

# PASSAGES POST

## *Principal's Message*

Provided by Yvette Baxter-Sweet

### **FEEDBACK: HOW DOES THIS PROCESS SUPPORT STUDENT GROWTH?**

What is feedback? Why is it important? I recently heard a teacher say that feedback isn't important; they (students) don't read it any way. Well, he might be right. But suppose out of his 10 students, 6 actually take the time to read what he has shared about their progress. That information will support 60% of his class in growing to meet standards, because those students are using that information to improve their task performance in the next activity.

What is feedback? We give feedback to each other every day in our daily activities. We are asked about our likes and dislikes, and we respond accordingly. We teach our children and pets to do tasks and behave in a particular fashion. They learn to replicate or correct based on our response to their actions. I clearly remember my oldest brother teaching me how to tie my shoelaces. How he explained carefully how to hold the laces, and which lace to pull through the loop to make a bow. The redirection (feedback) on which way to hold the strings, until finally I was able to make the tie according to his expectations. There were no set criteria like a rubric or checklist, just his voice and smile on his face to lead my growth.

I was recently invited by Dr. Lisante to attend a professional development facilitated by Learner-Centered Initiatives. Part of this workshop focused on feedback, looking at the purpose, tone and intent of feedback. In education, as I would imagine as it would be in any field, our purpose for feedback is to provide a person with objective constructive criticism, that will provide enough information to support improved growth in that individual's next set of tasks. What I believe to be disturbing to most people is the fact that the feedback does involve constructive criticism. People as a whole tend to be very concerned about bruising another person's feelings. The simple way to avoid bruising another person's feelings is by having clear set criteria that the constructive criticism is based on. When clear expectations are laid out in the beginning of an activity (checklist, rubric, scale score with criteria), this focuses the tone of the feedback. This allows for constructive criticism of a student's work. The student is aware of the criteria at the beginning, and therefore the intent of the feedback is clear – to move the student forward towards meeting or exceeding standards.

## *Principal's Message – Continued*

As with the Danielson's Domains which are used for the rating of instructional practice by teachers, Danielson provides a clear rubric through which to provide constructive criticism. With the sole purpose of moving instructional practice forward. I have never observed a teacher that did not want some form of feedback. In my career as a coach and administrator, I have conducted well over 400 observations. Every single person wanted to know what was going well and what areas do they need to improve in. The vast majority of our students also feel the same way. They want to know what they are doing well in, as well as what they need to do better in so that their grade can improve. If we are teaching, assessing and not providing feedback, then we are only doing two-thirds of our jobs. What information are we providing to support student growth towards positive outcomes?

I am including with today's message the LCI Checklist of Criteria for Quality Feedback. I believe this checklist will provide a good start to begin conversations around this topic. It will also act as a guide as you plan and provide feedback to students in your classes as well. So as we move across the balance of the school year, please realize the importance of providing feedback both verbally and in writing to your students. Also, understand the value of establishing clear criteria for students for the tasks that you are expecting them to complete. Finally, know that our students need to build resilience, and this can only be done by being held to a set of standards and the adults in their lives having clear expectations about them meeting those standards.

**LCI Checklist of Criteria for Quality Feedback****CONTENT**

- aligned to specific and shared criteria/expectations
- descriptive and non-judgmental
- specific
  - identifies strengths and areas to work on
  - includes concrete and actionable suggestions for improvement
  - includes examples from the work observed and/or models
- suggestions and questions allow the receiver to maintain ownership and control over work
- helps make connections
- builds content knowledge of the focus and related standards/expectations
- promotes deep thinking and/or further learning

**tone**

- positive/encouraging
- honest
- respectful
- appropriate to the relationship

**LEARNER-CENTERED**

- individualized
- accessible in terms of language, form and length
- prioritized

**TIMING**

- ongoing
- provided when it can be used to improve

**CONDITIONS**

- shared clarity about the type of feedback being provided (e.g. affirmation/appreciation, coaching, evaluation)
- trust in individual(s) ability to provide quality feedback
- an understanding of the intent of the feedback
- awareness of existing standards and related expectations
- clear alignment between the content of the feedback and the operating focus and standards/expectations

## Upcoming Events

**December 24-January 1: Winter Recess – Schools Closed**



*“In the attitude of silence the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness. Our life is a long and arduous quest after Truth.”*

**Mahatma Ghandi**

## Important Links

Passages Academy Public Website: [www.PassagesAcademy.org](http://www.PassagesAcademy.org)

Passages Academy Staff Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/passagesonline.com/staff/>

Passages Academy Handbook: <https://sites.google.com/a/passagesonline.com/staff/documents>

Passages Academy Library Website: [www.passagesacademylibraries.org](http://www.passagesacademylibraries.org)

Passages Academy Library Blog: [www.whatsgoodinthelibrary.blogspot.com](http://www.whatsgoodinthelibrary.blogspot.com)

Chancellors Regulations: <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ChancellorsRegulations/default.htm>

## Reminder

Passages Academy is seeking applicants for Special Education Coach and for the Saturday Regents Prep Academy.