

Rethinking Intervention

Reflections, Actions, and Resources





Table of Contents

Relationships and Learning

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)

Teacher and Student Expectations

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)

Challenging Content

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)

Advancing Learning

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)

Understanding and Meeting Needs

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)

Teacher Support

- [Video](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Reflection Questions](#)
- [Leadership Actions](#)
- [Resources](#)





Takeaway 1:
Relationships and learning
are inseparably
connected.





Relationships and Learning **Video**





Relationships and Learning

Lessons Learned

1. **Relationships and learning support each other.** In order to learn, students need to be seen, known, and valued. The way a student experiences the learning interaction shapes the relationship.
2. **Relationships are particularly crucial in stressful times.** Loving relationships can protect students from the damaging effects of stress.
3. **Trust is shaped by relationships across the school community.** Students are deeply impacted by the way they see their family treated and even how they see teachers form relationships with each other.





Relationships and Learning

Reflection Questions

1. When you think back to your student experience, what is one relationship that was most meaningful to you?
2. What is one relationship that is fueling you right now? Why?
3. What is one relationship that would benefit from being stronger? What is one action you can take to make that person feel seen, known and valued in your relationship?
4. What relationships come easily to you? What relationships require more work? Where do you think that pattern comes from?
5. Choose your question based on your role:
 - a. **For teachers:** Which students and families do you think feel seen, known and valued? Which may not? What can you do to strengthen those relationships?
 - b. **For coaches and school leaders:** Which educators and families feel seen, known and valued? Which may not? What can you do to strengthen those relationships?
 - c. **For system and state leaders:** How are you using resources (time, energy and money) to honor the foundational importance of relationships (teacher-student, student-student, teacher-family, leader-teacher, among teachers)? What additional supports may be important to consider?





Relationships and Learning Leadership Actions

- Ensure students and staff have access to needed mental health support.
- Provide professional learning for teachers and leaders that equips them to form trusting relationships and become more conscious of the way biases affect relationships (with attention to students and families), integrating what has been traditionally siloed in SEL and academics.
- Reinforce the importance of culture by creating time for educators to build relationships and culture amongst themselves. Value it for the model it creates for how to support student relationships.
- Decrease counselor, family coordinator, and teacher caseloads where possible so more people are watching out for student and family needs and connection.





Relationships and Learning

Additional Resources

- The [Well Being Index](#) from Turnaround for Children is a brief self-assessment designed to capture a holistic view of each student's sense of their own physical, emotional, and social health.
- These [resources](#) from Turnaround for Children help educators support the “three Rs:” relationships, routines, and resilience.
- Learning for Justice offers a [detailed look](#) at a trauma-informed approach to teaching during the pandemic.
- CASEL's [SEL Framework](#) fosters knowledge, skills, and attitudes to establish equitable learning environments that advance students' learning and development.
- This [Student Experience Toolkit](#) from TNTP offers a library of resources designed to help educators, policymakers, and families improve students' daily experiences in school.
- The [Challenging Assumptions Reflection Tool](#) from the Flamboyan Foundation can be used for educators to challenge themselves when biased or negative beliefs about families emerge.
- This [Beginning of the Year Relationship Building Toolkit](#) from the Flamboyan Foundation contains resources for fostering intentional relationships at the beginning of the school year.
- Instruction Partners' [Continuous Improvement Toolkit](#) offers support and [resources](#) for gathering and acting on data that gets at the perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders, including students, families, and staff.





Takeaway 2:

What teachers expect of their students influences what students expect of themselves.





Teacher and Student Expectations

Video

What teachers expect of their students influences
what students expect of themselves.



**RETHINKING
INTERVENTION**

48 Conversations | 4 Big Takeaways





Teacher and Student Expectations

Lessons Learned

1. **Potential is not fixed or knowable in advance.** What we are asked to do changes what we are capable of doing.
2. **Students take cues about their potential as learners from their teacher's actions and words.** Even when it is not intentional, lowered expectations are internalized by students as indications of their value and their potential to learn.
3. **We all carry assumptions or biases about dissimilar groups, but these assumptions do not have to govern our interactions.** In order to see and change the way bias plays out in our actions, we must create brave spaces to reflect on and talk about the factors that shape our expectations.





Teacher and Student Expectations

Reflection Questions

1. Reflecting on your career as a student, did you have a teacher who positively or negatively influenced what you believed yourself to be capable of? Who was that person, and how did they influence your self-perception?
2. Can you think of a time in your education career when you lowered expectations for your students? What were the circumstances surrounding your decision? Would you make that same decision again?
3. Particularly given the challenges students face with COVID, what assumptions might be affecting your expectations for your students? Do you currently have a safe and brave space to notice these assumptions or biases? When you do notice these assumptions, what would it look like to interrupt them?





Teacher and Student Expectations

Leadership Actions

- Invest in creating a culture that makes it both safe to talk about where expectations may slip and commits to dismantling those patterns. Model this commitment through self-work.
- Make sure every student has access to on-grade level instruction supported by quality materials.
- Provide professional learning for teachers on the impact of expectations and incorporate into ongoing structures (e.g., PLCs) the work of noticing biases and interrupting the impact.
- In the staffing model and schedule, support time for principals and coaches to observe instruction with attention to expectations for students, particularly students who have been historically marginalized.





Teacher and Student Expectations

Additional Resources

- In [The Opportunity Myth](#), TNTP shares what they learned about educators' choices and expectations for students by following nearly 4,000 students in five diverse school systems.
- The [Disrupting Inequity Toolkit](#) from UnboundEd contains ready-made presentations and support resources to facilitate conversations about race, bias, and prejudice within a learning community.
- The [Assignment Review Protocols](#) from TNTP can be used to assess whether an assignment gives students the opportunity to meaningfully engage in worthwhile, grade-level content. In addition, TNTP's [Student Work Library](#) helps educators learn how to distinguish between low- and high-quality assignments.
- In [The Power of Teacher Expectations](#), Education Next presents the findings of a study on the effects of differences in teacher expectations on students' likelihood of completing college.
- Here is a five-minute [video](#) on the Pygmalion Effect and the power of positive expectations.
- This [blog from Student Achievement Partners](#) explores how to create a culture that facilitates powerful learning for all learners.





Takeaway 3:

Students engage and learn best from work that is challenging, relevant to their lives, and helps them understand and impact the world.





Challenging Content Video

Students engage and learn best from work that is challenging, relevant to their lives, and helps them understand and impact the world.



**RETHINKING
INTERVENTION**

© Connetix LLC Big Takeaway





Challenging Content Lessons Learned

1. Content needs to both **equip students with a knowledge of the world** and **prepare them to change the world**.
2. Content needs to **build a common base of knowledge** in a way that broadens students' understanding of a diverse world and also **honors students' unique identities and stories**.
3. Content needs to **give students foundational knowledge** to allow them to engage while also allowing students to persist through novel challenges.





Challenging Content Reflection Questions

1. Looking back on your education journey:
 - a. What content challenged you?
 - b. What content felt most relevant to your life and your ambitions?
 - c. What content built your knowledge of something that might not have been interesting to you at first?
 - d. What content best prepared you to lead and change the world?
2. How do you feel about the content that students engage with in your classroom/school(s)?
 - a. What content is challenging? What is not?
 - b. What content is relevant to your student's identity and ambitions? What is not?
 - c. What content is building student knowledge of the world beyond their immediate surroundings?
 - d. Where is necessary foundational knowledge being attended to equitably? Where is it not?
3. In 20 years, when your students look back on their education journey, what will they feel their education prepared them to do? What gaps will they point to? What can you do about those gaps right now?





Challenging Content Leadership Actions

- Create a vision of effective instruction that includes challenge, relevance, and knowledge-building. Give feedback to teachers on whether instruction meets that vision.
- Make sure teachers have a solid set of materials they can use as the starting point and a lot of support as they learn to use those materials well.
- Make sure materials provide both windows and mirrors, building understanding of a broader world and making sure students see themselves in what they are learning.
- Attend to the role that knowledge plays, particularly in reading. Be suspicious of skills-only literacy instruction, and think about the role of knowledge in core instruction and in intervention.
- Examine course offerings for challenge and for relevance to career pathways. Find ways to give students access to courses virtually that cannot be able to offer locally.





Challenging Content Additional Resources

- The [Curriculum Support Guide](#) offers a straightforward example of what systems can do to improve instruction and achievement by selecting, launching, and supporting high-quality curriculum.
- Our team compiled a list of some of our [favorite content-specific resources](#) that we've used with partners this year.
- Dr. Gholdy Muhammad [spoke to EdWeek](#) about her book, *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*.
- This [report from Ed Trust](#) analyzed whether classroom assignments reflected today's college- and career-ready standards.
- In [this brief](#), the Ed Trust team looks at ways Black and Latino students are locked out of advanced coursework opportunities and offers actionable solutions for leaders.





Takeaway 4:

Moving forward into new content with support will advance learning more than stopping and going back.





Advancing Learning Video

Moving forward into new content with support will
advance learning more than stopping and going
back.



**RETHINKING
INTERVENTION**

40 Conversations | 4 Big Takeaways



Rethinking Intervention



Advancing Learning Lessons Learned

1. **Pushing forward into new learning** while being thoughtful about the extra support students with unfinished learning will need relevant to that content is more successful than “stop and go back.”
2. **Understanding what just-in-time supports a student may need** requires a deep understanding of how children learn that particular content, and what might be load-bearing walls to the new concepts.
3. **Focusing on student strengths and assets** and using those to build learning will lead to more progress than focusing on deficits and gaps. The language we use reinforces the way a community comes to think.





Advancing Learning Reflection Questions

1. For teachers:
 - a. What factors lead you to want to “stop and go back”? When have you made that choice in the past? Are there examples where you believe going back was the right approach? Are there examples where you wish you had handled things differently?
 - b. What are the load-bearing walls in the topic you are teaching next?
2. For leaders:
 - a. How can you develop your own content knowledge so that you can help your teachers identify load-bearing walls?
 - b. Does your culture encourage teachers to stop and go back or push forward? What messages do you send that might be creating an expectation about what you want teachers to do?
3. What would it look like to amplify students’ strengths as opposed to gaps? What asset-based language can you use in your next department or staff meeting to shift the narrative?





Advancing Learning Leadership Actions

- Foster a culture focused on advancing student progress as well as students' assets and strengths.
- Build teacher and leader content knowledge to understand the discipline as well as the best approach to unfinished learning, both up front in training and embedded in ongoing planning and coaching.
- Ensure curriculum design and implementation plans (e.g., scope and sequence) reflect the best of what we know about how to think about unfinished learning for that discipline.





Advancing Learning Additional Resources

- EdResearch for Recovery [published this brief](#) last summer to answer the question: Which areas should schools prioritize for intensive academic intervention and what strategies are most effective?
- [This document](#) from NGSS outlines the progression of disciplinary core ideas across grade bands, while highlighting the core science ideas of the standards.
- The [coherence map](#) from Student Achievement Partners illustrates how the math standards are related and includes a sample task for each standard.
- [This report](#) from Student Achievement Partners examines the research base for literacy accelerators, as well as the intersections for equitable personalization.
- [This article](#) from Inside HigherEd digs into the evidence on the effectiveness of co-requisite approach to unfinished learning.





Takeaway 5:

Even a great plan will not work for all students; continuously monitoring, understanding, and meeting needs will.





Understanding and Meeting Needs

Video

Even a great plan will not work for all students;
continuously monitoring, understanding, and
meeting needs will.



**RETHINKING
INTERVENTION**

48 Conversations | 4 Big Takeaways





Understanding and Meeting Needs

Lessons Learned

1. No instructional plan is going to work for all students in the same way. As educators, we must **put in place the best plan we can**, but we also must be ready to understand who it is not working for and determine how to meet their needs.
2. Learning needs cannot be identified by a single test—it will always require judgment, multiple perspectives and should, in particular, **prioritize student and family voice**.
3. Individual learning needs do not always benefit from individual solutions. We must **always remember that learning is social**.





Understanding and Meeting Needs

Reflection Questions

1. Reflecting on your own experiences as a learner:
 - a. How did data affect your own educational experience and identity as a learner?
 - b. How and when did your teachers seek out information about your and your family's perspective and experience? What might they have missed?
2. How do you define “data-driven instruction”? Compare notes with a colleague—do you both have the same understanding? If not, what is different?
3. What data do you trust and use to inform your daily work? What information might be missing?
4. Going into next year, what data do you wish you had on your students and families? What tools, time, and/or capacity do you need to gain access to that data?





Understanding and Meeting Needs

Leadership Actions

- Get to a shared understanding of data-driven instruction; make it safe to ask “what exactly do you mean?” when talking about data and assessment practices.
- Take inventory of your assessments and data practices; stop doing the assessments and practices that are not leading to improved outcomes.
- Create an early warning indicator system and accompanying routines to identify who is not quickly experiencing success and institute routines to support student-centered problem solving in teams.
- Create a school-wide process for taking stock that incorporates the student and family experience.





Understanding and Meeting Needs

Additional Resources

- The Curriculum Support Guide’s [Key Action II.2](#) contains steps, guiding questions, and resources for creating an assessment and grading strategy.
- Here is a [summary of University of Chicago’s 2005 study](#) on ways to use assignment completion data to support student-centered problem solving.
- ANet’s [3 Principles for Assessment](#) provides actionable advice to schools and districts on how to approach the use of assessments and data in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- This Learning Accelerator blog asks [what we really mean when we talk about “assessment.”](#)
- Center for Assessment’s Scott Marion wrote this blog on [what we can learn about student engagement and grading systems](#) from this year’s failure rates.
- This [STEM Teaching Tools brief](#) provides guidance on developing formative assessments that fit a three-dimensional view of science learning.





Takeaway 6:
The way teachers support
students mirrors the way
leaders support teachers.





Teacher Support Video

The way teachers support students mirrors the way
leaders support teachers.



**RETHINKING
INTERVENTION**

48 Conversations | 4 Big Takeaways



Rethinking Intervention



Teacher Support

Lessons Learned

1. Teachers understand how to engage and support students based on the way they see their leaders engage and support their learning.
2. A culture that values learning must be a culture that values risking mistakes. Only if teachers see their leaders take risks and learn from them will they feel safe doing the same, and make it safe for students to do the same.
3. All of the themes we have discussed so far apply to teacher learning as much as student learning:
 - a. Relationships and learning are inseparably connected.
 - b. What ~~teachers~~ **leaders** expect of their ~~students~~ **teachers** influences what ~~students~~ **teachers** expect of themselves.
 - c. ~~Students~~ **Teachers** engage and learn best from work that is challenging, relevant to their ~~lives~~ **jobs**, and helps them understand and impact the world.
 - d. Moving forward into new ~~content~~ **learning for teachers** with support will advance learning more than stopping and going back.
 - e. Even a great plan will not work for all ~~students~~ **teachers**; continuously monitoring, understanding, and meeting needs will.





Teacher Support Reflection Questions

NOTE: These questions are directed toward leaders to reflect on how interactions with teachers do/do not support the model of learning they want for students.

1. In what ways do your school culture and your interactions with teachers mimic the ways you want teachers to interact with students? In what ways do they contradict the conditions you want to create for students?
2. How are you modeling risk-taking for teachers? What additional risks can you be taking? What else can you be doing to transparently share the risks you take and the mistakes you make?
3. How can you make it clear to teachers that risk-taking is part of learning and will be safe and celebrated? When you see teachers take a risk or make a mistake, does your response encourage and normalize that act?
4. What messages do you send that might be creating mixed signals about what you want teachers to do (e.g., materials, assessments, pacing guidelines, professional learning content)?
5. Can you think of a time when you lowered expectations for your teachers? What were the circumstances surrounding your decision? Would you make that same decision again?





Teacher Support Leadership Actions

- Get clear on the vision for student learning and create space with leaders to regularly reflect on how well routines and culture are modeling that vision. Specifically, look at ways in which the culture does and does not create the psychological safety to take risks and make mistakes in learning.
- As leaders, model vulnerability in learning. Name things that are and are not working. Make this part of the vision for effective leadership and let it influence the way principals are coached and evaluated.
- Invest in professional learning support for teachers, and evaluate professional learning options using your vision for student learning.





Teacher Support Additional Resources

- Instruction Partners' [Continuous Improvement Toolkit](#) offers support and [resources](#) for teacher observation, teacher feedback, teacher coaching, and professional learning communities.
- This [piece from Harvard Business Review](#) presents the five major competencies strong leaders exhibit. The first theme: High ethical standards and providing a safe environment.
- In [this interview with Learning Forward](#), Heather Hill highlights research on two effective professional development practices for supporting teachers and impacting student learning.
- Dr. Tracey A. Benson and Dr. Sarah E. Fiarman [spoke to EdWeek](#) about their book, *Unconscious Bias in Schools*, and described what it means to cultivate a “brave community” for learning about race.





Join the conversation!

twitter.com/instructup
[#RethinkingIntervention](https://twitter.com/hashtag/RethinkingIntervention)



Rethinking Intervention