

Personalized Learning Plans (PLP)

Process Manual

The *Personalized Learning Plan Process Manual* offers guidelines, strategies, resources and tools to assist district administrators, school leaders, and educators working to implement the Personalized Learning Planning (PLP) process. This manual is intended to clarify statutory expectations, establish a standard for PLPs to allow for coherence across the state, and provide tools and resources to enable educators to work with students, parents/guardians, and the community to create a process and a product that reflects the distinct context of each school and the unique qualities of each student.

This manual is a compilation of previously published guidance on the Agency website as well as lessons learned since the introduction of Act 77.



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This Manual seeks to provide guidelines, strategies and tools for schools to develop high-quality, personalized learning planning processes to support every secondary student in Vermont.

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The What and Why

Act 77 and the Personalized Learning Planning Process

The Flexible Pathways Initiative, formerly and most commonly known as Act 77, was passed by the Legislature in 2013. The goals of [16 V.S.A. § 941](#), are the following:

1. to encourage and support the creativity of school districts as they develop and expand high-quality educational experiences;
2. to promote opportunities for Vermont students to achieve college and career readiness through high-quality educational experiences that acknowledge individual goals, learning styles, and abilities; and
3. to increase the rates of secondary school completion and postsecondary continuation in Vermont.

To accomplish these goals, Act 77 requires that every publicly-funded Vermont student in grades 7-12 participate in the personalized learning planning process. This process should accomplish the following:

1. identify the student's emerging abilities, aptitudes, and dispositions;
2. include the participation of families and other engaged/trusted adults;
3. guide decisions regarding course offerings and other high-quality experiences; and
4. document the personalized learning planning process over time (i.e., create and maintain a student PLP).

Act 77 also articulated that students must be able to pursue flexible pathways to graduation that inspire postsecondary continuation and be provided with career development and planning resources beginning in the 7th grade. See the Vermont Agency of Education's [Flexible Pathways web page](#) for more information.

What is Personalized Learning?

Personalized learning, proficiency-based education, and Multi-tiered System of Supports are all addressed in Vermont State Board of Education Rules Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards, 16 V.S.A. §165. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that all students in Vermont public schools are afforded educational opportunities that are substantially equal in quality and that enable them to achieve or exceed the standards approved by the State Board of Education. These rules are designed to ensure continuous improvement in student performance, instruction and leadership to enable students to attain rigorous standards in high-quality programs. In order to accomplish the purpose of State Board Rules, the AOE uses five essential attributes to personalized learning environments to support Vermont’s initiatives. Below are two definitions that best reflect how we define personalization or personalized learning in Vermont:

Personalization is “a learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway toward their own purposes, work cooperatively with others in challenging tasks, maintain a record of explorations, and demonstrate their learning against clear standards in a wide variety of media, all with the close support of adult mentors and guides.” (National Association of Secondary School Principals)

Personalized learning is systems and approaches that deepen student learning by incorporating each student’s interests, strengths and needs – including student voice and choice in what, how, when and where they learn – to achieve the goals of active engagement, academic success, and preparation for post-secondary opportunities. Personalized learning and personalized instructional approaches are critical to students in kindergarten through grade 6 as well as grades 7-12.

There are five essential attributes of personalized learning environments:

1. Personal Relationships
2. Flexibility (Flexible Pathways)
3. Learner Profiles (Personal Learning Plans)
4. Proficiency-Based Progression (PBGRs)
5. Student Agency

For a full description of the Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning please refer to the Vermont Agency of Education’s [Personalized Learning web page](#).

NOTE: A draft self-assessment for the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments has been developed as a tool for school systems to use on their journey toward fully implementing personalized learning. The full rubric can be found in the Appendix section of this guide. You will also find relevant sections of the rubric inserted at various points throughout this manual.

What is a PLP?

A Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) can be envisioned as a student’s road map (minimally beginning in grade 7) as they progress through their educational experience, informing choices through those years and beyond. PLPs not only help articulate and clarify students’ goals and needs but also are a reflection of the importance of student agency in learning as they work to meet graduation proficiencies.

A PLP is a plan created by a student, with the support of parents/guardians, teachers/mentors and peers, that defines the scope and rigor of academic and experiential opportunities that will lead to secondary school completion, postsecondary readiness, and civic engagement. Creating Personalized Learning Plans provides students the opportunity to reflect upon their learning and shape their future, and enables the adults in their lives to better understand each student as a unique individual. The planning and refining process should be ongoing and iterative, with formal updates to the PLP occurring at least annually, to ensure the student’s emerging abilities, aspirations, dispositions and interests inform the student’s path toward proficiency.

The actual documentation of the PLP—in whatever form it takes—is only as good as the process that supports the development and use of the document. Fundamental to the successful implementation of PLPs is a meaningful process much more so than a product, even though a clear and thoughtful product is key to ultimate success.

What is the Purpose of a PLP?

“The plan shall be developmentally appropriate and shall reflect the student’s emerging abilities, aptitude, and disposition. The plan shall define the scope and rigor of academic and experiential opportunities necessary for a secondary student to complete secondary school successfully, attain postsecondary readiness, and be prepared to engage actively in civic life.” 16 V.S.A. §942 (10)

Research suggests that students will be more motivated to learn and be more successful at learning if they have ownership, or [student agency](#), over their education and can inform what they learn, how they learn it, and how they show evidence of their learning. PLPs are a way for students to learn more about themselves – their personal and academic goals, their strengths and growth areas, their habits of mind and work – and to actively participate in designing an educational path to achieve their goals. PLPs allow students to discuss and share this learning with educators, family members and peers, receive input and guidance as they progress down their educational path, and develop self-reflection strategies – critical to future learning and success. PLPs can also serve to document learning milestones in a manner different than that of formal assessments.

The PLP should clearly be seen as a “living” document that can change as students’ needs and ideas change. The honesty and commitment to this process demonstrated by students, and the care and diligent use of the PLP by teachers and advisors, will determine the ultimate value of the Personalized Learning Planning process.

What are the Critical Elements of a PLP?

The choice of formats for Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) is a local school decision that should consider – with student and staff input – local needs, structures, and capacity. However, in order to establish some consistency across the state as schools develop their own unique formats and planning processes, and to ensure that they meet the mandate and purpose of PLPs described in Act 77, schools serving secondary students should include this list of critical elements when developing PLPs.

Schools may choose to include elements not listed here that align to their own specific school and community values. Additional guidance on the personalized learning planning process can be found for students and adults in the companion documents [Student Guide: How to Develop Your PLP](#) and [Personalized Learning Planning Process: Framework for Adults](#).

This document has organized recommended critical elements that align with the student and adult PLP companion documents. This organization does **not** suggest a recommended template, format or design to the actual PLP.

Plan Information

- Student name and student ID
- Name of school
- Date of initial plan development
- Dates of each update and/or ensuing meetings
- Participants in each development meeting listed [*e.g., student, family member or advocate, advisor/mentor, core teacher(s), etc.*]

Student Profile

- Student strengths, abilities and skills [*such as relationships, positive characteristics, leadership, communication, etc.*]
- Student core values [*e.g., What do you stand for? What is important to you? Why? Who inspires and influences you? Why? What do you value?*]
- Baseline Assessments results [*including academic, career and interest assessments/inventories to use as a basis for measuring student growth*]

Student Goals

- Secondary school goals [*These goals should be both long and short term; include the school's common learning expectations and the student's proposed pathway to meeting those expectations; and integrate the student's personal core values and interests.*]
- Post-secondary goals [*These should identify what students want to do after graduation from high school as well as what they need to do to prepare for those after-graduation goals. These goals could include attending a two or four-year college, enlisting in the military, enrolling in certificate-granting training programs, or employment.*]

Note: If you are developing PLPs with students prior to 7th grade you could include primary as well as secondary and post-secondary goals.

Action Steps

- Student goals action steps [*Action steps should include what students will do both immediately and over time, the overall timeline, and evidence that will demonstrate progress. Action steps should clearly indicate the relationship between short-term and long-term goals (e.g., maintaining a certain academic performance level will allow me to meet specific higher-education institutions eligibility requirements).*]
- Post-secondary goals action steps [*Action steps should include what students will do both immediately and over time, the overall timeline, and evidence that will demonstrate progress.*]

Achievement of Action Steps

- Progress toward meeting student goals
- Progress toward meeting common learning expectations and goals (as a means to measure student growth, achievement of action steps, and goal attainment).
- Assessments could include:
 - baseline assessment results,
 - evidence of student learning,
 - benchmark assessments, performance assessment, self-assessment, peer assessment, formative assessments

Reflection

- Student Self-evaluations [This evaluation process should include questions and generate thinking that can inform the revision process (e.g., Why and how did I complete my action steps and/or meet my goals? What were obstacles or barriers to completing my action steps or meeting my goals?)]
- Parent/Guardian Reflection [This is an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and an external reflection for the student to consider when entering the revision process.]
- Teacher/Advisor(s) Reflection [This is an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and an external reflection for the student to consider when entering the revision process.]

Revision

- Documentation of the revision process [Because the personal learning planning process is cyclical and ongoing, it is important for students to be able to reflect on their growth and revise based on their learning.]
 - Edits, amendments, improvements, alterations, etc.
 - Correspondence of revisions with reflections, etc.
- Once revisions are finalized the following would be included in the goals and action steps:
 - Updated short term and long-term goals
 - Updated Action Steps
 - Transition Plan *(if applicable)

Transition*

Transition Plans are critical to coherence for students as they undergo major changes and transitions in their lives. Some transition plans may be part of a school's or supervisory union/district's existing PLP process (e.g., from middle school to high school), whereas other transition plans may need to reflect new processes or forms (e.g., transition from high school to college/career, etc.). For students with disabilities or unique considerations, additional resources are available and can be found on the AOE Special Education team page.

What Role do Different Stakeholders Play in Personalized Learning?

Personalized learning changes the roles of students, families, teachers, school and district leaders, and the institutions that support them like state governments and teacher preparation programs. Implementing personalized learning in schools across Vermont requires long-term planning, sustained focus, and behavior change on the part of all stakeholders. The following are some of the changes necessary for personalized learning to thrive.

Students

In personalized learning, students take on a more active role in designing, monitoring, and ensuring success of their learning experience. In this environment, engaged students are responsible for the following:

- Actively participate in identifying their strengths, needs, and interests that will lead them toward a successful life and career.
- Actively co-design their personalized learning plans.
- Take greater ownership over monitoring their progression through learning activities, identifying when to ask for help, and knowing when they are ready to demonstrate proficiency.
- Make informed choices about what type of learning experience they want to engage in to practice a skill or demonstrate proficiency.
- Communicate with teachers about their PLP, as it reflects their learning, and how to strengthen it as a roadmap to graduation and beyond.
- Build long-term self-regulation skills to keep themselves on track for learning because of their increased autonomy.

Related Resources:

[Up for Learning](#)

[Tarrant Institute for Innovative Education](#)

[Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice](#)

[Spectrum of Student Voice](#)

[Maximizing Student Agency: Implementation of Student-Centered Learning Approaches](#)

[Student Agency Resource Bundle](#)

[Beyond Standardized Test Scores: Engagement, Mindsets, and Agency](#)

[Speak Out, Listen Up! Tools for Using Student Perspectives and Local Data for School Improvement](#)

NOTE: The Critical Element 5: Student Agency self-assessment focuses on the essential attribute “Student Agency,” and can be used as a point of discussion for school and community members and as a broad guide for setting goals around personalized learning. The full self-assessment for the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning can be found in the Appendix section of this guide.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment
<p>Critical Element 5: Student Agency All students are held to clear, high expectations, and students take ownership over their own learning. With the help of their teachers, they are involved in designing their own learning process and should be given a choice in how they demonstrate their learning, including through performance-based assessments.</p>
<p>Initiating Our teachers report frustration that their students are disengaged from their learning or, when given opportunities to drive their own learning, appear to lack the understanding of how to do so. Students report feeling a lack of choice in their learning options, or that the choices that are presented to them aren’t engaging. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are teacher led, designed, and sometimes lack connection to real world experiences, and learning expectations can vary from class to class.</p>
<p>Developing We inform our students of choices and pathways but understand that they need to learn to make good choices and follow through on their decisions. We explicitly support student growth in those areas and scaffold independence and ownership with them. The student body is beginning to reflect pockets of engagement, either in certain classes, extracurricular activities, flexible pathways, or leadership roles. Within classrooms, student input and choice is sometimes given toward curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions. Learning expectations have begun to be standardized across classes.</p>
<p>Performing Our students can almost always explain ways in which they have made decisions about their learning and report that adults inside and outside the school have supported their pursuit of interests and passions that demonstrate their learning. Teachers can point to high-quality, rigorous outcomes students have reached through their experiences.</p>

Families and Other Engaged Adults

In a personalized learning model, parents/guardians have an enhanced role and involvement in a student's experience. Parents/guardians know their children as individuals with unique needs, interests, goals, strengths and challenges, and for these reasons are integral to the personalized learning planning process. Families/guardians see their children through a different lens in this type of environment and can be involved in the following ways:

- Understand the purpose of the PLP process, and how it can best support a student's learning over time – including after graduation.
- Help to identify students' needs, goals, and interests in the development of a student's personalized learning plan.
- Access the school's resources and support to monitor their students' progress and PLP in-person and/or virtually.

Related Resources:

[School Community Engagement Entry Points Planning](#)

[Family Engagement Strategies](#)

[Planning For Engagement: Entry Points](#)

[PTA Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit](#)

[7 Ways to Communicate with Parents](#)

[Strategies for Engaging Immigrant and Refugee Families](#)

[Partner's Education in A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships](#)

[Student Agency & Engagement: How can schools motivate and empower young people to take responsibility for their own learning?](#)

[Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement](#)

[VSBA Essential Work Tool Kit: Engage the Community and Adopt a Vision](#)

[How Can Families and Communities Support Personalized Learning?](#)

[Engaging the Community](#)

NOTE: This section of the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments self-assessment focuses on the essential attribute "Learner Profiles," and can be used as a point of discussion for parents/guardians and school and community members, and as a broad guide for setting goals around personalized learning.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment
<p>Critical Element 3: Learner Profiles</p> <p>Each student has current documentation of their individual strengths, needs, motivations, and goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PLPs reflect a collaborative planning process by which student pathways to graduation are identified• PLPs reflect progress toward proficiency-based graduation requirements and are meaningful artifacts to and for the student. PLPs adapt, change, and progress along with students; reflect a student's authentic learning; and can act as an exhibition of student growth.
<p>Initiating</p> <p>We make our students fill out a personal learning plan, but students resist doing the work because they think it's a "waste of time" or don't see how it impacts their learning. Teachers feel that the PLP is an additional job requirement that they have to force students to complete rather than a meaningful guide to personalized learning opportunities. The PLP tends to create frustration for staff and students as a result.</p>

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Developing

PLPs are collaboratively created for all students at least annually; parents are given clear information about the opportunity to engage in this process. Many students use them to make some decisions about how they will move through school and plan for post-secondary opportunities. Some students are engaged in customizing their PLPs in interesting ways, and report that their work reflects who they are. Goals on PLPs may or may not be aligned to PBGRs. Teachers have access to PLPs and use them to build relationships with students. Some parents regularly engage with their student's PLP, but some do not.

Performing

Our students engage in creating their PLPs because they see an impact on their education and learning. The PLPs are personal and engaging, and many students use them for purposes outside of school, like college or job applications. Teachers feel equipped to guide students to use their PLPs to explore pathways, and master proficiencies.

Teachers

Vermont State Board of Education Rules Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards, 16 V.S.A. §165 states that “Instructional practices shall promote personalization for each student and enable each student to successfully engage in the curriculum and meet the graduation requirements. Classroom instruction shall include a range of research-based instructional practices that most effectively improve student learning, as identified by national and Vermont guidance and locally collected and analyzed student data.” Teachers recognize that a one-size-fits-all instructional model is inequitable and not aligned with the educational needs and rights of individual students. Today, teachers have a greater capacity to leverage technology and innovative instructional models to tailor learning to each students’ needs. In this type of environment, successful teachers:

- Understand that developing meaningful relationships with students is essential to understanding each students’ interests, needs, and goals, and is required to design a personalized learning environment that is both rigorous and responsive to students’ changing needs.
- Spend more time facilitating relevant learning that responds to student needs, instead of delivering all content themselves.
- Use formative assessments regularly to track student progress over time, provide frequent and timely feedback, and to design instruction to best meet the needs of the student.
- Curate high-quality, culturally-relevant learning resources to develop curriculum pathways for students based on learning level, need, and interest.
- Access types of professional development that supports them in the development of new skills to implement personalized learning. Guide students in developing meaningful, relevant, and authentic projects and assessments
- Promote the concept of PLPs as a cross-disciplinary tool that integrate with current instructional practices and align to performance indicators

Related Resources:

[Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching](#)

[The Shifting Paradigm of Teaching: Personalized Learning According to Teachers](#)

[Meeting Students Where They Are](#)

[Teaching Works High Leverage Practices](#)

[Vermont AOE Multi-tiered Systems of Supports web page](#)

[Universal Design for Learning \(CAST\)](#)

[Improving Students' Relationships with Teachers to Provide Essential Supports for Learning](#)

NOTE: The section of the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments self-assessment focuses on the essential attribute “Personal Relationships,” and can be used as a point of discussion for school and community members and as a broad guide for setting goals around personalized learning.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 1: Personal Relationships

Truly personalized education is predicated on, and fosters, positive student-staff relationships. In a personalized learning environment, students and staff have mutual respect, every student feels connected to at least one trusted adult, educators know their students' interests, goals, and academic levels, and students experience higher levels of achievement.

Initiating

We value personal relationships with students at our school, but those relationships form organically instead of intentionally, and some students have no trusting relationships with adults in our school. We have advisories and/or homerooms, but don't use them to build relationships or learn more about students' interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses as much as to deal with school logistics like announcements. There is mutual respect between individual students and teachers, but not between students and staff as a whole.

Developing

Time is intentionally scheduled in the school day to build relationships with students (advisory, interest groupings, academies, etc.). Many of our teachers use techniques, procedures, and protocols to build community and learn about their students' interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses during that time. Many other teachers don't feel as though they are equipped or trained to use the time for that purpose. We have made attempts to build a bank of ideas or even a curriculum to support those teachers. The student experience is varied depending on the adult in the room. Many students have a trusting relationship with an adult at the school, but many do not. We are working toward building a school wide atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and students

Performing

Time is built into the school calendar for teachers to regularly connect with groups of students. Our teachers are trained to facilitate student interactions and community building and report that they know many students well. Adults in our school identify and seek out students who don't seem to have connections with others. All students can identify an adult they trust and report that they feel the adults in the school know their interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses.

School and District Leaders

School and district leaders implementing personalized learning models must create the culture, climate, and structure where it is possible for teachers to personalize learning in their classrooms and for students to take advantage of flexible pathways. Plans for implementing these models should be included in the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), as required in 16 V.S.A. §165 and shall be designed to improve the performance of all students enrolled in the district. This is hard, slow work, and requires leaders to think strategically about their evolving roles in facilitating this type of learning. In this type of environment, school and district leaders should:

- Create policy and provide resources to support this work.
- Communicate with families and the community around the need to personalize learning, and the process the school or district is undergoing to implement this model.
- Foster and understand the connections between positive school climate and student achievement.
- Foster a culture that supports personalized learning, including supporting iteration and teacher development.
- Ensure that appropriate technology tools, technical infrastructure, and ongoing routines are in place to reduce the burden on teachers as they personalize learning. This includes vetting and selecting personalized learning systems, devices, and other technology, and ensuring access to high quality content and assessments. For more information, please see the Vermont AOE [Education Technology](#) web page.
- Provide the onboarding supports teachers need to implement new systems
- Ensure appropriate professional learning opportunities that align to educator competencies exist for their teachers and provide opportunities for informal collaboration to share best practices across teachers and buildings.
- Design new staffing models as needed to support a flexible learning environment.
- Align operational choices to their local personalized learning planning process, including modifying school schedule, physical layout, and data procedures.
- Effectively leverage fiscal resources (Consolidated Federal Programs and other funding sources) to address student and professional needs.

Related Resources:

[District Conditions for Scale: A Practical Guide to Scaling Personalized Learning](#)
[Ready to Lead: A National Principal Survey on How Social and Emotional Learning Can Prepare Children and Transform Schools](#)
[Expanding and Strengthening Best-Practice Supports for Students Who Struggle](#)
[School Climate and Social and Emotional Learning: The Integration of Two Approaches](#)
[VT AOE Education Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework](#)
[VT AOE Consolidated Federal Programs](#)
[NESSC League of Innovative Schools](#)

NOTE: This section of the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments self-assessment focuses on the essential attribute “Flexibility,” and can be used as a point of discussion for school and community members and as a broad guide for setting goals around personalized learning.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 2: Flexibility

Students have the opportunity to experience learning through any combination of high-quality academic and experiential components leading to secondary school completion and postsecondary readiness. For example, in Vermont students can participate in:

- Dual Enrollment and Early College
- Blended/Virtual Learning
- Work-Based Learning
- High School Completion Program
- Expanded Learning Opportunities
- Career Technical Education

Initiating

Our school has some pathways for students like Career Technical Education and Early College or online course work. Our focus tends to be on students who have not succeeded in traditional classrooms or students who ask for additional challenges like college course work, but the breadth and availability of flexible pathways is not made clear to all students. We are perhaps struggling to figure out how to involve the community in our pathways to a greater degree, and the connections between pathways and our proficiency system is not always clear.

Developing

In addition to CTE, Early College, and online coursework, we are beginning to create programs around Work Based Learning and Expanded Learning Opportunities. We have also focused on providing greater student choice and experiential learning within and outside of classrooms to help more students succeed. These options tend to be teacher-driven and designed, but we encourage students to take advantage of them, and students report that they know how to access pathways that interest them. Our school schedule continues to be traditional with courses aligned to proficiencies, but we are starting to have conversations about how we can make it more flexible.

Performing

We have created a variety of pathways for students, integrated choice and personalization for all students in classrooms, and created a process for students to design and for educators to validate their own learning or plan their own path to graduation. We train our students to take advantage of those opportunities and help them develop the skills to be successful in independent and self-designed learning. Students can explain how their learning meets required proficiencies.

Educator Preparation Institutions

Teachers' evolving role in a personalized learning model demands new training and support. Teacher preparation institutions should be at the forefront of providing pre-service teachers with experiences to prepare them for success in personalized learning environments. Educator preparation institutions should:

- Identify field placements for student teachers at schools and districts where they can immerse in a personalized learning environment and practice instructional strategies that support student-centered learning.
- Identify new competencies that teachers need to support personalized learning, and update curricula to align with these competencies.
- Provide exposure for pre-service teachers to the technology tools and systems used to personalize learning.
- Model personalized learning experiences for teachers by designing experiences for pre-service and in-service teachers that incorporate choice and individual needs.
- Provide pre-service teachers with training related to equity and diversity issues, including trauma-informed practice.

Related Resources:

[Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner Centered Teaching](#)

[Building Educator Capacity to Personalize Learning for Every Student](#)

[What Do Teachers Need to Know and Be Able to Do to Succeed in Personalized, Competency-Based Learning Environments?](#)

Education Organizations and Community Partners

To support the implementation of personalized learning in schools, education organizations and community partners can contribute in the following ways:

- Highlight examples and case studies of the different models to share best practices and demonstrate multiple models in action.
- Foster the connections within a state-level ecosystem of nonprofit organizations, teacher preparation institutions, and schools and districts.
- Develop a free, shared library of open education resources, including culturally relevant content.
- Curate high-quality, culturally relevant learning resources to develop curriculum pathways for students, personalized by student level, need, and interest.
- Engage in conversations about personalized learning and PLP implementation
- Serve as mentors and thought partners with schools and students

Related Resources:

Vermont Open at [OER Commons](#)

[VT AOE Personalized Learning in Practice](#)

[Vermont AOE Case Study Learning Project](#)

[VT AOE Consolidated Federal Programs](#)

[VT AOE Professional Learning Network](#)

The above section was excerpted and adapted from [A White Paper Creating a Shared Understanding of Personalized Learning for Rhode Island](#)

Considerations for Digital Personalized Learning Plans

The Vermont PLP Working Group highly recommends use of electronic platforms to coordinate Personalized Learning Plans. Many of these are commercially available; in other cases, schools have created local electronic versions. Wherever these come from, schools should ensure that their electronic PLPs meet your local needs. In addition, schools should attend to the following considerations that pertain specifically to electronic PLPs:

- Students, parents, and teacher/advisors should have easy access to the PLP using easily accessible on-line tools. Downloading of additional software should be kept to a minimum.
- Individual and sensitive data should be secure and protected. Schools should ensure that all FERPA requirements are followed with PLP materials and information on individual students.
- Schools should ensure that PLP information is backed-up on a daily basis.
- Schools should ensure that if using a commercial program, student PLPs can be downloaded in cases where contractual obligations are discontinued.
- Schools should ensure that other software frequently used by students is compatible with the requirements of the electronic PLP system
- As much as possible, electronic PLP systems should interface with other databases in the school. For example, if the PLP system and the Student Information System interface smoothly, many of the above-mentioned components can be automatically filled in the PLP.
- A system that has the ability to upload locally determined proficiencies and assessment scales.
- An online system, capable of 24/7/365 uptime to allow for full time interaction with the system. In this case, the solution should be fully cloud-based, capable of being accessed from anywhere, at any time and backed up in a redundant fashion to ensure adequate retention of data for the duration of a student's school career and in many cases, beyond.
- A system that can import objects in a wide variety of mediums and formats; video, audio, .pdf, etc. etc.
- A secure online environment, ensuring that private or personally identifiable information (PII) is kept as safe and secure as possible.
- An ability to easily view learner growth by both educators and students.
- A system that is accessible and portable.

Guides for Adults and Students



Family and Adult Guide to the Personalized Learning Planning Process

Overview

Creating Personalized Learning Plans provides students the opportunity to reflect upon their learning and shape their future and enables the adults in their lives to better understand each student as a unique individual. However, the actual documentation of the PLP—in any selected format—is only as good as the process that supports its development. This framework outlines a process much more so than a product, even though a clear and thoughtful product is key to ultimate success. The PLP should be seen as a “living” document that can adapt as students develop over time and as their needs and ideas change. The honesty and commitment to this process by students and stakeholders, and the integration of the PLP into the learning environment by teachers and advisors, will determine the ultimate value of the Personalized Learning Plan process.

Create a Student Profile

The first step in developing a Personalized Learning Plan is for each student to build a profile. Each school should develop a process that includes engaging ways for students to think about themselves as individuals. Such questions could include the following:

- Who am I? What defines me as a person and member of my community?
- What are my values? What do I value?
- What and/or who inspires or influences me?
- How do I learn? How do I learn best to meet my learning goals?
- What are my skills and interests? What do I like to do and what do I do well?
- What is my future? What do I want to do with my life after high school?
- Where do I see myself in the short term (6 months–2 years) as well as the long term (5 – 10 years)?
- What challenges or barriers will I need to overcome?

Schools may choose to give students the opportunity to complete a series of activities or experiences that will help them learn more about how to use their strengths and interests when considering their future. Schools may choose to use one or more of the following tools so students can develop a profile of themselves as a learner and individual: a learning style inventory, a Myers -Briggs Inventory, career assessments, or interest surveys. These questions, activities and tools should help students build a list of strengths and challenges that will help in the development of short- and long-term goals for students’ Personalized Learning Plans.

Identify Goals

Considering their interests, values, strengths and skills, each student will then identify personal and college and career goals. A goal is most helpful to students if it is something that is important to them (e.g., of personal interest or a graduation requirement), specific, achievable, and measurable. Questions that might help students develop their goals include:

- What are my strengths and abilities?
- What are the common learning expectations of my school?
- What do I want to accomplish? What are my short-term and long-term goals? (e.g., what do I want to accomplish this year? In school? After I graduate?)
- Does this goal challenge me? How does it challenge me?

- Am I willing and able to work toward this goal? Am I committed to it?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?
- What is my timeframe for accomplishing this goal?

Identifying these goals should occur with the support of a teacher, advisor or counselor and the student's family. The level of support provided should be developmentally appropriate to match the degree of autonomy and responsibility a student can demonstrate. Once students have set their goals they can devise a plan to attain them.

Draft Action Steps

The Personalized Learning Plan is a guide to help students meet their short-term and long-term goals toward graduation and post-secondary success. It is important that they are engaged in the process and take primary responsibility for monitoring their progress toward meeting those goals.

Considering the student's goals and the common learning expectations set forth by your school, students will want to map out their personal learning plan identifying how they will meet both sets of expectations.

A few questions for students to consider in this step include:

- Where do I have choice in course selection?
- How might various activities help me meet both my goals and common learning expectations at the same time?
- Have I considered flexible pathways –such as expanded learning opportunities, work-based learning, Dual Enrollment, Early College, Career Technical Education, etc. – to meet my personal and learning goals?
- How might experiences outside of my school help me meet common learning expectations and/or my goals?
- Does this plan describe steps/activities that will help me meet my short and long-term goals?
- How will I know if I have been successful at following my plan?
- When will I have the opportunity to adjust my plan if things change?
- Who or what might I need support from to develop my plan or meet my goals?

Once students have developed a Personalized Learning Plan, it will be important they revisit this plan regularly to be sure they are on track, and as necessary, make adjustments as plans or interests change. Act 77 requires districts to provide opportunities for secondary students to pursue flexible pathways to graduation, and specifies that any flexible pathway opportunities a student participates in must be documented in their PLP. It is of critical importance that students are aware of the flexible pathway opportunities available to them when they are considering how they might meet their learning goals. Some flexible pathways may require certain aptitudes, specific coursework or demonstration of readiness to participate. By introducing students to these educational opportunities early in the PLP development process (e.g., 7th grade or earlier) they can identify what they might need to know and/or do to access a flexible pathway and incorporate those action steps into their plan.

Work Toward Goals

Once students have developed their Personalized Learning Plan, students can begin working to achieve their goals. Students and vested adults should review their plans regularly to evaluate progress towards their goals. Communication between students and their advisors, teachers and parents/guardians will be crucial to meeting and, when necessary, revising their goals.

You may want to share the following tips for success with students:

- Your plan is a road map to successfully meeting your goals. Be sure to follow your plan and take the action steps necessary to complete your goals! This might include adapting or changing them. Pay attention to deadlines and make sure you are meeting them.
- In the event of challenges or barriers to your success, be sure to talk with your parents/guardians, teachers or school advisor to access resources that may help resolve them, allowing you to continue moving forward.

Assess Progress

As students review their goals on a regular basis, adults may need to support them to figure out which goals to extend, revise, or remove as well as which goals they have successfully met.

This step requires students to review their progress and provide evidence of their accomplishments. It is important that a PLP is a “living document” that students are frequently reflecting on and adding evidence to.

There are any number of ways that students can assess progress. Student self-evaluations or 360 evaluations with family members, school staff, peers and/or members of the community (such as employers); student discussions; video or digital journals or blogs; performance assessments; and many other tools and strategies can be integrated into this process.

Questions students might consider when assessing progress include:

- Which goals have I met?
- How do I know that I am making progress toward my goal or have accomplished my goal? Why or how did I accomplish this goal?
- Did I need support in accomplishing my goal?
- What strengths am I currently using and/or building?
- What recent achievements have I made?
- Where in my learning plan am I feeling challenged?
- How do I know that I am challenged?
- What kinds of information do I need to show that I have made progress?
- How will I display or share this information with others?

Reflect on Experiences

The nature of goals, short-term or long-term, is that they require assessment and reflection at various points along the way. The process of setting, assessing, and reflecting on goals is a continuous cycle. Reflection helps students consider their role in the learning process and guides them in the next steps of their personalized learning planning process.

Students should have an opportunity to review their progress and reflect on the overall experience, both as a formative and summative process. Teachers, advisors, or counselors may help them in this process through one-to-one conferences or small group discussions, by providing prompts or through interviewing techniques, or by developing reflective exercises/activities. A student's family or peers can also support their reflection and provide feedback, which may help the student in the revision of their Personalized Learning Plan.

It is important that students reflect and gain feedback at least once a year in a formal way. Schools may also create opportunities where students stop and reflect on the experience and their progress at any time throughout the year – with or without the support of their team. Integration into their daily experience, both in and outside of the classroom, can engender a sense of ownership over their own learning. Reflections can come in various forms and may include a journal entry, a dialogue, a presentation, a video, or a format that the student and school staff find suitable.

Questions students may want to consider as they prepare their reflections include:

- What did I learn from the assessment portion of the personalized learning planning process?
- What have I learned about myself thus far?
- What went well? How do I know?
- What do I wish had gone differently?
- What did I have control over?
- What do I better understand about my own learning and goal-setting?
- How was I able to make gains in learning? How can I apply these strategies to areas where I might need more work?
- Was there any unexpected learning? What was it?
- How does what I have learned connect to my future short-term and long-term goals?
- How could I use this experience to revise and/or make new goals for my plan?

The reflective process and the feedback students receive will help them in revising their Personalized Learning Plan to be sure it reflects who they are and what they want to achieve.

Revise

In this step of the cycle, students are expected to revise their plan based on the reflective process and changes in goals, interests, and circumstances. Reasons for goal revisions should be documented in the plan.

The revision process occurs between the student, their advisor, teacher or counselor, and a parent or guardian. This process must happen annually, although it can be helpful for students to review their plan with greater frequency – such as each marking period or after participating in a flexible pathway and/or completing major projects or units of study. Schools should establish a process where students can make changes in their plans outside of the official revision period.

At least annually, the revision process should be a joint effort between everyone who was originally involved in, or identified as a support or resource for, the development of the PLP. Changes in the plan should include documentation as to why they must be made and should outline changes in actions steps to achieve changed goals.

Questions for students to consider during the revision process include:

- In looking at my reflection, what has encouraged me to change or enhance my goal(s)?
- What level of effort did I make to meet my previous goals and actions?
- Were my goals realistic given my schedule, my interests, and/or my motivation and effort?
- How are my new goals more in line with my future plans?
- Do I need support or input from others in order to meet my new goals? How can I enlist others' support?
- How do my new short-term and long-term goals relate to each other?

Student Guide: How to Develop Your PLP

Overview

Developing your Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) provides you the opportunity to reflect upon your learning and shape your future and enables the adults in your life to better understand you and support your learning and goals. While the PLP can be seen as a written plan that you have developed, you should think of this as a “living” document that can adapt as your needs and ideas change. Your honesty and commitment to this process will determine how meaningful this plan is to you, and how successful you are at meeting your goals. Throughout your life, both in school and on the job, you will be asked to set goals, make connections, and reflect on who you are as a person and your school or work performance. Often you may be asked to submit portfolios, artifacts or exemplars of your work, or potential employers or clients may request access to your digital profiles (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, personal websites, etc.). It is our goal that this PLP process will provide you with a foundation for future planning in college and/or your career, and that your PLP may be a starting point for developing your future professional profile.

Create a Student Profile

The first step in developing a Personalized Learning Plan will be for you to build a profile. Your school will identify a process to help you with this.

When starting the development process, you might be asked to answer questions such as:

- Who am I? What defines me as a person and member of my community?
- What are my values? What do I value?
- What influences/inspires me? Who influences/inspires me? Why?
- How do I learn? How do I learn best to meet my learning goals?
- What are my skills and interests? What do I like to do and what do I do well?
- What does my future look like? What do I see myself doing? What do I want to do with my life after highschool?
- Where do I see myself in the short term (6 months – 2 years) as well as the long term (5 – 10 years)?
- What challenges or barriers will I need to overcome?

You might also be asked to complete a series of activities and tools that will help you learn more about what your strengths and interests might be, and how to use your strengths and interests to consider your future. Your school may choose to use one or more of the following tools in this process: a learning styles inventory; a Myers-Briggs Inventory; and career assessments or interest surveys.

These questions, activities and tools will help you build a list of strengths and challenges that will help you develop short- and long-term goals for your Personalized Learning Plan. It will be helpful to revisit your profile frequently and update as needed.

Identify Goals

Considering your interests, values, strengths and skills, you will now work through a process to identify personal and college and career goals. A goal is most helpful if it is something that is important to you, specific, achievable and measurable (i.e., you will know and can show you have met the goal). Questions that might help you form your goals include:

- What are my strengths and abilities?
- What are the common learning expectations of my school?
- What do I want to accomplish? What are my short-term and long-term goals? (e.g., What do I want to accomplish this year? In school? After I graduate?)
- Does this goal challenge me? How does it challenge me?
- Am I willing and able to work toward this goal? Am I committed to it?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?
- What is my timeframe for accomplishing this goal?

Writing these goals should occur with the support of a teacher, advisor or counselor and your family. Once you have set your goals you are ready to write a plan that will help you reach your goals.

Draft Action Steps

The Personalized Learning Plan is a guide to help you meet your goals, both short-term and long-term. It is important that you are engaged from start to completion and take primary responsibility of monitoring your goals and progress.

Considering your goals and the common learning expectations set forth by your school, you will want to map out your personal learning plan. From there, you will want to identify choices you have in courses and learning experiences – including flexible pathways such as work-based learning experiences, Early College, or Career Technical Education – that will help you meet the school's requirements and your goals.

A few questions to consider in this step include:

- Where do I have choice in course selection?
- How might various activities help me meet both my goals and common learning expectations at the same time?
- Have I considered flexible pathways – such as expanded learning opportunities, work-based learning, Dual Enrollment, Early College, Career Technical Education, etc. – to meet my personal and learning goals?
- How might experiences outside of my school help me meet common learning expectations and/or my goals?
- Does this plan describe steps/activities that will help me meet my short and long-term goals?
- How will I know if I have been successful at following my plan?
- When will I have the opportunity to adjust my plan if things change?
- Who or what might I need support from to develop my plan or meet my goals?

- Once your plan is developed, it will be important for you to revisit this plan regularly to be sure that you are on track and adjust if/when your goals or interests change.

Work Toward Goals

Once your Personalized Learning Plan is developed, the real work begins. It is now time for you to begin working on your plan for achieving your goals. Remember to review your plan regularly and utilize the supports you identified as important to your success.

Communication will be important if you are to achieve success in meeting your goals. The people who helped you develop this plan will be a great resource to you as you move forward.

Tips for success:

- Your plan is a road map to successfully meeting your goals. Be sure to follow your plan and take the action steps necessary to complete your goals! This might include adapting or changing them. Pay attention to deadlines and make sure you are meeting them.
- In the event of challenges or barriers to your success, be sure to talk with your parents, teachers or school advisor to access resources that may help resolve them, allowing you to continue moving forward.

Assess Progress

You have identified your goals, mapped out your plan, and are working through your action steps. Now you need to check on your progress. As you review your goals on a regular basis, you will figure out which goals to extend, revise, or remove and which goals you have successfully met.

This step requires you to review your progress and provide evidence of your accomplishments. It might be helpful to assess your plan in small parts, rather than as a whole. As you consider your accomplishments, you will want to provide evidence that supports your claim. You may also discover that you haven't met some of your goals, and that the steps to meeting those goals, or the goals themselves, may need to be revised. Reflecting on why you did or did not meet your goals will be as important as revising or developing new goals.

This step can be done through a self-evaluation; discussions with your family, school staff, and peers; and possibly with the support of members of your community.

Questions you might consider when assessing progress include:

- Which goals have I met?
- How do I know that I am making progress toward my goal or have accomplished my goal? Why or how did I accomplish this goal?
- Did I need support in accomplishing my goal?
- What strengths am I currently using and/or building?
- What recent achievements have I made?

- Where in my learning plan am I feeling challenged?
- How do I know that I am challenged?
- What kinds of information do I need to show that I have made progress?
- How will I display or share this information with others?

Continue this process with each area of your PLP. Upon conclusion, you will have a snapshot of your accomplishments and an idea of what to do next.

Reflect on Experiences

The nature of goals – short-term or long-term – requires assessment and reflection at various points along the way. The process of setting, assessing, and reflecting on goals exists in a continuous cycle. Reflection helps you consider your role in the learning process and guides you in the next steps of your Personalized Learning Plan.

You will have an opportunity to review your progress and reflect on the overall experience. Your teacher, advisor, or counselor may help you in this process. Your family or peers can support your reflection and provide feedback, which may help you in the annual revision of your Personalized Learning Plan.

Reflection and feedback are important components of the learning process. It is important that you reflect and gain feedback on your PLP at least once a year in a formal way. Informally, you may stop and reflect on your progress and the experience at any time throughout the year – with or without the support of your team. Reflections can come in various forms and may include a journal entry, a dialogue, a presentation, a video, or a format that you and your school staff find suitable.

Questions you may want to consider as you prepare your reflection include:

- What did I learn from the assessment portion of the personalized learning planning process?
- What have I learned about myself thus far?
- What went well? How do I know?
- What do I wish had gone differently?
- What did I have control over?
- What do I better understand about my own learning and goal setting?
- How was I able to make gains in learning? How can I apply these strategies to areas where I might need more work?
- Was there any unexpected learning? What was it?
- How does what I have learned connect to my future short-term and long-term goals?
- How could I use this experience to revise and/or make new goals for my plan?

The reflective process and the feedback you receive will help you in revising your Personalized Learning Plan to be sure it reflects who you are and what you want to achieve.

Revise

In this step of the cycle, you are expected to revise your plan based on the reflective process and changes in goals, interests, and circumstances. Reasons for goal revisions should be documented in the plan.

The revision process occurs between you, your advisor or teacher or counselor, and a parent or guardian. This process must happen annually, although it could be helpful to you to review your plan each marking period. If you know that you want to make changes in your plan before the official revision period, please request a meeting with your teacher, advisor, or counselor.

When you meet, everyone should review the reflections and feedback. Together, you will then revisit your goals and plan. If you choose to make changes, you should document the reason for those changes and adjust the action steps that will be taken to meet any new goals.

Questions to consider during the revision process include:

- In looking at my reflection, what has encouraged me to change or enhance my goal(s)?
- What level of effort did I make to meet my previous goals and actions?
- Were my goals realistic given my schedule, my interests, and/or my motivation and effort?
- How are my new goals more in line with my future plans?
- Do I need support or input from others in order to meet my new goals? How can I enlist others' support?
- How do my new short-term and long-term goals relate to each other?

Appendix and Resources

Laws and Policies:

[Act 77](#)

[Crosswalk of Personalized Learning Plans, Educational Support Team Plans, Individualized Education Program, and Section 504 Plans](#)

Great Schools Partnership [High Leverage Policy Framework](#)

[Vermont Education Quality Standards](#)

Vermont School Boards Association [Model Policy Manual](#)

Organizations:

[NESSC League of Innovative Schools](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Consolidated Federal Programs](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Personalized Learning in Practice](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Professional Learning Network](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Proficiency-Based Learning](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements](#)

[Vermont Agency of Education Transferable Skills](#)

[Up for Learning](#)

[Vermont AOE Multi-tiered Systems of Supports](#)

[Tarrant Institute for Innovative Education](#)

Tools:

Vermont Open at [OER Commons](#) (link)

[Personalization Glossary of Terms](#)

[Great Schools Partnership Proficiency-Based Learning](#)

[Strengthening and Streamlining Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems](#)

[Building Support for Student-Centered Learning: A Toolkit](#)

[Shaping Our Future Together](#)

[Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement](#)

[VSBA Essential Work Tool Kit: Engage the Community and Adopt a Vision](#)

[Student Agency Resource Bundle](#)

[Speak Out, Listen Up! Tools for Using Student Perspectives and Local Data for School Improvement](#)

Articles and Papers:

[“Meeting Students Where They Are”](#)

[A White Paper Creating a Shared Understanding of Personalized Learning for Rhode Island Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching](#)

[Partnership for Change: Remodeling Public Education in Burlington and Winooski, Vermont](#)

[Beyond Standardized Test Scores: Engagement, Mindsets, and Agency](#)

[17 Ways to Communicate with Parents](#)

[Building Educator Capacity to Personalize Learning for Every Student](#)

[District Conditions for Scale: A Practical Guide to Scaling Personalized Learning](#)

[Improving Students' Relationships with Teachers to Provide Essential Supports for Learning](#)

[Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice](#)

[Spectrum of Student Voice](#)

[Student Agency & Engagement: How do You Empower Young People to Contribute to Their Own Learning?](#)

[Teaching Works High Leverage Practices](#)

[The Shifting Paradigm of Teaching: Personalized Learning According to Teachers](#)

[What Do Teachers Need to Know and Be Able to Do to Succeed in Personalized, Competency-Based Learning Environments?](#)

[How Can Families and Communities Support Personalized Learning?](#)

[Engaging the Community](#)

A draft self-assessment for the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments was developed as a tool for school systems to use on their journey toward fully implementing personalized learning.

Self-Assessment for the Five Essential Attributes of Personalized Learning Environments

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment
<p>Critical Element 1: Personal Relationships</p> <p>Truly personalized education is predicated on, and fosters, positive student-staff relationships. In a personalized learning environment, students and staff have mutual respect, every student feels connected to at least one trusted adult, educators know their students' interests, goals, and academic levels, and students experience higher levels of achievement.</p>
<p>Initiating</p> <p>We value personal relationships with students at our school, but those relationships form organically instead of intentionally, and some students have no trusting relationships with adults in our school. We have advisories and/or homerooms, but don't use them to build relationships or learn more about students' interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses as much as to deal with school logistics like announcements. There is mutual respect between individual students and teachers, but not between students and staff as a whole.</p>
<p>Developing</p> <p>Time is intentionally scheduled in the school day to build relationships with students (advisory, interest groupings, academies, etc.). Many of our teachers use techniques, procedures, and protocols to build community and learn about their students' interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses during that time. Many other teachers don't feel as though they are equipped or trained to use the time for that purpose. We have made attempts to build a bank of ideas or even a curriculum to support those teachers. The student experience is varied depending on the adult in the room. Many students have a trusting relationship with an adult at the school, but many do not. We are working toward building a school wide atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and students.</p>
<p>Performing</p> <p>Time is built into the school calendar for teachers to regularly connect with groups of students. Our teachers are trained to facilitate student interactions and community building and report that they know many students well. Adults in our school identify and seek out students who don't seem to have connections with others. All students can identify an adult they trust and report that they feel the adults in the school know their interests, goals, and academic strengths and weaknesses.</p>

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 2: Flexibility

Students have the opportunity to experience learning through any combination of high-quality academic and experiential components leading to secondary school completion and postsecondary readiness. For example, in Vermont students can participate in:

- Dual Enrollment and Early College
- Blended/Virtual Learning
- Work-Based Learning
- High School Completion Program
- Expanded Learning Opportunities
- Career Technical Education

Initiating

Our school has some pathways for students like Career Technical Education and Early College or online course work. Our focus tends to be on students who have not succeeded in traditional classrooms or students who ask for additional challenges like college course work, but the breadth and availability of flexible pathways is not made clear to all students. We are perhaps struggling to figure out how to involve the community in our pathways to a greater degree, and the connections between pathways and our proficiency system is not always clear.

Developing

In addition to CTE, Early College, and online coursework, we are beginning to create programs around Work Based Learning and Expanded Learning Opportunities. We have also focused on providing greater student choice and experiential learning within and outside of classrooms to help more students succeed. These options tend to be teacher-driven and designed, but we encourage students to take advantage of them, and students report that they know how to access pathways that interest them. Our school schedule continues to be traditional with courses aligned to proficiencies, but we are starting to have conversations about how we can make it more flexible.

Performing

We have created a variety of pathways for students, integrated choice and personalization for all students in classrooms, and created a process for students to design and for educators to validate their own learning or plan their own path to graduation. We train our students to take advantage of those opportunities and help them develop the skills to be successful in independent and self-designed learning. Students can explain how their learning meets required proficiencies.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 3: Learner Profiles

Each student has current documentation of their individual strengths, needs, motivations, and goals.

- PLPs reflect a collaborative planning process by which student pathways to graduation are identified
- PLPs reflect progress toward proficiency-based graduation requirements and are meaningful artifacts to and for the student. PLPs adapt, change, and progress along with students; reflect a student's authentic learning; and can act as an exhibition of student growth.

Initiating

We make our students fill out a personal learning plan, but students resist doing the work because they think it's a "waste of time" or don't see how it impacts their learning. Teachers feel that the PLP is an additional job requirement that they have to force students to complete rather than a meaningful guide to personalized learning opportunities. The PLP tends to create frustration for staff and students as a result.

Developing

PLPs are collaboratively created for all students at least annually; parents are given clear information about the opportunity to engage in this process. Many students use them to make some decisions about how they will move through school and plan for post-secondary opportunities. Some students are engaged in customizing their PLPs in interesting ways, and report that their work reflects who they are. Goals on PLPs may or may not be aligned to PBGRs. Teachers have access to PLPs and use them to build relationships with students. Some parents regularly engage with their student’s PLP, but some do not.

Performing

Our students engage in creating their PLPs because they see an impact on their education and learning. The PLPs are personal and engaging, and many students use them for purposes outside of school, like college or job applications. Teachers feel equipped to guide students to use their PLPs to explore pathways, and master proficiencies.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 4: Proficiency-Based Progression

Instruction is aligned to proficiencies based on transferable skills and standards adopted by the state of Vermont. Each student’s progress toward clearly-defined goals is continually assessed. A student advances as they demonstrate proficiency. Students and parents have access to clear, transferable learning objectives and assessment results so they understand what is expected. Each school shall ensure that a tiered system of academic and behavior supports is in place to assist all students in working toward attainment of these goals.

Initiating

We have identified proficiencies and aligned them to individual courses. Instruction and assessment practices have remained the same, and students and parents tend to be unaware what proficiency students are working on in a class at a given time. Leadership, general, and special education teachers are beginning to work in an intentional, ongoing collaboration throughout the SU/SD to implement the five components of a multi-tiered system of supports designed to meet all students’ academic and behavior needs.

Developing

Our teachers have identified content proficiencies and aligned them with content area assessments. Teachers have created task neutral scoring guides for proficiencies. Students who pursue pathways are expected to use the scoring guides to demonstrate required proficiency. While we have worked on including and implementing transferable skills in our work, our teachers have tended to focus more on their content areas at this point. Leadership, general, and special education teachers work in an intentional, ongoing collaboration throughout the SU/SD to initially implement the five components of a multi-tiered system of supports designed to meet all students’ academic and behavior needs.

Performing

Our proficiency system supports personalization. We have designed our work on transferable skills and content proficiencies to integrate skills and content knowledge. Students and teachers can explain what proficiency they are working towards at any given time, and parents understand and support how student progress is reported. Our grading and reporting practices are linked to student proficiency. Teachers report that their instruction, assessment, and feedback is more focused on skill development than it used to be. Leadership, general, and special education teachers work in an intentional, ongoing collaboration throughout the SU/SD to fully implement the five components of a multi-tiered system of supports designed to meet all students’ academic and behavior needs.

Essential Elements for Personalized Learning Self-Assessment

Critical Element 5: Student Agency

All students are held to clear, high expectations, and students take ownership over their own learning. With the help of their teachers, they are involved in designing their own learning process and should be given a choice in how they demonstrate their learning, including through performance-based assessments.

Initiating

Our teachers report frustration that their students are disengaged from their learning or, when given opportunities to drive their own learning, appear to lack the understanding of how to do so. Students report feeling a lack of choice in their learning options, or that the choices that are presented to them are not engaging. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are teacher led, designed, and sometimes lack connection to real world experiences, and learning expectations can vary from class to class.

Developing

We inform our students of choices and pathways, but understand that they need to learn to make good choices and follow through on their decisions. We explicitly support student growth in those areas and scaffold independence and ownership with them. The student body is beginning to reflect pockets of engagement, in certain either classes, extracurricular activities, flexible pathways, or leadership roles. Within classrooms, student input and choice is sometimes given toward curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions. Learning expectations have begun to be standardized across classes.

Performing

Our students can almost always explain ways in which they have made decisions about their learning and report that adults inside and outside the school have supported their pursuit of interests and passions that demonstrate their learning. Teachers can point to high quality, rigorous outcomes students have reached through their experiences.