

What we know: Teachers are struggling with shifting ownership of learning to students.

Instructional leaders are struggling to support teachers in this shift and have not been provided the professional learning to generate learner-focused feedback that feeds forward.

Solution: Create a culture of learning through a culture of observation and feedback.

Provide teachers with ongoing feedback that is grounded in high quality observation and evidence collection aligned to goals for learners to help teachers see impact.

Taking Steps Towards the Solution

Step 1 - Clarity & Common Vision:

Leaders and teams need to build a common understanding of what you are truly seeking for your students and the difference between **student-centered or shared responsibility for learning vs. student-ownership of learning**

Step 2 - Skills, Dispositions, & Tools:

Build a common understanding of what needs to be in place for ownership to occur. What do students require? What do teachers require? What knowledge do they need? These will drive your observation and feedback. Some examples may be:

	Teachers	Students
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Build student capacity to work independently -Use appropriate scaffolding -Model how to self-monitor, use criteria, make adjustments, and utilize resources/evaluate effectiveness of resources -Plan/facilitate learning vs. delivering content -Give feedback to drive student-owned learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monitor own work and reflect using a learning target and criteria -Support peers in the day's work and give /receive feedback -Use a resource to move forward -Evaluate effectiveness of resources -Think metacognitively
Dispositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Turn learning over to students -Allow good struggle -Have high expectations/belief that students can achieve and think at high levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take responsibility and rely less on teacher -Seek out or use resources -Take risks, attempt responses, disagreements, or reasoning
Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clear & specific daily learning goals -Clear & specific learning criteria -Time throughout each lesson for reflection -Time to unpack goals & criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Usable tools for students to monitor their own/peer's work (e.g. exemplars, checklists, models, rubrics) -Usable resources (e.g. word lists students can locate/read)

Step 3 - Instructional Framework:

First, determine if expectations in your instructional framework align to your **common vision (Step 1)**. If not, your district may want to revise your framework. Align identified **skills, dispositions, and tools (Step 2)** to indicators in your instructional framework to build a common language. (Samples: CCT, 2014)

Notice how this sample provides the expectations to help students determine “Where am I going?”:

Instructional purpose	Does not clearly communicate learning expectations to students.	Communicates learning expectations to students and sets a general purpose for instruction, which may require further clarification.	Clearly communicates learning expectations to students and sets a specific purpose for instruction and helps students to see how the learning is aligned with Common Core State Standards and/or other appropriate Connecticut content standards.	Students are encouraged to explain how the learning is situated within the broader learning context/curriculum.
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Notice how this next sample provides expectations to help students work on their own and to answer “How am I going?”

Criteria for student success	Does not communicate criteria for success and/or opportunities for students to self-assess are rare.	Communicates general criteria for success and provides limited opportunities for students to self-assess.	Communicates specific criteria for success and provides multiple opportunities for students to self-assess.	Integrates student input in generating specific criteria for assignments.
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Notice how this sample provides expectations for students to determine “What’s Next?”

Instructional resources¹⁸ and flexible groupings	Uses resources and/or groupings that do not cognitively engage students or support new learning.	Uses resources and/or groupings that minimally engage students cognitively and support new learning.	Uses resources and flexible groupings that cognitively engage students in demonstrating new learning in multiple ways, including application of new learning to make interdisciplinary, real world, career or global connections.	Promotes student ownership, self-direction and choice of resources and/or flexible groupings to develop their learning.
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Step 4 - Look-fors & Evidence Collection:

Determine what your indicator descriptions look and sound like and how you would observe for the related teaching and learning using a variety of evidence-collection strategies.

Examples of Look-fors (for purpose & criteria) Based on Strategies 14-16–*Feedback to Feed Forward*

Cause/Teaching	Effect/Learning	
Listen to Teaching & Learning	View Teaching & Learning	Interact with Learners
<p>T communicates learning target & criteria & broader content/has Ss set their own goals</p> <p>Ss making personal connections to learning target or communicating to each other</p> <p>T revisits learning target between tasks & in feedback</p>	<p>T provides individual & partner reflection time</p> <p>T provides checklist, rubric, exemplar, model for criteria</p> <p>Ss writing learning goals & reflections</p> <p>Ss using the tool provided for criteria</p>	<p>What are you learning today?</p> <p>How is this helping you as a writer/reader/mathematician?</p> <p>How do you know when you have it?</p> <p>What challenges you about today’s learning?</p>

(Ask yourself: How many students are clear about the purpose and “Where am I going?”; How do you know as an observer? How did the teacher create the outcomes you are observing?)

Step 5 - Classroom Visits & Feedback:

Observe and provide learner-focused feedback that feeds forward consistently. This is feedback that:

- goes beyond summarizing events to **analyzing effectiveness**
- allows teachers to accurately and clearly see **how they are impacting learners**
- leads to **improved reflection and growth**

Resources:

Tepper, A. & Flynn, P. (2019). *Feedback to Feed Forward: 31 Strategies to Lead Learning*

Tepper, A. & Flynn, P. (2020). *Learner-Focused Feedback: 19 Strategies to Observe for Impact*

Revised Feedback Sample

Based on an instructional leader's evidence collection approaches and new understandings, she was able to shift feedback to the following more supportive feedback in alignment with the framework and goals.

***Note: We suggest observers begin with crafting directive feedback to better prepare for a conversation to meet teachers' coaching needs and skill levels. Claims are built directly from framework performance level language.**

Claim: You are implementing instruction that is often teacher directed, but provided some opportunities for students to develop independence as learners and share responsibility for the learning process.

Connect: During the first 15 minutes (11:32-11:47) you reviewed homework to help students create a study guide for the test. However, 8 students had no homework completed, then copied the posted answers. Though you are working to maximize time, you moved through homework with very few questions from students (2) (though 5-6 were also observed erasing). This isn't allowing them to understand their errors/assess their own readiness for the test. After the review and a 1-minute introduction, students moved into their groups to continue their graphing projects. 6/10 groups worked independently on various stages. 1 group was sitting waiting for you while you monitored other groups because they had been absent. 1 other group of 3 did not understand the math concepts, sitting waiting as well. When I asked if there was a resource, notes, or a site to help them, they said no and that you would help them.

Action: How can you help students create their own form of a study guide and resources that will help them throughout a lesson, unit, and year? How effective are their notes as tools? Consider during homework review how you can provide students an opportunity to reflect on what they understand or did not understand about the homework problems. This will help them determine their own readiness for the upcoming test. They can then work with peers with similar challenge areas.

Claim: You communicated learning expectations to students and set a general purpose for instruction, but did not communicate criteria for success or provide opportunities for students to self-assess against that.

Connect: After the homework review, you reminded students of their ongoing purpose that was posted before they moved into groups to finish projects started the day before. However, "To write linear equations in any form given an application," on the board, did not match the students' work nor their responses. (They

were graphing trend lines of data collected, though ultimately they may find an equation for their trend line.) Because you did not clearly state an aligned objective or have groups set a daily goal, all groups saw the project as calculator practice but only some (4/6) groups spoken to stated a purpose beyond that. I asked 6 groups, what are you doing and why are you doing this? They were able to state that the purpose of the task was to practice using the graphing calculator. (Other answers were: “I don’t know” and “we are plotting our data”) Only 2/6 groups spoken to were able to add to the purpose stating answers such as, ‘It helps with slopes’; ‘we are learning about slope’. No group however was able to answer a follow-up question, ‘when might you need to do this in the future’ or “why is this important to know?”. Beyond this, when asked, “What does your project need to include?” “How do you know when you have done it correctly?” “How do you know you have learned how to do this?” Several (9) students (in 4 groups) were unclear about steps to complete and time left to accomplish activity. 3 students said you would tell them if they had done it correctly.

Action: How can we ensure students know where they are headed? What do they need to own their own learning? Remember when beginning a lesson, it is essential to review the objective/ purpose (the what) and how the task will lead to that stated learning, engaging them in the connection-making. When students are working on different stages of a project, it can also be appropriate to allow them to set their own goals based on where they are. To allow them to self-assess their progress toward that learning, be sure to provide the learning criteria. How will you know (and they know) when they have it? Consider providing a check list and approximate time to complete having them work to create an action plan. This will ensure students are aware of how close they are to completion, if they are meeting the criteria, and will be more cognizant of time remaining/how to use their group work time.