

HLP 8: Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback to Guide Students' Learning and Behavior



High-Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

The goal of the HLPs is to provide a list of essential practices that are not only effective, but also are so critical that they should be in every teacher's everyday repertoire. All HLPs are important, but among the list of 22 are practices so essential they not only stand above others in terms of importance, but also continually show up as a key component of others on the list. HLP 8, Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback, is one of these key HLPs. In fact, this HLP is so critical, it appears in both the Social/Emotional/Behavioral domain, as HLP 8, and in the Instruction domain, as HLP 22. None of the HLPs from the Social/Emotional/Behavioral and Instruction domains can be either taught to students or implemented without feedback on academic or behavioral performance being part of the sequence. All students (and educators) need information about their performance and whether that performance is meeting expectations. Quality feedback is the key mechanism through which this is accomplished. Becoming an expert at quickly diagnosing student performance (correct or incorrect) and crafting a caring, thoughtful, and specific response is an essential competency for all teachers.

This resource is intended to support school leaders looking to embed the HLPs in professional development, implementation, teacher observation and feedback efforts at their school site.

The major source for content within this resource is the chapter by Allison Bruhn, Jennifer Freeman, Regina Hirn, and Lee Kern in *High-Leverage Practices in the Inclusive Classroom*; the book *High-Leverage Practices in Special Education: The Final Report of the HLP Writing Team*, and content on www.highleveragepractices.org.

Teachers Who Effectively Provide Feedback to Improve Student Behavioral Outcomes

- Provide positive and specific feedback to demonstrate approval of student behaviors.
Example: "Great job (positive) raising your hand (specific) and waiting to be called on!"
- Provide process-centered feedback rather than person-centered feedback to facilitate engagement, motivation, and perseverance.
Example: "You worked really hard on that math assignment and used excellent strategies to solve those problems" (process-oriented feedback)
Non-example: "You are so smart!" (person-oriented feedback).
- Provide instructive feedback to teach and/or emphasize academic and social/behavioral skills.
Example: A student responds to the question "What sounds should we hear when we line up for recess?" with the answer, "None." The teacher delivers instructive feedback such as, "That's right! We are quiet when we line up for recess. We are also quiet in the hallway to be respectful of other classrooms."
- Provide corrective feedback rather than reprimands when addressing social/behavioral or academic errors with students.
Example: "Remember that during independent reading time the expectation is that we are reading quietly to ourselves, and we aren't talking to our neighbors" (corrective feedback)
Non-example: "Stop talking!" (reprimand)
- Provide feedback only when the target behavior is observed (i.e., it is contingent) – feedback is not delivered in the absence of a target behavior.
Example: While monitoring students working in cooperative groups, the teacher notices that they are working together effectively and says, "I am so impressed with everyone's participation in this activity! You all are doing an excellent job following our classroom expectations for working in small groups."
- Provide timely feedback, in close proximity to when a target behavior is observed, to maximize instructional time and increase students' use of desired behaviors.
- Use a sincere tone of voice, avoiding sarcasm or joking, when delivering feedback to students.
- Understand and consider the ways in which ages, learning histories,

cultural backgrounds, preferences, and classroom dynamics, impact students' receipt of feedback.

- Adjust the type and frequency of feedback to facilitate students' progression through phases of learning (i.e., basic acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization, and adaptation).

Tips for School Leaders to Support Teachers

- Provide instruction, professional development, and/or coaching to teachers to increase knowledge and implementation of the types of feedback used in a variety of situations.
- When supporting educators' implementation of effective feedback, be sure to also provide feedback to them to support greater implementation fidelity.
- Identify individuals in the building who consistently provide effective feedback to students and utilize their expertise in peer coaching systems.
- Support teams/staff members in setting goals for increasing their use of feedback and keep each other accountable with weekly check-ins.

Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- What are some critical components of delivering effective feedback?
- How does this HLP connect to the collaboration and/or assessment HLPs?
- How can feedback support the development and maintenance of positive teacher-student relationships?
- Why is specific feedback preferred over generic feedback?
- What are some benefits of process-oriented feedback vs. person-oriented feedback? Corrective feedback vs. reprimands?
- Why is it important to consider factors such as age, cultural background, preferences, learning histories, and classroom dynamics when delivering feedback to students?

● References & Additional Resources

Online Resources

[High-Leverage Practices: A Professional Development Guide for School Leaders](#)

A downloadable online guide providing school leaders, including administrators, principals, mentors and coaches, with practical tools for engaging staff members in learning about how high-leverage practices can enhance student learning in the school and district.

Journal Articles

Collins, L. W., Cook, S. C., Sweigart, C. A., & Evanovich, L. L. (2018). Using performance feedback to increase special education teachers' use of effective practices. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 51(2), 125–133. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059918802774>

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Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The Power of Feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>

Konold, K. E., Miller, S. P., & Konold, K. B. (2004). Using teacher feedback to enhance student learning. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 36(6), 64–69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990403600608>

Oakes, W. P., Lane, K. L., Menzies, H. M., & Buckman, M. M. (2018). Instructional feedback: An effective, efficient, low-intensity strategy to support student success. *Beyond Behavior*, 27(3), 168–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10742956187993542>