

## WALKTHROUGH NOTES (WEEK 4)

On this week's walkthroughs, Lily and I were thinking about groundwork for differentiation. Both of us were struck by how purposeful every classroom felt. There was an overall sense of calm from room to room. Students were focused on learning – for the most part. Learning targets are sharp and clear. Our rooms are student-friendly; there is attention given to making sure they can access their work, course documents, and reminders of what they've doing. The subject matter you bring to students has been important, core, essential.

When we think about what building blocks need to be in place in order to differentiate instruction, all of these elements matter. If we know where we want them going – if we have our learning targets in place – we can begin to differentiate by learning profile, interest, or readiness. Rich classroom culture sets the stage for effective differentiation. In many rooms, we saw a constructivist approach where students are asked to bring their insights and understanding to the table. We saw curriculum content that emphasizes the recognition and respect for differences. We saw regular routines where students are asked to give cues when they're ready to move on to the next steps. And we saw opportunities for groups to move at different paces.

With the first month of school under our belts and as we think about moving forward into some of the differentiated instruction practices we learned in August, there are three key questions we would like to highlight from this walkthrough:

1. How do we create respectful tasks for our students where as many as possible have to take on moderate challenge?
2. How do we provide varied modes for our students?
3. How do we help our students care about and connect to their learning? When we ask them to think, how much room do we allow them to think about things that matter to them?

Keep up the good work, everyone. Our kids are in such good hands.