Anna Geiger: Welcome, Angie!

Angie Hanlin: Hello Anna. Thank you so much for having me.

Anna Geiger: I'm so glad you're here. I first learned of you when you came to Wisconsin's Reading League event a number of years ago and you talked about systems for school improvement. At the time, I had no idea what systems meant. I waited the whole time for you to talk about the program that your school had used and you never did.

Since then, I've learned a lot more about systems and assessment and all that, how it comes together, and it's about a lot more than the program.

So we're going to get into that today. But first, could you tell us your history and, and what you're doing now?

Angie Hanlin: I am Angie Hanlin, and I've spent close to 30 years in education as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, curriculum instruction, professional development coordinator, principal, and then superintendent. Now I'm a full-time literacy consultant working with schools across the country.

I think what really kind of defines my journey is that I've sat in every chair, I've felt the overwhelm as a teacher, and then the urgency as a district superintendent trying to get it right for all students, all teachers, throughout a whole district.

Along with Pati Montgomery, I had the extreme privilege of co-authoring the book, *It's Possible*, to give leaders actually a roadmap, a leadership plan, for transforming literacy outcomes through strong instructional leadership, clarity in the systems piece that you mentioned earlier that actually work. And then that book is really the story of the journey we lived: what it looked like to change a school where literacy outcomes felt completely stagnant. And then to prove what it looks like and what is possible with the right focus, and that is that all students can actually grow, succeed, and learn to read.

Today, the work I do, my mission is to help schools do just that. Do that work, build strong instructional systems, empower leaders, strengthen, in particular, their instructional leadership skills, and then empower and equip teachers to provide highly effective, explicit instruction.

It's like my favorite work to do, and give them the clarity they deserve in that area. So that's my journey and where I am right now.

Anna Geiger: Thank you so much for sharing all that and I'll be sure to link in the show notes to other interviews you've done on other podcasts where you talk more specifically about that journey in that school.

Today we're going to dial in on the assessment piece because this is part of a series about assessment. I'd like you to start first by talking about the mistakes you often see when it comes to creating a comprehensive assessment plan for a school.

Angie Hanlin: So with when I said I've done consulting now at full-time for right at a year and a half. The biggest mistake I see is that schools are collecting data, but without a clear purpose. So schools often end up collecting assessments because for several reasons, Anna, such as, well, we've always done them.

When I ask, why are you administering these assessments? Well, we've always done these, or someone else said we needed to, a neighboring district was doing it, or someone within the state, or they do it due to some type of state mandate. But no one in the school system can actually articulate what decisions those assessments should drive.

And another mistake we often see is not aligning the assessment plan. I think this is huge to the actual instructional cycle. Assessment needs to be a tool that informs instruction, what needs to be taught, what needs to be retaught, accelerated, what needs to be intervened on, and when that assessment plan is disconnected from the daily instruction, I always say, then it becomes compliance instead of commitment and support.

So in *It's Possible*, Pati and I both talk about how, especially in my work, our teachers were overwhelmed with data. They were collecting it, but they weren't deeply analyzing it. So what I mean by that is they didn't know what to do with it. They had the data, but they didn't know what to do with it. They didn't know what decisions to make based upon that data.

That's a huge signal when schools have that problem, because if assessments are not clearly directly impacting instruction, then we need to stop and we need to rethink the assessment plan.

Anna Geiger: Thank you for clearing that up. Is there anything else you'd like to share about the problem with having too many assessments?

Angie Hanlin: Yes. Years ago, I had the great incredible privilege of working with Vicki Gibson and Jan Hasbrouck, I was an associate with them, and I learned this from Dr. Jan Hasbrouck. There often are just too many assessments, and with too many assessments, a few things can happen.

One, teachers stop trusting the data. Because it can feel redundant or contradictory if we've got too many things we're looking at. The other thing though, and this is what I learned from Dr. Jan Hasbrouck, when we overassess, students lose instructional time. And that's the most important thing. The instruction. That's what closes the gaps. So we end up assessing too much of our time instead of teaching and providing high quality instruction.

Then also this, I learned from working with Pati Montgomery, when we overassess, leaders then lose clarity because they can't keep up, Anna, with analyzing all of it, let alone using it meaningfully. And again, that goes back to what I mentioned earlier about really driving instruction.

So I've learned through doing the work more is not better. Better is better. So a streamlined assessment system gives us these tools right here, universal screening assessments, first and foremost, diagnostic assessments or screeners, progress monitoring. We must have that to know is the work working? That's what Jan Hasbrouck always says, or is the help helping? And then finally, we do look at outcome assessments or summative assessments, and those are the assessments we need to truly drive strong instruction.

And if we're doing more than that, then that can be redundant and just too much.

Anna Geiger: So I would like to talk to you a little bit about the universal screener versus, or alongside possibly, a computer adaptive test. Do you think, is there value if a school does Dibels or Acadience, and then also does MAP or STAR or iReady. I'm not a hundred percent clear on all the differences with all those computer adaptive tests. I realize they're different from each other. They may a achieve different things, but is there a usefulness in both?

Angie Hanlin: I get this question all the time. Okay. And schools are so confused by it because they will have a computer adaptive test and they'll say, well, we're doing benchmarking. So there can be value, if and only if, everyone understands the purpose of each one. So let me explain the purpose of each one, if that's okay.

CBMs tell us whether students have the foundational reading subskills that they need. Computer adaptive tests tell us broader performance. Those are tied to something different, though, not foundational skills. Those are tied to growth.

But the problem is when districts only use that to drive and identify their Tier 2 or Tier 3 instruction, because that's really not what those were designed to do. They're too global and those are for how students are doing on state standards. So those assessments can't really provide us with the specific skills to go into our rooms to teach tomorrow, to close those foundational skill gaps in students.

And that's where the CBM measures are so powerful because they give us the actionable, skill-specific information needed for those early foundational reading skills.

So the computer adaptive tests, or CATs, tell us how students perform on grade level content. So in short, you can look at the computer adaptive test and you really get the big picture, the big picture of how your students are doing on standards, and also it gives you a great indicator of how they're going to score on an end of year assessment.

CBMs though are really more, are our students learning to read? Where are they on those foundational reading skills and what do I need to go in my classroom and teach tomorrow?

So districts often use both with success, but misunderstandings happen when that CAT data is used to make decisions that it was actually never designed to make or to inform, such as the exact skill deficit for intervention and where to begin intervention such as for decoding, intervention, phonics, phonemic awareness, because often we need a diagnostic for that. Our benchmark will tell us a student needs intervention, but then we need to give a diagnostic assessment to really drill down and say, okay, this is exactly where that intervention should begin.

So I think when schools understand the purpose for both and the difference and the information that they're going to receive from that, then using both can definitely supplement the picture and give schools more information on how to increase learning outcomes, but when they don't understand the difference or when they only have the computer adaptive test and they don't have a CBM measure, especially one for fluency, then that's when I always see confusion and also misplacement.

Anna Geiger: So with the computer adaptive tests, can they be used to inform instruction at all or are they more like an outcome-based measure?

Angie Hanlin: I gave them. Actually when I was a fifth grade teacher, we had a computer adaptive test and it gave me where my students were on state standards. So when we would give those benchmarks, then when I would go into my next units, I would drill deep and look at what skills were they weak in? What standards were they weak in? Cause and effect, summarizing, making inferences, drawing conclusions. I would really look at those things deep into the comprehension aspects, vocabulary, and the writing. And then I would go into my units and make sure I was really focusing on that.

I would look at the students who were not proficient in those measures and when I had them at small group, I would really make sure I was hammering those on a steady basis to make sure they were getting better. And then I would anxiously await the next benchmark to see if they were getting better on those standards.

Then from middle of year to end of the year, really going into test time because as an elementary teacher, Anna, I never taught a grade that wasn't going to have a state assessment.

So I always felt I needed that assessment as another layer to tell me then where they were on the standards so that I could plan and make sure the students were getting those standards mastered. We might have covered those standards or taught those standards, but did the students master them?

So yes, again, if we understand how to take that assessment data and use it to plan instruction, like what I just said, then yes, we can use both types.

Anna Geiger: If someone would say, well, we already have MAP, for example, we don't need a universal screener, what would you say to that?

Angie Hanlin: I would say that you do because you've got to have an assessment for automaticity and in the area of fluency. And then you think of fluency when you start thinking of mid first grade year and up, you think oral reading fluency. But also when you think of automaticity in kindergarten, that looks like letter naming, letter sound, and then we go into phoneme segmentation. All of these are indicators of whether or not a student is going to be a skilled reader.

Just simply looking at state standards, that's not going to tell us if a student is really on pace or struggling, and do they have areas and deficits where they're going to be a struggling reader. And so we need those to really drill down into those foundational skills so that we can close those gaps to get every single student to become a fluent reader.

I personally don't think we can do that without the CBM measures.

Anna Geiger: Yeah. And just for people listening, A CBM is like Dibels, Acadience, easyCBM, FastBridge, all those.

Angie Hanlin: Yes. That, and they have those measures such as oral reading fluency. They've got something for phonemic awareness. You really want to hone in on that fluency measure and see the percentile of where your students are. Are they reading at or above the 50th percentile on those CBM oral reading fluency measures? And then if not, how are we going to intervene? And then looking at, are they struggling with decoding? Is there an accuracy issue or is there a rate (words per minute) issue because we intervene differently.

But looking at those K-2 grades, really looking at those subskill tests that offer, such as Fastbridge, Dibels, Aimsweb, really looking at those tests on those foundational literacy skills and seeing, are

students at the 50th percentile or higher on that, because if they are, then we know they're on the way, on the path, to becoming a fluent reader.

Anna Geiger: hank you very much. Two weeks ago in this series, I did an episode with Michelle Hosp. We talked about the whole point of CBMs and where they came from.

But I think it's just really good to think about how those things compare, just because I know that schools have that question. In your book you wrote, I think it was your school, it says the teachers, they weren't sure what the data was telling them, didn't know how to change instruction based on that data, and were instead hoping the students' reading skills would improve.

I can certainly resonate with that, in terms of just hoping, not really knowing what to do about it.

Angie Hanlin: Hoping and wishing, yeah. Yes.

Anna Geiger: So, you know, one of the most important things that schools can do when they're trying to make this shift is have the regular data meetings, but I think that they might not know what to do, what that would look like, how often we should have them? We're looking at these graphs, but we don't even know what to do. Can you talk about what the data meetings should look like, how often, and what they should be working on in those meetings?

Angie Hanlin: When we were doing that, our journey, we were working with Schools Cubed. That was the company at the time with Pati Montgomery. She's now with Keys to Literacy. This is how we set up our process.

But effective data meetings should, first and foremost, we should have three of them right out of the gate, and they should come right after each benchmark. You administer beginning of year benchmark, you have beginning of year data team meeting. You administer middle of year benchmark, you immediately have middle of year data team meeting. And the same for end of year.

But we cannot wait until the next benchmark because half the year's gone and we don't have a second to waste on our students.

So then we also, in our book, suggest adding in those about every six weeks, a check-in meeting, and at those, Anna, you look at the progress monitoring data. That's not all students, it's only the students who are being progress monitoring because when we wait till the end of the quarter, it's just too late.

So first and foremost, then we have the three meetings, and we also build in those six week check-in meetings. But then it can't stop there.

We've got to have a structured, clear agenda. So when we come together, we review our grade level goals, because after that benchmark assessment, we use that then to set middle and end of year goals.

We review those grade level goals. We celebrate any and all successes in the data. What patterns are we seeing? What successes did we have? But then we look at the current universal screener. Or if we're in a six week check-in meeting, we're looking at progress monitoring data, and then we drill down and we look at every single individual student and we see who is on track, which students are not on track, and then we look at why.

Why are they making progress due to instruction? What instruction or what intervention have they received? Then we look at who is not making progress, and again, we ask ourselves, why? Not blaming the student, but why? Is it that the intervention needs to be changed or something like that?

Then in these meetings, we determine our skill deficits. And then once we have those skill deficits, that's then how we group our students based on skill deficits. Then we determine and assign the targeted instructional and intervention actions to close these gaps. And then we set up our progress monitoring, and all of the meetings should be focused on urgency and action.

So it's not a discussion. I tell this to teams in schools all the time. It's not a discussion just for the sake of having a discussion. We don't look at the data out of compliance. "Okay, well we held our data team meeting."

On page 148 of the book, we actually emphasize this shift: data meetings must end with clear decisions, ownership, and next steps.

So I say all the time, if teachers don't leave a data team meeting with a plan for instruction or a plan for intervention, then we have failed them. And, in my opinion, I don't think we've really had a data team meeting. So teachers should always walk away from, whether it be the three benchmark data meetings or the six week check-ins where we are reviewing progress monitoring, they should always walk away with an instructional plan, what they're going to teach, how they're going to intervene, and then how they're going to measure whether or not that's working. And that's through progress monitoring.

And how often with the frequency that they're going to look at that - will they be looking at the progress monitoring data weekly? Will it be twice a month or monthly? I worked one time with an instructional coach that said they were guilty of admiring the data. So now I say data meetings are not about admiring the data. They're about analyzing the data for one reason, and that's changing instruction to really leave those meetings with an instructional plan.

And you've got to have a clear agenda for that. If not, you can start talking it to death. And you can be identifying the problems, and you can be talking about the challenges, but a clear agenda with these guiding questions. Who's making progress? Why? Who's not making progress? Why? What are we going to do about it?

Then a step four, identifying the number of students not at benchmark, and also the percentage. One huge mistake I see is in a data team meeting, they'll say, well, 33% and move on. But you've got to drill down: Who? Who makes up that 33%? Who are the students? Let's look student by student. Let's look at that student across all the sub-skills and let's look at where their deficits are. And then when we've done that, that's then when we make instructional and intervention plans.

Anna Geiger: So in the book you talked about urgency, which you've talked a little bit about here. Can you emphasize a little bit more about what you mean by that?

Angie Hanlin: Sure. We don't have a minute to waste. And so I think that you can see urgency. You can feel urgency when you walk into a school.

Often when I'm training, I will do this little activity where I'll kind of show them If I'm at the table and I'm doing an intervention and "Hi everyone, how was your day?" And we're kind of strolling to the intervention room and we're talking, and then we get to the intervention room and students don't have a pencil and they go back to the classroom for a pencil or then we slowly take out the decodable book and slowly pass them out and, you know...

No, there's got to be a sense of urgency because every single minute matters. So are we intervening with a sense of urgency? Are we analyzing that data with a sense of urgency?

For example, what I mean by that. Right after that benchmark closes on that benchmark assessment window, we have that data meeting scheduled for the very next week. Interventions are set up immediately following those meetings.

We don't wait two weeks for the interventionists to start preparing, what are the interventions going to look at, and then take another week to determine who the groups are. We get that done in that data meeting so that those groups can start immediately following it, and then we set up progress monitoring for the very next week.

So then we have a sense of urgency. The goals help us have a sense of urgency because every student has a goal based upon where they are from the most recent benchmark. And then classes and grade levels and then as a building, we all have end of year goals and middle of year goals. And every single student, they have a goal for their very next week of progress monitoring. That helps us with a sense of urgency, constantly asking where are we? Where are we going? And how close are we to closing that gap?

I even want a sense of urgency when I'm speaking to students. I've got my posture straight. I am leaning over that table, and I've got my plan. My plan is clearly already predetermined, whether it's a small group table, inside the regular classroom, or if I'm the intervention teacher. And I've got those materials ready and it's bam, bam, bam, and here we go. Every minute matters. And I've got every minute planned.

That's what I mean by sense of urgency, that we are going to fix this, we're going to close those gaps. Time is of the essence and we've got to do it. And we've got to have, as Pati always does, a laser-like focus on the data.

Anna Geiger: And I think about, when people understand what a screener tells them, that, you know, if the child is not meeting benchmark, they are not on track to be an okay reader, unless we accelerate their progress through intervention to get them where they need to be. So knowing that, this assessment tells us, with high accuracy, basically the future for this child if we don't intervene now - that's very helpful to know that, oh yes, I know exactly what to work on.

Angie Hanlin: I think the thing that helps develop the sense of urgency by far the best is looking at the weekly progress monitoring scores. We did dot cards, and so in the book I write about that, and we dotted and we looked at, every single week, the students who were being progress monitored. Every child had a card.

Anna Geiger: Hello, Anna here. I just want to interrupt really quickly. Angie explained the dot card system, but it got jumbled up in our recording, so I just want to help you understand what that's all about. The idea is that you put a green dot on a child's card if they have nice growth from the last progress monitoring to the most current. A yellow dot indicates no growth since the last progress monitoring, and then red would be, we actually have the child going backwards and not making the necessary gains. So the color coding system gives a visual alert to the instructional leaders and teachers about whether or not what they're doing is working.

And you can learn more about the dot card system in the book, *It's Possible*, from pages 133-138.

Angie Hanlin: We looked weekly at the progress monitoring data, and we had weekly check-in meetings, and we were looking at that aim line, that trend line, on the progress monitoring data to see were those students above that line? If they were stagnant, what were we going to do about it? And we were talking every single week.

And so then I as the leader, to help with that sense of urgency, if we had a grade level not making progress, I was in those classrooms. If we had a specific intervention group that wasn't making progress, if they were stagnant, I was sitting in those intervention groups listening and giving feedback to the teacher and giving them their very next steps that they needed to do instruction to close those gaps.

Anna Geiger: Can you talk a little bit more about what it means for a staff to own their assessment data?

Angie Hanlin: Yes, yes. This is huge. Yes, I would love to. So, one aspect of owning the data is just to radically accept wherever you are.

When we started, we were at a 13% proficiency in literacy at elementary. It's not fun to own a 13%, but I told them we have to own that. And everywhere I've worked, whether it was as a principal or superintendent, or as a consultant, I say to everyone, we have to own wherever we are because we are not staying here.

You have to own it, and then we have to make a plan for how we're going to respond to that data. So you've got to own it because, like I said, you aren't staying there.

But ownership also happens when data is not something that's done to teachers or thrown at them. Or just simply done out of compliance, but it's something that is done with them. When the leader is invested in doing that work with them, and everyone has the exact same outcome, and that is to improve student outcomes and literacy.

When teachers really own their data, they can answer questions such as, how are my students performing? Why are they performing that way? What instructional practices did I do, or what am I doing in my classroom, that helped them get that result in the data, and then owning what am I going to do about it next?

We used to say, leave our egos at the door and just look at the numbers. Don't take it as personal, but look at it. And all of us owning everybody, these are all our students. So when we look at it, we come together as a team and say, okay, if these students aren't making progress, what are we as a team going to do about it? We don't say, oh, well it's that teacher's fault, or that intervention. No, all of us owning it. What are we going to do about it?

I always use those three questions that I learned through John Hattie's work. Where are we, where are we going, and how close are we to reaching our goal? Well, radically accepting the data is just the answer to the first question of where are we? Okay, this is where we are. We aren't staying here. This is where we are. Let's set that goal. Let's have a plan and start working towards that goal.

But I think too, that ownership comes from when we all look at it, that it's all of us and it's every single student that walks through the doors of our school. They are ours, and we are going to make sure we're going to own this work, own this data, not blame the student. We're going to take it. We're going to own it. Look at it as a response to our instruction, and then look at it, analyze it. What instructional changes do we need to make? Make it and steadily be asking ourselves, is it working? Is the work working? Is our help helping?

In *It's Possible*, we shared that once the teachers really understood the data, they were really having those conversations, the dialogue in the building, it changed, and then they stopped hoping students would improve. All blaming of students stopped. And we started really looking at what instructional practices had been implemented to get that change, what intervention had been done to get that change, and then what do we need to do as far as instruction and intervention.

Anna Geiger: And we're going to talk in just a minute, briefly, about some of those things that teachers can do. But before we do that, I just want to go back a little bit to the assessment meetings, the data meetings. Who should be in the data meeting?

Angie Hanlin: I think when you're going through the data, first of all, you bring in grade level teachers, but everyone that services that child.

And this is, I think, one of the common mistakes I see now as a consultant. The right people aren't in the room. You have to have regular teachers, regular classroom teachers there. You need the intervention teachers there. If the students have an IEP, you need the special education teachers in there. Then you need the school leader in there, and then anyone that is going to be making decisions about the instruction. So instructional coaches, those people need to be in that room because then this can't fall just on the back of one person. So we look at the data and then we look at what piece am I responsible for.

So if it is a Tier 3 student, as a classroom teacher, what will I be doing in Tier 1 to address the needs of this student? What will I be doing as far as Tier 2 small group instruction from me, the classroom teacher? And then what will the interventionist do in that? Often it's pullout Tier 3 intervention for that child. Then, let's say that child would also have an IEP, then what component of it, what can a special education teacher be doing?

I think a common mistake is not having all the voices that need to be at the meetings present. You've got to have the regular ed teachers sitting in there, and I feel strongly, strongly that you've got to have the building leaders in there, and too, those instructional coaches so that they know how to go provide the instructional support to the teachers to help close those gaps. So getting all the right people in the room is extremely powerful.

Anna Geiger: Can you just briefly talk about some of the specific things that teachers can do when students are scoring poorly on the universal screener?

Angie Hanlin: First, I would suggest doing, if you don't know where to start intervention, a diagnostic screener, to determine exactly where those interventions need to begin. But as far as activities for intervention, let's take phonemic awareness. If you have students that are low in phonemic awareness, then you would use brief, short, daily phonemic awareness routines for a few minutes. Then you would focus on blending, segmenting, manipulating the phonemes.

If students are low in phonics, or decoding, then you would provide explicit systematic instruction in that area. Use word reading, word building, decodable text practice. After we've taught that skill, then immediately go into decodable text on that pattern in phonics.

If students are low in accuracy, they need a decoding intervention. So reteach the phonics patterns that are driving their errors in accuracy, work on connected text practice, and then provide immediate corrective feedback.

If you've corrected the accuracy issue and you have students who are low in fluency, and by that now I'm talking about the rate, then we would use something such as repeated readings. We would model fluent readings such as an I Read, We Read Together, like I Do, We Do, You Do. I read it, read with me, now read to me, and I provide feedback.

Or we can do a practice that's called dyad reading. That's great to increase fluency. That's where two students read. I've got a higher reader paired with a lower reader. The higher reader is modeling what accurate fluent reading looks like with expression, and then the lower reader echo reads that paragraph. But repeated readings, not timed repeated readings, but repeated readings work well for fluency.

Then if students are low in vocabulary or language, explicit vocabulary instruction that's aligned to the content. Then they see those words in content after I've explicitly taught them with emotion and a student friendly definition - giving examples, non-examples, using it in a sentence, asking questions about it. Then I would find the word in content, and I would then use context clues. What are the context clues that prove that's the definition of the word? And then daily language-rich discussion opportunities for students.

So short, targeted, skill-specific interventions that match that screener in particular, often a diagnostic screener. Those are the types of key activities that teachers can do.

Anna Geiger: Thank you so much and, like I said, this is all spelled out in the book, so for teachers who want to get their hands on it, the book is called, *It's Possible* by Pati Montgomery and Angie Hanlin.

I thought we could finish off by something I hear you talk about a lot and that is, what does it mean to take the focus off of teaching and put it on learning?

Angie Hanlin: Okay. Thank you for asking because this is my absolute favorite shift in leadership is when we take the focus off of teaching and place it on learning, and it sounds foreign and it sounds odd because we're teaching. And I, at the core of who I am, regardless of roles, I still consider myself a teacher.

But we have to do this, Anna. We've got to shift. It's a mindset, it's a mind shift. We've got to take the focus off of teaching and put it on learning.

Here's how we do that. When the focus is on teaching, then often what you will hear teachers say is, "But I taught that, I covered it." So the question cannot be, "Did I teach it? Did I cover it? Did I cover the content?"

The focus, when it is on learning, then the question becomes, and this is the huge shift, "Did they learn it?" Because if you've taught only two months, two years, 22 years, you learn just because you taught it - you could have had an excellent lesson plan and done everything right - but just because you taught it does not mean they learned it.

But when the question becomes, "Did they learn it?", I look at it through a different lens because then I say, if they did not learn it, then what am I going to do to make sure they learned it? What am I going to do differently tomorrow in response to that? So just because we taught it does not mean the students learned it.

So having that learning focus shifting to taking it off of teaching and shifting it to learning, that requires a few things.

First, it requires a clear learning intention: what do I want the students to learn today? Clear success criteria: how will I know that they've learned it? So in every lesson we need to check at the end, check for comprehension, go through that success criteria. Did they learn it?

Every learning focused instructional lesson has modeling, think alouds, guided practice, and those checks for understanding. If we teach and we don't do a check for understanding, then we're stopping. We aren't taking the students all the way through to see if they learned it. So many times in classrooms I'll see a teacher, and they'll have a learning intention or learning target, or learning objective. They don't have success criteria with that. How will I know that you've learned it, but more importantly than how will I know that you've learned it - how will the student know that they've learned it?

Success criteria should be written in "I can" statements: I can, or we can. Then we teach and we can stop and we can say, can you, can we, can we do this? It makes the learning, not the teaching, the learning visible for the student. Then they can actually say, yes, I learned it. I'm not there yet. I'm not there at all, and I need more instruction from you, the teacher.

So when leaders really focus on learning and creating this shift in this building, they start looking for evidence. Evidence of student learning and student understanding.

I changed as a leader - first as a teacher doing this work, but then definitely as a leader - I changed my question when I went in classrooms and looked at students. Instead of, what are you doing - what are you learning? What are you learning right now? And then if the students couldn't tell me, then I knew there was a clarity problem. I needed to have more conversations with those teachers to make sure we had really made the shift to learning and not teaching just, "But I taught it." It's "Have they learned it?"

Because going to that level, that's what truly drives the next step of instruction. That's the transformation that we wrote about. That's the transformation that I'm so thankful that I've been blessed to live with our teams because students succeed when teachers move from coverage to mastery and from activities based on teaching to learning and from intention to impact. Did my instruction have an impact on student learning? If it did, great, what's my next lesson? And if not, what am I going to do in response to that? Because it's all about whether or not those students learned it.

Anna Geiger: Well, thank you. I feel like I just listened to a keynote. You gave you lots of great information.

Angie Hanlin: Thank you. I got a bit carried away. I'm sorry. I get extremely passionate about that.

Anna Geiger: That's wonderful. Wonderful. Really helpful for teachers and again, I recommend your book, but also how can people find you and learn more from you or get support from you?

Angie Hanlin: So I have a website: angelahanlin.com. Thank you for asking. And they can reach out to me on there.

I also have a free monthly newsletter called The Literacy Link that teachers can sign up for. Each issue, it's got pointers for teachers and also for leaders. There are resources. There was a month I put your book on there.

Anna Geiger: Oh, thank you! I'll have to get on your list.

Angie Hanlin: And some of your podcast episodes I've included on those as resources for people to listen to.

Also, you can follow me on social media. I am on X with @angiehanlin, and then I'm also, well, I have a Facebook, Angela Hanlin and Associates, and now I've just created a TikTok, and on that I'm going to be doing, I'm going to be doing snippets on there of little bitty short instructional tips for teachers. And then my email is on the website, but it is ahanlin@angelahanlin.com.

Anna Geiger: Wonderful. Well, thank you so much, Angie. It's just a pleasure talking with you and learning from you.

Angie Hanlin: Well, thank you Anna. Thank you for the work you do. It's an honor. I have gotten to know you on a better level because of our work through The Reading League of Wisconsin. Thank you for all you do to promote literacy. So thank you and thanks for the opportunity today. It's been a real privilege.

Anna Geiger: Thanks again.