



Personalized Learning in the Davis School District

Davis School District's (DSD) definition of PERSONALIZED LEARNING: *Learners are at the center of their own instructional experience. Student achievement of academic standards is our purpose, and learning paths are tailored to meet the unique strengths, interests, needs and goals of each learner.*

Overview: We believe in providing each student with a personalized learning experience that allows them to be college, career, and life ready. To achieve this, we are committed to providing rigorous content, authentic learning experiences, competency and mastery based progression, high quality technology integration with access to one-to-one resource, opportunities that promote student voice and choice, and flexibility of pace and place.

Why “personalize” learning?

1. Personalized learning empowers all learners to become active global citizens of high character.
2. Providing learners with choice and voice is motivational, teaches responsibility, and will positively influence the learner's social and emotional health.
3. Certified achievement of high academic standards will give the learner greater access to competitive opportunities and personal fulfillment.
4. All students develop the skills, abilities, and knowledge that will prepare them for college, career, and life.

How do we personalize learning?

1. All adults in the school community work to prioritize trusting and caring relationships.
2. Learners have choice and voice in selecting their own learning resources, co-design their learning experiences, and have flexibility in how they demonstrate their proficiency and mastery.
3. Students can progress at their own pace and advance when they demonstrate proficiency or mastery of key content and skills, regardless of the time spent in class or where instruction takes place.
4. Through targeted, timely, and differentiated support, students in need of intervention are as equally supported as those prepared to advance more quickly.
5. Teachers and students are equipped with technology and data to enhance learning and assess student progress; and create flexible learning environments.
6. Learners have 24/7 access to instructional content, feedback relating to their demonstrated level of proficiency/mastery, and the opportunity to move forward and backwards in their course.
7. When equitably implemented with a commitment to continuous improvement, these approaches can support each student to reach high levels of student learning.

DSD Personalized Learning Common Language

Currently, there are many proposed models for personalized learning and proposed vocabulary associated those models. It is important for the Davis School District to establish clear definitions for our use so that these terms can be used consistently and efficiently within our community of professionals and practitioners.

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DSD Student Characteristics

Overview: We strive to develop global citizens of character who seek to solve problems through innovation using *collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking*. To achieve this, we are committed to building positive relationships with and providing opportunities for students as they grow to become our future leaders.

People of Character

People of character gain the respect and trust of others through practicing honesty, integrity, and responsibility. To do this, they hold themselves and others accountable to upholding and practicing virtue, decency, and fairness. People of character also persevere in the face of challenges, see mistakes as learning rather than failure, and encourage themselves and others to overcome obstacles to achieve success.

Global Citizens

Global Citizens recognize the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of living, learning, and working in an interconnected world. To do this, they act as an ethically engaged contributor to a variety of communities, both local and global. Global citizens contribute their voice to accomplishing common goals, establishing relationships, and creating a culture of respect and acceptance that values the diversity of the communities in which they interact.

Problem Solvers

Problem solvers apply and adapt various strategies to solve unique and complex problems. To do this, they frame problems, explore various solutions, determine possible outcomes, evaluate options, implement solutions, monitor effects, and reflect upon their learning. Problem solvers discover the underlying opportunities within each situation, view problems as opportunities in disguise, remain objective, seek long term solutions, and work to gain agreement from all involved stakeholders.

Innovators

Innovators create something new or re-imagine things that already exist. Innovators exhibit an insatiable curiosity, infectious passion, and unshakable perseverance. To do this, they employ divergent thinking to theorize on a multitude of possibilities, reject preconceived notions, and exhibit courage in the face of criticism. Innovators also have the capacity to turn ideas into action.

Collaborators (4 C's)

Collaborators work with others to achieve common goals through effectively and respectfully working interdependently while acknowledging each individual's contributions. To do this, they build relationships, contribute to the team, navigate team dynamics, engage in shared decision making, and learn from and contribute to the learning of others. Collaborators use appropriate tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by working with others, both locally and globally.

Communicators (4 C's)

Communicators clearly and effectively exchange ideas or information with others through using a variety of platforms, tools, styles, and formats. To do this, they practice active listening and purposeful messaging, adjusting the medium and message based on the goal and identified audience. Additionally, communicators honor and build upon the voices of others to build and express understanding.

Critical Thinkers (4 C's)

Critical thinkers analyze information from a variety of sources, experiences, and perspectives to construct unique ideas and solutions. To do this, they process and evaluate information, seek connections and patterns, analyze and synthesize ideas, and apply the knowledge gained in authentic contexts. Critical thinkers reason effectively, make judgements and decisions, generate and respond to purposeful questions, and justify decision making.

Creators (4 C's)

Creators generate novel ideas or build upon previously existing ideas. To do this, they explore imaginative approaches and solutions to challenges through questioning, inspiration, design, iteration, and reflection. Creators also take calculated risks to support innovation.

Glossary of Terms and Concepts Associated with Personalized and Competency Based Learning

Key Stakeholder Groups

Learner: This term is frequently used in reference to personalized learning and can refer to youth, students, adults, and professionals within the system because all members of the system continue to learn throughout life. We are all “learners” regardless of our age and social status. We teach and practice life-long learning.

Student: A learner that is working toward graduation but has not yet demonstrated mastery of standardized skills and knowledge to become a graduate.

Teacher/Educator: A person hired with public funds to help students achieve mastery of specific **Davis Essential Skills and Knowledge** or **DESK** Standards and the Utah State Core Standards.

Instructional Areas of Focus

Authentic Learning Experiences: Students engage with their communities through learning partnerships, both inside and outside of school, to establish meaningful interactions, address challenges, and connect learning to life. Students contribute their voice to creating a culture of safety and thoughtful risk-taking that values and acknowledges the diversity of the communities in which they interact. Authentic learning experiences and assessments, experiential learning, problem-based learning, and mastery-based learning approaches provide opportunities to increase student engagement and achievement.

Blended Instruction: Any formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning, in part in a brick-and-mortar location, and with some element of student control over time, place, and/or pace. (Horn and Staker, 2015, pg. 34)

“Bold School:” Old-school wisdom that blends new school technologies with purpose into instruction that works (Kieschnick, 2017).

Choice (Student Choice): Student voice and choice is supported by opportunities to learn and continually increase their ability to independently engage in the design and direction of their learning. Students connect interests, needs, and cultures to what they are learning, set goals for their individual learning, and reflect on their own progress. Multiple pathways are offered to allow learners to achieve personal and academic goals. Learners are challenged to take risks, unleash their curiosity, and exercise their critical thinking skills.

Competency Based Learning / Progression: Synonymous with Mastery Based Learning. See definition for mastery based learning.

Constant (Systemic Constant): Student learning and achievement of standards. All other academic systemic support is flexible. Learning first!

Flexibility (Systemic Flexibility): Learning continues both within and beyond the classroom walls and school day schedule. Learners seek answers to interesting questions anytime and anywhere and possess the technology and mindset to actively learn at school, home, and in the community. Physical and virtual learning environments are used purposefully to activate and sustain learning. Learners are afforded the flexibility of time, space, place, and resources to explore learning at a deeper level when and where they choose to. In a personalized learning system model, student achievement of academic standards is considered the systemic “constant” and all forms of systemic support are “variable” and flexible and relate to needs of the student.

High Quality Technology Integration: Technology is used to enhance teaching and learning and offer learners greater opportunities to be more actively involved in their learning. Technology integration focuses on the “why” instead of the “what,” ensuring that there is a clear focus on outcomes and learning objectives rather than on tools. Technology seamlessly supports curricular goals and helps learners effectively reach their identified outcomes by providing access to updated source material, methods of collecting and recording data, the ability to collaborate with others around the globe, opportunities to express understanding via multimedia, learning that is authentic and relevant, and ways to present and publish knowledge.

Mastery Based Learning / Progression: Students move through content (**pacing**) as they individually master standards, rather than being dependent upon classroom pace. Assessment is approached as a support for learning. A variety of assessment strategies are used to monitor and evaluate understanding of content knowledge and skills, foster self-monitoring, and facilitate reflection to promote student autonomy. Monitoring learning focuses on high quality, aligned, and appropriate evidence of learning and feedback for individualized learner growth. All forms of assessment are criterion-referenced, and success is defined by the achievement of expected competencies, not based on relative measures of performance or student-to-student comparisons.

Personalized Learning: Students are at the center of their own learning and are actively involved in defining their learning path. Learners are empowered to develop a growth mindset, cultivate habits of mind, and engage in deep reflective practice. Students choose their own learning resources, co-design their learning experiences, and have flexibility in how they demonstrate their learning. Learning experiences provide multiple entry points and paths for learning.

Proficiency Based Learning: Synonymous with Mastery Based Learning. See definition for mastery based learning.

Rigorous Content: Instruction, learning experiences, and educational expectations are academically and intellectually challenging for each and every student. Rigorous learning experiences allow learners to work with content that is complex and encourages critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, and collaboration with other students and adults. In addition to core content, opportunities exist to ensure learners become well-rounded through experiences in the arts and humanities, the reinforcement of healthy lifestyles, and the development of social and emotional learning. Learners are at the center of a responsive environment that promotes continuous improvement.

SAMR Model: A model designed to help educators infuse technology into teaching and learning. This framework was created by Dr. Ruben Puentedura that categorizes four different degrees of classroom technology integration. The letters "SAMR" stand for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition.

Standards Based Grading: Student proficiency is measured based on learning goals and performance standards. Each learning goal or performance standard is a separate criterion or proficiency-based concept that students are expected to learn as they progress through their education. Students are allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of each goal or standard in a variety of ways. One grade or assessment entry is given for each learning goal or standard to provide clear communication to students and their families about where the student is with their understanding of each concept. Students are given feedback related to which goals and standards they are secure on and which they have not yet mastered. If students fail to meet their expected learning goals and performance standards, they receive additional instruction, targeted support, additional time, and other academic supports as needed to help them achieve proficiency.

STEM Centered Learning: STEM-centered learning focuses student thinking and discussion around real-world phenomena, problems, issues, or events across all content areas with the purpose of students collaborating in order to make sense of the world and persevere in solving problems.

STEM Opportunities: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) experiences are made available to all learners.

Voice (Student Voice): a student's expression of distinct and authentic perspective that can be used to validate the achievement of mastery of an academic standard.

Methods of Assessment, Feedback, and Decision-Making

Competency Based Grading and Progression: Students advance through content and earn graduation credit based on their demonstration of proficiency or mastery of standards as determined by successful completion of predetermined competency measures or requirements. Competency measures or requirements are associated with standards, concepts, and skills from the Utah State Core Curriculum in conjunction with the student leadership characteristics defined later in this document. Working at their own individual pace, each student advances to higher-level work as they demonstrate mastery or competency of the standards, rather than progressing according to age or seat time. Due to the individualized nature of competency-based progression, students will master some standards more rapidly, while taking more time to master others. Assessment is explicit in what students must know and be able to do in order to show mastery and progress to the next level of study.

Professional Learning Community (PLC): A group of teachers that teach the same subject and agree to use common formative and summative assessments. The assessments are used to measure, reflect on, and identify the best instructional practices. PLC teachers engage in a reflective and ongoing cycle of professional development that is based on the feedback and data gleaned from the common assessments. Educators work collaboratively in these cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators based on the data gleaned when using common assessments. "If a common assessment does not drive the conversation, you're not functioning within a PLC."

Professional Learning Network: An informal learning network or community that consists of the people a learner interacts with and derives knowledge from. In a PLN, a person makes a connection with another person with the specific intent that some type of learning will occur because of that connection.

Curricular Standards

Academic Standard: The knowledge and skills that a student is expected to know and be able to do at the end of each course and grade level. *See also: Common Core State Standards Initiative, Utah Core Standards, Davis Essential Skills and Knowledge (DESK) Standards.*

Common Core State Standards Initiative: Educational standards for English Language Arts (ELA)/literacy and Mathematics in grades K-12. The initiative is sponsored by the [National Governors Association \(NGA\)](#) and the [Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\)](#) and seeks to establish consistent educational standards across the states as well as ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to enter credit-bearing courses at two- or four-year college programs or to enter the workforce. These standards have significant influence on the Utah Core Standards, but most funding for our school district is provided for the accomplishment of the Utah Core Standards.

Davis Essential Skills and Knowledge or DESK Standards: Davis School District's priority standards agreed upon by our local school board that provide the framework for all instruction in the Davis School District.

Priority Standards: A carefully selected subset of the total list of grade-specific and course-specific standards within each content area that students must know and be able to do by the end of successful course completion in order to be prepared to successfully complete the course summative assessment, enter the next grade level or course, and eventually be successful in the workforce and community.

Utah Core Standards: Academic standards agreed upon by the Utah State Board of Education that are intended to ensure academic achievement for Utah students by defining the essential knowledge, concepts and skills to be mastered at each grade level, course, and within critical content areas. Utah State RISE tests are intended to measure Utah student proficiency on these standards at the conclusion of each core course and grade level. Federal funding provided to the State and State funding is allocated to DSD with confidence that these established academic standards will be achieved.

Assessment Tools and Approaches

Authentic Assessment: “Performance assessments call upon the examinee to demonstrate specific skills and competencies, that is, to apply the skills and knowledge they have mastered.”

Richard J. Stiggins

“A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.” John Mueller

Common Formative Assessment (CFA’s): A PLC designed academic measure used to monitor student attainment of essential learning targets throughout the instructional process so that instruction can be adjusted by the instructor to the specific needs of the students. The effective use of CFA’s will allow teachers to formulate and modify instruction based on the feedback received from a class or a student. CFA’s can be used by a PLC to discuss best classroom practice as determined by student performance on the formative assessments. This reflection and discussion drives and informs professional development. Typically, CFA’s direct instruction towards a Common Summative Assessment or CSA. *See also Professional Learning Communities or PLC’s, and Common Summative Assessments.*

Common Summative Assessment (CSA’s): Team or PLC designed or agreed upon measure with the purpose of certifying learning for specific academic standards. These are typically comprehensive and end of unit, end of quarter, end of semester, and end of course. PLC’s can discuss their student’s outcomes on these assessments to improve instructional practice.

End of Course or Level Summative Assessment: A summative assessment that measures competency to a specific set of standards. End of course summative assessments currently used in DSD grades 1-8 that are required by the Utah State Board of Education are the RISE assessments.

Formative Assessment or Feedback: Any activity that provides sound feedback on student learning. Characteristics of sound feedback include that it should be frequent, give students and teachers a clear picture of their progress and how they might improve or adjust. *Robert J. Marzano*

Formative assessments may also be frequently referred to as “feedback.”

Proficiency Scale: A numbered scale aligned to a descriptor that measures relative competency associated with a learning outcome.

Standard Rubric / Proficiency-based rubrics: Rubrics aligned with standards-based grading scales from the start, so that progress is described in terms of achievement of that standard. Proficiency-based rubrics use the same scale—the same levels of achievement—for each assessment, including both tests and performance assessments.

Summative Assessment: Evaluates student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period or at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against a standard or benchmark.

Technology Infrastructure to Support Teaching and Learning

One-to-one or 1:1 Resources: Every student is provided with access to a device to ensure they have full access at all times during their learning experiences.

High Access to Technology at School: A range of technologies and strategies are used intentionally to remove barriers to learning, enhance learning opportunities, and help students realize their full potential. Students have high access to digital devices for use when and where they need them in a school setting. High Technology access schools are not necessarily 1:1 (ratio of digital device to student) schools, but 1:1 schools are high technology access schools.

Learning Management System (LMS): A software platform that allows documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of [educational](#) courses, training programs, or learning and development programs i.e. CANVAS. CANVAS and Microsoft Teams are software programs that overlap in some features and function, however, Microsoft Teams considers itself a platform for collaboration and rejects the title of LMS while CANVAS is considered to be a classic example of an LMS. CANVAS is used in all systems of higher learning in the State of Utah and it is available for all of Utah's public-school districts.

Student Information System (SIS): A database that contains a comprehensive record of each student.

Ubiquitous or 24/7 Access: In a 1:1 or high access environment, robust digital curriculum is available to both teachers and students in order to ensure 24 hour a day, seven day a week access to learning material.

District-Supported Technology Resources to Support Teaching and Learning

CANVAS Learning Management System (LMS): One of the most commonly used learning management systems (LMS) in the world. Currently, the learning management system used in all systems of higher learning in Utah and it is available to all public k-12 schools. It is encouraged for student use in all courses in the Davis School District grades 4-12.

Encore: A secure software platform created by DSD employees that is used as a DSD's Student Information System, Human Resource Management System, Payroll Management System, and Budget Accounting System. All student academic and grade information is entered into the Encore system and all student academic records are stored and reported from this platform.

Microsoft Suite:

- Microsoft Excel - a Microsoft tool that is a spreadsheet program that organize numbers and data with formulas and functions.

- Microsoft Flipgrid - a Microsoft tool that gives teachers the power to create grids in which they or their students pose topics and other members of the class to participate by recording video that is shared with the teacher or the class through the software.
- Microsoft Forms- a Microsoft tool that lets the user create a form survey, collect responses in real time, and view automatic charts to visualize your data. Data can also be viewed and used within Excel.
- Microsoft Minecraft Education Edition is an open-world game that promotes creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.
- Microsoft Office 365 - Office 365 is a cloud-based service that brings together Microsoft tools and makes them available at any time and place to account holders online. Microsoft Tools are available in an online format.
- Microsoft OneNote - a computer program for free-form information gathering and multi-user collaboration. It gathers users' notes (handwritten or typed), drawings, screen clippings and audio commentaries. Notes can be filed, organized, and shared with other OneNote users over the Internet or a network.
- Microsoft Outlook - a personal information manager Microsoft tool accessed mainly for email and calendar usage.
- Microsoft PowerPoint - a Microsoft software tool designed to create electronic presentations consisting of a series of separate pages or slides.
- Microsoft Sway - a cloud-based, touch-enabled Microsoft tool use for creating interactive documents and presentations. Microsoft Sway software does more of the work for the user in creating a document or presentation, however the user experiences less control when creating a document or presentation.
- Microsoft Stream - is an Enterprise Video service where the user can upload, view, and share videos securely.
- Microsoft Teams – a cloud-based team collaboration software tool.

Nearpod - A instructional platform where the user can create presentations that can also contain quizzes, polls, videos, images, drawing-boards, and other web content.

Mydsd - online student and parent portal to access their academic, testing, payments, and school information.

Summit Learning Software Platform: A software platform that facilitates personalized teaching and learning to empower students to harness their inner drive for success. Developed in partnership with nationally-acclaimed learning scientists and researchers it is founded upon research backed practice that focuses on student success after graduation. Summit concentrates on the personal needs and abilities of both individual students and whole communities. The Summit Learning platform is an LMS, a content delivery tool, and an intuitive data system.