time, which is note-worthy when thinking about how these walkthroughs might impact any campus.

When I asked the teachers question 5 if “participating in the [walkthrough] process helped them in their own classrooms,” eleven of the twelve teachers interviewed answered this question with enthusiastic affirmation ranging from “Yes!” to “Absolutely!” to “Most definitely!”, which were significant responses in thinking about the purpose behind the question. The goal of the walkthrough process is to help teachers improve what happens in their own classroom, and their responses to this question
reinforced that desired outcome. The one teacher who did not answer yes did answer “somewhat” and clarified that she had been allowed to visit classrooms fairly regularly prior to the grant because of her role as an instructional coach, and this just reinforced what she had learned from that role. For her, this was not a new practice, but for everyone else interviewed it was not something they had done previously.

In addition to the agreement responses that the process enhanced the teachers’ teaching, the themes of gaining resources through idea sharing and seeing WICOR in action rose to the top again. Six of the 12 teachers interviewed also called out the fact that they saw ideas worth “stealing” meaning using in their own classrooms for their own purposes. They mentioned learning from others and improving their craft as a valuable use of time. One teacher recalled a time when her neighboring teacher, who “had not spoken to her all year” came to her after doing an observation in her classroom and asked her to help him with the one pager activity she was modeling. “I was so surprised and pleased to know that we could now talk about our craft together. And we had been neighbors for three years.” Teachers were open to learning from one another when they had not been before this process was introduced.

Five of the teachers interviewed specifically mentioned that the walkthroughs pushed them to try new things in their own classrooms, now that they had seen WICOR in action. The process helped them get over their fear of teaching “incorrectly” and validated the great things that they are doing in their own classrooms. The process of seeing other teachers in action also helped them “think of new ways to improve their classroom practices.” The teachers reported that we pushed them out of their “comfort zones” by this process. Participating in walkthroughs built their confidence for trying
new things. They said that when they were willing to push out of their comfort zones when they saw that their colleagues get positive results with students using those same practices.

I asked the District Director (DD) question #5, “Did participating in the walkthrough process help you in your role in the district?” His response was an enthusiastic, “yes, absolutely!” He claimed that it helped him build relationships with administrative teams that were sometimes difficult for a district level staff member. As mentioned before, the CRS DD is employed by the district but trained by CRS Center. His role is to ensure that the College Readiness System is implemented with fidelity, which he monitors from his district role. He was able to see what was happening in classrooms and it confirmed or conflicted with what I was being told, making the walkthroughs a true litmus test. Other benefits included the observation that there is now an open dialogue teacher to teacher, teacher to administrator, and teacher to student and he has an accurate pulse of what is going on in classrooms throughout the district, which reinforces the open communication theme the teachers brought up.

I recognized that the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms no longer felt like a foreign concept but was something that they could see for themselves, and ask questions on how to improve. The teachers mentioned that they “feel comfortable asking other teachers how to implement certain strategies,” where they used to feel isolated in the teaching process. They knew who to ask for assistance about the implementation of the strategies because they had seen them working with another teacher, in the same building, with the same students, again reinforcing the value of open communication. One teacher said, “I knew it was work trying when I saw Johnny participating in a
Socratic Seminar. If he can follow directions and do it, any of my students can.” I asked about Johnny, and she described him as the student who makes interactive activities difficult. This process removed the excuses for not trying new strategies and replaced them with solutions. Solutions included going to the teacher they observed to ask for guidance and to share ideas. The teachers I interviewed felt empowered to grow in their teaching practices and solicit the help of their teammates.

When asked question #6, “What do you feel is not working well with the WICOR walkthrough process,” a couple of teachers answered this question with a simple, “Nothing, I like the process.” Others had some specific things that were not going well, which fell into one theme with a few supporting ideas: The theme called out an inadequate selection process for who participated in walkthroughs. The supporting ideas teased out some specific ways that the process could be more efficient.

Half of the teachers mentioned the selection process for teachers to get to either observe or be observed was not a sound one. They said that the administrators should be intentional and geared to the types of classrooms visited. Some suggestions included visiting specific content classrooms that mirrored the classes taught by those observing, or visiting grade levels that were similar to their own.

Some teachers really wanted to see a specific strategy in action, but that was not necessarily what they saw. They also mentioned that it was often the same teachers observed, because these were the ones willing to open their classrooms, and they wanted more variety. “I have no idea why I was selected to get to observe other teachers. I am glad I got the experience, but I don’t know if it was because I was good or bad at my job.” This lack of understanding was disconcerting for the teacher quoted, but could have
been avoided through intentional communication. Teachers also mentioned that it was difficult to know exactly what to look for because the teacher selection was not intentional. If they had been in a content area classroom that was similar to their own, they would have known better what to observe. “I wanted to see a science teacher, but I only got to see math and English.” A few also wanted more direction on what to look for once they were in the room. They said that the WICOR walkthrough sheet had too much information on it for a short walkthrough. They wanted to focus on something more specific. The WICOR walkthrough sheet did have 36 different things to observe, and the schools eventually altered the sheet based on the feedback from the teachers.

The rest of the answers varied greatly, without duplicate themes but more supporting ideas for improving the process. Some specific ideas from the teachers included the desire to see schools other than their own, or to have the walkthroughs more frequently with more time to do them. Still others wanted to miss less class time, by incorporating planning periods into the mix for when to walk classrooms.

Not everyone who walked felt well equipped with what to look for when in the classrooms, either because they were not given the walkthrough form before the day of the walkthrough or they were not able to ask questions about it prior to walking. Teachers mentioned that there should be more follow up to the walkthroughs, so that they can also inform and improve instruction. These ideas all support the fact that the teachers wanted a “more intentional plan for who they saw teach,” including why they saw those particular teachers and when they saw them to keep from disrupting class time. I asked the DD to answer the same question regarding what did not work well with the process and he stated that “nothing really jumped out” to him as not working well. Even though
people had opportunities to complain about the walkthroughs to him both personally and professionally, he had not heard any complaints and he shared that typically teachers and administrators he knows on a personal level do not hesitate to tell him what is wrong with what they are doing.

The one negative thing the DD saw was scheduling because so many other things are going on within the district, competing for time, resources, and attention. And even though district staff members try to accommodate schedules, it is nearly impossible to avoid time conflicts. The district is refining the process, but the reality is school schedules are complex.

The DD also mentioned that schools do not do anything with the data that is collected on the walkthroughs. The district is currently working on the next steps so that this does not become an issue in the district. The district wants these walkthroughs to continue to inform instruction and find them to be a valuable resource for the teachers and administrators.

In my opinion, the process seems to resonate with teachers and students but has room for improvement. If the schools wish to utilize a continuous improvement model for growth, they need to use the data to make decisions about instruction in the school. Although the teachers claim to be learning from this process, if the information gathered on the walkthroughs could inform teaching and learning, the learning would become more sustainable.

Questions 7 and 8 coupled together shed light on how schools could improve the walkthrough process in the future. I asked teachers “what do you feel are the major obstacles in the implementation of the WICOR walkthrough process” (question #7) and
why do you feel these obstacles exist and what can be done to overcome them? (question #8) Just asking the question empowered the teachers, and their responses showed thoughtfulness and insight. The responses to these two questions could be summed up in three categories; insecurities, resources, and logistics.

The first theme was the most popular of the three, with eight of twelve mentioning insecurities of the teachers as an obstacle. Teachers claimed that they were insecure about having other people walk into their classrooms while they were delivering instruction. They mentioned phrases like trust, lack of confidence, lack of open-mindedness, fear of giving up control, and egos. To overcome this obstacle, two-way communication, principal to teacher and teacher to principal would be invaluable. Of the teachers interviewed, two-thirds felt that if communicated properly, with a clear understanding of purpose and expectations, growth in teaching skills would happen.

Many participants identified insufficient resources as an obstacle to improving the process. When the teachers discussed the barriers to the process several of them mentioned money. The district does not have excessive funding for substitute teachers to cover classes so that teachers can walk classrooms. The shortage of money sometimes limited the number of walkthroughs that could take place.

Sometimes a substitute shortage was the limiting factor, rather than the money to pay for the substitute. There are very few available substitutes in this rural district. The principals got creative with coverage to alleviate these issues. Sometimes the administrative teams actually covered classes so that the teachers had the opportunity to watch someone else teach. Other times, the coach would cover classes. Another remedy for this issue was to have the teachers walk classrooms during planning periods, when
they could observe without coverage. Because the teachers were willing to conduct walkthroughs during their planning periods one principal eliminated a faculty meeting and with some additional accountability pieces put into place, used the walkthroughs as a professional development opportunity.

Teachers also mentioned the logistics issue of being out of their own classrooms, finding coverage, and making sure learning was still happening without in spite of these obstacles. Another logistical concern had to do with other walkthroughs happening throughout the district that seemed to overlap but not necessarily compliment the WICOR walkthrough process. The district office needed a better communication system to be sure that everyone knew what other departments had teachers doing outside of their classrooms. The large number of walkthroughs, which seemed unrelated to the schools, became a difficult juggling act of days and times that teachers could be out and about on campus. When I asked the DD about the obstacles and solutions he said that scheduling has to be a priority. “If something is important to you, you will make it happen, and the walkthrough process needs to be important to us as a district.” If those in decision-making positions see value, the walkthroughs will happen. For the schools in question, walkthroughs have moved up on the district priority list and are scheduled to continue for 2015-16 based on their success in 2014-15.

I think the schools need to continue enhancing the walkthrough process. The DD’s solution would be to invite all teachers to participate in walkthroughs, strategically asking, “What do you see?” In his opinion, if that question and its answer became a part of every educational conversation on campus, and all teachers were given the opportunity to walk, the district would see a huge shift in student success. There is a structured plan
for all of this and it does inform the professional development district wide and school wide.

The majority of the obstacles mentioned by teachers and the District Director had to do with logistics and district level support. Those issues can be addressed easily through open communication and brainstorming at the school and district level. If this process has the value that these teachers and the District Director claim it has, then the obstacles can easily be overcome.

Two of the three categories were issues out of the teachers’ sphere of influence, making them very frustrating to the teachers. The leadership at the schools and the teachers themselves could have better addressed the category of insecurities by encouraging one another and further opening communication on each campus. When administrators allow for shared leadership at the school, the teachers feel empowered to speak up and make changes to policies and procedures. At these four schools, I saw shared leadership begin to take hold through this process, and the teachers became more vocal about their needs and wants in this process. The shared leadership created a platform for strong learning opportunities to take place.

I asked the teachers what they suggested the school do to improve the walkthrough process (question #9), and three major themes emerged; smaller groups walking at a time, but more teachers walking overall, more input on what rooms they see, and making walkthroughs a regular part of the professional development plan at the school. Even though these themes were mentioned by several of the teachers, they all have simple solutions which the teachers mentioned in their interviews specifically.
Five teachers spoke specifically about the need for more teachers to be involved with the process. One said, “I know of three teachers on my hall who wished they could have observed other teachers. They asked how they could get picked.” They wanted additional frontloading so that everyone, including new teachers would understand the process and its purpose. Teachers showed excitement about the opportunity for this to be a bigger part of how they train teachers on campus, but to do that more teachers needed to be involved.

Four teachers talked specifically about increasing intentionality with the walks, by selecting the content and the teachers to suit the needs of those walking. They also mentioned implementing a specific rotation and sign ups so that everyone would have a fair chance to participate. They also suggested using the curriculum leadership team to educate new teachers about the walks and accompany those newer teachers on the walks.

Three of the teachers interviewed also said that walkthroughs should happen early and often, becoming a more regular part of the professional development plan, as they saw it as a very useful way to spend their time. They would also like some additional formative feedback as the teacher observed, however, so that they could also grow from the process.

The CRS District Director felt that the creation of a structured plan for how to have and use the walkthroughs needed to be consistent districtwide. He felt this process should inform professional development at the district and school level. With a structure to maintain and a process to follow, the learning for the students and the skill sets of the teachers will improve in his opinion.
It is significant that although the teachers had specific concerns about the process, they also had specific solutions for solving the problems. They saw enough value in the process to say that more teachers should have the opportunity to do the walks, and they want to be able to influence what they see more directly, implying that they see value in the process and want it to be more specialized.

When asked what the perceptions of the teachers at your school were regarding the walkthrough process (question #10) the responses were an interesting balance between feeling that people saw the process as a positive opportunity to learn and an invasion of classroom space. Although perceptions did vary, these two categories captured the thinking of the group.

Seven of the twelve teachers used words like “excited,” “positive,” “open,” and “useful” to describe the perceptions of the walkthrough process. These teachers mentioned that they learned many new ways of work and this process actually helped them do better on their evaluation. One teacher said, “I even tried a new strategy for my evaluation that I saw another teacher do the week before. I got a very high evaluation score.” They were enthusiastic about the chance to see other people teach. The teachers mentioned that this opened up a chance to collaborate with their peers, and they considered it a privilege. “I had always been curious about how other teachers taught, but now I have seen them in action.” The culture shifted on campus because of these opportunities and teachers saw this as a privilege. In every instance the people who sensed some negativity about the process also said the majority of the teachers thought that it was a very positive opportunity. They mentioned things like, “some people will always be grumpy no matter what,” and “we only saw favored teachers.”
Some of the negative responses in terms of perception mentioned that some teachers felt “targeted” and that the targeting was sometimes positive, because the teacher was great, or negative, because the teacher needed improvement. It was said that some people want to close their doors and “hide from others”, but this process did not allow them to do that anymore. The teachers mentioned that some saw this as “one more thing” that took their time, until they participated, and then they realized that this was time well spent.

Overall, the District Director believes the majority of the teachers think that the walkthrough process is a positive one. In all the walkthroughs he conducted, he never had a teacher have a problem with us being in her room. He said, “We went on walkthroughs in other counties when we were learned to be District Directors, and I honestly thought they were staged. The students and teachers seemed so natural. Now that happens in my own district. I know it is authentic.” He mentioned that participants see the value in walkthrough process and are now asking to go. For most of the teachers, this was the first time they have ever been in classrooms other than their own and he and I agreed that the opportunity yielded positive results.

I feel it is of value to reinforce that these local people are not shy to tell the DD what they really think of things. The participants have given no negative feedback to him about this process. He did emphasize the value of making the purpose of the walks clear and relevant. He said, “When the principals made the walkthroughs a part of their system as a school, the teachers appreciated the opportunity.” Not only does it need to be mentioned, but it needs to be revisited often. The overall buy in of the teachers in the process and the opportunity to learn from each other has shifted the learning on these
campuses for the teachers as well as the students, as shown by the positive response to walkthroughs. “I did not think our teachers would embrace this process like they have, but it has changed the way they teach.”

I asked the teachers (question #11), “what major successes have resulted because of the implementation of the walkthrough process” and got three categories of responses. The three most prominent answers were increased teacher confidence, growth as educators, and increased peer to peer support. Of the twelve people interviewed, eight specifically mentioned that the process built teacher confidence. It gave teachers a way to help each other, showing them that they are not alone in their teaching and learning. One interviewee mentioned that this process “shined light on what to do in the classroom” and two others mentioned that seeing other people teach made teachers “hungry” for more learning. The process increased unity and started crucial conversations about teaching, which made people want to try new things in their classrooms. “I am no longer afraid to try new things in my classroom. That is a great feeling.”

Half of the teachers interviewed talked about how this process “grew them as educators”, saying things like they now “learn and reflect on what they are doing in their classrooms”, and they “go over feedback to get better”. They have changed their habits and now “own the strategies” instead of just hearing about them and not using them. One teacher said, when asked what successes had resulted from the walkthrough process, “Just look at my room! It belongs to the students and the learning now!”

Half of the teachers also talked about the increased peer to peer support. They mentioned teacher collaboration and support. Teachers built relationships between
content areas that did not exist prior to this process. One teacher said that this “process of learning together creates a lighter load for all teachers.” They appreciated the opening that now exists for conversations around learning. Teachers now know what happens in other rooms and it is pushing them to be better teachers in their own classrooms.

Three of the twelve teachers interviewed also mentioned that student behavior has improved because of the walkthroughs. They mentioned that WICOR is a student-centered learning experience requiring the students to be active learners and decreasing behavioral issues. According to one of the teachers, celebrating students in the schools is now the norm because teachers are more open with what is happening in their own classrooms. Student learning has also improved according to those interviewed, because the students are attentive, alert, and they have a more solid understanding of the material because they have interacted with it personally.

A school wide culture shift was also mentioned, in regard to the schools becoming places where students go to learn and grow. One teacher mentioned that “referrals are down and students are no longer hanging out in the hallways. They are here to learn.” Teachers and leaders created environments for students that are safe and have a focus of pushing the students to think about their futures. This attitude had always existed for some of the students on campus, but now it was happening consistently for all students on campus.

According to the teachers I interviewed, teachers are more comfortable opening their doors. Before instituting this process, teachers had the mentality that “my classroom is my world” and they shut their doors. The shut door concept makes teachers
stagnant. Now doors are open and no one is as nervous about observations. Teachers are learning from each other and are now using the strategies in their classrooms.

When asked this same question, the District Director gave an example of the power of this process that helps paint a vivid picture.

I have a coordinator at a school who has a teacher using interactive notebooks really well and another teacher who is struggling with the process. Because the coordinator has been in classrooms, she knew right away how to help the struggling teacher and was able to pair her up with the teacher who is doing so well. This walkthrough process paved the way for those conversations to happen. If the principals are the only one who knows that these resources exist in the building, the teachers often do not get hooked up with the people who can help them the most.

This quote shows that teachers are taking ownership of learning in their buildings, and are willing to help one another improve. Learning on the part of the teachers has become a way of work which was not the case prior to the walkthroughs. The doors that the process has opened for conversation have remained open for the remainder of the school year and into the next. This is the first time in this district’s recent history that this type of collaborative learning has happened with the teachers, and it is well received by the teachers and the administration.

The DD also mentioned that, “We seldom walk into classrooms where there is no evidence of WICOR strategies used. When we do, it is very obvious both to those who walk and the administrative team, and action is taken with those teachers to help improve their practice.” This shift in practice, making WICOR strategies use the norm instead of
the exception, has positively influenced the schools in the district as well as the students. I have seen a strong shift towards best teaching practices in the two years I have worked with these schools.

The power of this realization, to me, comes in the fact that an administrator did not need to be involved for the teacher to make this connection for her peers. Instead, teaching and learning has become the responsibility of everyone on her campus. Shared leadership involves leaders and followers, but the leaders do not necessarily have a leadership title (Rost, 1993). Teachers have been given permission to be both leaders and followers and have made exciting discoveries about teaching and learning because of it.

It was useful to hear the teachers capture what I had actually seen on their campuses in their interviews. Although only one finding was significant and the project cannot be considered a major contributor with much confidence, there is growth and the walkthrough process may have been an important part of the improvements. The difference in how the teachers carried themselves from the beginning of the year to the end of the year clearly showed the growth and confidence they mentioned in their statements. I was impressed by the teachers’ desire to learn.

In question 12, I asked the teachers about how the atmosphere of the classrooms and campuses have changed because of walkthroughs. Their answers, while varied, focused around increased accountability for the teachers and the students, collaboration among teachers, a more positive classroom and hallway environment visually, and student ownership.

The most common answer, coming from half of those interviewed, focused around teacher and student accountability. One interviewee said, “I had to have the best
learning and the best lessons every day, because someone might be learning from me at any given moment.” Teachers mentioned that they are no longer isolated. The teachers want to outdo one another with great ideas, fun classrooms, and strong learning. Having people walking into one another’s classrooms gave the teachers reasons to try the strategies and “be on their game.”

Three of the twelve teachers interviewed mentioned collaboration when asked this question as well. They talked about the open conversations that now exist on campuses for the teachers. They discussed the sharing of ideas and acceptance of views and new ideas, which did not exist prior to this process. Teachers are working as a team instead of in isolation.

Teachers mentioned changes in the classroom and hallway environment frequently in the interviews as well. Teachers commented on seeing a “college going culture” in the hallways, with “banners, pennants, student projects, and bulletin boards” celebrating the future throughout the schools as a positive atmospheric change. One teacher noticed that “celebrating students for their academic successes instead of just athletic accomplishments through the posting of exemplary work both in classrooms and in hallways has become more common school wide.” At this particular school, students were recognized on the walls for their athletic accomplishments via pictures and trophies. Now if a student passes and Advanced Placement test or completes a certification, they get their picture on the wall as well. There is much more student work up on the walls, which actually cut down on discipline issues and improved attitudes and appearances. The students now get noticed for the right reasons instead of the negative ones. One teacher mentioned that,
Kids like to be here. They used to say that they could not wait to move on to high school, but last year, the students cried and talked about how much they will miss our middle school. That was a huge culture shift for our students. The celebration made them feel valued and appreciated.

This shift is significant because in this rural area, staying in school can be a real challenge for students. Generational poverty overpowers most other influences. Getting students to want to be in school is a positive step towards getting them to graduate with options beyond high school.

Teachers also mentioned that they now want to go to professional learning opportunities to learn how to serve the students more effectively, which was not the case in years past. This process “opened our doors to one another’s classrooms” and allowed the teachers to see that there are alternative ways to deliver information. It made them hungry for more.

The District Director said the biggest change he saw involved the culture of the campuses. He mentioned that classroom “doors are open, collaboration is happening and silos are coming down.” There is a more formal structure for allowing people to learn from one another and now it is safe to ask questions and the teachers feel safe doing so.

As I listened to the teachers and District Director, it came across to me that the teachers felt better equipped to do their jobs because of the walkthrough process on their campuses. For many of them, this school year was the first time in their careers that they had a chance to watch other people teach. According to the DD, the teachers felt empowered to ask more questions and learn from one another. They had not been given a chance to experience that before this process in this district, as was shared by the DD.
The teachers feel better equipped and the students are reaping the benefits as the teacher above so eloquently stated.

To end the interview, I asked each person if there was anything else they would like for me to know (question #13). It was difficult to find specific themes in the final question because it was so open ended, but there was one response that was mentioned more than other ones. The teachers felt the process of walking one another’s classrooms allowed for an increased student-teacher interaction and continuity in classrooms that did not exist before the walkthroughs started. They said it was a chance for learning and growth.

They also mentioned that they all had things to learn. They felt the feedback was purposeful and helpful and it lead to growth in their own classrooms. One teacher said that “prior to this process she had never seen anyone else teach, but now she changed for the better because of the chance to learn from her peers.” Another teacher mentioned that, if the process of walking classrooms were not continuous, people would return to their old habits so the learning should be ongoing.

The District Director, when asked the same question, approached his response from a more global level. He said that if you wish to replicate this model there are a few things you need to be sure to do. He recommends that you take the “time to build it right the first time.” Be thoughtful about who is involved and why and make sure administration understands the importance. He also said to be “strategic, putting specific people in strategic roles to save yourself the time it will take if you start with the wrong people in place.” Finally, he says to have a plan and be willing to learn from others.
When the District Director mentioned having a plan and learning from others, it reminded me that this process requires paying attention to many moving parts. He said, “The culture must be right for the teachers to feel comfortable learning from one another.” The planning must be well thought out so that teachers do not feel their time is being wasted. The school staff must have a ‘mindset of growth and learning,’ as noted by the DD. The DD shared that schools that planned out how they were going to use the walkthrough process to enhance learning had enthusiastic teachers who wanted to experience the process.

I asked the District Director three additional questions because he had seen every school every time we walked. He had the unique perspective of knowing the history of the district, the culture of the schools, and the differences among them. This perspective allowed him to make some unique conclusions that the teachers were not able to make.

When asked what comparisons about the process he could make for the four schools, he said that the “most powerful indicator of how this process goes on a campus, are leadership differences.” Sometimes the principal takes the lead, but he or she often has too many other plates spinning and this becomes an afterthought. The assistant principal might take the lead and in cases where that person “knows and understands the purpose, great things have happened as they did at ABC Middle School.” In other schools, the coordinator takes the lead with guidance from the administrative team, which allows that teacher to take a more active leadership role. When strategic, the variance in this process can be impactful to the outcomes. The DD was impressed with the leadership roles taken by the various school members. If the variance was based on the
person who had the time to do it, it can be detrimental to the learning. According to the DD, the person in charge must be willing to take ownership.

At ABC High School, the coordinator took ownership of the process with the guidance of the principal. Participating in walkthroughs built leadership in the coordinator and made school wide change a reality in the building. The school wide change, resulting in teachers relying on one another to improve their teaching strategies came about because of the support of the principal and the organization of the coordinator. According to the DD, the entire campus atmosphere at ABC High School shifted into one that believe that “all students deserve the opportunity to learn to their highest ability, and teachers must teach accordingly.” He said that the walkthrough process expedited that process.

At ABC Middle School the assistant principal took ownership of the project and because she had been to the CRS Summer Institute and she truly understood how the walkthrough project could enhance the learning in the building. After building a culture of safety and learning, she created an opportunity for every teacher to get to observe someone else teach. It went amazingly well, with open doors throughout the building and every teacher walking classrooms. The DD considered this a model school for the rest of the district.

At LMN High School, the principal assigned someone as coordinator who had room in her schedule, not because of her skill sets, according to the DD. He also told me that no one was passionate about the process on campus, therefore the school used volunteers only for the process. Teachers felt intimidated by the administrators to volunteer, resulting in only three teachers walking classrooms all year. The DD felt that
the culture at this school did not foster learning, based on the environments that he saw in the other schools involved with the process. As a result, only a few classrooms were visited, and even fewer teachers actually got to observe.

At LMN Middle School, the coordinator owned the process of walkthroughs and the administrative team simply gave guidance. She enjoyed the leadership and the principal and assistant principal supported her growth. The DD told me that this type of leadership opportunity would not have been afforded under the previous administrators. The DD also let me know that the coordinator learned a lot and has grown because of the position. In my observations at this site I learned that this year every teacher saw someone else teach at LMN Middle.

I agree with the District Director’s assessment that leadership plays the most important role in the success or failure of this process. If the leaders in the building understand the value of having teachers watch other people teach, the process will become a priority on campus. If the value in the process does not exist, the teachers will sense it and oppose the program. Leaders play a major role in building the culture of a campus that will influence how decisions are made throughout the building.

When asked which process seemed to be most effective (question #14), the District Director felt that there were two schools that really stood out in the process. At ABC High School, he said the coaches took a lead role. A strong coordinator had a vision for the process and built that vision with others on her staff. She was given the freedom to act on that vision by her principal. The administrator led the charge but gave the coordinator the tools she needed to be successful. Teachers responded well to the fact that this was a teacher led initiative and wanted to be a part of the process.
At ABC Middle School, every single teacher walked classrooms at least twice in the 2014-15 school year. The Assistant Principal took an active role in this process and demonstrated strong instructional leadership skills, as was evidenced by the positive response from the teachers the DD interacted with regularly. The walkthroughs occurred frequently and the level of teaching increased. Teachers knew that great teaching was valued and supported. They told the DD that on a regular basis when he visited the campus. My study results indicated that great teaching was valued and supported based on their comments about learning and mirroring practices of others, and feeling positive about the teaching witnessed.

According to the District Director, personnel choices were the key. He said “putting the right people in charge makes all the difference.” I have to agree with his theory, as my observations aligned with his. When the people in charge of the process believed in the value of the walkthroughs, the teachers interviewed saw value. The DD supported the teacher interview findings in his responses as well. In the school where the value of the process was not communicated effectively the results were considerably less noticeable.

I also noticed the power that having the right people in the right roles had on the positive implementation of the walkthrough process. In *Good to Great, and the Social Sectors*, Collins talks about three main things that need to happen for any organization to move in a positive direction. Number two, says to focus on the “First Who” principle, which is that you should do everything you can to “get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people into the right seats on the bus” (Collins, 2005, p. 14). In my opinion, school staffs that had the right people in the right seats on
the bus appreciated the walkthrough process and saw changes in perceptions and thinking about teaching practices. The other two schools did report positive changes, but they also reported fear and concern, which often counters the positive movement.

The final question I asked the District Director was which process had been the least effective (questions #15). He noted that LMN High School did not see the same results as the other schools. He said that at LMN assigning tasks such as the walkthrough process, to the wrong person was the problem. The principal assigned it to the person who had enough available time in her schedule, instead of to the best person fit for the job. In my opinion, this was very unproductive. Nothing about the process at this school was strategic. It was random and staffed by volunteers.

The lesson he learned at LMN High School was that the people leading need to be on board for planned and needed growth and change to take place regarding teaching and learning. Acceptance of this sort of change in professional learning, requires strong relationships and leadership skills. For the process to be widely accepted, his or her peers must also respect the lead person in any new process.

The District Director and I discussed the importance of leadership in the positive implementation of the College Readiness System as a whole and walkthroughs specifically and agreed that no change could occur throughout the school without leadership support. Change can happen in pockets on a campus, but it will not be widespread without a clear purpose and implementing vision, mission, and goals guiding decision makers’ beliefs that related changes are worthwhile.
Interpretation

Survey.

Through the survey, I asked some questions about the frequency of the use of WICOR strategies by teachers. I also asked every teacher in the building, regardless of training the teachers had or had not received, to complete the survey. I did not take into consideration the overall understanding for the WICOR strategies in the building or the difficulty some teachers might have in moving from once a month to once a week on the Likert scale, showing growth and effectiveness over time and increased frequency of strategy use.

I believe that the lack of significant movement can be attributed to two major factors. The first factor being the specificity of the questions in each category. I asked about every single WICOR strategy that CRS Center teaches, but each school only picked a select few on which to focus. Some teachers may have been confused by there being so many different types of strategies to discuss. I believe if I had asked more general questions about the five areas of focus, writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading, I may have seen a bigger shift in the self-reported use of strategies that were discussed and shared in the interviews.

The Likert scale that I used jumped from using the strategies once a month (3) to using them more than once a month but not once a week (4) to once a week (5) which might have concerned some teachers. Many content areas do not frequently lend themselves to the use of each specific type of WICOR strategy, which might have resulted in less movement up the scale. I was looking for a large number of strategies on each walkthrough, but was only in the classrooms for 5-7 minutes. It would have made
for more sound research if I had limited the strategies I expected to see in that short amount of time.

Another factor to consider in the survey involved teacher turnover. Of the four schools in the study, one had 14 new staff members between 2013-14 and 2014-15 and the others hovered around 10 new staff members. Although professional development happened on these campuses throughout the school year, some of these teachers had a year less exposure to WICOR strategies than their counterparts, but they still took the survey. This has implications for planning for such situations as the program grows.

In the instance of all five categories of WICOR, the mean on the survey hovered between three and four, which makes logical sense, because teachers are honestly admitting that they are using the strategies at least once a month but not weekly. This is a considerable improvement over the use of these strategies prior to the introduction of CRS and WICOR strategies, when many of these strategies were completely unknown to these teachers and not used at all. To jump from 4 (more than once a month but not weekly), to 5 (once a week) requires a true shift in the mindset teachers have about having active learners in their classrooms. An article in the Center for Public Education publication states, “The largest struggle for teachers is not learning new approaches to teaching but implementing them.” This article says that it takes 20 times of trying a new strategy to master it (Gulamhussein, 2013). This type of change typically happens in waves, beginning with early adopters and ranging all the way to laggards. This theory, the Diffusion of Innovation (Rogers, 1983) explains the typical way that a group accepts new ideas and I have found it to be accurate in depicting the roll out of CRS strategies in schools. Some people adopt the strategies right away, but it takes time to get the next
group to agree with the shift. The walkthrough process exposes more teachers to the process more frequently, moving them closer to their 20 exposures to the new strategy and boosting their confidence to try something new.

**Walkthroughs.**

The observations lacked some consistent pieces for giving a clear picture of the use of strategies campus-wide. I did not observe all of the same teachers both semesters, I looked for more specificity in the types of strategies used than could be easily documented to see growth. Also, I did not observe at the same time in each class period.

If I had seen all of the same teachers both semesters, I would have been better able to determine if the use of strategies increased or decreased between semester one and semester two. The variables of teacher, time of class period, and lesson for the day made it difficult to determine if the teachers were indeed using the strategies more frequently or not. Seeing the same teachers would have at least cut out one variable.

I looked for 38 different types of strategies in a span of 5-7 minutes in each classroom. I did not in any way expect to see all 38 strategies in any one walkthrough. That was not how the walkthrough process was designed. Instead, I wanted to see if, over time, I would start to see trends of certain strategies being used more frequently. I only compared two instances of walkthroughs, one in the fall and one in the spring.

I conducted at least 4 walkthroughs on each campus throughout the year. I saw growth in all four schools, and substantial growth in two of the four. Though this is not part of my study, it did color somewhat what I might have expected from it.

The walkthrough design is only meant to get a snapshot of what the teachers did on a regular basis, but if the other observers and I happened to enter a room during a test
or quiz or right after an interactive activity, I did not see as much on the form as I might have if I had entered 5 minutes earlier. If I had narrowed what I was trying to observe down to fewer types of strategies, I might have seen more specific shifts from semester one to semester two. Again, this information is a reflection for finding ways that might lead to the more effective use of walkthroughs.

In my study, one particular school did not embrace the walkthrough process as a professional learning opportunity, and overall, had trouble embracing WICOR strategies as a way of improving instruction in the school. This school had a strong cohort of teachers who did not want to accept CRS strategies as best practices, because they were not involved in the beginning of the initiative. The teachers in this cohort vocally disagreed with the use of CRS strategies. This was not because they did not believe they were good for teaching and student learning, but because they were not asked to go to the CRS Summer Institute in the first year and some newer teachers were asked to attend instead. This information came from the CRS District Director who was a former teacher at this school and knows the community well.

The principal knew that this issue existed but did not take any actions to stop the disagreement. The newer teachers who did attend the CRS Summer Institute came back excited but their excitement got thwarted by these other teachers. The teachers trained in CRS strategies continued to use them in their classrooms but did not feel comfortable sharing their successes with others. This is an important lesson that must be considered for future implementation.
Interviews.

It resonated with me after conducting these interviews that the teachers saw value in the process but wanted input in how the walkthroughs were prepared for, organized and conducted. They wanted to be a part of the shaping of the process not just the process as designed. They had excellent ideas for improving the process, but most of them did not feel equipped to inform the existing process. The teachers liked the concept but wanted to improve the execution to get more out of the experience. To me, this is further confirmation that open communication could benefit the process, but when the communication feels closed, the process shuts down almost immediately, proving to be counterproductive to growth for teachers.

The district also sees the value of the walkthroughs, but needs to determine how the data will be used after the walkthroughs take place. If the data does not inform instruction, great teaching will only continue in pockets. If the data does inform instruction the results could potentially have an exponential effect.

Making the walkthroughs a common part of the professional development plan would require buy in from administrative teams, which these teachers hoped to influence. In the interviews I clearly saw that the teachers appreciated the opportunity to see other teachers teach. They hoped to have the chance to continue this practice in the subsequent school years and had gone to their administrative teams with suggestions to improve the practice.

It impressed me that all 13 people interviewed found value in the process of observing teachers and hoped the opportunity to do so would continue. They all had slightly different suggestions for improving the practice but no one suggested that the
practice was not beneficial. The value came in seeing other people teach students in the same building, with the same challenges. The professional development opportunity was both relevant and immediate. The teachers could use the strategies they saw the very next class period, and they knew where to go to learn more about the strategies. They started relying on one another and they became truly collaborative.

These schools are located in a very rural area, and the teachers do not have very many opportunities to attend large professional development conferences. This type of professional development allowed them to learn without high cost to the district. In other conversations with the teachers, they mentioned that they appreciated that these were strategies that would work with the types of students they teach. One said, “My students pay more attention and are doing better on assessments now that I am requiring active learning.” When attending other professional development sessions, they felt that the strategies shared would not work with “their students.” Seeing other people in their buildings successfully try strategies with the same students they also teach broke down barriers for their learning those strategies.

The interviews also revealed some frustration that this was not something that happened more often, especially in the one school that only allowed three teachers to walk all year. One teacher at that school said, “I wish I could walk at other schools because the process is great, but I feel judged at my school.” At ABC Middle School every single teacher in the building walked at least twice and every teacher in the building also got observed, but at LMN High School only three teachers walked total. The teachers from both of these schools said they would have liked for the process to happen more often. They saw value in the chance to see other people teach.
In my opinion, the return on investment has become clear to administrators in the district and they now find the process invaluable. The DD said, “school board members have participated in walkthroughs and now want it to happen in all schools in the district”. It encourages me to know that the district does see the value in the process, and once the grant funding runs out, I believe the process will continue. Teachers can voice the benefits of the process and the administrative teams appear to be listening.

Culture, as created by the administrative team and the teachers on campus, plays a large role in the success or failure of the walkthrough process. Most of the principals in this study took the time to create a positive culture where learning from one another was safe and encouraged. The culture created by the schools enhanced the success of the walkthrough process. The negative perceptions that some teachers had about the process happened in places where the culture was not well established or happened in pockets on campus rather than throughout. A strong culture of collaboration is the lynchpin for this walkthrough process’s success.

**Conclusion**

The overall results of the survey and observations did not show significant increases in the use of strategies from 2013-14 to 2014-15, but in both years there were pockets of growth. The interviews indicated that every teacher I talked with appreciated the chance to observe other teachers and hoped to do it more often. I cannot say that allowing teachers to observe one another teach will increase the use of WICOR strategies by all schools and staff members based on my quantitative data, but my qualitative data told me that the process is very beneficial to the morale and learning of the teachers as a
whole. As an administrator, I would want to allow for this process to happen on my campus for the boost in morale and collaboration alone.

Use of strategies throughout the schools could have increased if data from the walkthroughs had been used to identify additional professional development targeting specific strategies to ensure that the teachers feel comfortable using them. The next round of walkthroughs would then involve looking for those specific strategies. Narrowing the focus and providing targeting learning opportunities around selected individual strategies might yield more pronounced results.

Teachers in general valued time to learn from one another. The things that they disliked about the process were really ideas to make the process better, such as having more say in which teachers get to observe or be observed, seeing classrooms from their own content area specifically, or doing observations during planning periods to avoid missing class time. I believe if the administrative teams from different schools were willing to make adjustments to the process based on their suggestions, the teachers and students would benefit from them. At LMN High the teachers did not feel safe on their campus to learn from one another, which should be an indicator to the administrative team that there are some cultural issues that need to be addressed. These include teachers not trusting in themselves and others and not being open to collaboration as well as change and new teaching strategies.

The different approaches that each school made to the process yielded a variety of interpretations of the process and its purpose. Three of the four schools embraced the opportunity for teachers to learn from one another and the responses from the teachers interviewed echoed that thinking. At the schools where the walkthroughs only involved a
total of three teachers, they saw benefit in walking but felt anxiety due to the culture of the building not fostering collaboration.
SECTION FIVE: JUDGMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS

Judgment

Studying the WICOR walkthrough process at these four schools and determining whether the process had an impact on the use of WICOR strategies overall on these campuses enlightened me to several assumptions. It also showed some areas for growth for the schools in the future. My research questions revealed both positive and negative answers that all can pave the way to improving the process.

Primary Exploratory Questions

Question one was, what do participants (teachers and District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites report as working well with the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies? A rather extensive list of components that the teachers liked emerged from the interview process, but a few themes can sum up the positive feedback. Teachers gained knowledge and understanding from the walks, and appreciated the positive feedback that they received from the people who observed in their classrooms. They felt affirmed through the process which built morale amongst the staff. The teachers also appreciated having a say in which rooms they visited and what they saw during the walkthroughs. Being allowed to play an active role in the process gave teachers enthusiasm and hope for making things new in their own classrooms.

Based on the answers given by the teachers to this question, I would recommend that anyone wishing to start this process on campus should start with developing a joint and clear purpose for the entire process, paying specific attention to how the observations are conducted. One should get input from the teachers on what they want to see and then
provide specific opportunities for the teachers to see that. Positive feedback must be
given for this process in a timely manner to be well received by the staff, and that
feedback can be given by the teachers and the administrators. Affirmation will build
morale on the campus.

Question two was, what do participants (teachers and District Director) in the
WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites report as not working well with the
classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies? Again, several themes
emerged from the interview conversations. Some teachers felt that the walks were too
short and the selection process for selecting persons to observe and who was observed
was not intentional. The teachers were not always selected for predetermined purposes.
Teachers also felt that the walks were time consuming and sometimes too random. Some
teachers, particularly the ones at schools where the purpose of these walkthroughs did not
clearly get messaged, felt judged during the walkthroughs as if for a summative
performance evaluation and even threatened by having their peers in their classrooms.

My recommendations to address these issues would be to allow the teachers to
have a voice in the process, creating more specific intentionality or purposes and to focus
on them during the walkthroughs. Involving teachers in the process and finding out what
they might want to see in classrooms would allow for increased relevant and meaningful
learning opportunities. I would also recommend that teachers have the chance to walk
with their department peers so that authentic discussion about the observations could
follow the experience with specificity towards what the teachers teach. Principals also
need to create a culture where the teachers feel safe to learn from one another and not
judged or threatened.
Question three was, what do participants (teachers and District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites report as major obstacles in the implementation of the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies? The obstacles reported showed concern for funding beyond a grant cycle and sustained purpose. The teachers wanted to know that this initiative would remain a priority once the funding ended. They also felt that time could be a frustrating element in the process. Some felt that it took too much time away from their own classrooms and others wished they had been able to stay in classrooms for a longer period of time to observe more of a lesson. Administrators could address the time and the funding element by utilizing planning periods to conduct the walkthroughs and then eliminating a faculty meeting or another required additional task if teachers chose to participate in the walkthrough process. The administrators could also ease the minds of the teachers by being very clear about the purpose and the intention of the walkthroughs prior to the school year beginning. Giving the teachers a voice in the process and then helping them know the purpose behind the process will improve implementation and increase comfort levels for trying new things.

The final primary question asked was what do participants (teachers and District Director) in the WICOR walkthrough process at 4 current school sites suggest as ways to improve the classroom walk-through observations of the WICOR strategies? The suggestions about improving the process centered mainly on the teachers getting to select who they saw and what they saw. One school allowed for choice and the teachers I interviewed from that school felt valued and appreciated because of that freedom. The
District Director specifically mentioned that the schools do not utilize the data that is collected on the walkthroughs to alter their practices in the building.

My number one suggestion would be that if you collect data on these walkthroughs, use it to alter instruction. The data could be a key factor in identifying professional learning opportunities and improved instruction, but if it does not get utilized no practices will change. Administrators need to recognize the value in learning from the observations made in the building. If administrators choose to use the data collected on walkthroughs primarily to identify and provide teacher training and to improve instruction, I believe over time there will be a large and sustained impact on learning.

**Secondary Exploratory Questions**

The secondary exploratory questions helped me determine the perceptions of the participants in the walkthrough process. It also allowed me to determine if the walkthroughs were having the intended results. They further contributed to learning the perceptions of the teachers in this study.

My first secondary question was, “what are the perceptions of the teachers at 4 current school sites regarding the walkthrough process?” The perceptions of the teachers were mostly positive. The teachers felt that the process allowed them to learn from one another and get out of their own classrooms. They appreciated being given the chance to see other people in their own school teach the same students they teach. They would have enjoyed a chance to discuss the strategies used with the teachers who they observed, closing that feedback loop. They felt it was a genuine and practical learning opportunity.
and it was one that all 13 people interviewed wanted to see continue, with some modifications.

I wanted to determine “what the perceptions of the District Director for the 4 school sites regarding the walkthrough process” might be as well. In interviewing the District Director, he candidly mentioned that he was originally skeptical of the process, but once he saw it happening in his schools, with his teachers and administrators, he not only appreciated the process but saw it as adding value to teacher development and student learning. He was concerned that the process would not continue at the same level once the grant ended and the funding to pay for substitutes stopped, but he did have a few specific options for reducing the cost so that the process would continue. These include using planning time in lieu of a faculty meeting, having administrators cover classes, and using fewer substitutes and sharing them with several teachers, so that they can observe one class period each.

The District Director also hoped to see the schools use the data collected on the walkthroughs to inform and shape future professional development opportunities. He planned to make some targeted suggestions to the principals of these schools on how they could use the data to better inform future instruction. He saw great value in continuing the process and felt that with minor tweaks, the process could be even more impactful.

The final secondary question was “what major successes have resulted because of the implementation of a walkthrough process on campus?” It should be noted that with one exception, there were no significant differences in the results of my study. Nevertheless, according to the interviews, the teachers’ morale increased, their understanding of how to use WICOR strategies grew, and they felt better equipped to
teach their students. Teachers became more collaborative as a result of this WICOR walkthrough process and they started having more collegial conversations about teaching and learning. These conversations continued all year, and I believe will continue in years to come.

Teachers overcame fears of judgement and replaced them with feelings of empowerment and excitement for learning from one another. Teachers became better equipped to educate their students and they appreciated being given the opportunity to do so. The teachers also found their voice with their principals to share what they needed to continue their learning in the future.

**Recommendations**

According to the teachers interviewed in this study, spending time observing other teachers built confidence and support for the teacher observing as well as the teachers being observed. Based on their responses, I would recommend that schools adopt a system for allowing teachers to watch one another teach. A few parameters must be set for this to be successful, however.

The first recommendation for a smooth use of this technique would be to create a culture of learning campus-wide. Teachers need to feel safe taking risks and trying new things. If the teachers feel that judgement is being passed regarding their teaching and would be used for summative evaluation purposes, they would be threatened by it and this could lead to less, not more learning. The administrators must be the impetus of this culture setting, and they need to bring the teachers alongside them in the process. Teachers can feel safe with one another, but if they do not feel safe trying new things with the administrators, ultimately, their evaluators, then they are not going to try those
things. The administrators must create a culture of trust and collaboration for the program to work best for teachers and students.

If a school chooses to implement WICOR walkthroughs with teachers, the culture needs to promote safety for trying new things and adult learning. The teachers need to be provided clarity on what to observe as well as what will be observed, and the purpose for the walkthroughs needs to be well established. My study indicates if these three things exist, the implementation of the walkthrough process would result in teachers being more willing to try new strategies in their own classrooms.

The teachers also need to know what to look for in the classroom and the teachers being observed need to know the same information. Discussion about the types of strategies modeled should happen at the beginning of the school year and then training on what those strategies look like should follow. It would be overwhelming for a teacher to try to look for everything in a classroom, and instead should have a narrower focus for the observation. The narrower focus could also give direction to the teacher about what to expect to do in his or her own classroom.

A clear purpose for the walkthroughs needs to be set as well. In talking to the teachers, it came to light that in three of the schools in this study, the administrator team set a clear purpose for the walkthroughs, explaining why teachers were asked to observe in one another’s classrooms. In those schools, the teachers felt empowered by the observations, and took what they learned and applied it in their own classrooms. In the fourth school, where the administrator did not set a clear purpose for the walkthroughs, the teachers reported feeling judged both when they observed and when they were the
ones being observed. Their reason for being in the classrooms did not appear clear to them, making them feel uncomfortable.

I have been in schools, one of which was a part of this study, where the culture did not lend itself to safe collaborative opportunities for learning. In those schools, the teachers would not benefit from the opportunity of seeing someone else teach. The lack of benefit would occur because the teachers would not be able to talk to one another about the successes and failures or trying something new, and that could create angst in the teachers. Having a healthy collaborative environment can make or break the positive perception and potential success of WICOR walkthroughs.

In terms of logistics, several suggestions were made to enhance the procedures for the WICOR walkthrough process. WICOR walkthroughs need to fit into the other initiatives taking place in the school district. If these walkthroughs do not meld with the other processes on campus, the teachers might perceive them as yet another thing to have added to their proverbial filled up plates. If the administrators and teachers can see the interconnectedness of these walkthroughs and the other district level initiatives, then they will be more likely to embrace this new concept, as was discovered in the interviews in this study. At the schools where this process contributed to the overall professional learning at the school, the teachers were excited about the opportunity, but where it was just another thing to do, the teachers felt more frustrated than enlightened.

Funding can also be an issue with the WICOR walkthrough process. If substitute teachers need to cover classes so that teachers can observe, then there needs to be a funding source to cover that expense. Some workarounds for that issue include; having teachers walk during their planning period in exchange for a required faculty meeting,
using administrators to cover classes so that the teachers are free to observe, or using the same substitute to cover multiple teachers throughout the day, and only have teachers walk for one or two periods at a time. Being strategic about scheduling can alleviate some of the cost associated with the WICOR walkthrough process.

I would not recommend WICOR walkthroughs be conducted in the first 6 months of trying new strategies, unless the teachers have been exposed to open learning environments prior to the walkthroughs. Teachers need to feel safe to make mistakes and it takes 21 times of trying a new activity before that activity is mastered. If you start observing too soon, teachers will not have developed proficiency in those activities yet, and frustration might overtake growth. That said, there is great value in learning from mistakes as well. The conversations around the learning become more crucial at this point.

After leaving a classroom, a conversation needs to take place about what was seen and what can be used. After each classroom visit, a debriefing between those who participated in the observation should take place in the hallway or some other available space for conversations. The conversations should not be focused on evaluation but instead growth. The growth comes in the observers talking about what they saw that they could use in their own classrooms. These conversations can enhance the understanding on the part of the observer as well as point out easily implemented ideas for his or her classroom.

There were no statistically significant increases in the use of all but one of the strategies in my study. I did not go into the classroom at the same time each class period and I did not know what the teacher’s plan was for the day prior to entering the room. If
I wanted to gather data on how a specific teacher’s practice changed over time, or how that teacher increased WICOR strategy use, I would need to tweak my own observation process. Instead, I authentically observed the teachers in their environment and looked for how many times I saw certain strategies within the WICOR framework. If I were to redo the study, I would have narrowed the timing of the walkthroughs to a specific point in the class period and I would have looked for more specific strategies rather than all of them at once. It was difficult to compare the walkthrough data from first semester to second semester when I did not always observe the same point in the lesson, type of lesson, subject, or teacher. The data I gathered represented the school as a whole, but not necessarily teachers who had been extensively trained in these strategies. Every teacher had been exposed to the strategies, some through CRS trainings while others were only exposed during on-campus faculty led trainings.

I recommend that if a school decides to implement the WICOR walkthrough process, that they celebrate the small wins first (Kotter, 1996). The entire school’s teaching practice will not change in a week, a month, or maybe even years, but teachers will try new things. The willingness to try new things should be celebrated by the administrators as well as the teachers. An environment where administrators encourage teachers to try new things and teachers are willing to share the new things they are learning creates healthy conversations about teaching and learning.

In an article published by Gardner-Webb University, teacher empowerment is said to increase teacher morale, particularly when they are given a chance to learn from one another (How Administrators Can Empower Teachers, n.d.). The teachers that I interviewed were visibly excited about teaching and when asked how they felt about
observing other teachers, they all said that they learned from the process and appreciated that it happened with their own students. The process will not change an entire school’s use of WICOR strategies immediately, but if the administrators celebrate when things do shift, teachers will be more likely to try the new thing the next time.

If an administrative team decided to implement WICOR walkthroughs with teachers, they should follow a few specific implementation strategies. The administrators should create a culture of learning campus wide, give clear direction on what to observe in classrooms, set a purpose that can be communicated to all stakeholders, think through logistics thoroughly, anticipate funding implications, have thoughtful conversation around the classroom visits, be patient with the results and celebrate quick wins. Following this formula will potentially yield empowered teachers who willingly try new strategies and ultimately have a positive impact on the learning in their classrooms.

Conclusion

Engaging in this process of inquiry was enlightening, empowering, and exciting. I became more enlightened to the issues teachers have about feeling inadequate and how to face them. I realized that even though most schools are in a similar position, feeling as if they cannot change the effectiveness of teaching in schools, this process of experiencing one another’s classrooms allowed for an overall improvement in teaching. The empowerment came from my realization that studying this process can and will make a difference in how people teach and learn and could give educators an alternative to mediocrity.

I did not see statistically significant shifts in the use of most strategies as self-reported by the entire group of teachers in a school, but in talking to specific teachers
who had experienced the process first hand, I realized that the most significant impact happened in pockets. After a few more years, I feel confident that the impact would have been made on more teachers, showing a bigger statistical significance in the use of strategies. The interviews showed me that the teachers who got to participate in the process of observing in other teachers’ classrooms had improved their craft as teachers and were willing to try new strategies. As more exposure to the process takes place, I believe that the use of the strategies on a consistent basis will increase.

I learned that when conducting research, narrowing my focus would have allowed me to gather better data for my purposes. The data I had gave me a broad perspective but if I wanted to know the specific impact this process had, I could have only surveyed and observed teachers who had been trained and had experienced the walkthrough process. Instead, I got feedback from all the teachers in the building, even though they were not all exposed to these experiences.

This WICOR walkthrough process involved teachers and administrators, striving to become better equipped to teach their students. The process looked a little different at each school but the goal remained the same. The educators all wanted teachers to learn best practices from one another so that the students could become more active learners. Learning happened at each of the schools because the administrators allowed teachers to see what others were doing in their classrooms and exchange or “steal” best practices. Change happened when the administrators built trust in their buildings and the teachers felt empowered to grow in their craft.
REFERENCES


DeWitt, P. (2015, May). 3 reasons why your observations may be a waste of time [Web blog post]. *Education Week.* Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/finding_common_ground/2015/05/3_reasons_why_your_observations_may_be_a_waste_of_time.html


Van Tassell, R. (2014). The trouble with top-down: A small group of teachers were energized by learning from one another—until the learning was mandated. *Educational Leadership, 71*(8), 76-78.


*Education Digest, 75*(2), 31-35.
Appendix A: WICOR Walkthrough Form

Check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing to learn</th>
<th>Inquiry</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>____Focused</td>
<td>academic task</td>
<td>strong sense of mutual</td>
<td>organized binders</td>
<td>pre-reading activities,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell notes</td>
<td>analyzed and expectations</td>
<td>respect and support</td>
<td>____up-to-date planners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w/questions</td>
<td>articulated information</td>
<td>and/or products</td>
<td>for assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in left margin</td>
<td>processed and connections</td>
<td>problems solved</td>
<td>in and out of school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; summary</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>together</td>
<td>activities,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at end</td>
<td>____info</td>
<td>academic</td>
<td>and long-term projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____pre-writing</td>
<td>synthesize into new</td>
<td>discourse</td>
<td>___tools to track</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activities/quick</td>
<td>understandings</td>
<td>____challenge</td>
<td>progress and grades in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k writes to develop</td>
<td>____application of learning</td>
<td>one another to think</td>
<td>core classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking</td>
<td>____questions</td>
<td>deeply about the task at</td>
<td>___developed 4 or 6 year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>____learning</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>hand</td>
<td>plans for HS courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>logs,</td>
<td>____questions</td>
<td>____focus on the</td>
<td>___graphic organizers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>summaries,</td>
<td>asked to seek clarification</td>
<td>content and build on each-</td>
<td>___other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>reflections,</td>
<td>or additional information</td>
<td>others’ thoughts</td>
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<tr>
<td>interactive</td>
<td>____problem solving</td>
<td>Socratic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>notebooks</td>
<td>____questions</td>
<td>questioning or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>____graphic</td>
<td>self-regulate</td>
<td>Seminar or Philosophical</td>
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<tr>
<td>organizers</td>
<td>____other</td>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____writing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>process</td>
<td></td>
<td>activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>____GRS writing</td>
<td></td>
<td>____collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td>curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>research</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>____note taking</td>
<td></td>
<td>____room</td>
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<td>____other</td>
<td></td>
<td>____think pair</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>share, table</td>
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<td>talk, shoulder</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>partners</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>___other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rigor:   ____Applying (Level 3)   ____Processing (Level 2)   ____Gathering (Level 1)

Description:

Student Participation:   ____Student Centered   ____Teacher Centered

Description:

Environment:

Motivational   ____Posters  ____Quotes  ____Student generated work
Academic       ____Content Posters  ____Maps, Tables, Charts  ____Student generated content
College/Career  ____College  ____SAT/ACT Information  ____Graduation Requirements
                ____Pennants  ____CTE Testing Information  ____Data Walls  ____Other

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Appendix B: Teacher Survey

For the teacher survey, only specific questions from a larger survey were used for the purposes of this study, which is why the numbers appear to be non-sequential.

12. This set of questions concern strategies of organization you might use with your students to help them organize their work, thoughts, and/or time. During the 2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you use the following organizational tools in your classroom? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12a. Three ring binders to keep work in and to keep it orderly?
12b. Assignment logs to record work and grades on that work?
12c. Agenda or calendar to record due dates, homework, and your expectations or assignments?
12d. Spiral notebooks for recording notes in an interactive format (i.e. lecture notes and handouts on one side, and student generated work on the other)?
12e. Notes chunked into three categories/columns of questions, facts, and steps

13. This set of questions concern strategies of organization you might use with your students to help them organize their work, thoughts, and/or time. During the 2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you use the following organizational tools in your classroom? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13a. Rubrics or other clear guidelines to explain expectations for assignments including the point value of specific components, which is given to the students when an assignment is made.
13b. Use of “foldables” that is folding paper to help students organize and record information into categories.
13c. Essay planning where students first formulate and state a clear thesis and organize details and facts to support that thesis prior to writing.
13d. A form for writing assignments to assist students with organizing the fact/details to use, identify a thesis statement, etc.
14. The next series of questions concern **inquiry and collaboration** teaching strategies you might use in your classroom. During the 2014-2015 school year, how often in a term did you do the following? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>14a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students to agree/disagree with a prompt where one student speaks at a time, going back and forth from the pro to the con?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students to work in small groups, asking each other questions about the subject matter or texts to discover answers to questions as a group?</td>
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<td>14c.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students to apply what they have previously learned to what they are currently doing in your classroom?</td>
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<td>Ask students to work in small groups on a product with a rubric of expectations?</td>
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<td>Ask students to debate a statement or question in written form only, utilizing chart paper.</td>
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</table>

17. The next series of questions concern **writing** strategies you might use in your classroom. During the 2013-14/2014-2015 school year, how often during a term did you do the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17a.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students to revise their notes and/or create a summary of their notes (from readings, classroom lectures, etc.)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17b.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask students to write a summary sentence in order to synthesize a passage?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17c.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask students to write in journals or logs reflecting on what they have been learning in their classes, as well as how they are doing and/or what goals they have for themselves?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

18. The next series of questions concern specific **reading** strategies that you might use in your classroom. During the 2014-2015 school year, how often during a term did you do the following? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
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<td>18a.</td>
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<td>Ask students to read complex texts in your classroom?</td>
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<td>18b.</td>
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<td>Spend time helping students learn the meaning of new words?</td>
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<td>18c.</td>
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<td>Have students number the paragraphs, circle key terms, underline author’s claims, and use this information to engage in activities about the text?</td>
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<td>18d.</td>
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<td>Use guided reading techniques that assist students in determining the meaning of the passage and the author’s purpose, either as a class or small group?</td>
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<td>18e.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employ close reading techniques that allow for the students to repeat and/or fill in the blanks as the class reads together?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
19. The next series of questions concern specific reading and collaboration strategies that you might use in your classroom. During the 2014-2015 school year, how often during a term did you do the following? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per term</th>
<th>At least once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>More than once a month, but not weekly</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week, but not daily</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19a. Use rereading techniques that require students to read a passage more than once, with a different focus each time, to ensure comprehension?

19b. Have students participate in Socratic seminars – that is, engage in collaborative dialogue about the text through the use of higher level questioning?

19c. Ask students to summarize texts, pulling out the most important information in a concise wrap up?

19d. Ask students to use tables, graphs, or pictures to organize the information in the text into a more understandable form (such as Venn Diagrams, Acrostics, Spider Diagrams, Timelines, etc?

43. How strongly do you disagree or agree with the following statements about your school? (Please select one answer for each row.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

43a. The teachers, administrators and staff at your school have a shared understanding of what each student should know when they enter and leave each grade level at your school.

43b. At your school, teachers have time during the school day to speak with other teachers about their teaching.

43c. The professional development offered at your school has helped you to be successful.

43d. Teachers at your school have the resources they need to perform to the best of their ability.

43e. Teachers and other staff are supported and respected in their professional learning.
Appendix C: Interview Questions for Teachers

The following questions were asked of teachers during the interviews.

1. What role do you play on your campus?
2. What role(s) have you played in the WICOR walkthrough process and in your school?
3. Please describe the WICOR walkthrough process for your school. What do you like about the process? Dislike?
4. What do you feel is working well with the WICOR walkthrough process?
5. Did participating in the process help you in your own classroom?
6. What do you feel is not working well with the WICOR walkthrough process?
7. What do you feel are the major obstacles in the implementation of the WICOR walkthrough process?
8. Why do you feel these obstacles exist and what can be done to overcome them?
9. What do you suggest the school do to improve the process?
10. What are the perceptions of the teachers at your school regarding the walkthrough process?
11. What major successes have resulted because of the implementation of a walkthrough process on campus?
12. What changes in the atmosphere of the classroom and your campus have taken place because of the walkthroughs?
Appendix D: Interview Questions for District Director

The following questions were asked of the district director during the interview.

1. What role(s) have you played in the WICOR walkthrough process?
2. Please describe the WICOR walkthrough process for each of the 4 target schools. What do you like about the process? Dislike?
3. What do you feel is working well with the WICOR walkthrough process?
4. Did participating in the process help you in your role in the district?
5. What do you feel is not working well with the WICOR walkthrough process?
6. What do you feel are the major obstacles in the implementation of the WICOR walkthrough process?
7. Why do you feel these obstacles exist and what can be done to overcome them?
8. What do you suggest the schools do to improve the process?
9. What are the perceptions of the teachers at 4 current school sites regarding the walkthrough process?
10. What major successes have resulted because of the implementation of a walkthrough process on campus?
11. What changes in the atmosphere of the classrooms and your campuses have taken place because of the walkthroughs?
12. What comparisons can you make about the process at the four different campuses?
13. Which process, in your opinion has been most effective? Why?
14. Which process, in your opinion has been least effective? Why?
Appendix E: Informed Consent for Data Use

Consent to Conduct Research using Data from CRS Center

My name is Christie McMullen and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent for access to the WICOR walkthrough data collected during a federal grant as well as the teacher survey data for 2014 and 2015, also attached to the grant. The study is entitled: An Evaluation of WICOR Walkthroughs and Teacher Practice. The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of the WICOR walkthrough process, which allows teachers to walk one another’s classrooms, on the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms.

My project will address the process of WICOR walkthroughs and how it impacts those involved in Orange Grove School District. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding the WICOR walkthrough process.

I will utilize the survey data and the WICOR walkthrough data to determine if the incorporation of the walkthroughs increased the teachers’ responses to using the strategies in their classrooms and also if the walkthrough data as collected by me as the Project Systems Coach and the self-reported teacher surveys indicate the same usage of WICOR strategies. By signing below, you are giving permission of me to utilize these data in my research.

I will keep the identity of the district, the schools and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the survey and walkthrough data, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home, and on a password protected hard drive, to which only I have access. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While CRS Center is likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of WICOR walkthroughs and your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at cmcmullen@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 727 278 3530; email cmcmullen@my.nl.edu; or my address 1943 Ripon Dr. Clearwater, FL, 33764. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Carol A. Burg, email: cburg@nl.edu; phone (813) 397-2109; 5110 Eisenhower Blvd. #102, Tampa, FL 33634; or EDL Program Chair (Dr. Norm Weston, NWeston@nl.edu; 1.233.2287; or the NLU’s Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 224.233.2328, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

______________________________  ___________________________  Date
Director Name (Please Print)    Director Signature

______________________________  ___________________________  Date
Researcher Name (Please Print)  Researcher Signature
Appendix F: Informed Consent for Adult Participant Interview

My name is Christie McMullen, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: An Evaluation of WICOR Walkthroughs and Teacher Practice. The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of the WICOR walkthrough process, which allows teachers to walk one another’s classrooms, on the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms.

My project will address the process of WICOR walkthroughs at your school. I will use the data I collect to determine what sort of an impact, if any, the walkthrough process has on the strategies teachers use in their classrooms. I will interview voluntary participants in regards to their thoughts on the implementation WICOR walkthroughs at ABC Middle School.

You may participate in this study by signing this Consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the interviews and agree to participate in one 60-minute interview, with one 15 minute follow up interview possible and if needed, possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order to clarify any questions I may have regarding your interview data. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as a teacher who participated in the WICOR walkthrough process as either an observing teacher or a teacher being observed. I will audio tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home and on a password protected hard drive, to which only I have access. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of the implementation of WICOR walkthroughs and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at cmcmullen@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 727 278 3530; email cmcmullen@my.nl.edu; or my address 1943 Ripon Dr. Clearwater, FL, 33764. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Carol A. Burg, email: cburg@nl.edu; phone (813) 397-2109; 5110 Eisenhower Blvd. #102, Tampa, FL 33634; or EDL Program Chair (Dr. Norm Weston, NWeston@nl.edu; 1.233.2287; or the NLU's Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 224.233.2328, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

____________________________________
Principal Name (Please Print)            Date
Principal Signature

____________________________________
Researcher Name (Please Print)            Date
Researcher Signature
Appendix G: Informed Consent for School District

Consent to Conduct Research in Orange Grove Schools: School District Superintendent
My name is Christie McMullen and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent for selected staff at ABC Middle, ABC High, LMN Middle, and LMN High to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: An Evaluation of WICOR Walkthroughs and Teacher Practice. The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of the WICOR walkthrough process, which allows teachers to walk one another’s classrooms, on the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms.

My project will address the process of WICOR walkthroughs and how it impacts those involved in your district. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding the WICOR walkthrough process. I will interview up to 3 teachers in regards to their thoughts on WICOR walkthroughs at your school.

I will work with up to three teachers from the 4 target schools who volunteer to be interviewed for a 60-minute interview. I will also interview the CRS District Director for Orange Grove County. The participants in the interviews will have participated in walkthroughs during the 2014-15 school year either as an observer or a teacher being observed. Those participants will have completed an Informed Consent form like this form indicating that they understand the purpose of the interview and agree to be interviewed. All information collected in the interviews reflects their experience and opinion as a teacher regarding WICOR walkthroughs. I will audio tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes.

By signing below, you are giving your consent for me to ask for voluntary participation from selected stakeholders to participate in this research study: to participate in one 60-minute interview, with one possible face to face interview follow up lasting 15 minutes and up to 5 email communications in order to clarify data from the first interview.

All participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the district, the schools and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home, and on a password protected hard drive, to which only I have access. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of WICOR walkthroughs and your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at cmcmullen@my.nl.edu. In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 727 278 3530; email cmcmullen@my.nl.edu; or my address 1943 Ripon Dr. Clearwater, FL, 33764. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Carol A. Burg, email: cburg@nl.edu; phone (813) 397-2109; 5110 Eisenhower Blvd. #102, Tampa, FL 33634; or EDL Program Chair (Dr. Norm Weston, NWeston@nl.edu; 1.233.2287; or the NLU’s Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 224.233.2328, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

Superintendent Name (Please Print)
Superintendent Signature

Researcher Name (Please Print)
Researcher Signature

Date
Date
Appendix H: Informed Consent School Site

School Site Administrator: Consent to Conduct Research at School Site

My name is Christie McMullen and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent for selected staff at your school to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: An Evaluation of WICOR Walkthroughs and Teacher Practice. The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of the WICOR walkthrough process, which allows teachers to walk one another’s classrooms, on the use of WICOR strategies in classrooms.

My project will address the process of WICOR walkthroughs and how it impacts those involved your school. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding the WICOR walkthrough process. I will survey and interview up to 3 teachers in regards to their thoughts on WICOR walkthroughs at your school.

I will work with up to 3 teachers who volunteer to participate in a 60-minute interview. The participants in the interviews will have participated in walkthroughs during the 2014-15 school year either as an observer or a teacher being observed. Those participants will have completed an Informed Consent form indicating that they understand the purpose of the interview and agree to be interviewed. All information collected in the interviews reflects their experience and opinion as a teacher regarding WICOR walkthroughs. I will audio tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes.

By signing below, you are giving your consent for me to ask for voluntary participation from selected stakeholders to participate in this research study: to participate in one 60-minute interview, with one possible face to face follow up interview lasting 15 minutes and up to 5 email communications to clarify any data from the first interview.

All participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home, and on a password protected hard drive, to which only I have access. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of WICOR walkthroughs and your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at cmcmullen@my.nl.edu. In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 727 278 3530; email cmcmullen@my.nl.edu; or my address 1943 Ripon Dr. Clearwater, FL, 33764. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Carol A. Burg, email: cburg@nl.edu; phone (813) 397-2109; 5110 Eisenhower Blvd. #102, Tampa, FL 33634; or EDL Program Chair (Dr. Norm Weston, NWeston@nl.edu; 1.233.2287; or the NLU’s Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 224.233.2328, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

____________________________
Principal Name (Please Print)
Principal Signature
Date

____________________________
Researcher Name (Please Print)
Researcher Signature
Date