

Providing Students with Effective Feedback
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“Feedback is the breakfast of champions.”

Kevin Blanchard

This school year, the Diversity Team ListServ will focus on ways to provide students with effective feedback. Feedback is nonverbal, verbal, and/or written information provided to an individual or group for the purpose of improving performance. Research has long confirmed that teacher responses to student performances are an integral component in improving student achievement. As students answer questions, offer comments during discussions, complete written assignments, create projects, and demonstrate levels of content and skill mastery through assessment, teacher feedback provides students with the information they need to gauge how well they are meeting established learning standards. Without effective teacher feedback students may not only misjudge the accuracy and quality of their work, but lack the information they need to improve their performance.

Research links the quality of teacher feedback with teacher expectations. Perceived lower achieving students receive less effective feedback than their higher achieving peers. Brophy and Good found that teachers were not only less likely to call on perceived low achievers, but they were less likely to react to low achievers responses. Other researchers have found the perceived low achievers are:

- Less likely to be given opportunities to improve their answers
- Less likely to receive feedback on public responses
- Given briefer and less informative feedback
- Given more frequent criticism

In addition, research suggests that African American students and Latino students receive less teacher attention and more negative feedback than their white peers. Negative feedback may not only diminish student motivation and effort, but lead to reduced self-esteem. There is also evidence to suggest that the frequent corrections to English language learners lowers their self-esteem and raises their reliance on feedback from others. Over-correction hampers the ability to self-assess, self-correct, and set improvement goals for one’s self.

The Teachers Expectations Student Achievement (TESA) cites five instructional practices for providing effective feedback and developing self-regulated learning. These strategies include:

- Providing timely, direct, and appropriate help to improve performance
- Promoting positive self-image, self-talk , and goal setting
- Encouraging reflective dialogue
- Connecting abstract concepts
- Linking learning and experience

Future tips will describe specific ways that teachers can implement these five strategies in the classroom.

Please visit our webpage to access archived tips from 2004-2006.
<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/development/teams/diversity/diversity.shtm>