

Visioning for Observation and Feedback

Below is a sample process for how your team can develop a vision statement and shared values for observation and feedback. Leadership teams can use this process to create or strengthen the observation and feedback structure at their school.

Step 1: Gather stakeholders together

- A. Identify which members of the school community should contribute to the development of the shared vision; include a balance of roles such as school leader, assistant school leader, instructional leaders/coaches, department heads, and teachers.
- B. Schedule dedicated time for this group to meet for at least 90 minutes.
- C. Allow participants to share current experiences with observation and feedback to surface mindsets and issues.

Step 2: Norm on definition and criteria for success

- A. Read and discuss the definition of observation and feedback below:
 - a. What do you notice?
 - b. What do you wonder?
- B. Read and discuss the criteria for success below:
 - a. What is already true at your school?
 - b. Where are there opportunities?
 - c. What feels different or challenging?
- C. Make any additions or revisions to this definition and these criteria based on stakeholder input.
- D. Reach consensus on the group's commitment to this definition and these criteria for success.

Definition of observation and feedback

The process of observing classrooms with a specific focus on providing targeted feedback to teachers to inform instructional improvement.

Criteria for success

- There is a clear, communicated **vision** for the purpose of observation and feedback.
- There is dedicated and consistent **time** to engage in observation and feedback.
- There is a way to **track** that all teachers receive consistent observation and feedback.

- All staff members understand their **roles** and responsibilities in the observation and feedback structure.
- Observers receive **training** and clear protocols for how to do observation and feedback.
- Teachers and observers are **invested** in observation and feedback.
- Interactions between observers and teachers **affirm** teachers' perspectives, efforts, and contributions.

Step 3: Brainstorm aspirations

- A. Set a timer for individual reflection on the following prompt: “Considering these big goals, what comes to mind when you picture effective observation and feedback? What is it? What is it not? What do you think is most important?”
- B. Ask each participant to share their answers, including what observation and feedback is, is not, and any priorities, images, or values that came up for them.
- C. List all of these in a collective brainstorm (see Part 1 of **Sample Answers: Observation and Feedback Visioning**).

Step 4: Identify trends

- A. Read the group brainstorm together.
- B. Use a key to highlight the major themes that emerge, such as common values, structures, or purposes (see Part 2 of **Sample Answers: Observation and Feedback Visioning**).

Step 5: Review criteria of a vision statement

- A. Read **New Leaders' criteria of a successful vision statement**. They say, a good vision statement:
 - reflects high standards of performance;
 - describes a unique attribute;
 - represents future accomplishments;
 - conjures up an image or picture;
 - presents a unifying theme (if multiple people are working toward the vision); and
 - appeals to personal/shared values (shared if multiple people are working toward the vision) (quoted from **The New Leaders Visioning Toolkit**, page 2).
- B. Review a sample vision statement (see below).

Sample vision statement

Every teacher will develop the instructional skills, knowledge, and capacity to support all students to thrive. This will be achieved through two ongoing practices: ongoing feedback cycles and instructional rounds.

- Ongoing feedback cycles: Every teacher will be observed at least once a week. These observations will inform weekly feedback sessions so that all teachers receive ongoing individualized support about how to improve their practice that is purposeful, relevant, and actionable.

- Instructional rounds: The leadership team will conduct instructional rounds at least once a month to calibrate themselves and determine next steps for schoolwide improvement.

Step 6: Write a concise vision statement

- A. Ask each person to individually write a vision statement that attempts to capture the group's aspirations and meets the criteria for a successful statement.
- B. Ask participants to share their statements with the group.
- C. Synthesize individual vision statements into one concise statement.
- D. Revise the synthesized statement as needed as a group.
- E. Reach consensus on the statement.

Step 7: Identify and discuss shared values

- A. Ask the group to discuss the following prompt: "What are the underlying shared values that we should name explicitly to reach this vision?"
- B. Review the values that emerged when you discussed aspirations in Step 3, adding additional values as needed.
- C. List and synthesize the values.
- D. Reach consensus on shared values.

Sample shared values

- All students can learn and deserve a high-quality education.
- Everyone is responsible for continuously improving to create better student experiences and outcomes.
- All teachers can improve when given bite-sized, actionable feedback and time to practice.
- The observer and the teacher are equally invested in the goals.
- The observer and teacher have an affirming relationship.
- Mistakes and uncertainty are welcomed, shared, and discussed.

Step 8: Finalize and create a communication plan

- A. Review the final vision statement and shared values.
- B. Decide how to share them with other stakeholders at least three times in at least three ways (e.g., in email, at a team meeting, in one-on-one check-ins).