

# Meaningful Responses to Student Writing



## GRANT RECIPIENTS

Timothy D. Burns  
Matthew Bindig

Fayetteville-Manlius Central Schools  
Fayetteville-Manlius High School

[tburns@fmschools.org](mailto:tburns@fmschools.org)  
[mbindig@fmschools.org](mailto:mbindig@fmschools.org)

## NYS STANDARD

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding, for literary response and expression, for critical analysis and evaluation, and for social interaction.

## GRADE LEVEL

Grades 9-12

## STUDENTS SERVED

50 students

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Our grant investigated the various ways to respond to student writing and implemented several feedback mechanisms to determine which type of feedback was most effective. We discovered the most effective ways to respond are tied to the type of writing and the stage in the writing process. If the student is at the final draft phase, meaningful responses need focus on what the writer can do next and how the writer will make the transition from this completed piece to the next in-progress piece.

If the student is at the drafting phase, and we found more attention at this stage of the process leads to better comprehension of writing goals for a particular assignment, careful interlinear notes on a specific student-designated section illustrate the student's current strengths and weaknesses. If the marked section is truly representative of the piece as a whole, commentary in that section of the paper can be extrapolated and applied throughout. The other option, reading and commenting on the entire draft, can lead to oversaturation and a final draft stage where the writer is only responding to someone else's comments, not internalizing the information in the commentary and applying it themselves where appropriate. At the earliest writing stage, less specific and more interrogative response yields more focused writing. Rather than reword a thesis statement, for example, raising the questions to which the thesis still needs to respond gives the writer specific response to consider as well as the latitude to create her or his own writing.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES

Upon implementation of the grant, students will be able to utilize teacher response to writing as an avenue for continued growth and improvement.

Upon implementation of the grant, students will be able to internalize important aspects of the writing process for each assignment and apply those elements in future writing pieces.

Upon implementation of the grant, students will be able to see writing as an ongoing conversation between the author and the reader resulting in a greater appreciation of both text and the process for creating text.