



Observation, Feedback, and Support: Educator Performance and Practice



Connecticut State Department of Education

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Introduction

Pursuant to Governor Ned Lamont’s Executive Order 7C, [The Flexibilities for Implementing the CT Guidelines for Educator Evaluation 2017 for the 2020–21 School Year \(Flexibilities\)](#) reflect the critical importance of the social and emotional learning and well-being of students and educators during the current academic year, while maintaining meaningful feedback and substantive evaluation of educators and administrators. With the sudden shift to remote learning in mid-March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, public health requirements that limited social contact during the summer and continuing into the new school year, and teaching and learning models that could vary based on current health and science data, it is important to recognize that students, educators, and administrators, in addition to students’ families, may demonstrate varying levels of readiness and needs as the new school year begins. Tepper and Flynn, LLC have developed [4 Stages of the Shift to Distanced Learning](#) to guide educators and administrators in identifying priorities and outcomes as they shift through the progression of meeting basic needs to analyzing the impact of learning.

The resources for implementing the Flexibilities will apply to onsite and remote blended teaching and learning models and will include strategies and tools to support:

- A common understanding of effective teaching and learning within varied models, as described in CT’s *Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Teaching*, *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery*, and the *CT Leader Evaluation and Support Rubric*;
- Continuity and coherence of observations and reviews of practice in varied teaching and learning settings that lead to formative feedback and support;
- Developing and implementing student learning objectives that support social and emotional learning and students’ academic success; and
- Ensuring students have equitable access to learning regardless of the teaching and learning model.

Resources will be provided in three parts:

- Observation, Feedback, and Support: Educator Performance and Practice (Strategies, Resources, and Professional Learning)
- Observation, Feedback, and Support: Leader Performance and Practice (Strategies, Resources, and Professional Learning)
- Developing and Implementing Student Learning Objectives/Indicators with a Focus on Social and Emotional Learning

Two Webinars will also be provided:

- Introduction to the Resources for Observation of Performance and Practice
- Introduction to the Resources for Developing Student Learning Objectives/Indicators with a Focus on Social and Emotional Learning

This resource was informed by a collaborative effort among the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and Tepper and Flynn, LLC.



Recommendations and Strategies for Varied Teaching and Learning Models

“Educator” includes classroom teachers and student and educator services specialists.

The [Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning](#) (CSDE, 2020) provides a framework for teaching and learning in onsite and remote environments that prioritizes:

- Families as partners in facilitating learning;
- Quality and standards-based curriculum resources;
- Mastery-based learning focused on individual student needs;
- Equity, especially for the most vulnerable students and families, to ensure access to devices, connectivity and digital tools and resources, access to high-quality content, and access to culturally and linguistically relevant resources; and
- Consistency and simplicity in cross-curricular planning, common platforms, instructional plans, and communication with families.

As CT educators and administrators begin the evaluation and support process for the 2020–21 school year, it is important for evaluators to recognize, observe, and provide feedback to support practice and performance in these areas. The *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017 (CCT Rubric/Teaching)* and the *CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery 2017 (CCT Rubric/Service Delivery)*, as well as other CSDE-approved rubrics used in the observation of educators, provide standards-based language to guide professional growth and continuous improvement in the priority areas of the *Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning*.

Resources in this document will include:

- Strategies for Observation of Practice and Performance in Varied Teaching and Learning Models;
- Strategies for using a Standards-Based Framework for Observation of Educator Practice and Performance — with a Focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Engaging Families, and Well-Being of Students and Staff;
- Resources to Support Observation, Evidence Collection, and Feedback; and
- Ongoing Professional Learning.

Observation of Practice and Performance in Varied Teaching and Learning Models

Although teaching and learning may occur in varied models throughout the school year, skills, strategies, and best-practices for collecting evidence should continue to be implemented:

- **Purpose:** Observations, conversations, and artifact reviews are important practices to ensure that every student has access to equitable and rigorous learning experiences. These practices provide:
 - Information for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning process, as well as feedback and support for educators to be successful and improve their impact on student learning;
 - Data about the level of, and quality of, student engagement in the learning process; and
 - Evidence that identifies strengths, encourages self-reflection and discussion to collaboratively determine actionable next steps.
- **Expectations:** The *CCT Rubric/Teaching*, the *CCT Rubric/Service Delivery*, and/or your district’s instructional framework aligned with the CCT operationalize the standards-based expectations for educator practice and performance.

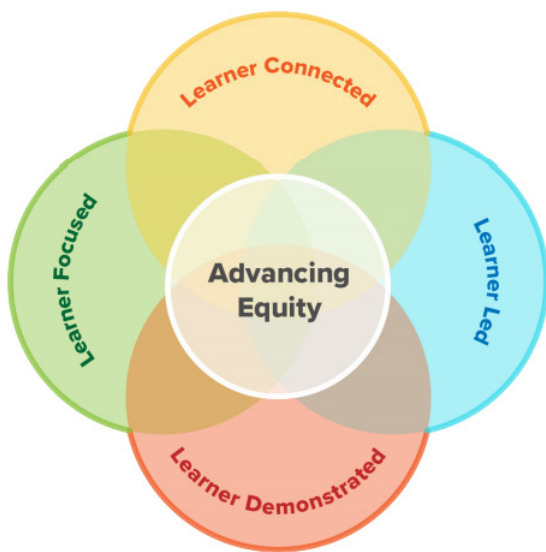
	Evaluator Practice
Maintain	Collect evidence of an educator’s teaching or service delivery to support educator self-reflection, provide feedback and support, and identify goals for continuous improvement and professional learning.
Adapt	In addition to collecting evidence and analyzing impact on academic learning, also focus on evidence and impact on social and emotional learning, and varying impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Celebrate and support efforts to accommodate student needs as the context for teaching and learning may vary throughout the year.

- Evidence Collection:** The use of varied modalities for collecting evidence will provide an evaluator with a comprehensive understanding of an educator’s practice and performance. Evaluators should collect evidence from both educator and learner actions and discussion:

	Evaluator Practice
Maintain	Listen to educator and learner discourse, observe interactions between the educator and learners, interact with learners as they participate in the lesson, and analyze student work to determine the impact of the lesson on learning.
Adapt	Consider recordings of audio and/or video demonstration of understanding or explanation of skill being taught; identify how to observe learner engagement using the district-approved platform for remote learning; develop a plan to observe and collect evidence when multiple breakout rooms may be in session; review plans or discuss with educators how they will meet the needs of special populations in a virtual environment; acknowledge and support tasks that allow learners to make their thinking visible.

Using a Standards-Based Framework for Observation of Educator Practice and Performance — with a Focus on Social and Emotional Learning, Engaging Families, and Well-Being

Figure 1.1 Learner Framework



A standards-based framework is the basis for equity, continuous improvement, consistency of educator practice and performance, and providing support in varied teaching and learning models. Supervisors and evaluators can discuss with educators what examples of practice and performance would look like for indicators and attributes of the CCT Rubrics that align to the priorities of the *Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning*.

Observations should also be aligned to the Learner Framework (LEAP Innovations, 2020) shown in Figure 1.1, described in the *Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning* (pg. 6), to support CT as they reimagine the teaching and learning process in onsite, remote, and hybrid models to accelerate learning and advance equity.

The table below provides examples of CCT Rubric Attributes that focus on the components of the Learner Framework. It includes examples of potential connections and alignment between the Learner Framework and the *CCT Rubric/Teaching* and *CCT Rubric/Service Delivery*.

Teachers may feel overwhelmed, so helping them build on existing knowledge and skills and familiar tools is critical. Supervisors and evaluators should help educators and service providers see connections and explicit language among critical framework attributes, research, short-term priorities, and long term goals for learners, existing practices, previous professional learning, and expectations on the CCT Rubrics and/or district framework. Consider examples from the *CCT Rubric/Teaching* (2017) and the *CCT Rubric/Service Delivery* (2017) Domain 1a indicators paying close attention to the footnotes, noticing the explicit language.

PROFICIENT		EXEMPLARY <i>All characteristics of Proficient, plus one or more of the following:</i>		PROFICIENT		EXEMPLARY <i>All characteristics of Proficient, plus one or more of the following:</i>	
Uses resources and flexible groupings that cognitively engage students in demonstrating new learning in multiple ways, including application of new learning to make connections between concepts.	Implements instruction that provides multiple opportunities for students to develop independence as learners.	<u>Fosters student ownership, self-direction and choice of resources and/or flexible groupings to develop their learning.</u>	Provides opportunities for students to approach learning tasks in ways that will be effective for them as individuals.	Uses multiple resources or flexible groupings to actively engage learners in new learning and facilitate connections between concepts and/or across settings.	Implements service delivery that provides multiple opportunities for learners to develop independence and take responsibility for the learning.	Fosters learner ownership, self-direction, and choice of available resources or flexible groupings.	Supports and challenges learners to identify ways to approach learning that will be effective for them as individuals.
CCT Effective Teaching 3b, 2017				CCT Effective Service Delivery 3b, 2017			
Provides individualized, descriptive feedback that is accurate, actionable and helps students advance their learning.	Adjusts instruction as necessary in response to individual and group performance.	Provides opportunities for students to self-reflect and/or provide peer feedback that is specific and focuses on advancing student learning.	Provides opportunities for students to independently select strategies that will be effective for them as individuals.	Provides feedback that is specific, timely, accurate, and actionable, and supports the improvement toward academic or social/behavioral outcomes.	Adjusts to service delivery in response to learners' performance or engagement in tasks.	Fosters self-reflection and/or peer feedback that is specific and focused on advancing learning.	Develops differentiated methods to obtain feedback from learners in order to assist in adjustment of service delivery.
CCT Effective Teaching 3c, 2017				CCT Effective Service Delivery 3c, 2017			
<p>2. Learning needs of all students: includes understanding typical and atypical growth and development of PK-12 students, including characteristics and performance of students with disabilities, gifted/talented students, and English learners. Teachers take into account the impact of race, ethnicity, culture, language, socioeconomics and environment on the learning needs of students.</p>				<p>3. Student diversity: recognizing individual differences including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, intellectual abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.</p>			
<p>1. A <u>respectful and equitable learning environment</u> supports whole-child development and the understanding that educators must continuously work to ensure not only that educational learning environments are inclusive and respectful of all students but they also offer opportunities for equitable access, survivability, outputs and outcomes. Branson, C. & Gross, S. (Eds.). (2014). <i>Handbook of Ethical Educational Leadership</i>. New York: Routledge.</p>				<p>4. Take risks: Fostering a classroom environment that promotes risk-taking involves building trust; students' trust in the teacher and other students in the class. Students who trust their teachers believe that teachers will turn their failures into learning opportunities.</p>			
				CCT Effective Teaching, 2017			
				<p>2. <u>Respect for learner diversity</u> means recognizing individual differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, intellectual abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.</p>			
				<p>3. <u>Take risks:</u> Fostering a classroom environment that promotes risk-taking involves building trust; students' trust in the teacher and other students in the class. Students who trust their teachers believe that teachers will turn their failures into learning opportunities.</p>			
				CCT Effective Service Delivery 3b, 2017			

Figure 1.2 that follows shows an example of potential connections and alignment to not only Indicator 1a, but also to Indicators 1b and 1c.

Figure 1.2 Making Connections

Social and Emotional Learning	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy/Equity	Trauma	4 Stages of the Shift to Distance Learning
<p><i>5 competencies:</i> self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, & responsible decision making (CASEL, 2020)</p>	<p><i>Characteristics:</i> self-identity and community, cultural differences embraced and integrated, independent learners high expectations (Gay, 2018, Hammond, 2015)</p>	<p><i>4 Trauma-informed priorities:</i> predictability, flexibility, empowerment, and connection (Chevrin-Venet, 2020)</p>	<p><i>Priorities of Stage 1:</i> communication, relationships, routines, classroom community (Tepper & Flynn, 2020)</p>

Source: Tepper and Flynn, 2020

Educators across the state have the opportunity to focus on what Dena Simmons calls **Fearless SEL**:

“SEL skills can help us build communities that foster courageous conversations across differences so that our students can confront injustice, hate, and inequity” (2019).

and what CASEL calls **Transformative SEL**:

“A process whereby young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting relationships that facilitate co-learning to critically examine root causes of inequity, and to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community and societal well-being” (2020).

The *CCT Rubric/Teaching* and the *CCT Rubric/Service Delivery* remain driving tools in providing evaluation and support to educators in alignment with the Flexibilities.

The CSDE Academic Office has released *Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning* and *Addendum 12: Reimagining CT Classrooms: Planning the Instructional Time for Remote Learning in Hybrid and Full Remote Models* which outline guidance, learning experiences, and activities for continuous teaching and learning, ensuring educators can provide students with learning opportunities aligned to state and national educational standards. Additional resources from the CSDE for educators can be found through the [CT Learning Hub](#) which includes curated tools and resources to accelerate learning and advance equity in CT classrooms. Each of these documents provide valuable and supportive information as educators and evaluators define teaching and learning in varied models and seek to leverage that understanding to improve their performance and practice.

As educators plan for implementation and use of these tools and resources provided by the CSDE, evaluators can and should consider how these translate into observable examples of quality teaching and learning. As the CSDE [Flexibilities within the Guidelines for Educator Evaluation 2017 for the 2020–21 School Year](#) provide for attention to the social-emotional well-being of students, it is essential that evaluators ensure their own levels of understanding of potential teaching and learning in school (onsite) and out of school (remote). Beginning with use of the Learner Framework provided in *Addendum 12: Reimagining CT Classrooms: Planning the Instructional Time for Remote Learning in Hybrid and Full Remote Models*, for example, evaluators can identify potential experiences and corresponding resources that support student learning in blended learning models. The CSDE Talent Office [Connecticut Evidence Guides](#) can be used to support an understanding of key performance indicators from the CCT Effective Teaching and Service Delivery rubrics, leading to a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning in remote, blended, or analog models.

Regardless of the model of teaching and learning, each expected learning outcome is aligned to a set of student understandings, skills, tools, and dispositions that must be explicitly taught and modeled by a teacher and then reinforced through teacher and student-student feedback in classrooms. Teachers require knowledge, skills, tools, and dispositions to achieve the expected learning outcomes. These will form the foundation for evaluator artifact review, evidence-collection, feedback, and goal setting.

Figure 1.3 Example of Skills, Dispositions, & Tools

(Ss=Students)

	TEACHER	STUDENT
Skills	How to communicate & engage Ss w/ targets digitally	How to self-assess & determine readiness digitally w/ peers/alone
Dispositions	Willing to take time to build in reflection opportunities w/ varied ways for Ss to respond	Willing to sit & try/reflect asynchronously alone
Tools	Rigorous targets aligned to priority standards, tech tools	Journals/notes/ sketches & digital tools like Flipgrid

Engaging in the process of identifying the skills, dispositions, and tools required for learning outcomes can be a valuable task that allows observers and teachers to further identify what to focus on in the teaching and learning process. (Figure 1.3)

Examination of the [4 Stages of the Shift to Distanced Learning](#) (Tepper and Flynn, 2020), mentioned in the introduction and summarized below, will also support evaluators regardless of the model, especially as they consider the progressive and incremental shifts staff and students will experience in the first 30-90 days of the 2020–21 school year.

[Part 2: Seeing the Shift as a Progression](#) provides an overview of the use of the tool to support evaluators and educators as they support meeting students basic needs and begin to transition to the teaching and learning that will increase student engagement and, ultimately, deeper levels of student learning.

Summary: 4 Stages of the Shift to Distanced Learning



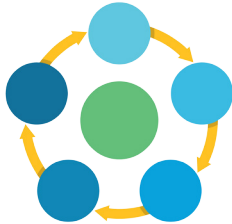
FIGURE 2.1: 4 STAGES OF A SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL TO DISTANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING

STAGE 1: MEETING BASIC NEEDS



At the outset or at any point this year, learners may be nervous or stressed and Maslow's needs may not be met. They are in need of connections, relationships, and consistency. Learners or their families may be uncertain and unfamiliar about expectations and tools. Teachers may be uncertain or unfamiliar with basic requirements of shifting to online teaching: use of technology, time, and establishing expectations. They too may be nervous or stressed.

STAGE 2: ADAPTING THE LEARNING



Learners, families, and teachers are settling into routines and comfort levels are increasing. As a result, expectations in learning and use of technology are being adapted. Learners understand and are following schedules, building skills and dispositions to begin to create their own schedules, routines, and tools. There may be varying levels of student motivation, success and engagement, and completion of tasks with varying levels of teacher success in responding to student needs as they arise or to increase engagement.

STAGE 3: GAUGING THE LEARNING



Learners are becoming more independent and engaging more deeply and consistently at developmentally, socially, and academically appropriate levels (which includes factors like access or equity), generally moving forward in their learning. Learners are becoming more reflective about their own learning and needs and demonstrating greater capacity for metacognition and self-regulation. Teachers are able to invest more time in planning and are purposefully trying new tools and resources (proactive), finding effective ways to scaffold, and becoming more proficient in use of tools and resources to make adjustments (react in real time).

STAGE 4: ANALYZING THE IMPACT



Most learners are cognitively engaged at developmentally, socially, and academically appropriate levels, becoming assessment-capable learners who own their learning, but there is always room for all students to be further challenged or further supported. Teachers are highly reflective about their teaching and learning and may be comfortable self-assessing the effectiveness of tech tools in meeting their own and their learners' needs. They are analyzing tasks and the outcomes of virtual instruction to identify their impact and to continuously advance student learning. In Inquiry Team/PLC meetings, teachers are routinely analyzing impact and high leverage strategies and tools. They are also identifying students who may require further support or enrichment and are working together for solutions.

Resources to Support Observation, Evidence Collection, and Feedback

All of the support provided to educators must be based on the strengths, voice, and needs of staff, families and students. Evaluators should strive to build the knowledge, skills, strategies, and tools (and to work collaboratively with their mental health specialists in this pursuit) to identify symptoms of stress or trauma in adults and children, while also working to identify efficient or “high leverage” strategies that will have immediate and long-term positive impact on learners.

Figure 1.4 and Figure 1.5 provide a snapshot of how observers can use the [4 Stages to the Shift to Distance Learning](#) to focus evidence collection, feedback, and next steps. Please note any example look-fors provided in tables would be based on district-approved tools and platforms. Look-fors offer possible examples not requirements.

Figure 1.4 Snapshot of Priorities by Stage (Ss=Students)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Basic Needs/Access Communication/Language Community/Relationships Family Engagement	Increased Ss participation and engagement Improved Ss collaborations & discourse	Deeper learning Ss self-assessment Improved Ss reflection	Collaborative analysis of impact on learning

Figure 1.5 Possible Look-fors Examples for Stage 1 (T=Teacher, SP=Service Provider, Ss=Students)

What you could hear	What you could see
T/SP starts lesson/service with a wellness check-in T/SP offers choice for Ss who don't like to be on camera/no access T/SP includes voice recordings/translations/images to represent or images explained for all directions for tasks/assignments, with attention to English learners and students with specific visual/auditory needs	T/SP created a slide deck for interactive check-ins or uses the Mood Meter (or SP/coach is modeling) T/SP created a virtual centralized space for Ss/families to access resources (e.g., Bitmoji Room, Google Sites), with attention to English learners and students with specific visual/auditory needs (e.g., translations, captions, alternative text); has an “office hours” scheduler (e.g., Google Forms, Calendly)
Ss are opting not to use cameras but are contributing with audio responses Ss are participating in group discussions	Ss are challenging each other's responses in posted discussion board Ss work/products (submitted or on screen) using new tools

Source: *Tepper and Flynn, 2020*

The ability to collect evidence directly impacts the clarity, accuracy, and depth of understanding about impact on engagement and learning, and is more challenging now in our varied models. Evaluators must begin to develop model-specific strategies. [Part 3 of the 4 Stages to the Shift to Distance Learning: Building the Foundations of Feedback](#) provides:

- An overview of collecting evidence in varied models;
- [Strategies](#) for listening and viewing teaching and learning and for interacting with learners; and
- [Detailed example](#) of evidence collection and analysis of impact for synchronous virtual learning.

Tepper and Flynn (2019, p.144) identified 5 Focus Areas that impact engagement and learning (referenced in Part 3). **Figure 1.6** (page 11) provides specific recommendations for observers to consider regarding their own understanding of how educators impact learners and can be a basis for the development of look-fors for evidence collection.

Figure 1.6 Research-based Practices Related to Impact

Focus Areas	Specific Practices to Understand
Focus Area #1: Environment	Social, emotional, and developmental needs, student self-regulation mindsets and habits
Focus Area #2: Level of Challenge	Scaffolding, gradual release, zone of proximal development
Focus Area #3: Progression	Student-centered or student-driven instruction; essential skills for the 21st century/4 C's (e.g., learning to positively disagree to collaborate); use of technology
Focus Area #4: Assessment	Assessment and feedback cycles; design of rigorous assessments to apply new learning
Focus Area #5: Supports	Differentiation/personalization strategies

Additional examples of evidence collection and analysis for impact are provided for an asynchronous model (Figure 1.7) and synchronous model (Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.7 Possible Asynchronous Example: Observing for Stage 1 Priorities

View	Listen
<p>T/SP — district-approved platform/LMS/district-approved tools for organization, announcements and messages posted (e.g., Google Classroom, Seesaw), click on provided links, look at correspondence being sent to families and students and accessibility</p> <p>Ss — posts/submitted work (digital artifacts in a tech tool, photos of work)</p>	<p>T/SP — audio messages, directions, or audio screencasts Ts/SPs create, T/SP recorded feedback</p> <p>Ss — recorded responses (digital artifacts in a tech tool)</p>
<p>Interact</p> <p>Through survey or phone call: Ss — <i>“I am able to locate my assignments and teacher/service provider videos and the directions are clear. I know where I can go for help if I need it.”</i></p> <p>Parents — <i>“My child can locate assignments and teacher/service provider videos and follow directions [independently, with some help, not at all].” “My child knows where to find resources and ways to contact the teacher/service provider for help [independently, with some help, not at all].” “One suggestion to improve the clarity and ability to navigate assignments and resources would be...”</i></p>	

Source: Tepper and Flynn, 2020

Figure 1.8: Possible Synchronous Example: Observing for Stage 1 Priorities

View	Listen
<p>T/SP — design of lesson materials/visuals used in live lesson (e.g., teaching with Desmos or Peardeck or another district-approved tool to build Ss comfort with new tools)</p> <p>Ss — student use of camera options, tools (e.g., Zoom hand raised, chat room, whiteboard), apps</p>	<p>T/SP — live feedback, direct teaching, modeling for Ss or parents through web-conference session</p> <p>Ss — Ss presentations/explanations, join break-outs to hear Ss response, discussions, peer feedback</p>
Interact	
<p>Through a video-conference tool or breakout room: <i>“How are [the district-approved tools] helping you learn?” “What still challenges you when using it?” “Where can you go/What can you do if you need help or are stuck when you work on your own?” “Do you know what to do for assignments when you are on your own?” “What is one thing you would suggest to your educator about these live lessons? To help you at home?”</i></p>	

Source: Tepper and Flynn, 2020

The examples provided are based on an educator and learners who are progressing through Stage 1 of the 4 Stages of Shift to Distance Learning. The evaluator has already determined basic needs have been met. Evaluators should work to refine capacity to recognize signs of trauma and lack of well-being and how educators are addressing, supporting, or contributing to (without intention) increased stress (e.g., Educators should not require cameras to be on.).

Absolutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Observe” both synchronous and asynchronous lessons and student work (if these exist in your model) • “Observe”/review each educator’s platform or central hub for the teaching and learning • “Observe/review each educator’s location/methods of communication, curation, and sharing of resources to identify ease of use for students and families using district-approved platforms

Providing Feedback

To ensure students have access to equitable and accessible learning, a highly effective evaluation and support model utilizes feedback as a key driver to continuous learning. For this to occur, feedback should:

- require analysis of effectiveness vs. a summary of teaching/services provided;
- help educators see impact on and learning; and
- result in reflection and growth.

(Tepper and Flynn, 2019)

For each evaluation, written feedback should be provided and should always meet the criteria established at the outset of these recommendations. For guidance, consider the two feedback examples on the next page. Feedback similar to the second example below will have more impact on continuous improvement of educator practice, as well as on student learning than a friendly email, though in these challenging times, affirmations are important.

Affirmation: I had a chance to jump into your Flipgrid. Thanks for sharing access and for dedicating time to learn how to use a new tech tool! I noticed you are using it often for lessons and added an example of your own introduction video. Keep up the great work!

Feedback that feeds forward: Thanks for sharing access to Flipgrid and for dedicating time to learn how to use it. Based on the quality and diversity of the students' work (using pixel effect, stickers), it is clear you have found ways to respect and celebrate their diversity (CCT 1a.2) and to use the tool to integrate choice, build community, and have fun. It allows them to show who they are to their classmates in their intros and personalized submissions. I had a chance to talk to [student's parent] and they said [student] loves making videos and watching others'—that it feels like being in a classroom with their friends!

The students' last submission for reflections on their reading allowed them to personalize their responses through a new modality as well as build their self- assessment and metacognitive skills. All were willing to take risks in attempting a response (1a.3), though the depth of the reflections varied (more than half are summarizing what they read). I wondered how you might support students in deepening their thinking and connection-making instructionally and through the tool (3b) now that they are comfortable with Flipgrid? Do students require direct instruction on how to reflect/respond with a few criteria so they can self-check (3a.3, 3c.1) before submitting regardless of the tool? Or maybe some need to organize their ideas first before a video recording?

You will continue to grow in your use of this tool! I am wondering how you could use the teacher and peer feedback (3c) options in Flipgrid to further build a community of learners who support each other and to continue to boost engagement? Visit the [Flipgrid blog](#) for a great list of tips.

In both versions, the feedback is positive and praises the teacher's use of the tool. The observer recognizes the value in taking the time to learn how to navigate a new tech tool many teachers are using and review student work. It demonstrates a commitment to growth and support. In the second example, the observer recognizes that the teacher is meeting Stage 1 goals and is ready to think about Stage 2 and increasing engagement. The feedback is student-centered, helps the teacher reflect on how the use of the tool is impacting students, and promotes actionable next steps.

Source: Tepper and Flynn, 2020

[Additional sample of feedback 1](#) — **Synchronous HS**

[Additional sample of feedback 2](#) — **Asynchronous Elem**

Varied Modalities for Feedback

Though evaluation includes written feedback, we recommend evaluators seek to utilize the vast number of tools and modalities available. Evaluators can engage in formative feedback that models those same methods educators can utilize with students — [through writing, verbally, and through video](#). Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) may wish to consider the various methods used during school closures in spring of 2020 and determine which modalities and approaches best served to support educators.

7 WAYS TO GIVE VERBAL FEEDBACK

For Asynchronous, Synchronous, Analog, & Hybrid Teaching & Learning

Student ↔ Student
Teacher ↔ Student
Peer, Coach, Admin ↔ Teacher

ANYTIME FEEDBACK	ARTIFACT-SPECIFIC FEEDBACK
Phone Calls Google Voice	Audio Screencast/Tagged or w Annotations Kaizena Screencastomatic Awesome Screenshot
Live or Recorded Text Messages Voxer Text-to-voice What's App	Live screenshare Zoom Google Meets
Recorded Messages Kaizena Quicktime Voice Memo Audacity	Recorded comments Seesaw
	Predesigned/Saved Kaizena

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8 WAYS TO GIVE WRITTEN FEEDBACK

For Asynchronous, Synchronous, Analog, & Hybrid Teaching & Learning

Student ↔ Student
Teacher ↔ Student
Peer, Coach, Admin ↔ Teacher

ANYTIME FEEDBACK	ARTIFACT-SPECIFIC FEEDBACK
Emails/Ecards Mail/Cards	Tagged Comments or w/ Annotations Floop Desmos Awesome Screenshot Google Docs/Slides Google Classroom Edthena (for Tchr Fdbk)
Texts Chat Messages/ Private Comments Zoom Google Meets/ Classroom	Private Comments Ed Puzzle Seesaw Go Formative Google Docs/Slides/ Classroom Flipgrid (+“Vibes”)
Class Comments Google Docs	Predesigned or Saved Google Forms/ Classroom Bank

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5 WAYS TO GIVE VIDEO FEEDBACK

For Asynchronous, Synchronous, Analog, & Hybrid Teaching & Learning

Student ↔ Student
Teacher ↔ Student
Peer, Coach, Admin ↔ Teacher

ANYTIME FEEDBACK	ARTIFACT-SPECIFIC FEEDBACK
Recorded Videos QuickTime iMovie Phone YouTube Windows Camera	Tagged or w/ Annotated Comments Flipgrid Screencast-o-matic Screencastify Awesome Screenshot Google Classroom
Live Video Facetime Zoom Google Meets	Recorded Comments Screencast-o-matic Screencastify Awesome Screenshot
Recorded Screencasts Screencast-o-matic Screencastify Awesome Screenshots	

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Resources for Supporting Educators

The following list of resources can be used to support PDECs and individual educators as they establish goals for their own professional learning and improvement in 2020–21. These resources can also be used regardless of role and will support leaders, teachers and student and educator support specialists as they seek to improve performance and practice on behalf of students.

Observation and Feedback	
Topic	Resource
Educator Self-Assessment	Great Teachers and Leaders at American Institute for Research The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) CASEL Classroom Self-Assessment
Frameworks	What Does SEL Look Like in the Classroom CASEL
Evidence-based Practices	Indicators to Schoolwide Practices Effective Social and Emotional Practices-Preschool and Elementary Effective Social and Emotional Practices-Middle and High
How To	Tepper, A., & Flynn, P. (2019). <i>Feedback to feed forward: 31 strategies to lead learning</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a SAGE company. Tepper, A., & Flynn, P. (2020). <i>Learner-focused feedback: 19 strategies to observe for impact</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a SAGE company.
Video-Based Observation	Feeding Forward with Video for Teacher Professional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)	
Topic	Resource
CSDE SEL Resources	Social-Emotional Learning webpage Social Emotional Learning Hub Self-care and Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care for the Caregivers: Wellness Strategies for Student Support Service Providers • Healthy Schools Start with Healthy Adults: Strategies to Support Educator Wellness Resources for educators Best practices from districts Resources for families
Full SEL Reopening Plan	Returning to School During and After Crisis: Supporting States, Districts, Schools, Educators, Families, and Students through an MTSS Framework Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning Roadmap for Reopening Schools
SEL in Times of Stress	<i>“Social and Emotional Learning in Times of Uncertainty and Stress: Research-Based Strategies”</i> (Marc Brackett)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)	
Topic	Resource
Competencies	Core SEL Competencies
Standards	Connecticut State Department of Education (K–3) Kansas State Department of Education
Implementation Guidance	Minnesota Department of Education
Trauma	A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching Through Coronavirus Four Core Priorities for Trauma-Informed Distance Learning Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Supportive School Environments for Children Traumatized by Family Violence School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) UCLA Brief COVID-19 Screen
Emotions	Mood Meter — <i>Permission to Feel: Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help Our Kids, Ourselves, and Our Society Thrive</i> (Marc Brackett)
Supporting School Communities	Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating (RULER)
Comprehensive Overview	Teaching the Whole Child Instructional Practices That Support Social-Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks
Coaching	Social and Emotional Learning Coaching Toolkit
Feedback Strategies	Feedback Provider and Receiver Dispositions
Review/Comparison of Programs	Navigating Social Emotional Learning from the Inside Out: Looking Inside and Across 25 Leading SEL programs (Elem focus)
Comparison of Frameworks	Explore SEL

Interconnections	
Topic	Resource
Social, Emotional, Cognitive/Academic	Academic Integration (CASEL) The Evidence Base for How We Learn: Supporting Students’ Social, Emotional, and Academic Development Frey, N., Fisher, D., & Smith, D. (2019). <i>All learning is social an emotional: Helping students develop essential skills for the classroom and beyond</i> . Alexandria, VA: ASCD. Ahmed, S. K. (2018). <i>Being the change: Lessons and strategies to teach social comprehension</i> . Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Equity	Guide to Schoolwide SEL: Equity and SEL (CASEL) Webinar: Leveraging SEL to Promote Equity: What Educators Need to Know and Do (CASEL) Stembridge, A. (2020). <i>Culturally responsive education in the classroom: An equity framework for pedagogy</i> . New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. Hammond, Z., & Jackson, Y. (2015). <i>Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a SAGE Company.

Remote/Blended Learning	
Topic	Resource
Online Learning Standards	National Standards for Quality Online Learning
Remote Learning	Connecticut Learning Hub Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning
Remote Learning & Stress	6 Ways to Help Heal Toxic Stress, Trauma, and Inequity in Your Virtual or In-Person Classroom
Blended Learning	Tucker, C. R., Wycoff, T., & Green, J. T. (2017). <i>Blended learning in action: A practical guide toward sustainable change</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a Sage company.
Remote Teaching	Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Hattie, J. (2021). <i>The distance learning playbook Grades K-12: Teaching for engagement and impact in any setting</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a Sage company.

Ongoing Embedded Professional Learning

PDECs will need to concentrate on not only the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and tools that will be needed for educators to be successful but also how they will deliver learning experiences to ensure supportive, ongoing professional learning. The core questions to be considered are:

- What data already exists and what needs to be collected to support the design of the district and school's professional learning about the strengths and needs of staff and students?
- How do we ensure that educators have the skills, dispositions, and tools to meet students' needs?
- How do we ensure that supervisors and evaluators have the skills, dispositions, and tools to effectively observe educator practice and provide impactful feedback?
- How can we continue to support staff and student well-being, meeting each where he or she are by leveraging tools and resources provided?
- How do we determine the effectiveness of professional learning?

When ongoing professional learning is designed to introduce new skills and strategies, it is important to begin with developing knowledge and awareness in order to create a deeper understanding that will lead to changes in educator practice. Levels of stress, readiness and knowledge in implementing remote learning will vary, and thus professional learning should remain responsive, adaptive, and personalized, meeting each educator where they are.

PDECs can explore and determine the district-wide professional learning needs related to observation of and feedback and support for educator performance and practice. The members of the committee should determine the ways in which professional learning will be implemented and determine if external support is necessary. The resources provided in the previous section, *Resources for Supporting Educators*, align with these recommendations and, therefore, can directly support PDEC and/or district decision making.

Figure 1.9 (page 19) provides overarching/broad learning outcomes for embedded professional learning topics to ensure that practices associated with the recommendations, strategies, and resources in this document will have the greatest possible impact. These are organized to show what educators *should know* and *be able to do* to ensure effective implementation of practice related to the Flexibilities 2020–21.

Figure 1.9 Learning Outcomes for Educators

Educators should know...	Educators should be able to...
<p>Foundational research and strategies related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEL • Trauma-informed teaching strategies • Culturally responsive pedagogy • Equity • Remote teaching and learning & Crossover Strategies <p>How students learn (e.g., brain compatible strategies, trauma impact)</p> <p>How educators impact engagement and learning (create outcomes/potential barriers) (e.g., Universal Design for Learning)</p> <p>Evidence-collection strategies in varied, remote models (e.g., collaborative calibration exercises with peers or evaluators)</p> <p>Feedback Provider and Receiver Dispositions (e.g., Culture of trust to receive feedback)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpack the CCT, the 4 Stages, SEL Competencies (e.g., CT K-3, CASEL), cultural competence and responsive pedagogies, and trauma-informed instruction/priorities to make connections and deepen understanding • Based on the unpacking, determine schoolwide or individual classroom/caseload needs of students and school/district goals to design SLOs with corresponding IAGDs • Generate action plans that include practice related to SEL Competencies, culturally relevant pedagogy, and trauma-informed instruction, as appropriate • Examine high impact instructional and technology tools being used within school and/or throughout district <p>Additionally, observers (regardless of role) will need to be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine evidence collection strategies and look-fors based on the model for teaching and learning • Implement evidence collection strategies with peers and engage in debriefs about impact • Analyze evidence collected to determine areas of strength and need of educators • Generate written and verbal feedback based on school model

PDEC Planning for Professional Learning

Given the circumstances in the 2020–21 school year, professional learning will need to concentrate significant amounts of time on protocols and structures to ensure the physical safety of students and educators. Beyond this, PDECs should focus on developing ongoing professional learning as described in **Figure 1.9**.

Figure 1.10 Recommended Actions for Professional Learning and Evaluation

Educator Evaluation & Support	
Recommended Action	Person Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current SEL instructional materials already in house and how they have been integrated in the past Identify experts on your staff to maximize use of these materials and leverage leadership teams/PLCs to support ongoing analysis of impact 	Administrators, Teachers, Student and Educator Support Specialists
Create/identify a tool for sharing digital teaching and learning artifacts for video-based observation between educator and evaluator or for staff to share with one another	Administrators, Teachers, Student and Educator Support Specialists
Collaboratively revisit the CCT Rubric/Effective Teaching, CCT Rubric/Effective Service Delivery, or your district framework to unpack critical attributes in alignment to SEL, equitable/accessible learning, and the 4 Stages (<i>See Linking Learning and SEL: Make Connections to Make Meaning</i>)	Administrators, Teachers, Student and Educator Support Specialists
Plan responsive professional learning for remote learning pedagogy and to ensure educators see coherence and connections among academic learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, equitable instruction, trauma informed priorities, engagement, and SEL	Administrators, Teachers, Student and Educator Support Specialists

CSDE provides guidance to district PDEC committees and to all schools and districts in the design of professional learning for all staff on the [CSDE website](#). The CT Standards for Professional Learning and guidance provide specific information about the criteria for an effective professional learning system. An effective professional learning system should be:

- Responsive to address incremental needs of educators, staff, and students (30-60-90 day plans);
- Designed based on surveys, stakeholder input, artifact review, collegial conversations, and observation and feedback related to performance and practice expected outcomes (to ensure creation of responsive professional learning for improved practice);
- Organized in smaller chunks (shorter in duration);
- Focused on high leverage skills, dispositions, and tools (opportunities for cross-connections in content and practice);
- Delivered utilizing varied blended/remote delivery methods (professional learning experiences should model classroom experiences);
- Structured so that educators have opportunity to collaborate and plan (planning for and responding to student academic and social-emotional needs); and
- Allows for choice relative to the greatest areas of need either as a whole school or individually in an educator’s classroom.

Delivering Professional Learning

Professional learning systems must maximize opportunities for educators to collaborate and learn from each other. Districts and schools must adapt professional learning based on the:

- Model (how to reach educators who are in the building and at home);
- Availability of time (how to schedule and use time considering two hours on a videoconference platform is different from two hours face-face); and
- Need (how to personalize).

Figure 1.11 Options for Professional Learning

Possible Asynchronous/Synchronous Learning Opportunities
Staff Meetings (Face-to-Face, Remote) PLC/Inquiry Teams Virtual Conferences Online Courses Podcasts On-Demand Webinars Blogs/Articles/Book Studies Videos Twitter/Social Media Networks
Possible Resources
District and School Staff Regional Educational Service Centers Free Webinars/Tutorial Videos Authors and Publishers CT Education Organizations

The 2020–21 school year may require PDECs to shift in focus towards the well-being of both staff and students as an essential focus of not only the topics or outcomes of professional learning, but also part of the consideration of the best methods of delivery. As is always the case, data should drive these decisions. Knowing the needs of staff, students and stakeholders will allow for learning designs to build skill sets, increase efficacy, and ensure collective professional growth for educators so that all students advance towards positive academic and non-academic outcomes.