Implementation and Assessment of Personalized Learning

District Leadership Forum

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1) Executive Overview

Key Observations

Administrators at profiled districts note that embedding personalized learning into district culture is a continuous process. Personalized learning efforts constantly evolve based on assessments of current practices and revisions to include teacher and student feedback. At **District C**, administrators began the implementation process in 2013 and continue to introduce new aspects of personalized learning and adjust classroom strategies to best suit their students' needs. Administrators at **District F** piloted personalized learning classroom strategies in an elementary school in 2009, and in 2012 began introducing personalized learning practices across the district. In 2016, district leaders pivoted their approach from district-wide implementation strategies to school-specific implementation. Contacts note that each school in the district has adopted personalized learning to varying degrees. Administrators continue to work toward full integration of personalized learning practices at all district schools.

Administrators at profiled districts create district-wide standard competencies that students should master through personalized learning strategies and curricula. In order to establish consistent, district-wide expectations for academic rigor and student learning during the initial implementation of personalized learning, administrators at **District B** and **District F** developed a standard set of competencies that students should master. Because personalized learning allows teaching strategies to be tailored for students' needs, district-wide, standard competencies ensure each student develops the same skills as other students around the district.

To create a culture of personalized learning, administrators at profiled districts organize professional development opportunities for all staff. These professional development sessions help teachers understand personalized learning conceptually and learn tactics to integrate personalized learning into their classrooms. District leaders also train school-level administrators on how to support teachers as they implement personalized learning. At **District C**, district leaders began professional development exercises for teachers and administrators two years before they began large-scale classroom implementation of personalized learning. This helped cement a culture of commitment to individualized learning before practices were introduced in the classroom.

Administrators at profiled districts evaluate personalized learning through observations, student data, and surveys. To evaluate student progress, administrators frequently create summative assessments that include student demonstrations of learning (e.g., student-designed projects) and observations of students in the classrooms. To evaluate teachers, administrators observe how teachers interact with students and ask students which personalized learning strategies their teachers employ regularly. To evaluate the district's culture of personalized learning, district administrators conduct surveys of the school community, including teachers, students, parents, and other local community members.

2) Value of Personalized Learning

21st Century Skills

Cultivate 21st Century Skills to Prepare Students for Today's Society

Today's society and labor market demand that students learn skills to handle a fast-paced business environment and to integrate technology with daily life in a globalized society. These essential skills necessary to succeed, often called "21st Century Skills[1]," prepare students for their journey through higher education, various careers, and civic participation. District administrators across the country have integrated a variety of 21st Century Skills into learning outcomes, competency standards, and curricula to better prepare students to be competitive in the labor market and to be productive members of society.

Personalized Learning Helps Students Master Valuable Skills

Contextualizing course materials to develop 21st Century Skills through project-based learning and technology-enabled classrooms is key to developing a personalized learning environment in classrooms and across districts. Leadership at profiled districts in this report have been acknowledged as leaders in personalized learning through their innovative classroom practices and district-wide approach to implementation. Administrators at profiled districts choose to use personalized learning frameworks because they provide an educational foundation focused on holistic child development and deep learning of skills and concepts.

While the definition of personalized learning varies across profiled districts, in many cases it includes competency-based education, project-based learning, individualized learning practices, and student-centric learning environments. By empowering students to forge their own path through their educational experience, administrators and teachers can help students develop critical skills to enable them to be successful in the classroom and beyond.

The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) is an organization forged from an alliance between education leaders, policymakers, and business executives that has created a comprehensive framework for understanding 21st Century Skills and how they integrate into curricula. P21 identifies the "Four Cs," information, media, and technology skills, and life and career skills as key components of their definition of 21st Century Skills (referred to as 21st Century Learning Outcomes).[2] P21 includes 21st Century Learning Outcomes in their Framework for 21st Century Learning, which closely aligns with personalized learning frameworks.

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1) Partnership for 21st Century Learning. 2007. "Framework for 21st Century Learning." Accessed November 16, 2018.
   http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework
2) Ibid.

Components of P21's Learning Outcomes and 21st Century Skills

Component	Included Skills
Four Cs	• Critical thinking • Communication • Collaboration • Creativity
Information, Media, and Technology Skills	• Media literacy • Information and communication technologies (ICT) literacy
Life and Career Skills	• Flexibility • Adaptability • Social skills • Cross-cultural skills

In-Demand Skills

Employers Seek Candidates Competent in the "Four Cs"

According to the American Management Association's (AMA) 2012 Critical Skills Survey, executives and managers around the country identified the Four Cs as key competencies of effective employees. As the pace of business changes in today's global society, employers around the country seek candidates proficient in applying the Four Cs to business concepts and issues.[3] Creating a learning environment where students can thrive and develop competencies in the Four Cs remains critical to helping students meet employer expectations.

Results from the AMA's 2012 Critical Skills Survey[4]

>50%
Of surveyed executives and managers believe their employees and prospective employees are not adequately competent in the Four Cs.

75%
Of those surveyed believe the Four Cs will become more important to business in the future.

Global Society Demands Technological Competencies

Today's global society enables students to connect with information, people, and resources faster than ever before. In order to be an active and informed citizen, students must be able to access information and evaluate its quality to participate fully in society.[5] One-to-one computing programs, the rise of educational software, and technological literacy programs help students learn how to be knowledgeable and discerning technology users, and many profiled districts use these programs to support students' development of 21st Century Skills in classrooms. The rise of technology in the classroom enables teachers and administrators to develop student-focused, personalized learning strategies and curricula that engage students in their learning processes.

3) American Management Association. 2012. "AMA 2012 Critical Skills Survey Executive Summary."
4) Ibid, pg. 1.
5) National Education Association. c. 2011. "Preparing 21st Century Students for a Global Society: An Educator's Guide to the Four Cs."

3) Implementation of Personalized Learning

Planning

Develop a District-Wide Implementation Strategy to Ensure Widespread Compliance with District's Personalized Learning Framework

Many administrators at profiled districts revised their personalized learning implementation strategies based on assessments of current practices and incorporation of teacher and student feedback. Contacts at many profiled districts noted that their initial district-wide implementation of personalized learning failed to resonate with teachers and students at the school level, and therefore administrators did not see widespread changes in student learning or classroom strategies. Over time, administrators adjusted their personalized learning framework to suit the needs of specific school communities, which improved compliance with the districts' personalized learning framework.

District leaders at **District F** piloted personalized learning classroom strategies in an elementary school in 2009 and in 2012, began introducing personalized learning practices across the district. Administrators' early efforts of implementing personalized learning across the district were not successful. At first, district leaders tried to simply replicate their pilot school's personalized learning strategies at other district schools. However, when administrators failed to see district-wide success of personalized learning, they realized that their approach did not account for the unique student and teacher needs at each school.

District leaders pivoted their approach in 2015 to provide the district with an overarching personalized learning framework and left the specific implementation strategies up to school-level administrators. This approach allows school administrators to develop a personalized learning plan that suits the needs of their specific school community and has helped the district make progress on full-scale implementation of personalized learning throughout the district.

Administrators at **District B** committed to implementing personalized learning across the district in 2012 but did not see widespread success initially. In 2017, district leaders worked with the Institute for Personalized Learning to adjust their approach to personalized learning. Facilitators from the Institute for Personalized Learning worked with administrators and teachers to articulate a model, develop a visual representation of the model, and establish clear messaging about the district's commitment to the initiative. Administrators at each school are now in the process of creating an implementation roadmap for how they will integrate personalized learning into classrooms and professional development opportunities based on the district's new model and messaging.

Use Early Supporters of Personalized Learning to Garner Support from Other Teachers

Administrators at profiled districts used the support of teachers committed to personalized learning to gain teacher buy-in during initial district-wide implementation. Administrators engage teachers who show initial interest in personalized learning and provide them with professional development to grow their expertise in related classroom strategies. These teachers, who support the district's initiative focused on personalized learning, can then share their knowledge with colleagues to promote the initiative and spark excitement in its potential. Cultivating

grassroots support through teacher champions can help garner widespread support from teachers across the district.

Identifying District-Wide Standards

Solicit Community Input to Create Standard, District-wide Competencies

During the initial implementation of district-wide personalized learning, administrators at **District B** and **District F** developed a standard set of competencies that students should master in order to establish district-wide expectations for academic rigor and student learning. Leaders at profiled districts solicited community input to create standard competencies that illustrate the districts' commitment to creating a school culture that best suits individual student's needs. Standard competencies provide an initial structure for teachers and school administrators to use when designing school-specific curricula and classroom strategies. Because personalized learning allows teaching strategies to be tailored for students' needs, district-wide standard competencies ensure each student develops the same skills as other students around the district.

As a part of personalized learning implementation at District B, administrators collected student, teacher, and community feedback to create grade-level competencies that each student must master to progress to the next grade. Leaders asked community members to identify skills and competencies necessary to succeed post-graduation in 21st century society. After collecting community feedback, administrators identified six core competencies that resonated with the community and district leadership as key components of student learning.

Each competency has four to five target statements to help teachers and administrators assess student progression, and the targets vary by grade level. These six competencies include content-specific learning outcomes to help students develop their skills holistically. District administrators continue to clarify and prioritize their learning outcomes and competencies to ensure clear articulation of standards across the district.

Example of a Core Competency and Associated Targets at *District B*

Competency: Innovative Thinker and Creator				
Overall Competency Statement	**Primary Elementary Targets**	**Intermediate Elementary Targets**	**Middle School Targets**	**High School Targets**
Students are innovative thinkers and creators who demonstrate intellectual curiosity by applying original solutions to problems or challenges and think and produce creatively in both collaborative and independent settings.	I am creative in showing what I know and have learned. I show my learning in different ways.	I show my creativity using different tools and resources. I have participated in problem-solving activities, science fairs, history days, etc.	I maintain a portfolio with evidence of my unique accomplishments as a learner. I am creative in my learning and seek unique solutions to problems.	I maintain a portfolio with evidence of my unique accomplishments as a learner. I have participated in challenging problem-based learning and have tangible evidence of my creative solutions.

Administrators at **District B** chose to use developmentally-appropriate "I" statements in their target statements as they help personalize each competency from the learner's perspective.

At District F, district administrators used the Alliance for Excellence in Education's Deeper Learning Competencies and the Four Cs to create a district-wide framework

and vision for personalized learning in 2015. District leaders then asked administrators at each school to work with their communities to create a school-specific culture of personalized learning, complete with personalized learning implementation and classroom strategies that suit the needs of their students and teachers. Contacts note that while some of their schools have completed this process, other schools around the district have just begun the process of developing a unique culture.

School administrators conduct one-on-one interviews with teachers, students, parents, and community members to identify their communities' vision for personalized learning at their school. School administrators then work with students and teachers to develop a unique school culture that implements personalized learning strategies aligned with the district-wide competencies and framework. By allowing school communities to develop their own implementation strategy for personalized learning, district administrators have supported large-scale personalization of students' learning experiences.

Three Examples of Schools that Align District Framework to School Culture at *District F*

One district school identified math and science as important tenets of education in their community, and school administrators chose to develop their middle school into a STEAM (i.e., science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) school.

Another school recognized a commitment to social justice in their school community, and administrators chose to align their personalized learning approach with community-based learning and social justice themes.

A third school identified environmental justice as a key area that school community members expressed interest in exploring through personalized learning strategies.

Additional Resources

Provide Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators to Promote a Shared Understanding of Personalized Learning

To create a shared understanding of the district's approach to personalized learning, administrators at profiled districts organize professional development opportunities for all levels of staff before, during, and after implementing personalized learning across the district. These professional development sessions help teachers understand personalized learning conceptually and learn tactics to integrate personalized learning into lesson plans and the classroom. District administrators also create professional development opportunities for school administrators that focus on helping teachers consider different ways that students can access information, how students can process and engage with content, and how students can demonstrate their learning.

At **District C**, contacts note that the implementation process should begin with educating teachers and administrators on the importance of personalized learning

through intensive professional development. District leaders offered professional development to teachers and administrators two years before the implementation of personalized learning in the classroom, which helped create a culture of commitment to individualized learning before introduction of classroom practices.

District leaders at **District B** created a four-day, intensive summer professional development opportunity for teachers and administrators initially interested in personalized learning. Administrators invited experts in personalized learning to present at professional development sessions. These experts helped teachers and administrators become familiar with the pedagogical concept of personalized learning and identify classroom strategies within the framework.

> ### Challenges of Personalized Learning May Lead to Increased Teacher Turnover
>
> During the initial implementation of personalized learning at **District F,** schools across the district experienced a lot of teacher turnover. Contacts note that teaching in a personalized learning framework can be more difficult than developing teacher-centric lesson plans that align nicely with the curriculum. In the new model, teachers must give students more freedom and choice in their learning. Teachers who prefer traditional classrooms often struggle to embrace personalized learning strategies in their classrooms. As more teachers become comfortable with personalized learning strategies and flexible classroom environments, administrators notice less turnover.

Hire Additional Instructional Staff to Encourage Classroom Implementation

Administrators at **District D** and **District F** hired instructional coaches to assist teachers with developing personalized learning strategies for their classrooms. Administrators wanted to ensure teachers across the district fully implemented personalized learning strategies in their classrooms and chose to hire coaches to help teachers gain confidence in their instructional strategies. Coaches work with teachers in the classroom and lead professional development opportunities focused on the districts' personalized learning framework.

Instructional Coaches at *District D*

While contacts note that it was risky to pull their high-performing teachers from classrooms, they believe their coaching model helps create even more high performing teachers and students.

Instructional Coaches	
Administrators offer coaches full-time, yearly contracts with the option to reapply at the end of the contract.	Teachers can apply to work with coaches for eight weeks at a time, and coaches are assigned based on areas of need.
Every coach hired is a former teacher within the district, and often high-performing teachers apply to be instructional coaches.	Coaches alleviate workloads of senior administrators, as coaches now work directly with teachers who need assistance instead of senior administrators.
Coaches focus on a few areas of expertise and work directly with teachers on classroom management and instructional strategies.	The coaching model serves as a professional development opportunity for coaches and creates a talent pipeline of emerging leaders for administrative positions.

Provide Flexible Seating and Classroom Arrangements to Accommodate Student Learning Needs

Administrators at **District A**, **District B**, and **District F** encourage teachers to develop learning environments that best suit their students' needs. Classrooms incorporate flexible seating arrangements, interactive instructional materials, and a variety of workspaces to suit student preferences. Flexible seating and classroom arrangements further personalize students' learning experiences by allowing students to choose the learning environment that suits their current needs.

At District F, administrators at one school completely redesigned the learning environment to provide more personalized learning experiences for their students. Administrators converted the gym into a large, collaborative learning space for over sixty students. Three teachers engage with students through one-on-one instruction, small groups, and large groups for direct instruction. The classroom has independent work spaces, collaborative tables, and comfortable seating to help all students learn in the way that best suits them. Other schools in the district have also removed walls between classrooms so students can flow between teachers and interact with different students.

4) Creating a Culture of Personalized Learning

Administrative Commitment

Make Decisions Informed by Personalized Learning to Demonstrate Leadership's Commitment

Administrators at profiled districts make a concerted effort to incorporate their personalized learning vision, competencies, and framework into administrative decision-making processes across the district. Administrators solicit teacher input when making decisions, incorporate personalized learning strategies into professional development, and create opportunities for students and administrators to collaborate to support student learning. By demonstrating their commitment to personalized learning in top administrative decisions and actions, district leaders build support for the initiative and cultivate trust among teachers and school administrators. These efforts contribute to a healthy, welcoming school culture that supports personalized learning holistically.

After developing a one-to-one technology program across the district, leaders at **District A** chose to re-purpose old computer lab spaces into communal spaces for teachers and students. At one school, administrators tasked a class with re-creating a computer lab space. Students developed proposals and presented their ideas to a space committee. The committee then chose a student proposal to reinvent the space as a coffee shop, and students created the design for the interior of the space. Administrators illustrated their commitment to personalized learning beyond the classroom by offering students and teachers the opportunity to engage collaboratively with administrators to re-purpose the computer lab space.

Encourage Teachers to Take Risks and Support Innovative Ideas to Provide Learning Opportunities

Administrators at **District A** and **District E** encourage their teachers to take risks in the classroom and try innovative learning strategies or classroom environments to support student learning. Administrators note the importance of supporting teachers as they take risks, even if teachers' strategies fail to resonate with students. Administrator support reassures teachers that the district supports innovation in the classroom and leads to a school culture of experimentation and risk-taking across administrators, teachers, and students.

Create a Document of District-Defined Personalized Learning Terms to Establish Common Definitions

Administrators and teachers at **District B** are in the process of creating a common language document to serve as a glossary of terms related to the district's personalized learning efforts. The document begins with a clear position statement of how personalized learning is implemented in the district. It then defines common classroom strategies and how they are implemented in the classroom. The document concludes with a list of personalized learning terms and how administrators define those terms in the context of their school community. By working together to create this document, administrators prove their commitment to full implementation of personalized learning across the district and embedding shared definitions of terms across the school community to ensure thorough understanding.

Provide Opportunities for Teachers to Observe Other Classrooms to Deepen Understanding of Personalized Learning Strategies

Administrators at **District A**, **District B**, **District E**, and **District F** arrange for teachers to observe personalized learning strategies in other classrooms within their districts and in nearby districts before and after implementing personalized learning. This allows teachers to better understand how to effectively foster a personalized learning environment in their own classrooms and how students interact in these environments. Observation exercises particularly help teachers unfamiliar with personalized learning, such as new teachers or tenured teachers more accustomed to teaching in an instructor-focused classroom. By attending observation experiences after district-wide implementation of personalized learning, teachers continue to learn new skills and strategies to maximize student learning.

At **District E** and **District F**, teachers from across the district and across grade levels observe classrooms in other schools and grades. For example, high school teachers will observe elementary classrooms and middle school teachers will observe high school classrooms. This helps teachers gain a better understanding of how personalized learning is implemented across the district and promotes cross-district knowledge sharing of challenges and successful classroom strategies.

> ### *District E* District Organizes Group Observations to Clarify Administrators' Expectations
>
> Administrators at **District E** organize monthly group observation sessions for five to six teachers. Teachers register for the sessions and must attend at least one per school year, though many teachers observe more than once. The small group of teachers and one district administrator observe another district classroom for almost two hours, studying how students interact with classroom strategies and each other. After each observation session, the district administrator publishes their notes from the observation session and the post-observation discussion with the teacher group for any teacher or administrator to review. This transparency between administrators and teachers clarifies administrators' expectations of personalized learning strategies in the classroom and provides helpful documents for teachers to reference when they consider which strategies to implement in their classrooms.

Administrators at **District D** created an optional professional development opportunity during their five-week, summer-school term that allows teachers to observe and practice personalized learning strategies in a classroom setting. Teachers can observe summer school courses to learn new instructional strategies and then implement their knowledge by teaching the course the next day. This allows teachers to learn and grow by practicing classroom strategies that they find challenging. This opportunity also serves as a leadership development program for teachers who lead the professional development sessions. The dual-purpose nature of this summer professional development opportunity further creates a district-wide culture dedicated to personalized learning as it illustrates teachers' and administrators' commitment to continuous growth and interactive learning opportunities.

Summer School Professional Development at *District D*

A+   **High-performing teachers** familiar with personalized learning practices instruct summer school terms**.**

Remedial classes for students take place in the mornings, and each day focuses on a **different instructional strategy**.

Summer school teachers offer **afternoon professional development sessions** on the instructional strategy of the day.

Teachers from around the district observe summer school teachers interacting with students in the classroom and teachers **learn how to implement** the classroom strategy in the afternoon.

Observing teachers can implement their newly learned classroom strategy with students the next morning and **receive feedback** from the instructing teacher.

Include Personalized Learning Practices in All Professional Development Opportunities

To create a district culture committed to personalized learning, administrators at profiled districts include personalized learning practices in all professional development opportunities to help teachers experience personalized learning strategies. By incorporating the same classroom strategies that district administrators expect teachers to use into all professional development opportunities, administrators illustrate their commitment to personalized learning across all levels of staff and develop a district culture that supports personalized learning strategies for all.

Administrators at **District B** and **District E** embody their commitment to personalized learning in all professional development experiences by avoiding large-group sessions and blanket programming. Administrators develop tools and trainings that provide a variety of ways to study about personalized learning strategies and benefits, so teachers can create their own learning experience in the same way teachers should allow students to create individualized experiences in their coursework.

District leaders at **District F** recently engaged their school administrators in a professional development exercise centered around problem-based, learner-focused experiences. Administrators invited teachers to a nearby cultural institution (e.g., museum) to determine if the location would be suitable for a student experience. This exercise helped administrators better understand how teachers assess personalized learning experiences for their students and how learners approach activities with personalized learning strategies.

Project-Based Professional Development at *District F*

Professional Development Agenda

9:00-9:30am	**Community Building Exercise**
	At the beginning of the day, district administrators randomly separate participants into small groups for a surprise activity and ask them to get to know one another with a community building exercise.
10:00-10:30am	**Travel to Cultural Institution**
	District administrators then send groups to different cultural institutions (e.g., art museum) across their local area to assess whether that cultural institution and their program offerings align with the districts' competencies and the schools' cultural focuses.
10:30-12:30pm	**Interview Staff and Patrons**
	Participants spend a few hours conducting interviews with institution staff and patrons visiting the institution to gain a better understanding of the institution and whether they align with personalized learning strategies.
12:30-1:30pm	**Lunch**
1:30-2:30pm	**Discuss Interview Findings with Group**
2:30-3:15pm	**Travel Back to Campus/Break**
3:15-5:00pm	**Discuss Exercise with Large Group**
	At the end of the day, groups come together to discuss their cultural institution and whether they will bring students to engage with the programming and exhibits as a personalized learning activity.
5:00pm	**Closing**

# 5) Assessment of Personalized Learning Practices

Student Progress

Recognize that Student Outcome Improvements Take Time

Administrators at profiled districts did not see widespread success of their personalized learning efforts until several years after implementation. Contacts note that student performance may actually decline during the initial implementation of personalized learning compared to earlier assessments under traditional classroom models. This could be attributed to the significant shift in instructional strategies. Students must learn how to be successful in a personalized learning environment and teachers must learn how to teach in such an environment. Administrators typically see student outcomes recover and eventually surpass historical rates of proficiency as students and teachers become more comfortable in personalized learning classrooms.

At **District E**, administrators began to see student scores on state-mandated standardized tests improve within two years of personalized learning implementation. Administrators have been able to sustain growth over the last seven years, and now over 89 percent of students score proficient or above on state assessments.

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Above on State Assessments at *District E*
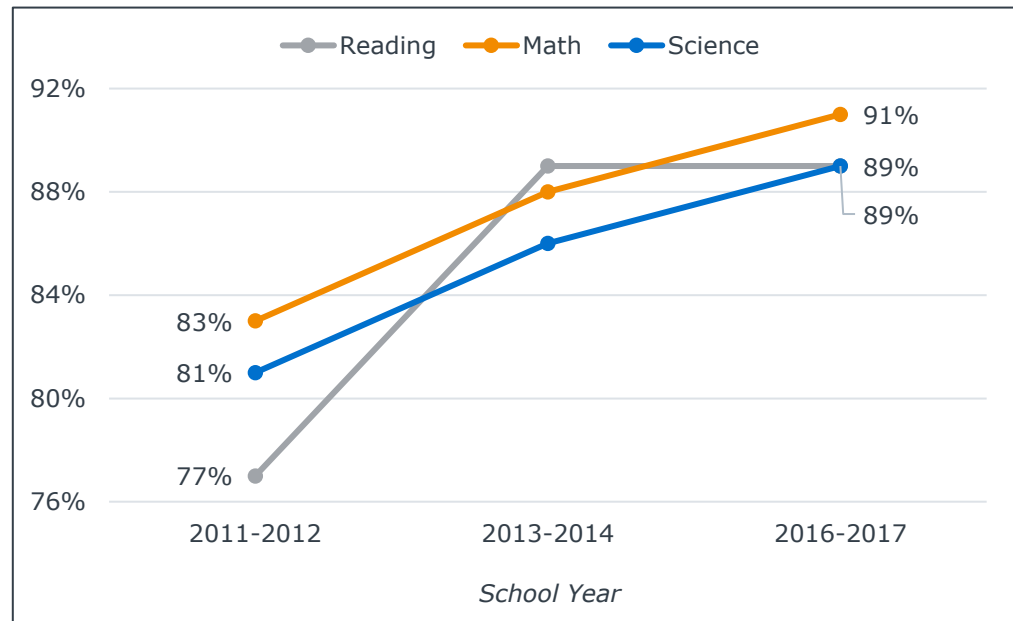
Consider Using Competency-Oriented Assessments to Gauge Student Progress

Contacts at profiled districts note that personalized learning practices lend themselves well to alternative methods of assessing student progress, such as standards-based grading and competency-focused rubrics. Personalized learning strategies support the development of 21st Century Skills by contextualizing learning for each student. Because personalized learning strategies focus on students' skill development, it can be very challenging for teachers and administrators to use traditional, grades-based rubrics or test-like assessments. Administrators at profiled districts create alternative assessment rubrics and assignments to better assess student learning and progress towards skill competencies.

Administrators at **District F** are currently exploring assessment strategies that better align with their personalized learning approach. Currently, administrators use standardized test scores and other test-based assessments to evaluate students and the district at large. Contacts note that these practices do not align well with their vision for personalized learning. Instead, district leaders would like to use more detailed rubrics that better observe specific student demonstrations of skill to assess student mastery of competencies holistically. Administrators envision assessment at the district as an ongoing feedback loop between students and teachers and creating a feedback loop will help teachers better assess their students' progress throughout the year.

Administrators and teachers at **District A** developed assessment rubrics for each grade level that include specific metrics to gauge student mastery of standard competencies, such as collaboration, agency, and oral communication. Teachers and administrators frequently discuss how to identify the metrics for each competency to create a common understanding of student mastery across the district.

In addition to district-wide, grade-level assessment rubrics, teachers at District A collaboratively create rubrics for project-based learning assessments that include standards like responsibility, teamwork, respecting others, and following instructions. Contacts note that it can be difficult to consistently measure student-designed projects, and these rubrics are important for maintaining a high standard for student work.

Using the community feedback collected while creating grade-level competencies, administrators at **District B** developed personalized student learning profiles for each grade. Students complete the profile and review them with teachers three times a year. These profiles help students articulate their specific learning styles to better understand themselves as learners and help teachers better understand how to create learning experiences that empower each student. Teachers use the student learning profile as part of assessing student progress towards district competencies and content-related learning outcomes. Contacts note that all middle school grades use these personalized student learning profiles, and district administrators are in the process of implementing similar profiles in elementary- and high-school grades.

Components of a Personalized Student Learning Profile at *District B*

☑ Short-answer questions on their interests, hobbies, formative experiences, and future goals.

☑ Preferences for learning environment, including lighting, seating, sounds, and working style (e.g., on their own or with others).

☑ Academic strengths and challenges.

☑ Self-Assessment Rubric.

Self-Assessment Rubric Allows Students to Reflect on Learning Experiences

- Rubric features seven, grade-level competencies with short descriptions of what it means for the student to master the competency.
- Students rate themselves on a scale of one to five, with one indicating that the sentence sounds "not like me" and a five indicating that the sentence sounds "a lot like me."
- Students complete this self-assessment rubric in the fall, winter, and spring, and teachers use the rubric to track students' perceptions of their progress.

District and Teacher Evaluation

Use Student Feedback and Classroom Evaluations to Assess Teachers' Personalized Learning Practices

Administrators at **District F** evaluate teachers' adherence to the district's personalized learning framework by going to each classroom and asking students about the strategies that teachers use during class time. Both district and school leaders evaluate each teacher by observing classrooms and students' interactions with projects and materials. Administrators believe that true personalized learning should be witnessed in each classroom differently depending on school culture and student preferences. By observing teachers and asking for student feedback, administrators can evaluate teacher effectiveness more fairly than if administrators relied solely on student performance.

Survey Students and Teachers to Evaluate District Commitment to Personalized Learning

Administrators at **District A** are in the process of re-developing their assessment framework to include school climate surveys for students and teachers to better understand if the district has created a culture of personalized learning across the district. In the past, administrators used typical student success indicators such as standardized test results and graduation rates to assess the district. Moving forward, administrators want to more thoroughly assess the quality of schools and programs within the district. District leaders have engaged a local college professor to help develop a new assessment framework.

Administrators at **District E** survey teachers and students twice a year to assess the district's vision and goals related to personalized learning. Questions on the survey focus on identifying personalized learning practices present in classrooms, describing how frequently student projects incorporate more than one standard and skill mastery area, and whether participants believe the district fulfills its values.

Administrators at *District F* Measure Success of Personalized Learning Based on Decreased Exclusionary Discipline

Administrators at **District F** monitor exclusionary discipline occurrences to determine if their personalized learning approach resonates with students. Contacts note that students who feel responsible for their educational journey and included in the school community (i.e., students who are engaged with their coursework through personalized learning practices) are less likely to be removed from the classroom, suspended, or expelled for behavioral disruptions. This connection enables administrators to use exclusionary discipline frequency as a proxy to measure the efficacy of personalized learning practices. Administrators use this disciplinary data to make school-level adjustments to professional development or classroom strategies to promote student engagement and reiterate their commitment to personalized learning.

Publicize Results of District, Teacher, and Student Assessments to Community Members

Administrators at **District E** publish a 13-page annual report focused on teaching and learning throughout the district. The report features an overview of the district's vision, recently launched learning initiatives, and developments in personalized learning. It also includes recent district performance on state-wide standardized tests. Administrators recently decided to move away from reporting annual student achievement data as evidence of district progress and instead want to report student activities, classroom strategies, and larger district initiatives. Administrators anticipate redesigning their annual report for the 2018 version.

Components of *District E's* Annual Report on Teaching and Learning

- ☑ District overview

- ☑ District mission and vision

- ☑ Overview of learning initiatives, including classroom strategies

- ☑ Overview of professional development and assessment practices

- ☑ Description of learning environment, including pictures of flexible classrooms

- ☑ Discussion of learning results, including results from state-mandated assessments and surveys of students and teachers

- ☑ Plans for improvements to teaching and learning

- ☑ Contact list for administrators in teaching and learning department

6) Research Methodology

Project Challenge

Leadership at the member district approached the Forum with the following questions:

- When did contact districts implement personalized learning?

  - What specific personalized learning tactics did contact districts implement?

- What resources did contact districts allocate to support personalized learning initiatives?

- What strategies did contact districts use to embed personalized learning into the culture and daily practices of administrators and teachers?

  - What organizational structures did administrators use at contact districts?

  - What support systems existed for students? For teachers? For administrators?

- What physical classroom or school environments were necessary for success at contact districts?

- What was the timeline for contact districts to fully integrate personalized learning into their curriculum and school culture?

- Do contact districts consider their implementation of personalized learning a success?

  - What challenges did contact districts face during the implementation of personalized learning?

  - What recommendations or advice do contact districts suggest to districts looking to successfully integrate personalized learning into their district culture?

- What strategies do contact districts use to measure student outcomes?

- How have the student learning outcomes changed since implementing personalized learning?

- How long did it take for contact districts to see measurable impacts on student academic growth due to personalized learning?

- Do contact districts survey their staff, teachers, and/or students to gauge perceptions of growth?

- How do contact districts communicate their achievements to teachers, students, parents, and the wider community?

- What challenges did contact districts face when assessing personalized learning?

Project Sources

The Forum consulted the following sources for this report:

- EAB's internal and online research libraries (eab.com)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (http://nces.ed.gov/)
- Partnership for 21st Century Learning. 2007. "Framework for 21st Century Learning." Accessed November 16, 2018. http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework
- American Management Association. 2012. "AMA 2012 Critical Skills Survey Executive Summary."
- National Education Association. c. 2011. "Preparing 21st Century Students for a Global Society: An Educator's Guide to the Four Cs."

Research Parameters

The Forum interviewed district-level administrators with knowledge of curriculum and personalized learning at public school districts.

A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief

District	State	Approximate Enrollment
District A	Pennsylvania	1,600
District B	Minnesota	2,700
District C	California	18,400
District D	California	24,000
District E	Iowa	600
District F	Wisconsin	9,800