



Partnering With Students: Building Ownership of Learning

By Mary J. (Jane) O'Connell, Kara L. Vandas

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Empower students to own their learning

This resource is designed to empower teachers and leaders with strategies to develop learners who have the confidence and tools to engage in any challenge. By flipping the focus to student ownership of learning, the authors provide clear and simple ways to:

- Develop collaborative relationships
- Jointly establish clear expectations for learning and criteria for success
- Intentionally build learner strategies that last a lifetime
- Use formative assessment results to monitor progress
- Harness the power of reciprocal feedback to improve teaching and learning
- Empower and motivate students set meaningful goals and prove learning

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Editorial Review

Review

"Anyone working on developing a growth mindset or even understanding it would benefit from this book. The strategies offered can be implemented immediately. As an administrator, I can use this material to help guide teachers who need support in guiding students to own their learning. This would be a great book study or a springboard for Professional Learning Group work."

(Lena Marie Rockwood, Middle School Assistant Principal)

"The book provides a much-needed guide in developing student-focused classrooms."

(Marsha L. Carr, Assistant Professor and former Superintendent)

"This book gives step-by-step suggestions on how to become a partner with students – to help them be better, and not just in your content area. Expose students to the methods in this book, and they will use them for the rest of their lives. And they will thank you for it." (Nancy Foote, 8th Grade Conceptual Physics Teacher)

"Mary Jane O'Connell and Kara Vandas have taken a courageous step in connecting the dots on several pieces of strategic research about student learning. They have provided classroom teachers with practical templates with which to apply the teacher's planning for instruction in partnering with students to build ownership for learning." (Ainsley B. Rose, Professional Development Associate, Corwin Press)

"Practical, perfect for professional learning communities and independent study. An extremely rich resource for educators who genuinely want to empower students to be successful in college AND careers. The research supported strategies put forth press educators to engage in deep reflection and analysis of their personal beliefs and practices while equipping them with practical techniques to engage students in rigorous, relevant ways in the classroom which translates to VISIBLE LEARNING!" (Kim S. Benton, Chief Academic Officer, Deputy State Superintendent)

"The book walks the reader through all of the steps involved in moving every classroom to a collaborative learning experience. The authors ensure that the reader (teacher or principal) sees how these concepts are scaffolded together to create a learner-centered environment . . . This is a book that gets better and better each time you read it. It drives you to take action. I look forward to making changes in my classroom using these strategies. The authors clearly have a vision of the classroom feel and the learning experiences that move students to own their own learning." (JoAnn Hiatt, Mathematics Teacher)

"The TRUST Model presented by O'Connell and Vandas captures the essence of what our most effective teachers do to ensure students are co-owners of the classroom and their learning. The authors have articulated exactly what is needed to create the engaging classroom environments we need in our schools."

(Karen Brofft, Superintendent)

*"O'Connell and Vandas provide a wealth of information to educators **proving that** it is not only important to be student-focused and driven, but essential if students are to reach their fullest potential. In an era where we seemingly complicate things because we can, it is refreshing to see a book like this that is clearly written, driven by commonsense, evidenced by good practice, and supported with tools and clear examples to support both the teacher and learner."* (Russell J. Quaglia, President/Founder)

"Vandas and O'Connell do a masterful job of making the research on student achievement completely accessible, relatable, and immediately usable in the classroom. This book is profound in its ability to do this while putting the tools for implementation into the hands of teachers and their students."
(Kelley King, Principal, Education Speaker & Consultant)

"Most of us are quick to agree that teachers shouldn't do all the work when it comes to student learning, but we're not always sure how to do that. In Partnering with Students to Build Ownership of Learning, O'Connell and Vandas tell us how to do that in an extremely practical and theoretical book. If you want to know how to get students to do more of the work, then you should read this book."
(Jim Knight, Author of Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction)

"Collaborating with students? Providing them with feedback and listening to the feedback they have for us? Too often we have left students out of the dialogue of learning, but those times are changing. In Partnering with Students to Build Ownership of Learning, Mary Jane O'Connell and Kara Vandas share practical and proven methods of putting students at the center of their own learning."
(Peter DeWitt, Corwin consultant and author of Flipping Leadership Doesn't Mean Reinventing the Wheel)

About the Author

Mary Jane O'Connell brings a unique practitioner's perspective to her work with educators. She has seven years of classroom teaching experience and over twenty years of experience as a building principal in year-round schools ranging in size from 450 to 980 students. Since 2007, she has served as a consultant working with teachers at all levels, building administrators, and central office staff in a variety of urban, suburban and rural settings. Mary Jane has presented numerous seminars throughout the United States and volunteered for two weeks in Zambia to work with college professors desirous of improving their teacher-training programs. It is particularly rewarding when there is an opportunity to establish a relationship and partnership with others that leads to significant increases in student learning.

Mary Jane holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of California, Northridge and a Master's degree from the University of Colorado in Educational Administration. Mary Jane has personal experience with year-round education, opening new schools, and has implemented the principles of Continuous Quality Improvement embedded in the National Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.

Sedalia, Colorado is home for Mary Jane. In addition to being an avid reader and worldwide traveler, she enjoys the winters skiing with family and friends. During the summer months Mary Jane and her husband live near Big Sky, Montana on the Gallatin River. They are fly fishing enthusiasts and open their home to many friends who share their passion for fishing. The O'Connells have four grown children, three grandchildren, and two Labradors who continue to keep the household buzzing with excitement.

Kara Vandas is an educator at heart and has an enduring passion for learning and supporting and fostering learning for others. She began her career in education at a private school for high-need and at-risk youth. Her desire was to enable students to see and realize their true potential. Kara spent several more years in the classroom in public education as a middle and high school educator and then transitioned to coaching and professional learning positions that allowed her to support teachers and leaders. Her current role as a

consultant takes her around the country to partner with schools and school districts. Her work has also taken her outside of the US as well to Ecuador and the US Virgin Islands.

Kara holds a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Wyoming and a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Regis University. She has worked in K-12 education for over 15 years with a focus in instruction, curriculum design, using data to drive instruction, science education, learning environments, formative assessment, Visible Learning, and more. She also volunteers as a board member at her child's local charter school, where she and her family live in Castle Rock, Colorado. She loves the outdoors and spends much of her free time with family and friends.

Users Review

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Edward Torres:

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