



Learning Walks and Instructional Rounds

Developing “V-shaped learners,” Mount Vernon uses learning walks for generating broad views into the teaching and learning ecosystem, as well as instructional rounds for exploring the depths of professional practice.

Learning Walks

Learning Walks Allow for Surveying School

On a learning walk, MVPS educators visit classrooms and learning environments for a collection of brief observations. A teacher might make 5-6 classroom stops, staying 8-10 minutes in each classroom - observing, listening deeply, questioning a few students, and looking for examples of visible thinking. At each stop, the walker captures an impression via Twitter to share practice transparently. It’s a strong way to tear down walls, know one’s school, and spark conversations about our work and learning.



Dr. Tony Wagner, HGSE, on Learning Walks

“In education, we talk about all kinds of things -- theories of learning and classroom techniques, and so on. But we never actually look at and talk about teaching together. And if we want to improve instruction, the first thing we need to do is make the classroom walls transparent. We have to do ‘learning walks’ together and talk about what we see....We need to talk about the elements of good practice and then strategies for helping everyone in the system improve every year.” (pp. 128-9)

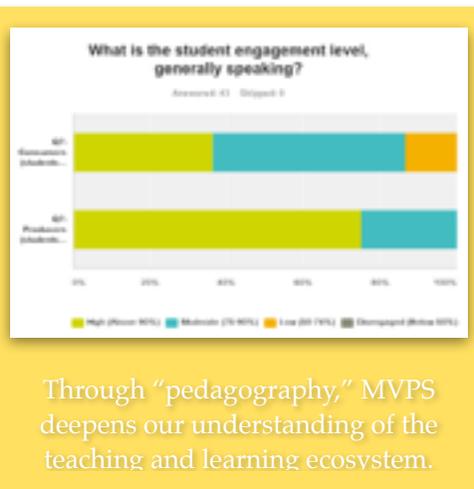
Wagner, Tony. [The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need--and What We Can Do About It](#). New York: Basic Books, 2008. Print.

Instructional Rounds

Instructional Rounds Provide Deep Dives

Instructional rounds, derived from medical rounds, are about deep practice and professional coaching. At MVPS, we also use rounds to map and innovate our teaching and learning ecosystem.

At MVPS, we began “ooching” instructional rounds (IR) in the fall of 2013. In our Heads of Grade pilots, we teamed four teacher leaders and four administrators to provide multiple lenses and sounding boards for giving feedback and engaging in rich discussions about our teaching and learning practices. During IR, four observers record detailed notes for the visited educator and complete an ethnographic survey that collects data on such things as instructional methods, roles and engagement levels of student learners, space



Through “pedagography,” MVPS deepens our understanding of the teaching and learning ecosystem.

configurations, and infusion of the MV Mindsets. The notes guide reflection and team debriefs for questioning and enhancing professional practice. The data help us map our teaching and learning ecosystem in what we call “pedagography.”

Resources for Instructional Rounds

- Aguilar, Elena. [“Teachers Observing Teachers: Instructional Rounds.”](#) *Edutopia*. March 16, 2012.
- City, Elizabeth A.; Elmore, Richard E.; Fiarman, Sarah E.; and Teitel, Lee. [Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning](#). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education, 2009. Print.
- Teitel, Lee. [“Improving Teaching and Learning through Instructional Rounds.”](#) *Harvard Education Letter*, Volume 25, Number 3. May/June 2009.
- Weber, Matt. [“Harvard EdCast: Making the Rounds.”](#) Podcast. *Ed. The Magazine of the Harvard Graduate School of Education*. Winter 2014.

