



Canvas:

Year-Two Comprehensive Evaluation

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Introduction

Background

Canvas is a Learning Management System (LMS) adopted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) in 2020-2021 to deliver educational content to students online. It provides an application for interacting with and accessing instructional content. In conjunction with Mastery Connect, Canvas also provides an application for assessing student learning in a variety of ways. VDOE offered the Canvas LMS for all Virginia school divisions free of cost for five years.^{1,2}

Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) began a pilot of Canvas with seven schools during the 2021-2022 school year, and all schools were expected to use Canvas as a tool for instruction during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years with students in grades 3 through 12.³ According to the director of instructional technology, teachers and students in kindergarten through grade 2 were not expected to use Canvas during the school year as teachers were provided another platform, Seesaw, at these grade levels. In addition, Mastery Connect was adopted in 2022-2023 as the platform to administer divisionwide assessments and is integrated within Canvas. In Mastery Connect, assessments are aligned with individual or multiple standards, which allows for monitoring students' mastery of standards.

When Canvas was adopted by VBCPS, the implementation of the initiative was managed by a central office Canvas implementation team. This team included staff members from several central office departments and offices, including the departments of Teaching and Learning; Technology; School Leadership; and Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability. As implementation continued during 2023-2024, the implementation was primarily led by the instructional technology team, which includes the director of instructional technology, instructional technology coordinators, and coordinator of library services. Beginning in 2020 and throughout the Canvas implementation, the instructional technology coordinators could join weekly calls provided by the state and Canvas representatives to support the initiative.⁴ In addition, the instructional technology team met with an Instructure representative on a monthly basis who provided support for Canvas and Mastery Connect.⁵

Background and Purpose of Program Evaluation

Because the Canvas initiative was a new initiative and operated with local resources for part of the implementation, evaluation of Canvas was required for at least two years by School Policy 6-26. On September 13, 2022, the School Board approved the Canvas initiative for an initial implementation evaluation to be conducted during the 2022-2023 school year which coincided with the first year all schools were to begin implementation of Canvas.

The first-year evaluation was presented to the School Board on October 24, 2023. The year-one implementation evaluation of Canvas during 2022-2023 focused on the instructional and assessment components of the LMS, data management and integration processes, professional learning opportunities, parent access and communication, initial progress toward the outcome goals and objectives, stakeholder perceptions, and the cost and savings of Canvas to the school division. The recommendations focused on exploring the reasons for lower satisfaction rates with Canvas among teachers especially at the elementary school level, ensuring Mastery Connect professional learning and support provided necessary knowledge to teachers, and developing a communication plan for disseminating resolutions for issues with the grade passback process. The recommendations were approved by the School Board on November 14, 2023.

This year-two comprehensive evaluation of Canvas provides the School Board, Superintendent, and central office Canvas implementation team with information about divisionwide implementation as well as a focus on the outcomes of implementing Canvas and goal attainment. This year-two comprehensive evaluation

addressed the same areas as the year-one implementation evaluation with a focus on the progress made toward the outcome goals. In addition, progress toward recommendation areas were addressed where appropriate.

Program Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for Canvas were developed in collaboration with the central office Canvas implementation team and based on a review of documentation and prior goals from the implementation of Schoology, the previous LMS. The goals focused on the following areas: (1) instructional material creation and course delivery, (2) learning assessment and reporting, (3) data management and integration, (4) professional learning, (5) communication and collaboration, and (6) student agency and engagement. The specific goals and objectives, as well as data assessing progress toward meeting these goals and objectives, are outlined throughout the report when information about the goal area is discussed.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

Evaluation Design and Data Collection

The evaluation included mixed methodologies to address each of the evaluation questions, including the goals and objectives. Quantitative data were gathered through closed-ended survey questions and Canvas usage data from the online platform. Qualitative data were collected through discussions with the program managers, document reviews, and open-ended survey questions. The Office of Research and Evaluation evaluators used the following data collection methods:

- Communicated with the instructional technology team, including the director of instructional technology, instructional technology coordinators, and coordinator of library services, as well as the director of testing and executive director of elementary teaching and learning to gather implementation-related information.
- Administered Canvas surveys to grades 3 through 12 classroom teachers, building administrators, instructional technology specialists (ITSs), students in grades 4 through 12, and parents of students in kindergarten through grade 12.
- Gathered student usage data from the Canvas platform.
- Gathered cost data from the departments of Teaching and Learning and Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability.

Surveys

As part of a larger survey effort of multiple initiatives, the Office of Research and Evaluation invited teachers, administrators, ITSs, students, and parents to complete survey items regarding their perceptions of Canvas. Staff and parents received an email invitation with a link to participate in the online survey in April 2024. Students accessed the survey through a link on their ClassLink dashboard in April 2024.

Of the teachers, administrators, and ITSs invited to complete the survey, 44 percent of teachers in grades 3 through 12, 57 percent of administrators, and 67 percent of ITSs completed the survey. Of the students in grades 4 through 12, 80 percent completed the survey. Of the parents of students in kindergarten through grade 12 invited to take the survey, 7 percent completed the survey. See Table 1 for response rates by school level.

Table 1: Staff, Student, and Parent Survey Response Rates by Level

Groups	Elem	Middle	High	Overall Rate	Overall Number of Respondents
Teachers (Grades 3-12)	25%	54%	54%	44%	1,538
Administrators	54%	54%	64%	57%	148
Instructional Technology Specialists	68%	67%	65%	67%	61
Students (Grades 4-12)	91%	86%	70%	80%	35,528
Parents (Grades K-12)	8%	7%	5%	7%	5,942

For all stakeholders, survey agreement percentages reported in the evaluation are based on those who answered the survey item (i.e., missing responses were excluded from the percentages). Teacher and student surveys included an initial question regarding whether they used Canvas. Nearly all secondary teachers (98%) who answered the survey item indicated they used Canvas during 2023-2024, whereas 84 percent of teachers of students in grades 3 to 5 indicated they used Canvas during 2023-2024. Nearly all students from grades 4 through 12 (98% to 99%) indicated they used Canvas in their school. Teachers and students who indicated they used Canvas were provided with additional items regarding their perceptions. Parent surveys also included initial questions regarding whether they were aware of being able to access Canvas and whether they accessed Canvas. Survey data for parents who indicated they had students in grades 3 through 12 were included in the analysis (N=4,721), while parents who indicated they only had children in grades K through 2 were not included in the analysis (N=1,221).

Where appropriate, comparisons were made to survey data from the 2022-2023 school year. Overall, changes in perceptions were noted if percentages changed by more than two percentage points, whereas perceptions were noted as remaining relatively the same if there was a change of two percentage points or less.

Canvas Usage Data

Canvas student usage data were gathered from the Canvas platform for the 2023-2024 school year. Data about students' activity within Canvas was obtained for all students who were enrolled in Canvas during the school year. Activity within Canvas included at least one participation in a course. To determine student usage by grade and school level, student activity data obtained from Canvas was combined with student grade level data from the Student Information System. The percentage of students who had any activity in Canvas was calculated. Due to nearly all grades 3 to 5 (98%) and secondary teachers (100%) having activity in Canvas during the 2022-2023 school year, Canvas teacher usage data were not obtained for 2023-2024.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions for the evaluation process were created by the evaluators with feedback from the central office Canvas implementation team. The evaluation questions established for the comprehensive evaluation are listed below. In addition, progress toward recommendation areas from the year-one implementation evaluation were addressed where appropriate in the following sections: data management and integration processes, professional learning, and satisfaction with Canvas.

1. What were the main instructional and assessment components of Canvas and what progress was made toward meeting related goals and objectives?
 - a. Instructional material design and course delivery
 - b. Student learning assessment and reporting
2. What were the data management and integration processes of Canvas and what progress was made toward meeting the related goal and objectives?

3. What professional learning opportunities were provided for Canvas and Mastery Connect and what progress was made toward meeting the related goal and objectives?
4. What is the status of parent access and communication using Canvas?
5. What progress was made toward meeting the Canvas initiative's outcome goals?
 - a. Communication and collaboration
 - b. Student agency and engagement
6. How satisfied were stakeholders (i.e., students, teachers, ITs, administrators, parents) with the Canvas initiative, and what were identified areas of strengths and areas for improvement?
7. What were the costs and savings to the school division for the Canvas initiative during 2023-2024?

Evaluation Results and Discussion

Canvas Instructional and Assessment Components

The first evaluation question focused on the main instructional and assessment components of Canvas and the progress made toward meeting related goals and objectives. One of the main features of an LMS is enabling users to interact with and access educational content and assess student learning of the content.

Instructional Material Design and Course Delivery

An LMS provides the ability to house and manage educational curricula and course content. Educational curricula and course content can include assignments, discussion boards, embedded content, pages, and third-party integrated resources and applications. During the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years, it was the expectation that teachers and students in grades 3 through 12 would utilize Canvas for instructional material and course delivery.⁶ However, the expectations related to the level at which Canvas is used with students varied by school level. According to the executive director of elementary teaching and learning, at the elementary school level, the expectations of use were flexible as the primary mode of instruction should be face-to-face interaction and Canvas should be used as a supplementary tool for students in grades 3 through 5.⁷ Teachers in grades 3 through 5 also had access to Seesaw. However, there was an expectation that teachers have their course content within Canvas and that they and students should know how to use Canvas in the event there is a need to provide instruction virtually.⁸ Providing more face-to-face instruction and using the computer less frequently in the classroom was in alignment with the strategy in *Compass to 2025* that stated: "Balance the effective and efficient use of technology to meet students' individual needs and allow them to demonstrate their learning."⁹

The instruction-related goal for Canvas is "**Canvas will allow teachers to design and deliver high-quality instructional materials for their students.**" Objectives for this goal focused on: (1) division-created instructional content, (2) content design and storage, (3) content accessibility, (4) learning activities, and (5) third-party resources and applications.

Division Resources

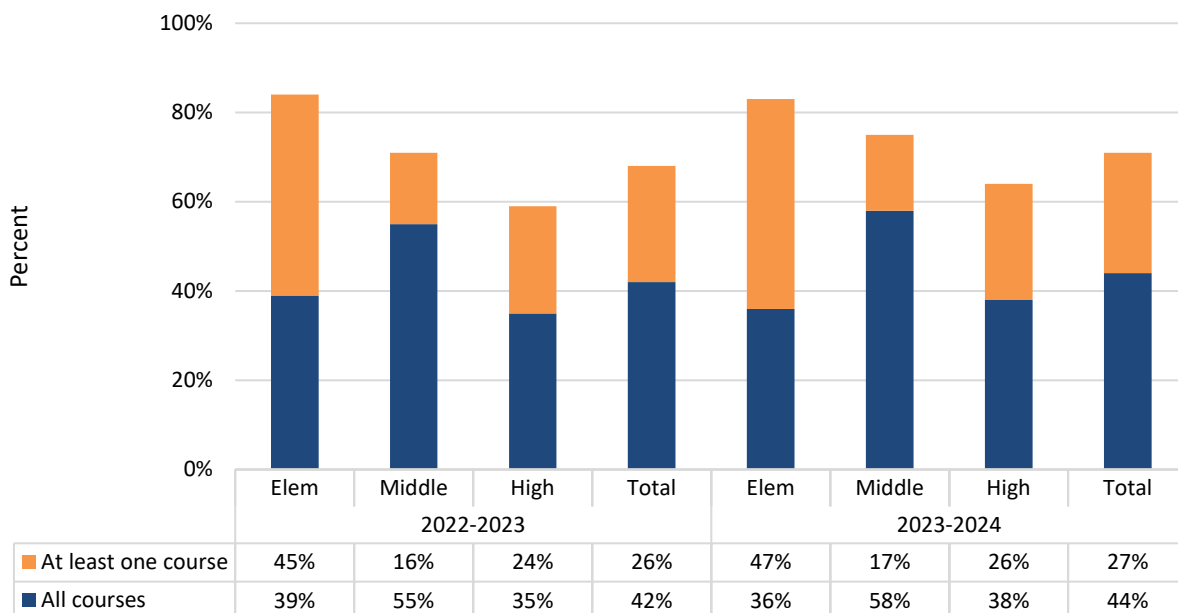
To support school-based instructional staff with high-quality curricula, the Department of Teaching and Learning curriculum coordinators provided instructional resources through Google docs.¹⁰ These resources were structured by grade level at the elementary school level and by content area at the secondary level. A link to access the curriculum resources Google docs was accessible through the Canvas Help Menu. Administrators were notified about the curriculum being provided in the Google docs in February 2022 and were encouraged to share the information with instructional staff to provide feedback to the Department of Teaching and Learning.¹¹ During the 2023-2024 school year, the Department of Teaching and Learning also hired teachers to create instructional content and materials that could be accessed within Canvas Commons,

which is a learning objective repository where teachers can store course content for their own use and for collaboration with colleagues both within and outside the division. Division resources may also be shared through Professional Learning Community (PLC) courses within Canvas.¹² These PLC courses are built at the school level to help staff design and manage their course content. It is expected that teachers access and utilize the instructional resources and content created at the division level. When accessing content through PLC courses, teachers can transfer information from these courses into their individual course(s). The division-created instructional content objective for the Canvas instruction goal is **“Teachers will utilize division-created instructional content from Google docs and/or PLC courses for individual courses in Canvas as measured by teacher survey responses.”**

Higher percentages of elementary school (83%) and middle school teachers (75%) indicated they used division-created instructional content for their Canvas course(s), such as content from Google docs, PLC courses, or their Sandbox, than high school teachers (64%) (see Figure 1). Although the survey items were not identical from year to year, this pattern of results is consistent with survey data from similar items in 2022-2023 when 84 percent of elementary school teachers indicated they used division-created instructional content from either PLC courses or Google docs. In addition, there was indication of some improvements in reported use of division-created instructional content at the middle school and high school levels (from 71% to 75% MS, from 59% to 64% HS).

Teachers were also asked to indicate the extent to which they used division-created instructional content for their courses. Overall, as shown in Figure 1, a higher percentage of middle school teachers (58%) indicated they used division-created instructional content for **all** of their courses compared to grades 3 through 5 teachers (36%) and high school teachers (38%). Elementary school teachers were more likely to indicate they used division-created instructional content for at least one course (47%) than all courses (36%).

Figure 1: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Use of Division-Created Instructional Content



Note: Data from 2022-2023 were based on merging responses from two survey items about utilizing division-created instructional content from PLC course(s) or from Google docs.

Staff who indicated they did not access division-created instructional content (N=417) also had the opportunity to comment on the reason for not using division-created instructional content for their individual course(s).

Approximately 84 percent of teachers (N=351) who indicated they did not access division-created content provided a reason. Many teachers commented on their preference for using personalized content they have created. Some teachers commented on the lack of resources available for their specific course (e.g., specific content area, specialized course such as IB or AP). Some teachers also commented on concerns about the quality of the materials, such as the materials being outdated, or difficulty with using or integrating the resources into Canvas.

Content Design, Storage, and Delivery

As noted, Canvas offers teachers the ability to design and store content in their courses. At the elementary school level, courses utilize a simplified template (i.e., C4E) for the younger learners.¹³ This template ensures that students only view modules and resources. With this view, students only need to navigate two links, one for modules and one for resources, at the top of their screen to find course content (see Appendix A). At the secondary levels, teachers can customize the links that students can navigate on the left-hand side of the screen when viewing a course, including modules, assignments, discussions, pages, and quizzes (see Appendix A).

Modules are an organizational tool used in Canvas that help teachers structure course content for students. Teachers can organize content by day, week, unit, topic, or outcome. Within a module, teachers can add various types of materials, including assignments, quizzes, files, pages, discussions, text headers, external URLs, or external tools.

The Department of Teaching and Learning instructional technology staff created documents for school staff that detail best practices for elementary and secondary courses, which include important course set up and setting information as well as details about setting up modules and assignments. In addition, the best practice documents include various types of learning activities and assessments to consider using. According to the instructional technology team, these documents were intended for teachers to review to be “Day 1 ready” at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. In preparation for the 2023-2024 school year, the best practices documents were updated for schools regarding any new information.

The content and design objective for the instruction goal is **“Teachers will design and store content in their courses in Canvas as measured by teacher survey responses.”** Most secondary teachers designed and stored course content in their published Canvas courses (95% at middle schools, 97% at high schools), along with a relatively high percentage of grades 3 to 5 teachers (79%). When teachers were surveyed about whether they designed and stored course content in published Canvas courses, most secondary teachers indicated they did for *all* their published courses (89% at middle schools, 88% at high schools). As shown in Table 2, an additional 6 percent of middle school teachers and 10 percent of high school teachers indicated they designed and stored course content in *at least one* of their published courses, while 5 percent of middle school teachers and 3 percent of high school teachers indicated they did not for any published course. At the elementary school level, 47 percent of teachers indicated they designed and stored course content in *all* their published Canvas courses, while 32 percent indicated they did for *at least one* of their published courses and 21 percent indicated they did not for any course (see Table 2). In comparison to 2022-2023, there was a slight decrease in the percentage of elementary school teachers who indicated they designed and stored content in at least one of their courses in 2023-2024 (from 35% to 32%), while there was a slight increase in the percentage who indicated they did not design and store course content in Canvas (from 17% to 21%). There was little change from 2022-2023 survey data at the secondary level.

Table 2: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated They Designed and Stored Course Content by Number of Courses

Do you design and store course content in your published Canvas courses?	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Yes, for all my published courses.	48%	47%	89%	89%	86%	88%	79%	81%
Yes, for at least one of my published courses.	35%	32%	7%	6%	9%	10%	14%	12%
No.	17%	21%	3%	5%	5%	3%	7%	6%

Beyond designing and storing content, a key purpose of an LMS is to deliver the course content to students. According to Canvas usage data, overall, 78 percent of students in grades 3 through 5 had participation in a Canvas course during 2023-2024, which is a decrease from 2022-2023 when 83 percent of students in grades 3 through 5 had participation in a Canvas course. Analyses by grade level showed nearly all grade 5 students had participation in a Canvas course in 2023-2024 (98%), which remained consistent from 2022-2023 (see Table 3). In addition, 81 percent of grade 4 students had participation in a Canvas course, which was a decrease from 91 percent in 2022-2023. A notably lower percentage of grade 3 students participated in Canvas with approximately half (55%) of grade 3 students participating in a Canvas course in 2023-2024, which decreased from 63 percent in 2022-2023.

Table 3: Percentage of Enrolled Students Who Had Participation in a Canvas Course

Student Participation in Canvas Course	2022-2023	2023-2024
Grade 3	63%	55%
Grade 4	91%	81%
Grade 5	97%	98%
Grades 3-5	83%	78%

Nearly all secondary students (98% at middle schools, 98% at high schools) had participation in a Canvas course in 2023-2024, which is consistent from the previous year.

The objective related to content accessibility for the instruction goal is **“Content in Canvas will be easily accessible for Canvas users as measured by student survey responses.”** At least 90 percent of students at all levels agreed they can easily find things they need for their classes in Canvas (see Table 4). There were increases in agreement percentages at the middle school and high school levels (see Table 4).

Table 4: Student Agreement Regarding They Can Easily Find Things They Need for Their Classes in Canvas

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
I can easily find things I need for my classes in Canvas.	90%	90%	88%	91%	85%	90%	88%	90%

As noted, within modules, teachers can provide students with a variety of ways to interact with instructional content, such as through assignments, discussion boards, embedded content, and pages. The learning activities objective for the instruction goal is **“In Canvas, teachers will provide a variety of learning activities for students to interact with content (e.g., assignments, discussion boards, embedded content, pages) as measured by teacher and student survey responses.”** Overall, 89 percent of secondary teachers agreed they provided a variety of learning activities for their students to interact with instructional content, while 71 percent of elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 5). Similarly, higher percentages of secondary ITSs (from 91% to 92%) agreed teachers at their school provided a variety of learning activities for their students than elementary school ITSs (69%). Most administrators at all levels (from 91% to 97%) agreed with a similar

item. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in teacher agreement percentages at all levels, while there were decreases in the agreement percentages of elementary school ITSs and administrators and middle school ITSs.

Table 5: Staff Agreement Regarding Teachers Providing a Variety of Learning Activities

Groups and Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – In Canvas, I provide a variety of learning activities for my students to interact with instructional content.	64%	71%	86%	89%	85%	89%	81%	86%
ITS – In Canvas, teachers at my school provide a variety of learning activities for their students to interact with instructional content.	75%	69%	100%	91%	91%	92%	87%	78%
Admin – In Canvas, teachers at my school provide a variety of learning activities for their students to interact with instructional content.	95%	91%	97%	97%	96%	94%	95%	93%

Note: Any administrator or ITS respondents who indicated “Don’t Know” were excluded from analysis.

Teachers were also surveyed about the specific types of learning activities their students used. At least 86 percent of teachers at all levels indicated their students used links to external URLs, assignments, modules, and embedded content (e.g., video, audio, Google slides) (see Table 6). Higher percentages of secondary teachers (from 75% to 89%) indicated their students used text headers and discussion boards than elementary school teachers (51% to 61%). Canvas studio, which is an interactive video management platform, was the least used learning activity at all levels with 32 to 34 percent of teachers reporting use by their students. According to the instructional technology coordinators, this is a more advanced feature that was new for many teachers during the 2023-2024 school year. In comparison to data from 2022-2023, there were increases in use of embedded content at the elementary school and high school levels, text headers at the high school level, and discussion boards at the secondary levels, while there was a decrease in use of modules at the elementary school level (see Table 6).

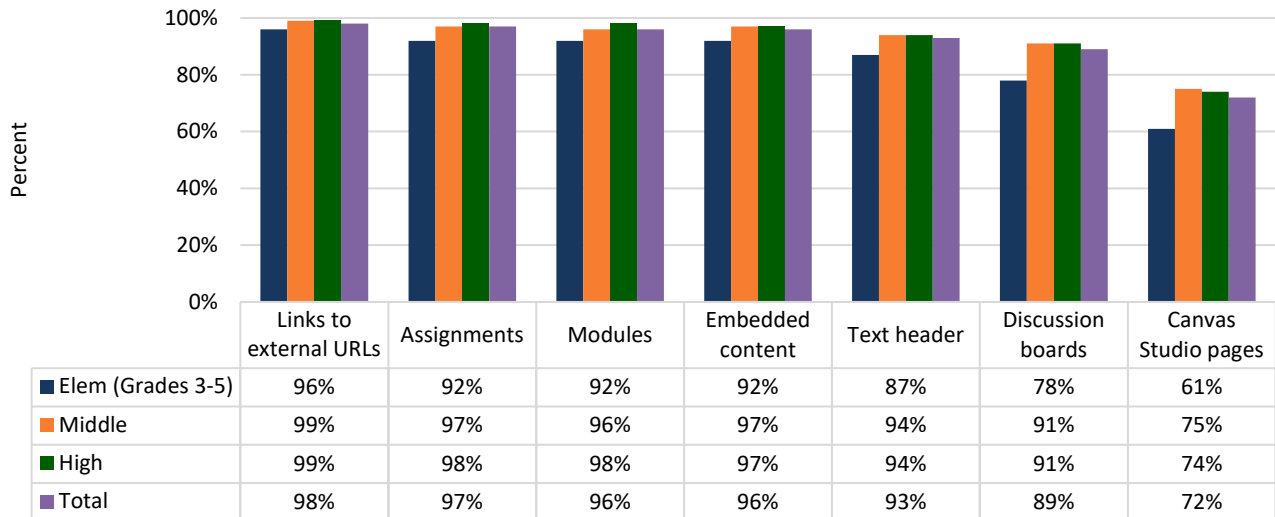
Table 6: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated They Used Various Learning Activities

Teachers – Used the following learning activities for students to interact with instructional content:	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Links to external URLs	93%	93%	98%	98%	96%	99%	96%	98%
Assignments	93%	94%	99%	98%	98%	98%	97%	97%
Modules	89%	86%	98%	98%	98%	98%	96%	96%
Embedded content (e.g., video, audio, Google slides)	87%	90%	93%	93%	90%	93%	90%	92%
Text header	62%	61%	85%	87%	83%	89%	79%	83%
Discussion boards	53%	51%	72%	75%	71%	75%	67%	71%
Canvas studio pages	31%	32%	34%	32%	33%	34%	33%	33%

Teachers were further asked about the usefulness of the various learning activities for students to interact with instructional content (see Figure 2). Overall, at least 87 percent of teachers at all levels indicated that links to external URLs, assignments, modules, embedded content, and text headers were very useful or somewhat useful for students to interact with instructional content. While 91 percent of secondary teachers indicated discussion boards were very useful or somewhat useful, 78 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers did. In addition, lower percentages of teachers at all levels indicated Canvas Studio pages were very useful or somewhat useful

(from 61% to 75%). In comparison to perceptions from 2022-2023, at the secondary levels, the percentages of teachers who indicated discussion boards (from 87%-88% to 91%) and Canvas Studio pages (from 66%-68% to 74%-75%) were useful increased. In addition, there were increases in the percentages of high school teachers who indicated assignments (from 94% to 97%) and modules (from 93% to 96%) were useful. At the elementary school level, there was an increase in teachers who indicated text headers were useful (from 84% to 87%), while there was a decrease in the percentage who indicated discussion boards were useful (from 82% to 78%).

Figure 2: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Learning Activities Were Very Useful or Somewhat Useful for Students to Interact With Instructional Content in 2023-2024



Note: The other response option was Not Useful.

When students were surveyed about the various activities they used in Canvas, nearly all students at all levels who responded to the survey items indicated they completed assignments and at least 87 percent watched videos (see Table 7). In addition, at least 94 percent of secondary students indicated they posted as part of a discussion and at least 81 percent indicated they used notifications and the calendar. Lower percentages of elementary school students indicated they posted as part of a discussion (72%) and used notifications and the calendar (61%). The percentage of elementary school students who indicated they used the discussions decreased in comparison to 2022-2023, and the percentages of elementary and middle school students who indicated they used notifications and calendar decreased (see Table 7).

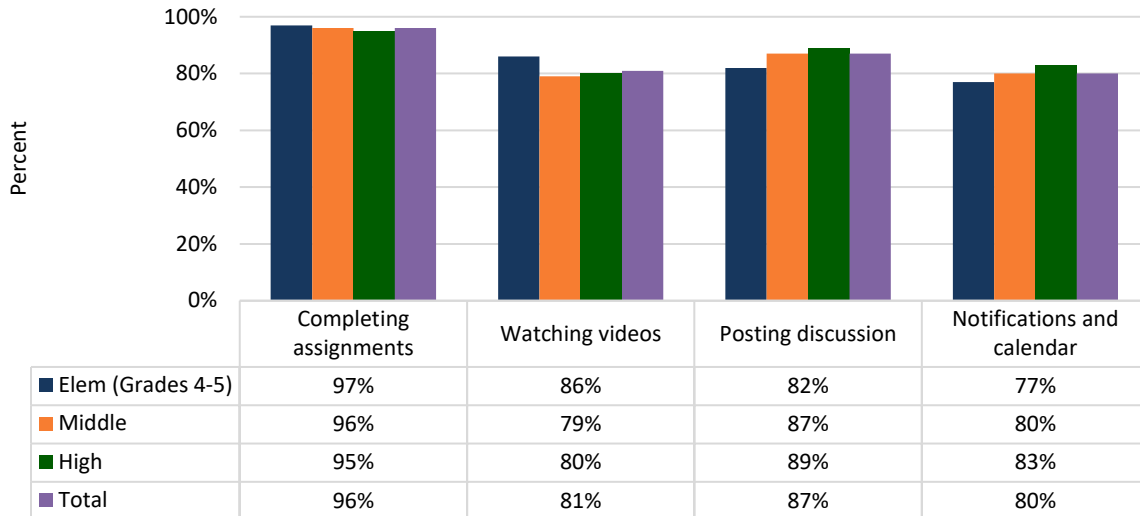
Table 7: Percentage of Students Who Indicated They Used Various Learning Activities

Students – Used the following learning activities in Canvas:	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Completed assignments	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Watched videos	88%	87%	92%	91%	92%	92%	91%	90%
Posted as part of a discussion	76%	72%	95%	94%	96%	96%	91%	90%
Notifications and calendar	69%	61%	85%	81%	89%	88%	85%	79%

Students were also surveyed about the usefulness of the activities in helping them be successful in their learning. At least 95 percent of students at all levels who responded to the survey items indicated completing assignments were very useful or somewhat useful in helping them be successful in their learning (see Figure 3). In addition, at least 77 percent of students at all levels indicated watching videos, posting as part of a discussion, and notifications and calendars were very useful or somewhat useful in helping them be successful

in their learning. The percentages of students who indicated the various activities were useful remained relatively consistent from 2022-2023 with the exception of the percentage of elementary school students who indicated notifications and calendars were useful, which decreased (from 80% to 77%).

Figure 3: Percentage of Students Who Indicated Learning Activities in Canvas Were Very Useful or Somewhat Useful in Helping Them Be Successful in Their Learning in 2023-2024



Note: The other response option was Not Useful.

Third-Party Resources

Canvas has the capability to integrate with other applications that provide educational content. Several third-party applications are currently available through VBCPS and Canvas, such as BrainPOP, CK-12, Discovery Education, Google, and IXL. Teachers can provide students with content or materials by inserting pages or instructions for an assignment through the external tool option under assignments. Teachers can also embed content from third-party applications, such as Google slides, within a page or assignment in Canvas. The third-party resource and applications objective for the instruction goal is **“Teachers will provide instructional content through third-party integrated resources and applications (e.g., BrainPOP, CK-12, Discovery Education, Google, IXL) in Canvas as measured by teacher survey responses.”**

When teachers were surveyed about the use of third-party resources, such as BrainPOP, CK-12, Discovery Education, Google, and IXL, 88 percent of middle school teachers indicated their students used them, whereas 78 percent of elementary school and high school teachers indicated their students used them (see Table 8). Regarding the usefulness of these resources, from 90 to 94 percent of teachers at all levels indicated third party resources were very useful or somewhat useful for students to interact with instructional content. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases at all school levels in the percentages of teachers who indicated they used third-party resources as well as increases in the percentages of secondary teachers who indicated using third-party resources was useful (see Table 8).

Table 8: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Use of Third-Party Resources and Usefulness

Survey Items	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Indicated using third-party resources in Canvas for students to interact with instructional content.	69%	78%	84%	88%	68%	78%	73%	81%
Indicated using third-party resources in Canvas was very useful or somewhat useful for students to interact with instructional content.	88%	90%	91%	94%	87%	92%	89%	93%

Through an open-ended survey item, teachers had the opportunity to provide comments regarding instructional material design or course delivery. Of the total teacher respondents who reported using Canvas on the survey (N=1,461), approximately 22 percent responded to the item (N=320). Of those who commented, several teachers noted the platform was not user friendly in general, difficult to navigate, or not intuitive. Some teachers commented about the platform requiring too many clicks and/or wanting more efficient processes to complete tasks. Teachers also commented about the desire for customization and flexibility when organizing course content, such as wanting to use different colors for headers or modules or adding folders within modules. Some teachers also commented on issues related to connecting to third-party applications. Some elementary school teachers commented specifically that the platform was not user-friendly or difficult to navigate for their students at the elementary school level.

Student Learning Assessment and Reporting

Canvas offers the ability to monitor student learning through a variety of assessment methods, including discussion boards, Canvas Studio, assignments, and Canvas quizzes. Canvas does not offer a way to administer divisionwide assessments within the platform itself. As a result, Mastery Connect, which offers the ability to administer divisionwide assessments, was purchased by VBCPS to be integrated within Canvas.

Discussion boards, which allow students to post responses to teacher-generated prompts or in response to other students' posts on a given topic, can be created as assignments for grading purposes within Canvas. Canvas Studio is an interactive video management platform that allows teachers and students to view, share, and directly comment on uploaded video or audio content. Within Canvas Studio, teachers can create quizzes, which allows teachers to prompt students with multiple choice, true/false, or multiple response questions while watching videos. Assignments in Canvas are activities that students complete for a grade and are evaluated by their teacher or peers. Teachers have various options when creating assignments, including the number of submission attempts, whether the assignment is a group assignment, and specified due dates. Through Canvas, teachers can use the SpeedGrader tool to grade and give detailed feedback on assignments that are submitted online. Within Canvas, teachers also have the option to create a rubric for discussions and assignments, which is visible to students.

When teachers were surveyed about their use of SpeedGrader in 2023-2024, higher percentages of secondary teachers (82% at middle schools, 81% at high schools) indicated they used the Canvas SpeedGrader, than elementary school teachers (66%). In addition, at least 94 percent of secondary teachers indicated SpeedGrader was either very useful or somewhat useful to assess student learning and/or provide feedback, while 80 percent of elementary school teachers indicated usefulness. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of secondary teachers who indicated SpeedGrader was either very useful or somewhat useful to assess student learning and/or provide feedback (89% to 94% at middle schools, 91% to 95% at high schools). The percentage of elementary school teachers reporting usefulness remained relatively the same (79%).

Within Canvas, teachers can create and administer classroom assessments through quizzes. There are two types of quizzes that teachers can create in Canvas: Classic Quizzes and New Quizzes. New Quizzes offer more question types and the ability to view data related to students' quiz attempts and submissions. Within New Quizzes, Canvas allows for various types of questions, including categorization, essay, uploading files, matching, multiple choice, and true/false. When creating a quiz, teachers have the ability to determine the number of points for the quiz as well as whether the quiz counts toward the student's final grade. Teachers can establish a time limit and whether students can attempt multiple times. Teachers can also view students' attempts with the score and the time taken to complete the quiz. However, data for quizzes within Canvas are not accessible to others besides the course teacher.

At the secondary level, student grades for assignments, discussions, and quizzes within Canvas can be imported automatically into the gradebook of record, Synergy. For grades to import from Canvas into Synergy, teachers must ensure the assignment type matches within both systems and there must be a due date for the assignment or quiz in Canvas. Most importantly, the teacher must select that they would like for the grade to sync to Synergy (i.e., select the "sync to SIS" checkbox) when creating the assignment or quiz.

Assessing Student Learning through Mastery Connect

Although Canvas does not offer a way to administer divisionwide assessments with the platform itself, Mastery Connect is integrated within the Canvas platform to administer these assessments. The creation and management of divisionwide assessments are completed by central office staff. At the secondary levels, all divisionwide assessments were administered through Mastery Connect during 2023-2024. According to the executive director of elementary teaching and learning, the expectations were different at the elementary school level due to utilizing more performance-based tasks and the shift to less computer time.¹⁴ At the elementary school level, the only mandatory assessments in Mastery Connect were in grade 5 science and social studies. Additional unit assessments were made available to teachers by the Department of Teaching and Learning for grades 2 through 5 English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In addition, teachers can create classroom assessments within Mastery Connect. There are two item banks in which teachers can access questions to add to their assessments. The first item bank has been utilized by VBCPS for many years, the Certica Navigate Item Bank, and it includes a robust repository of high-quality, standards-based items across the core content areas.¹⁵ The second item bank includes hundreds of items created by the Department of Teaching and Learning. Teachers may also create questions and add them to the VBCPS teacher item bank.

To administer Mastery Connect assessments and view assessment data by standard, a "Mastery Connect Tracker" must be created for each individual Canvas course. In VBCPS, teachers must create Mastery Trackers based on their course-specific Curriculum Map created and shared by the Department of Teaching and Learning curriculum coordinators. Curriculum maps are blueprints for courses that include which standards should be assessed throughout the course and provide the common, divisionwide assessments that will be administered during the school year. After teachers link the course-appropriate Curriculum Map to their course, Mastery Trackers can be used to guide course instruction as teachers can then view all standards that are the basis of the course. Within a course's Mastery Tracker, teachers can add an assessment for an individual standard or multiple standards. In addition, when a teacher creates assessments, teachers must identify which standards within the course-specific Mastery Tracker align with the assessment and/or questions within assessments. All items from the item banks have already been aligned with standards, which will connect with the Mastery Tracker. According to the director of testing and the instructional technology team, some teachers experienced issues when syncing their Mastery Connect Tracker with the course-appropriate Curriculum Map.¹⁶ Due to these issues, ITSs were directed to work closely with teachers to follow the correct steps to sync the correct Curriculum Maps to their courses. In addition, during 2023-2024,

the instructional technology team ran a report to determine courses that were incorrectly synced, which was then provided to schools for ITSs to review. ITSs were expected to review the report and work with the teachers who connected their trackers incorrectly.¹⁷ To support the student assessment process, since 2018-2019, VBCPS has contracted with Respondus, which provides teachers the ability to lock down website browsers to ensure that students cannot access any outside information during an assessment. This contract has remained in place with the switch to Canvas as the learning management system.

As assessments are taken, within the course's Mastery Tracker, teachers can view data regarding each students' mastery of the standards. According to the director of testing, viewing the data summarized by mastery of the standards is a shift in philosophy from prior years where the data were summarized based on the average performance for individual assessments. According to the instructional technology team, during 2023-2024, although this shift remained a challenge, most teachers were understanding the reports and data better.¹⁸ Beyond this main homepage data view, Mastery Connect has several different reports that can be viewed from within the Mastery Connect Tracker. These reports include reports overall by item and by standard for individual students, courses, and teachers.

All divisionwide assessments must be completed within Mastery Connect and as noted, teachers can create and administer classroom assessments within Mastery Connect. According to the instructional technology team, it is recommended that teachers utilize Mastery Connect for classroom assessments rather than quizzes in Canvas because of the ability to tag standards to items and to see more data from the assessments in Mastery Connect. The instructional technology team noted that in previous school years, it was easier for teachers to build quizzes in Canvas than Mastery Connect assessments. However, as of the 2023-2024 school year, creating assessments in Mastery Connect was more user friendly for teachers due to adjustments made by Mastery Connect.¹⁹ According to an instructional technology coordinator, teachers could create an assessment at the same time as creating individual items/questions, which was an adjustment from previous years when teachers were required to create all individual items/questions prior to creating an assessment.²⁰

The learning assessment and reporting goal for Canvas is "**Canvas will allow teachers to assess student learning through a variety of methods (e.g., discussion boards, assignments, Canvas Studio, Canvas Quizzes, Mastery Connect assessments).**" Objectives for this goal focused on: (1) assessment methods, (2) showing knowledge, (3) formative feedback, (4) monitoring student progress in Canvas, and (5) monitoring student progress in Mastery Connect.

The assessment methods objective for the learning assessment and reporting goal is "**Teachers will utilize a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning, including discussions, assignments, quizzes, and Mastery Connect assessments as measured by teacher survey responses.**" As shown in Table 9, when surveyed about the use of a variety of assessment methods, higher percentages of secondary teachers (from 82% to 86%) agreed they utilized a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning than elementary school teachers (61%). Similarly, higher percentages of secondary administrators (96% to 97%) agreed with a similar item than elementary school administrators (84%). Higher percentages of middle school ITSs (91%) agreed teachers at their school utilized a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning than high school (77%) and elementary school ITSs (69%). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of teachers at all levels who agreed they provided a variety of assessment methods (see Table 9).

Table 9: Staff Agreement Regarding Teachers Utilizing a Variety of Assessment Methods

Groups and Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – In Canvas, I utilize a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning.	58%	61%	81%	86%	77%	82%	67%	80%
ITS – In Canvas, teachers at my school utilize a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning.	67%	69%	94%	91%	73%	77%	77%	75%
Admin – In Canvas, teachers at my school utilize a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning.	85%	84%	100%	97%	94%	96%	91%	91%

Regarding using various methods to assess or check student learning, the most common method at all levels was assignments in Canvas. Nearly all teachers at all levels (at least 91%) indicated they used assignments in Canvas (see Table 10). From 76 to 79 percent of elementary school and middle school teachers indicated they used Mastery Connect to assess student learning, while 62 percent of high school teachers indicated they had. In addition, from 74 to 78 percent of secondary teachers indicated they used discussions and quizzes in Canvas, while from 49 to 57 percent of elementary school teachers indicated they had. The least used method at all levels was Canvas Studio with 26 to 29 percent of teachers indicating they used Canvas Studio to assess or check student learning. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of high school teachers who indicated they used Mastery Connect, Canvas quizzes, discussion boards, and Canvas Studio (see Table 10). In addition, there was an increase in the percentage of middle school teachers who indicated they used discussion boards, while there was a decrease in elementary school teachers who indicated they used Canvas Studio (see Table 10).

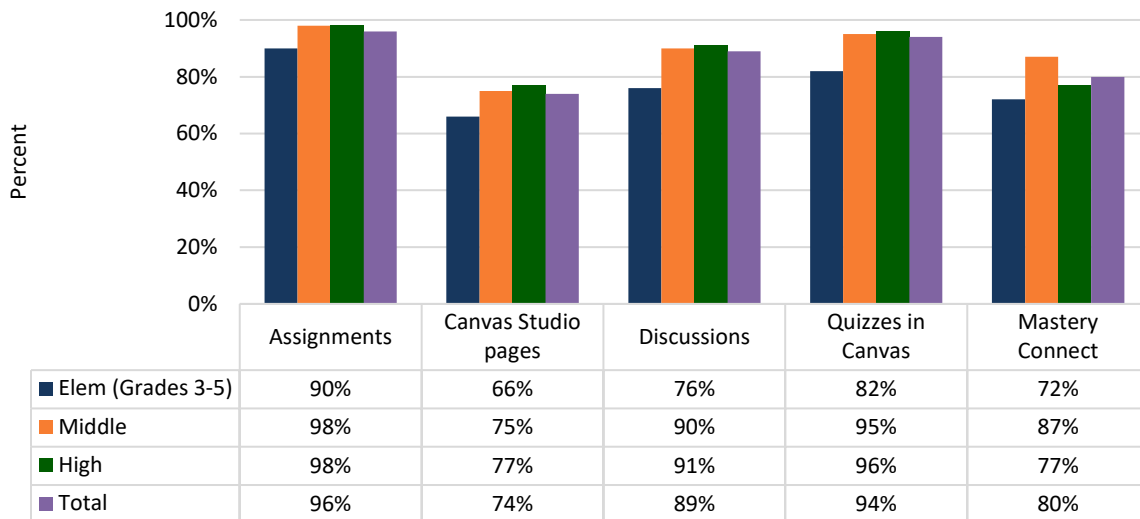
Table 10: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Use of Various Assessment Methods

Teachers – Used the following methods to assess or check student learning:	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Assignments in Canvas	92%	91%	98%	97%	96%	97%	96%	96%
Mastery Connect	79%	79%	76%	76%	59%	62%	69%	70%
Quizzes in Canvas (e.g., New Quizzes, Classic Quizzes)	56%	57%	78%	76%	75%	78%	72%	74%
Discussions in Canvas	50%	49%	70%	74%	69%	74%	65%	70%
Canvas Studio	31%	26%	28%	29%	26%	29%	28%	28%

Regarding the usefulness of these various methods to assess student learning, at least 90 percent of teachers at all levels indicated that assignments were very useful or somewhat useful to assess student learning and/or provide feedback (see Figure 4). In addition, from 90 to 96 percent of secondary teachers indicated discussions or quizzes in Canvas were very useful or somewhat useful to assess student learning and/or provide feedback, while from 76 to 82 percent of elementary school teachers did. Although 87 percent of middle school teachers indicated that Mastery Connect was very useful or somewhat useful to assess student learning and/or provide feedback, 72 to 77 percent of elementary school and high school teachers viewed Mastery Connect as useful. From 66 to 77 percent of teachers at all levels indicated that Canvas Studio pages were very useful or somewhat useful. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of teachers at all levels who indicated Canvas Studio pages (increases of 8 to 14 percentage points depending on level) and Mastery Connect (increases of 7 to 11 percentage points depending on level) were useful to assess learning, while there were increases at secondary levels regarding the usefulness of quizzes (increases of 1 to 5

percentage points depending on level) and regarding discussions at high school (from 88% to 91%). There was a decrease at the elementary school level regarding the usefulness of discussions (81% to 76%).

Figure 4: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Various Methods Were Very Useful or Somewhat Useful to Assess Student Learning and/or Provide Feedback in 2023-2024



The objective related to students showing their knowledge for the learning assessment and reporting goal is **“Students will be able to show what they know in a variety of ways in Canvas as measured by student survey responses.”** Overall, from 86 to 88 percent of students depending on level agreed they can show what they know in a variety of ways in Canvas (Table 11). There was an increase in the percentage of high school students who agreed they can show what they know in comparison to 2022-2023 (see Table 11).

Table 11: Student Agreement Regarding They Can Show What They Know in A Variety of Ways

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
I can show what I know in a variety of ways in Canvas.	86%	86%	87%	88%	82%	87%	85%	87%

The formative feedback objective for the learning assessment and reporting goal is **“Teachers will provide students with formative feedback on discussions, assignments, and quizzes in Canvas as measured by teacher and student responses.”** Higher percentages of secondary staff agreed teachers provided students formative feedback in Canvas and agreed Canvas allowed for an efficient way to provide this feedback compared to elementary school staff. While 76 to 84 percent of secondary teachers agreed they used Canvas to provide students with formative feedback about their learning, 50 percent of elementary school teachers agreed they did (see Table 12). In addition, from 80 to 84 percent of secondary teachers agreed Canvas allowed them to provide students with formative feedback on discussions, assignments, and quizzes in an efficient manner, while 54 percent of elementary school teachers agreed they did. In comparison to 2022-2023, there was an increase in the percentage of high school teachers who agreed they used Canvas to provide formative feedback and increases at the secondary level in the percentages of teachers who agreed Canvas allowed them to provide formative feedback in an efficient manner (see Table 12). Consistent with teachers' responses, higher percentages of ITs (77% to 89%) and administrators (86% to 93%) at the secondary level agreed teachers at their school used Canvas to provide students with formative feedback about their learning compared to elementary ITs (44%) and administrators (81%).

Table 12: Teacher Agreement Regarding Providing Formative Feedback and Canvas Allowing Them to Provide Feedback Efficiently

Survey Items	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
I use Canvas to provide students with formative feedback about their learning.	49%	50%	75%	76%	77%	84%	70%	76%
Canvas allows me to provide students with formative feedback on discussions, assignments, and quizzes in an efficient manner.	56%	54%	75%	80%	78%	84%	72%	78%

When students were asked, from 74 to 84 percent of students depending on school level agreed their teacher gave them feedback on assignments, discussion posts, or quizzes in Canvas. In addition, as shown in Table 13, relatively high percentages of students at each school level indicated that teacher feedback was very useful or somewhat useful in helping them be successful learners (88% to 89%). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases at the high school level regarding both items (see Table 13).

Table 13: Student Agreement Regarding Feedback Was Provided and Usefulness for Success in Learning

Survey Items	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
My teacher(s) give me feedback on my assignments, discussion posts, or quizzes in Canvas.	76%	74%	82%	81%	80%	84%	80%	80%
Teacher feedback was very useful or somewhat useful for being successful in my learning.	89%	89%	88%	88%	86%	89%	87%	89%

The objective related to monitoring student progress for the learning assessment and reporting goal is **“Teachers will monitor student progress through accessing and analyzing student data on assignments and quizzes in Canvas as measured by teacher survey responses.”** Overall, 83 percent of secondary teachers indicated Canvas allowed them to effectively monitor student progress through accessing and analyzing student data on assignments and quizzes in Canvas, while 62 percent of elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 14). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were notable increases at the secondary level regarding teacher agreement (see Table 14).

Table 14: Teacher Agreement Regarding Canvas Allowing Effective Student Progress Monitoring

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Canvas allows me to effectively monitor student progress through accessing and analyzing student data on assignments and quizzes in Canvas.	61%	62%	77%	83%	73%	83%	72%	79%

The objective related to monitoring student progress in Mastery Connect for the learning assessment and reporting goal is **“Teachers will monitor student learning on assessments through accessing and analyzing student data in Mastery Connect as measured by teacher survey responses.”**

Overall, 74 percent of middle school teachers indicated that Mastery Connect allowed them to effectively monitor student learning on assessments through accessing and analyzing student data, while 56 percent of elementary school and 61 percent of high school teachers did (see Table 15). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentage of teachers at all levels who agreed with this item, most notably at the middle school level (see Table 15).

Table 15: Teacher Agreement Regarding Mastery Connect Allowing Effective Student Progress Monitoring

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Mastery Connect allows me to effectively monitor student learning on assessments through accessing and analyzing student data.	52%	56%	64%	74%	55%	61%	57%	65%

Through an open-ended survey item, teachers were given the opportunity to provide comments regarding assessing student learning in Canvas. Of the teachers who indicated they used Canvas (N=1,461), approximately 20 percent (N=292) responded to the item. Most teachers commented about Mastery Connect or the process of grades passing from Canvas to Synergy. Comments related to Mastery Connect, included the platform not being user-friendly as well as difficulties setting up assessments and accessing or interpreting the data. Comments related to syncing grades from Canvas to Synergy at the secondary level included the process being cumbersome and lengthy, comments about not syncing, and difficulty with or inefficiency of manually updating grades in Synergy. Some teachers indicated they did not use this feature as they viewed it would add work and time for them.

Data Management and Integration Processes

The second evaluation question focused on the data management and integration processes of Canvas with other systems and the progress made toward meeting the related goal and objectives. For Canvas to work effectively, there are various systems that it needs to integrate with, including the ability to import data to and from the Student Information System (i.e., to initially enroll students and import final grade data). In addition, to aid in providing high-quality instruction, Canvas should integrate with third-party applications and resources allowing teachers the capability of using various educational resources. Due to using Mastery Connect for assessments, it is also important that the transition of assessment data between these two systems is seamless. The data management and integration goal for Canvas is **“Canvas will integrate with other VBCPS platforms to ensure efficiency and accuracy.”** Objectives for this goal focused on: (1) student data, (2) secondary grades, (3) third-party integration resources and applications, and (4) Canvas and Mastery Connect.

Canvas and Synergy

For students to have access to course information within Canvas, they must be enrolled in the course. Student registration and all course information are stored within the Student Information System, Synergy. All course information in Canvas was built based on the information within Synergy. Prior to the school year, the Department of Technology works to import student course registration data from Synergy into Canvas. Any adjustments within Synergy sync nightly with Canvas. The student data objective for the data management and integration goal is **“The process of transitioning student data (e.g., course enrollment, student information) from Synergy to Canvas will be efficient and accurate as measured by ITS survey responses.”** While 91 percent of elementary school ITSs agreed the process of transitioning data from Synergy to Canvas is efficient, from 70 to 82 percent of secondary ITSs agreed. ITSs had more positive perceptions about accuracy with 91 to

100 percent of ITSs at all levels agreeing the process of transitioning data from Synergy to Canvas was accurate (see Table 16).

Table 16: ITS Agreement Regarding Data Transitioning from Synergy to Canvas Being Efficient and Accurate

Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
The process of transitioning data (e.g., course enrollment, student information) from Synergy to Canvas is efficient.	69%	91%	92%	82%	73%	70%	77%	84%
The process of transitioning data (e.g., course enrollment, student information) from Synergy to Canvas is accurate.	94%	96%	100%	91%	91%	100%	95%	96%

Note: Any ITS respondents who indicated “No experience with this process” were excluded from the analysis.

The integration between Canvas and Synergy must be bidirectional to allow for student grades to be imported from Canvas into Synergy, which is the gradebook of record. However, this process only occurs at the secondary level due to the use of standards-based grading at the elementary school level. According to the instructional technology team, it was not a requirement for secondary teachers to utilize the grade passback process, although many teachers opted to do so. As previously noted, for grades to import from Canvas to Synergy, teachers must ensure that the assignment type matches within both systems. In addition, within Canvas, there must be a due date for the assignment or quiz and the teacher must select that they would like for the grade to sync to Synergy (i.e., select the sync to SIS checkbox) when creating it.

The secondary grades objective for the data management and integration goal is **“The process of passing secondary grades from Canvas to Synergy will be efficient and accurate as measured by secondary teacher and ITS survey responses.”**

In 2022-2023, overall, 39 percent of secondary teachers and 56 percent of secondary ITSs agreed passing grades from Canvas to Synergy was efficient and accurate. Based on these results from the year-one evaluation, one recommendation from the 2022-2023 evaluation focused on developing a communication plan for disseminating resolutions to secondary classroom teachers for commonly experienced issues with the grade passback process between Canvas and Synergy to ensure the process was efficient and accurate for teachers. According to the instructional technology team, teachers experienced some issues when learning the grade passback process during the 2022-2023 school year, including experiencing difficulty when wanting to change a grade and entering grades manually.²¹ However, detailed information about the process as well as steps to take were provided to ITSs who could provide the information to teachers. Actions taken regarding this recommendation during the 2023-2024 school year included a systems administrator in the Department of Technology updating the Learning Management System SharePoint page to include a link to the document detailing the overview of the grade passback process. This information was also shared on the Canvas ITS Google site and within the secondary best practices document. ITSs were also asked to share this information with their buildings, such as through newsletters or emails, and a video playlist with information focused on grade passback was shared by ITSs with new teachers. New teachers were encouraged to meet with their school’s ITS, and ITSs had times in which teachers could schedule time to work with them, which could include working through issues related to grade passback. In addition, during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years, an instructional technology coordinator (ITC) monitored grade passback data, which included the numbers of grades that successfully and unsuccessfully synced from Canvas to Synergy. According to the ITC, in comparison to the 2022-2023 school year, the numbers of grades that unsuccessfully synced each week decreased to approximately half during the 2023-2024 school year, while the numbers of grades successfully synced increased.

When surveyed about the efficiency and accuracy of passing grades from Canvas to Synergy in 2023-2024, overall, 46 percent of secondary teachers and 57 percent of secondary ITSs agreed. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in agreement percentages for teachers at both secondary levels (from 38% to 44% at middle schools, from 39% to 47% at high schools) and high school ITSs (from 55% to 62%). Agreement remained low and there was a decrease for middle school ITSs (from 56% to 50%) (see Table 17).

Table 17: Staff Agreement Regarding Passing Grades from Canvas to Synergy Being Efficient and Accurate

Groups and Survey Items	Middle		High		Total Secondary	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – Passing grades from Canvas to Synergy is efficient and accurate.	38%	44%	39%	47%	39%	46%
ITS – Passing grades from Canvas to Synergy is efficient and accurate.	56%	50%	55%	62%	56%	57%

Note: Any ITS respondents who indicated “No experience with this process” were excluded from the analysis. Although secondary teachers did not have a similar response option, there was a slight decrease in the number of respondents to this item in comparison to other items on the survey.

Teachers and ITSs were also surveyed about the help or support they received related to grade passback in 2023-2024. Overall, 73 percent of secondary teachers and 87 percent of secondary ITSs agreed there were helpful resources or strategies provided when they looked for help or support related to passing grades from Canvas to Synergy (see Table 18). Similar to the previous item, agreement was higher at the high school level for both groups (77%-92%) regarding helpful resources or strategies being provided when looking for support than at the middle school level (68%-80%).

Table 18: Staff Agreement Regarding Accessing Third-Party Resources Being Efficient

Survey Item: When I have looked for help or support related to passing grades from Canvas to Synergy, helpful resources or strategies were provided.	Middle	High	Total
Teachers	68%	77%	73%
ITSs	80%	92%	87%

Note: Any teacher or ITS respondents who indicated “N/A” were excluded from the analysis.

Canvas and Third-Party Applications

As noted, Canvas has the capability to integrate with other applications that provide educational content, such as BrainPOP, CK-12, Discovery Education, Google, and IXL. The integration between Canvas and third-parties relies on Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI), which allow for web-based applications from different vendors to integrate fully into an LMS, such as Canvas. LTI integrations support individuals not needing to sign in when entering different platforms (i.e., single sign on) and for the data to transfer across applications. The third-party integration resources and applications objective for the data management and integration goal is **“Accessing third-party integration resources and applications within Canvas will be efficient as measured by teacher and ITS survey responses.”**

In 2023-2024, at the elementary school and high school levels, from 92 to 97 percent of ITSs agreed accessing third-party resources (e.g., BrainPOP, CK-12, Discovery Education, Google, IXL) through Canvas was efficient, while 64 percent of middle school ITSs agreed (see Table 19). When teachers were surveyed in 2023-2024, from 67 to 82 percent of teachers agreed accessing third-party resources through Canvas was efficient. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of elementary school ITSs and teachers at all levels who agreed accessing third-party resources was efficient, while the percentage of middle school ITSs who agreed decreased (see Table 19).

Table 19: Staff Agreement Regarding Accessing Third-Party Resources Being Efficient

Groups and Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – Accessing third-party resources through Canvas is efficient.	60%	67%	73%	82%	66%	80%	67%	78%
ITS – Accessing third-party resources through Canvas is efficient.	75%	97%	71%	64%	91%	92%	77%	90%

Note: Any ITS respondents who indicated “No experience with this process” were excluded from the analysis.

Canvas and Mastery Connect

Student information data, including course enrollment and demographic information, are synced nightly into Mastery Connect from ClassLink. However, there is a delay of one day. In addition, grades from Mastery Connect assessments sync from Mastery Connect into Canvas. Teachers can also indicate if they would like for these assessments to be synced with Synergy, the gradebook of record, through Canvas. In addition, to use Mastery Connect within Canvas, teachers must take several steps, including linking the appropriate Curriculum Map created by the Department of Teaching and Learning with the correct course.²²

The Canvas and Mastery Connect objective for the data management and integration goal is **“The process of transitioning data to and from Canvas and Mastery Connect will be efficient and accurate as measured by ITS responses.”**

When surveyed about data integration between Canvas and Mastery Connect, from 77 to 82 percent of elementary school and middle school ITSs indicated the process of transitioning data to and from Canvas and Mastery Connect was efficient, while 38 percent of high school ITSs agreed (see Table 20). Higher percentages of ITSs at all levels (from 91% to 94%) indicated that the process was accurate. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were notable increases in the percentages of ITSs who agreed the process of transitioning data to and from Canvas and Mastery Connect was efficient and accurate, with the exception of high school ITSs regarding the efficiency of the process, which had a decrease (see Table 20).

Table 20: ITS Agreement Regarding Transitioning Data To and From Canvas and Mastery Connect Being Efficient and Accurate

Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
The process of transitioning data to and from Canvas and Mastery Connect is efficient.	59%	77%	50%	82%	50%	38%	54%	69%
The process of transitioning data to and from Canvas and Mastery Connect is accurate.	71%	94%	81%	91%	70%	92%	74%	93%

Note: Any ITS respondents who indicated “No experience with this process” were excluded from the analysis.

Through an open-ended survey item, ITSs were given the opportunity to provide comments regarding data management and integration between Canvas and other systems. Of the 61 ITSs who responded to the survey, approximately 18 percent of ITSs (N=11) provided a comment. Some ITSs commented about challenges with Mastery Connect, especially related to accessing and/or interpreting the data. A couple ITSs commented about occasional technology issues connecting with third-party resources, while some ITSs identified improvement areas, such as Mastery Connect being more user-friendly and better connections with third-party applications.

Professional Learning and Support

The third evaluation question focused on professional learning and support provided for Canvas and Mastery Connect and the progress made toward meeting the related goals and objectives.

During the summer 2022 Leadership Conference, sessions were held for administrators that provided an overview of Canvas and best practices for using the platform. In addition, in preparation for the divisionwide implementation of Canvas in 2022-2023, optional professional learning was offered to division staff in June and August 2022 through Camp Canvas, which was a one-day in-person event. Camp Canvas provided many sessions offered by ITSs, teachers, and central office staff on various aspects of using Canvas. Staff attending the event could choose a learning path with suggested sessions based on their grade level and familiarity with the system. Videos covering the information from all Camp Canvas sessions were posted on the VBCPS Instructional Technology Canvas Google site for staff to access asynchronously at any point after the conference.²³ Beyond the Camp Canvas conference, school ITSs were primarily responsible for training other school staff on using Canvas. In addition, the Canvas Best Practices documents created by the Department of Teaching and Learning were expected to be shared with teachers prior to the school year to ensure they were “Day 1 ready.” These best practices documents are updated annually with any new information.

School ITSs and library media specialists (LMSs) participated in monthly meetings with the instructional technology team throughout the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years that covered various topics. In the spring of 2024, time was devoted to identifying areas of weakness and exploring fixes for identified issues. Overall, ITSs and LMSs were expected to share information from these meetings with staff in their buildings. According to the instructional technology team, teachers could schedule time to work with their ITS, and new teachers were encouraged to do so. There are also various self-guided professional learning opportunities for using Canvas, including videos posted on the Instructional Technology Canvas Google site, the Training Services Portal on the Canvas Help menu, the Canvas YouTube site, and various Canvas professional learning courses offered through Virtual Virginia.

Additional professional learning opportunities were offered related to Mastery Connect. During the 2022-2023 school year, professional learning was offered to elementary school level literacy leaders and math coaches who were primarily responsible for supporting teachers in their use of Mastery Connect.²⁴ In addition, elementary school ITSs were provided professional learning and handouts, which were expected to be provided to teachers for support. At the secondary levels, ITSs, LMSs, and math and literacy coaches were provided professional learning on Mastery Connect from the Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability’s Office of Student Assessment in September through November 2022 on item and assessment creation and how to support teachers and other coaches in the building.²⁵ At the secondary level, sessions for secondary teachers were offered on three dates in October and November 2022 that addressed using assessments that have already been created and building new test items and assessments.²⁶ Two additional training dates were offered to secondary teachers in January 2023.²⁷ Teachers who attended these trainings were expected to share what they learned with colleagues in their departments and/or grade levels. During 2023-2024, ITCs attended a training with reading specialists to provide them professional learning on Mastery Connect. During summer 2023 and summer 2024, there were sessions related to Mastery Connect for building leaders at the Leadership Conferences and for teachers at the Department of Teaching and Learning (DTAL) Conference. Additionally, during regular monthly ITS/LMS meetings, ITCs provided updates about Mastery Connect throughout the 2023-2024 school year. ITSs were encouraged to provide coaching, work with teachers one-on-one, and walk through the processes. The ITSs were also encouraged to bring any issues or concerns mentioned by teachers to the monthly ITS/LMS meetings. Additional self-paced resources on Mastery Connect were available online: VBCPS Growing with Mastery Connect – Canvas Course, Secondary Quick Reference Guide, and Mastery Connect Help Connect.

In general, ITSs were also tasked with showing students how to use Canvas.²⁸ At some schools, ITSs created activities so that students could become familiar with the system. There were also videos that elementary school teachers could show students to introduce the system at the beginning of the school year. In addition, at some schools, courses available to all students had resources about using Canvas. On the survey, students were asked whether resources were available to help them become familiar with Canvas. From 88 to 92 percent of students depending on the school level agreed resources were available to help them become familiar with Canvas so they could use it in their classes. In comparison to 2022-2023, there was an increase in the percentage of high school students who agreed (from 83% to 88%).

The professional learning and support goal for Canvas is “**Professional learning opportunities and support will provide teachers, administrators, and ITSs with the necessary information to utilize Canvas and Mastery Connect.**” Objectives for this goal focused on: (1) Canvas professional learning, (2) Canvas support, (3) Mastery Connect professional learning, and (4) Mastery Connect support.

Canvas

The Canvas professional learning objective for the professional learning and support goal is “**Professional learning for Canvas will provide teachers, administrators, and ITSs with the necessary knowledge to use Canvas as measured by staff survey responses.**” At least 84 percent of teachers, ITSs, and administrators at all levels indicated they participated in professional learning on Canvas (see Table 21).

Table 21: Percentages of Staff Who Participated in Professional Learning on Canvas

Groups	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers	97%	93%	98%	92%	95%	94%	97%	93%
ITS	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92%	96%	98%
Admin	93%	94%	91%	87%	88%	84%	91%	89%

Overall, 84 percent of teachers who participated in professional learning on Canvas agreed the professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Canvas in their classroom. As shown in Table 22, higher agreement percentages were found at the secondary level (from 86% to 90%) than at the elementary school level (66%). All elementary school and middle school ITSs agreed the professional learning they received on Canvas allowed them to support the teachers at their school during implementation, while 83 percent of high school ITSs agreed. From 88 to 92 percent of administrators agreed the professional learning they received on Canvas provided them with the necessary knowledge for their school’s Canvas implementation. In comparison to 2022-2023, with the exception of high school ITSs, there were increases in the percentages of staff who agreed professional learning on Canvas was effective, most notably for secondary teachers (see Table 22).

Table 22: Staff Agreement Regarding Effective Professional Learning on Canvas

Groups and Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – The PL I received on Canvas provided me with the necessary knowledge to use Canvas in my classroom.	61%	66%	73%	86%	78%	90%	73%	84%
ITS – The PL I received on Canvas allowed me to support the teachers at my school during implementation.	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%	83%	98%	97%
Admin – The PL I received on Canvas provided me with the necessary knowledge for my school’s Canvas implementation.	86%	88%	84%	92%	82%	88%	84%	89%

The Canvas support objective for the professional learning and support goal is **“Canvas support will be available when needed, helpful resources or strategies are provided, and issues are resolved in a timely manner as measured by staff survey responses.”** When surveyed about the support they received related to Canvas, from 87 to 93 percent of secondary teachers at all levels indicated the help they received was available, resources were helpful, and there was a timely resolution of the issues, while from 71 to 78 percent of elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 23). In comparison to 2022-2023, at the secondary levels, there were increases in agreement percentages of teachers regarding these items (from 3 to 6 percentage points). However, agreement at the elementary school level varied by item. There were slight decreases of 2 to 4 percentage points regarding help being available and resources being helpful, while there was an increase of 2 percentage points regarding the issues being resolved in a timely manner. In addition, in 2023-2024, at least 94 percent of administrators and 92 percent of ITSs at all levels agreed with these items, which was consistent with high agreement percentages in 2022-2023.

Table 23: Teacher Agreement Regarding Receiving Effective Canvas Support in 2023-2024

School Levels	Help Available			Resources Helpful			Timely Resolution of Issues		
	Teacher (Grades 3-5)	Admin	ITS	Teacher (Grades 3-5)	Admin	ITS	Teacher (Grades 3-5)	Admin	ITS
Elementary	76%	100%	100%	71%	98%	100%	78%	100%	100%
Middle	90%	96%	100%	87%	96%	100%	88%	100%	100%
High	93%	100%	100%	92%	95%	100%	92%	94%	92%
Total	90%	99%	100%	87%	96%	100%	88%	98%	98%

Note: These percentages exclude staff who reported the question was not applicable.

When teachers were surveyed about the training or support they used to learn about Canvas, the highest percentage of teachers at all levels indicated they used ITS or LMS support (from 66% to 68%) (see Table 24). In addition, approximately half of teachers indicated they used the Canvas Page on the VBCPS Instructional Technology Google site (from 47% to 58%). From 17 to 28 percent of teachers, depending on level, indicated they used Canvas Quick Guides, the VBCPS Canvas YouTube Playlists, or Camp Canvas. Lower percentages of teachers indicated they used tools on the Canvas Help Menu or Panda Pros. From 10 to 12 percent of teachers depending on level indicated they did not use any of the listed resources for Canvas training or support. In comparison to 2022-2023, there was an increase in the percentage of elementary school teachers who indicated they did not use any of the listed resources for Canvas training or support (from 8% to 12%).

Table 24: Percentage of Teachers Who Indicated Using Various Canvas Trainings or Supports in 2023-2024

Used for Canvas training or support	Teachers			
	Elem (Grades 3-5)	Middle	High	Total
ITS/LMS Support	68%	66%	66%	66%
Canvas Page – Instructional Technology Google Site	49%	47%	58%	53%
Canvas Quick Guides	27%	27%	28%	27%
VBCPS Canvas YouTube Playlists	21%	21%	26%	23%
Camp Canvas	28%	19%	17%	20%
Training Services Portal (Canvas Help Menu)	8%	7%	7%	7%
Canvas Support 7 days/365 (Canvas Help Menu)	3%	5%	4%	4%
Panda Pros	2%	2%	3%	2%
None of the above	12%	11%	10%	11%

When ITSs were surveyed about the training or support they used for Canvas, at least 60 percent of ITSs at all levels indicated they used other ITS/LMS support, the Canvas Page on the Instructional Technology Google Site, Canvas Quick Guides, Canvas YouTube Playlists, and Camp Canvas (see Table 25). Lower percentages of ITSs indicated they used the Canvas Support through the Canvas Help Menu or Panda Pros. For administrators, the majority indicated they used ITS or LMS support (from 70% to 72%). From 34 to 47 percent, depending on level, indicated they used the Canvas Page on the Instructional Technology Google site. Lower percentages of administrators indicated they used the other resources, while from 10 to 16 percent indicated they did not use any resources. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in the percentages of administrators at the elementary school (from 4% to 12%) and high school levels (from 10% to 16%) who indicated they did not use any of the listed resources for Canvas training or support.

Table 25: Percentage of Staff Who Indicated Using Various Canvas Trainings or Supports in 2023-2024

Used for Canvas training or support	ITS				Admin			
	Elem	Middle	High	Total	Elem	Middle	High	Total
ITS/LMS Support	86%	90%	92%	88%	70%	72%	72%	71%
Canvas Page – Instructional Technology Google Site	89%	90%	85%	88%	47%	34%	46%	44%
Canvas Quick Guides	78%	90%	100%	85%	24%	14%	22%	21%
Camp Canvas	92%	60%	69%	81%	35%	7%	8%	20%
VBCPS Canvas YouTube Playlists	69%	70%	85%	73%	9%	7%	10%	9%
Training Services Portal (Canvas Help Menu)	25%	40%	38%	31%	12%	3%	8%	9%
Canvas Support 7 days/365 (Canvas Help Menu)	33%	10%	46%	32%	0%	3%	2%	1%
Panda Pros	25%	0%	31%	22%	0%	0%	6%	2%
None of the above	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%	10%	16%	13%

Mastery Connect

The Mastery Connect professional learning objective for the professional learning and support goal is **“Professional learning for Mastery Connect will provide teachers with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect as measured by teacher survey responses.”**

In 2022-2023, when teachers were surveyed on the effectiveness of the professional learning received on Mastery Connect, from 49 to 56 percent of teachers who participated in professional learning, depending on school level, agreed the professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classroom. When surveyed about the support received related to Mastery Connect, from 60

to 72 percent of teachers at all levels agreed help was available, resources were helpful, and there was a timely resolution of the issues. Based on these results, one recommendation from the 2022-2023 year-one implementation evaluation focused on ensuring professional learning opportunities and support on utilizing Mastery Connect were provided for classroom teachers to have the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classrooms. According to the instructional technology team, actions taken regarding this recommendation during 2023-2024 included providing training documents on the ITS Google site, which is accessible through the staff Classlink dashboard and was also shared by ITSs. In addition, a document with specific information about Mastery Connect settings was updated and provided through the ITS Google site. To help make the process more efficient for teachers, staff in the Department of Teaching and Learning added some new prebuilt assessments and teachers were encouraged to add assessments that could be accessible to other teachers.

When surveyed about participation in professional learning related to Mastery Connect, from 76 to 82 percent of elementary school and middle school teachers indicated they participated, while 68 percent of high school teachers indicated they did (see Table 26). Nearly all ITSs indicated they participated in professional learning on Mastery Connect and from 76 to 90 percent of administrators indicated they did.

Table 26: Percentages of Staff Who Participated in Professional Learning on Mastery Connect

Groups	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers	89%	82%	80%	76%	68%	68%	76%	73%
ITS	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92%	98%	98%
Admin	77%	90%	85%	83%	73%	76%	77%	84%

In 2023-2024, when surveyed about the effectiveness of the professional learning received, from 69 to 70 percent of secondary teachers who participated in professional learning agreed the professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classroom, while 51 percent of elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 27). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were notable increases in the agreement percentages of secondary teachers regarding the effectiveness of professional learning on Mastery Connect. The agreement percentage remained relatively low for elementary school teachers.

In addition, from 94 to 100 percent of elementary school and middle school ITSs agreed the professional learning they received allowed them to support the teachers at their school during implementation, while 75 percent of high school ITSs agreed. From 79 to 84 percent of administrators agreed the professional learning they received on Mastery Connect provided them with the necessary knowledge for their school's Canvas implementation. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were notable increases in the agreement percentages of ITSs and administrators at all levels regarding the effectiveness of professional learning on Mastery Connect.

Table 27: Staff Agreement Regarding Effective Professional Learning on Mastery Connect

Groups and Survey Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – The PL I received on Mastery Connect provided me with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in my classroom.	49%	51%	56%	69%	51%	70%	52%	66%
ITS – The PL I received on Mastery Connect allowed me to support the teachers at my school during implementation.	87%	94%	71%	100%	60%	75%	76%	91%
Admin – The PL I received on Mastery Connect provided me with the necessary knowledge for my school’s Canvas implementation.	69%	79%	70%	80%	59%	84%	66%	81%

The Mastery Connect support objective for the professional learning and support goal is **“Mastery Connect support will be available when needed, helpful resources or strategies are provided, and issues are resolved in a timely manner as measured by staff survey responses.”** When surveyed about the support received related to Mastery Connect, from 76 to 82 percent of secondary teachers agreed the help was available, resources were helpful, and there was a timely resolution of the issues, while from 64 to 69 percent of elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 28). In addition, at least 85 percent of ITSs and 84 percent of administrators at all levels agreed with similar items (see tables 29 and 30). In comparison to 2022-2023, in nearly all cases, there were notable increases in the agreement percentages of teachers, ITSs, and administrators at all levels regarding the effectiveness of Mastery Connect support received. However, the increases for elementary school teachers were smaller and remained relatively low.

Table 28: Teacher Agreement Regarding Receiving Effective Mastery Connect Support

School Levels	Help Available		Resources Helpful		Timely Resolution of Issues	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Elementary (Grades 3-5)	65%	69%	60%	64%	63%	64%
Middle	72%	82%	67%	80%	68%	80%
High	70%	80%	64%	76%	63%	76%
Total	69%	79%	64%	75%	65%	75%

Note: These numbers exclude staff who reported the question was not applicable.

Table 29: ITS Agreement Regarding Receiving Effective Mastery Connect Support

School Levels	Help Available		Resources Helpful		Timely Resolution of Issues	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Elementary	91%	97%	95%	97%	100%	94%
Middle	75%	100%	81%	100%	75%	80%
High	90%	92%	90%	85%	80%	92%
Total	85%	96%	90%	95%	87%	91%

Note: These numbers exclude staff who reported the question was not applicable.

Table 30: Administrator Agreement Regarding Receiving Effective Mastery Connect Support

School Levels	Help Available		Resources Helpful		Timely Resolution of Issues	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Elementary	81%	88%	77%	84%	83%	85%
Middle	70%	96%	70%	91%	68%	95%
High	90%	94%	72%	85%	81%	90%
Total	81%	92%	74%	86%	79%	89%

Note: These numbers exclude staff who reported the question was not applicable.

Through an open-ended survey item, teachers and ITSs were provided the opportunity to provide comments regarding professional learning and support. Of the total teacher respondents who reported using Canvas on the survey (N=1,461), approximately 10 percent responded to the item (N=142). Several teachers commented on positive aspects of their ITS who provided them support. Some teachers indicated they did not have additional training beyond other teachers or support from colleagues. Other teachers identified various other tools that were used, such as Googling their issues. Some teachers identified a lack of awareness of the resources listed on the survey. Of the total ITSs who responded to the survey (N=61), 11 percent of ITSs responded to this item (N=7). ITSs commented on the use of various tools, such as the helpfulness of ITCs and other ITSs, use of YouTube videos, Virtual Virginia Canvas training, and regular ITS meetings.

Parent Access and Communication

The fourth evaluation question focused on the status of parent access to Canvas and communication using Canvas. Parents can access their child’s course information in a Canvas account through ParentVue, which allows viewing information in Canvas as an observer, including modules, assignments, and assessments. Due to the potential of being able to view another student’s work, parents are unable to view discussion boards. According to the instructional technology team, there is a connection issue between ParentVue and Canvas when parents attempt to access Canvas using the phone application. The alternative for parents is to utilize a web browser on their phone to access Canvas through ParentVue. Although attempts were made by the Student Information System company, Synergy, to correct the connection issue with the phone application, it will likely not be fixed. Detailed information for parents and the community regarding the Canvas system and how to access Canvas through the web browser were posted to the VBSchools.com website in August 2023.

When parents were surveyed in 2023-2024, overall, 61 percent of parents of students in grades 3 through 12 who responded to the survey indicated they accessed their child’s Canvas account through ParentVue (see Table 31). A higher percentage of parents of middle school students (71%) indicated they accessed their child’s information in Canvas than parents of high school students (65%) or elementary school students in grades 3 through 5 (50%).

Table 31: Percentages of Parents Who Accessed Canvas

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 3-5)	Middle	High	Total
Accessed child’s Canvas account through ParentVue.	50%	71%	65%	61%

Of those who indicated they did not access Canvas or didn’t know whether they did, 34 percent indicated they were aware they could access their child’s Canvas account (see Table 32). Higher percentages of middle school (42%) and high school (41%) parents indicated they were aware of Canvas than parents of elementary school students in grades 3 through 5 (26%). In addition, when parents were asked about the reasons for not accessing their child’s account, they commented on technical issues with accessing the platform, lack of need or perceived necessity, lack of awareness, and time constraints. Some parents also commented specifically

about not having any issues with their child’s performance or the current level of communication with their child’s teacher.

Table 32: Percentages of Parents Who Did Not Access Canvas but Were Aware They Could Access

Survey Item	Elem	Middle	High	Total
Aware could access child’s Canvas account and related course information through ParentVue.	26%	42%	41%	34%

When parents who accessed their child’s Canvas account were asked about its usefulness, 89 percent of parents indicated accessing the information was very useful or somewhat useful with little variation by school level (see Table 33). In comparison to 2022-2023, there was a decrease in the percentage of parents of elementary students in grades 3 through 5 who indicated Canvas was useful, while the percentages remained the same at the secondary levels.

Table 33: Percentages of Parents Who Indicated Access Was Very Useful or Somewhat Useful

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Accessing child’s course information or work in Canvas was very useful or somewhat useful.	89%	87%	90%	90%	92%	92%	91%	89%

Of those parents who accessed their child’s Canvas account, from 80 to 83 percent, depending on level, agreed the information in Canvas was easily accessible for them. As shown in Table 34, from 77 to 79 percent of parents agreed accessing Canvas helped them understand what their child was working on in school. In comparison to 2022-2023, there were decreases in the percentage of parents of elementary students in grades 3 through 5 and parents of high school students who agreed with these items, while the percentages increased at middle school or remained relatively the same.

Table 34: Parent Agreement Regarding Accessing Canvas

Survey Items	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Information in Canvas is easily accessible for me.	87%	83%	77%	82%	82%	80%	81%	82%
Accessing Canvas has helped me understand what my child is working on in school.	81%	77%	79%	78%	82%	79%	81%	79%

Through an open-ended survey item, parents had the opportunity to provide comments related to Canvas in general. Of the total parent respondents who reported they accessed Canvas on the survey (N=2,899), approximately 14 percent provided a response to this item (N=419). One theme that emerged from parents included finding the information in Canvas helpful for them. Other themes that emerged included experiencing technical issues related to accessing Canvas or having difficulty understanding or navigating the system. In addition, parents commented on lack of consistency across teachers or courses and information not being updated.

Progress Toward Meeting Outcome Goals and Objectives

The fifth evaluation question focused on progress made toward meeting the outcome goals and objectives. The outcome goals for Canvas were related to Canvas promoting communication and collaboration as well as supporting student-centered practices.

Goal 1: Canvas will promote communication and collaboration amongst teachers and between teachers and students.

A benefit of an LMS includes the ability to connect and communicate with others. Canvas allows teachers and students to communicate with each other through messaging and feedback on assignments. Canvas also allows teachers to connect, communicate, and collaborate within and across schools as well as with a broader online community. Canvas offers Canvas Commons, which is a learning objective repository where teachers can store course content for their own use and for collaboration with colleagues both within and outside the division. During 2023-2024, teachers were paid to create instructional materials that were added to Canvas Commons to allow others to access them.

Objective 1: Canvas will help facilitate the communication between teachers and students through messaging and assignment feedback as measured by staff and student survey responses.

Most secondary teachers, students, and other staff agreed Canvas helped facilitate communication, while there were lower percentages of agreement at elementary schools. When surveyed, from 82 to 84 percent of secondary teachers indicated Canvas helped facilitate their communication with students through messaging and assignment feedback, whereas 45 percent of grades 3 through 5 elementary school teachers agreed (see Table 35). Similarly, from 84 to 86 percent of secondary students indicated that Canvas helped them communicate with their teachers through messaging and assignment feedback, while 52 percent of fourth- and fifth-grade elementary school students agreed. A similar pattern of results was found for ITSs (from 85% to 100% for secondary and 63% for elementary) and administrators (from 87% to 92% for secondary and 72% for elementary).

Table 35: Staff and Student Agreement Regarding Canvas Facilitating Communication Between Students and Teachers

Survey Groups and Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – Canvas has helped facilitate my communication with students through messaging and assignment feedback.	38%	45%	71%	82%	72%	84%	65%	77%
Students – Canvas helps me communicate with my teachers through messaging and assignment feedback.	59%	52%	85%	84%	80%	86%	76%	77%
ITS – Canvas has helped facilitate communication between teachers and students through messaging and assignment feedback.	38%	63%	88%	100%	80%	85%	65%	74%
Admin – Canvas has helped facilitate communication between teachers and students at my school through messaging and assignment feedback.	80%	72%	93%	92%	89%	87%	86%	81%

Objective 2: Canvas will help facilitate the collaboration between teachers as measured by teacher survey responses.

Regarding collaboration with other teachers, as shown in Table 36, from 63 to 68 percent of secondary teachers agreed Canvas helped facilitate their collaboration with other teachers, while 43 percent of elementary school teachers agreed. Notably higher percentages of secondary ITSs (90%-92%) and administrators (85%-92%) agreed Canvas helped facilitate collaboration between teachers at their school, while again lower percentages of elementary school ITSs (81%) and administrators (63%) agreed.

Table 36: Staff Agreement Regarding Canvas Facilitating Collaboration Between Teachers

Survey Groups and Items	Elem		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Teachers – Canvas has helped facilitate my collaboration with other teachers.	41%	43%	57%	68%	50%	63%	51%	62%
ITS – Canvas has helped facilitate collaboration between teachers at my school.	64%	81%	88%	90%	80%	92%	76%	85%
Admin – Canvas has helped facilitate collaboration between teachers at my school.	68%	63%	90%	92%	84%	85%	78%	76%

Teachers were also surveyed about the various ways in which teachers collaborated with other teachers regarding instructional materials. As shown in Table 37, from 78 to 81 percent of secondary teachers indicated they collaborated with other teachers regarding instructional materials through either PLC courses, all staff or all students courses, a sandbox course, and/or Course commons, while 67 percent of elementary school teachers indicated collaborating with other teachers in one or more of these ways. The highest percentages of teachers at all levels indicated they collaborated through PLC courses (see Table 37). At the middle school level, approximately half of teachers (51%) indicated they collaborated with other teachers regarding instructional materials through all staff and/or all students courses, while approximately a third of teachers at the elementary school and high school levels indicated they collaborated in that way. In addition, from 38 to 40 percent of secondary teachers indicated they collaborated through a sandbox course, while only 18 percent of elementary school teachers indicated they collaborated in that way. From 13 to 25 percent of teachers indicated they collaborated through Course commons.

Table 37: Percentages of Teachers Who Indicated They Collaborated With Teachers Regarding Instructional Materials

Survey Item: I have collaborated with other teachers regarding instructional materials in...	Elem (Grades 3-5)	Middle	High	Total
At least one of the following ways	67%	81%	78%	77%
PLC course(s).	44%	60%	57%	56%
All staff and/or all students course(s).	39%	51%	35%	41%
Sandbox course.	18%	40%	38%	35%
Course commons.	13%	20%	25%	21%
None of these ways.	33%	19%	22%	23%

Goal 2: Canvas will support student-centered practices that foster student agency and student engagement.

Another potential benefit of an LMS includes the ability to support educational practices that are student centered. As noted in the VBCPS Canvas Best Practices documents, “As we progress in using a learning management system, course instructors should consider designing student-centered experiences that blend active and engaged learning both online and offline. Blended learning strategies support increased student

agency concerning time, place, path, and pace and allow for alternate methods to assess mastery.”²⁹ Therefore, it was the hope that teachers utilized Canvas to design student-centered experiences that blended active and engaged learning.

Objective 1: Using Canvas will allow students to make choices about their learning as measured by student survey responses.

From 76 to 77 percent of students at all levels agreed using Canvas allowed them to make choices about their learning (see Table 38).

Table 38: Student Agreement Regarding Canvas Allowing Them to Make Choices About Learning

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Using Canvas allows me to make choices about my learning.	78%	76%	78%	76%	73%	77%	76%	76%

Objective 2: Using Canvas will help students monitor their learning as measured by student survey responses.

From 75 to 80 percent of students at all levels agreed using Canvas helped them monitor their learning progress (see Table 39).

Table 39: Student Agreement Regarding Canvas Helping Them Monitor Learning Progress

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Using Canvas helps me monitor my learning progress.	77%	75%	81%	80%	75%	79%	78%	79%

Objective 3: Using Canvas will help encourage students to think creatively as measured by student survey responses.

Somewhat lower percentages of students at all levels agreed using Canvas helped encourage them to think creatively, with 68 to 70 percent of students at each level agreeing (see Table 40).

Table 40: Student Agreement Regarding Canvas Helping Encourage Them to Think Creatively

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 4-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Using Canvas helps encourage me to think creatively.	71%	69%	71%	68%	66%	70%	69%	69%

Objective 4: Canvas supports teachers providing student-centered practices as measured by teacher survey responses.

When teachers were surveyed, overall 80 percent agreed Canvas helped them provide instruction using student-centered practices. As shown in Table 41, higher percentages of secondary teachers agreed (from 82% to 84%) than elementary school teachers (65%).

Table 41: Teacher Agreement Regarding Canvas Helping Provide Student-Center Practices

Survey Item	Elem (Grades 3-5)		Middle		High		Total	
	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24
Canvas has helped me provide instruction using student-centered practices.	61%	65%	74%	82%	73%	84%	71%	80%

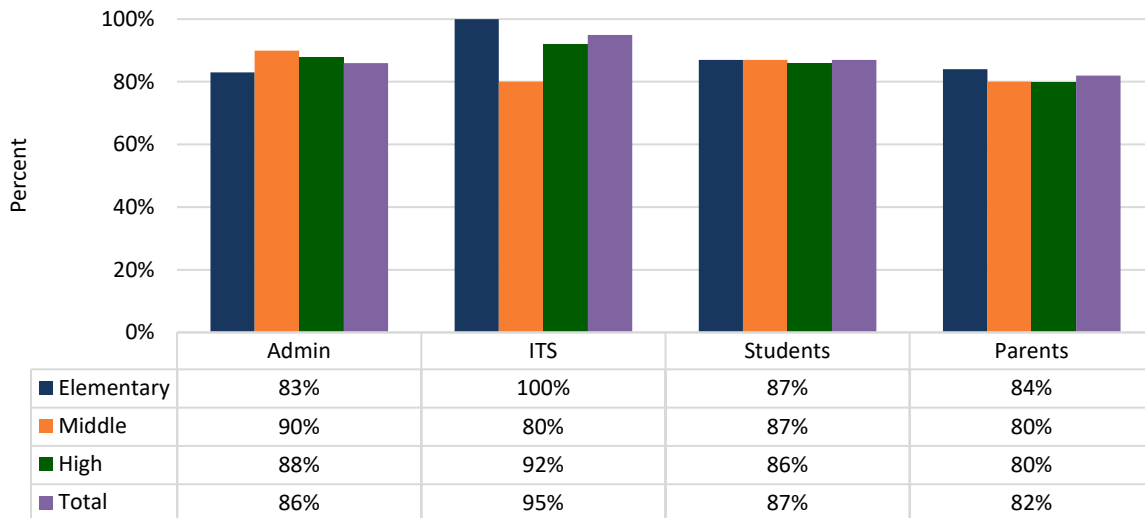
Stakeholder Satisfaction and Program Strengths and Areas for Improvement

The sixth evaluation question focused on stakeholder satisfaction and areas of strength and improvement.

Satisfaction

When surveyed about satisfaction with Canvas in 2023-2024, across all school levels, at least 83 percent of administrators, 80 percent of ITSs, 86 percent of students, and 80 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with Canvas (see Figure 5). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were increases in satisfaction percentages for secondary students (from 83% to 87% at middle schools, from 79% to 86% at high schools) and elementary school ITSs (from 92% to 100%). There were decreases in satisfaction percentages for elementary school administrators (from 89% to 83%) and parents (from 87% to 84%). Agreement for other groups at other levels remained relatively the same (i.e., two percentage points or less).

Figure 5: Staff, Student, and Parent Satisfaction in 2023-2024



Teacher Satisfaction

In 2022-2023, when teachers were surveyed about their overall level of satisfaction with Canvas, 52 percent of grades 3 through 5 teachers, 66 percent of middle school teachers, and 67 percent of high school teachers indicated they were satisfied (see Table 42). Based on these results, one recommendation from the 2022-2023 year-one implementation evaluation focused on further exploring the reasons for lower satisfaction rates with Canvas among teachers, especially at the elementary school level, to identify potential solutions. According to the instructional technology team, actions taken regarding this recommendation during 2023-2024 included working with the ITS and LMS staff to identify areas of weakness and work to address them. In February 2023, at the monthly ITS and LMS meeting with the instructional technology team, staff conducted a Canvas pulse check and identified areas of weakness to explore. In the March 2023 monthly meeting, staff conducted a Canvas triage system, which included working through the areas of weakness to develop fixes. During this

meeting, ITSs and LMSs were encouraged to work with teachers at their school the following month regarding these areas. As implementation of Canvas continued throughout the 2023-2024 school year, teachers continued to become more comfortable with Canvas, which allowed for more advanced and powerful features within Canvas to be used. Additionally, Canvas courses continued to be used for professional learning purposes, including the Office of Professional Growth and Innovation, which allowed teachers who were participating in the professional learning to see models of courses and features. Similarly, the instructional technology team encouraged schools to use their “All Staff and Students” courses, with coaching from ITSs, to model with teachers how to use Canvas. In addition, in spring 2024, the Learning Management System SharePoint site was updated. This site includes quick links with information on VBCPS resources, such as the Instructional Technology Canvas site, Canvas Quick Guide, Best Practices documents, and videos of professional learning sessions, as well as resources and guides from Instructure, which is the company that owns Canvas.

When teachers were surveyed about their satisfaction with Canvas in 2023-2024, from 81 to 84 percent of secondary teachers indicated they were satisfied with Canvas, while 64 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers indicated they were satisfied (see Table 42). In comparison to 2022-2023, there were notable improvements in satisfaction at all levels with satisfaction increasing 15 and 17 percentage points at the secondary levels and 12 percentage points at the elementary school level. Although there was notable improvement, satisfaction remained lower at the elementary school level.

Table 42: Teacher Satisfaction in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

School Levels	2022-23	2023-24	Improvement
Elementary	52%	64%	+12
Middle	66%	81%	+15
High	67%	84%	+17
Total	64%	80%	+16

Teachers who indicated they were dissatisfied with Canvas were also asked to select the primary reason(s) for their dissatisfaction. Potential areas for dissatisfaction were listed as options on the survey based on comments from staff on the 2022-2023 survey. As shown in Table 43, overall, 80 percent of teachers who were dissatisfied with Canvas indicated difficulty navigating the system was a primary reason for their dissatisfaction. In addition, 64 percent indicated difficulty moving or copying content across courses and 59 percent indicated organization of content within Canvas were primary reasons. In addition, depending on school level, from 40 to 53 percent of teachers indicated issues related to Mastery Connect was a primary reason for dissatisfaction. At the elementary school level, 49 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers indicated they needed additional time to learn. Of those elementary school teachers who indicated they needed additional time to learn, the majority also selected logistical issues, such as difficulty navigating the system (83%), difficulty moving or copying content across courses (69%), and issues related to Mastery Connect (64%). In addition, 48 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers indicated Canvas was developmentally inappropriate for their students. Lower percentages of secondary teachers indicated this was a reason for dissatisfaction. While 47 percent of middle school teachers indicated issues related to grades passing from Canvas to Synergy was a reason for dissatisfaction, 37 percent of high school teachers indicated it as a reason. Lower percentages of teachers at all levels indicated the need for additional professional learning being related to dissatisfaction (from 18% to 24%). In addition, from 5 to 15 percent of teachers indicated there was another reason, which they could elaborate on with a comment. These comments focused on inability to customize the platform, technical issues experienced, need for better training or support, difficulty integrating Canvas with other platforms, lack of student engagement, and preferences for a simpler platform.

Table 43: Dissatisfied Teachers Reasons for Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction Reason	Elementary N=86	Middle N=91	High N=111	Total N=288
Difficulty navigating the system	78%	79%	82%	80%
Difficulty moving or copying content across courses	56%	75%	61%	64%
Organization of content within Canvas	44%	62%	69%	59%
Issues related to Mastery Connect	53%	40%	48%	47%
Issues related to grades passing from Canvas to Synergy	N/A	47%	37%	40%
Need additional time to learn	49%	22%	22%	30%
Developmentally inappropriate for my students	48%	19%	8%	23%
Additional professional learning	24%	18%	19%	20%
Other	5%	13%	15%	11%
None of the above	3%	3%	5%	4%

Teachers who indicated they were dissatisfied with Canvas were also provided an opportunity to comment on potential solutions for dissatisfaction. Of the total teacher respondents who reported being dissatisfied with Canvas on the survey (N=289), approximately 27 percent responded to this item (N=78). Themes regarding solutions for dissatisfaction from teachers focused on aspects of Canvas, including the platform not being user friendly and taking too many clicks or steps to complete processes. In addition, teachers commented about the desire for customization and flexibility when organizing course content, such as wanting to use different colors for headers or modules or adding folders within modules.

Teachers were also surveyed about whether their needs were met with Canvas. Overall, 85 percent of teachers indicated Canvas met all or some of their needs (see Table 44). From 86 to 90 percent of secondary teachers indicated Canvas met all or some of their needs, while 67 percent of elementary school teachers did.

Table 44: Percentages of Teachers Indicating Needs Being Met By Canvas

School Levels	Met All Needs	Met Some Needs	Met Few Needs	Met None of Needs
Elementary	13%	54%	28%	5%
Middle	30%	56%	12%	2%
High	35%	55%	10%	1%
Total	30%	55%	14%	2%

Teachers who indicated some, few, or none of their needs were met were provided an opportunity to comment on their needs that were not being met and any potential solutions. Of the total teacher respondents who reported Canvas did not meet all of their needs on the survey (N=995), approximately 34 percent responded to this item (N=340). Similar to themes that emerged related to solutions for dissatisfaction, themes were related to aspects of Canvas. For example, comments focused on the platform not being user friendly, taking too many clicks or steps to complete processes, and processes being too time consuming. In addition, teachers commented on the need for more organization within the platform, such as the use of folders within modules.

Strengths and Improvements

Through open-ended survey items, teachers, administrators, and ITSs were provided the opportunity to provide comments regarding what worked well with Canvas and what could be improved. Of the total teacher

respondents who reported using Canvas on the survey (N=1,461), approximately 34 percent responded to the item about what worked well (N=492). Themes from teachers regarding what worked well included various aspects of the system, including the modules and providing students with various resources, materials, assignments, and quizzes. Other teachers identified Canvas as a centralized location with organized information as a benefit, while others noted using Canvas for communication worked well. Some teachers noted it was easy to use for themselves and students, while others generally commented about their dislike of the system. Of the 61 ITSs who responded to the survey, approximately 36 percent of ITSs (N=22) provided a comment on what worked well. Themes from ITSs focused on the improvements they had seen in teacher knowledge and use. A couple ITSs also commented on the ease of use for students. Some ITSs specifically commented on aspects of the platform that are easy for teachers, such as sharing resources or modules or posting in classes, and a couple ITSs noted the reliability of the platform. Of the total administrators who responded to the survey (N=148), approximately 17 percent provided a comment on what worked well (N=25). Administrators commented on the benefits of using Canvas as a communication tool as well as the ability for students to access a variety of content that is in a single location. Administrators also commented on the improvement in teacher familiarity and comfort level with the platform.

Of the total teacher respondents who reported using Canvas on the survey, approximately 30 percent of teachers responded to the item about areas for improvement (N=433). Similar to previous items related to dissatisfaction, themes regarding improvements from teachers focused on Canvas not being user friendly and taking too many clicks or steps to complete processes. In addition, teachers commented on the desire for customization and flexibility with organization within the platform. Of the 61 ITSs who responded to the survey, approximately 44 percent of ITSs (N=27) provided a comment on improvement areas. Themes from ITSs included comments about the need for curriculum or assignments from the Department of Teaching and Learning that are “Canvas ready,” enhancing the organizational tools in Canvas, such as nesting modules, folder system, color coding folders, and inability to copy files to multiple classes. Of the total administrators who responded to the survey (N=148), approximately 13 percent provided a comment on improvement areas (N=19). Administrators commented on the need for additional professional learning, particularly in-person opportunities. In addition, administrators indicated issues related to Mastery Connect needed improvements.

Additional Cost

The final evaluation question focused on the cost to VBCPS for implementation of Canvas during 2023-2024 as well as the expenses not incurred by VBCPS due to the state providing access to Canvas for all Virginia school divisions free of cost. A comparison of the Canvas-related costs and the expenses not incurred by VBCPS that would have been incurred if Canvas had not been adopted resulted in a cost savings for the school division. Cost data were collected from the Department of Teaching and Learning and the Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability. Costs for 2023-2024 related to Canvas were totaled for the following areas: subscription fees/student licenses for Mastery Connect and the Respondus assessment lockdown browser. In addition, approximated savings were totaled to include the cost of subscription fees/student licenses for Schoology in 2021-2022 as well as the Certica item bank, which is included in the total cost of Mastery Connect in 2023-2024. Table 45 summarizes the costs and savings.

Table 45: Costs and Savings for Canvas in 2023-2024

Items	Expenses Not Incurred in 2023-2024 (Savings)	Costs in 2023-2024
Canvas LMS Subscription fee/student license		\$0
Schoology Subscription fee/student license	\$417,520*	\$0
Certica item bank	\$182,594**	Included with Mastery Connect
Mastery Connect Subscription fee/student license		\$337,213
Respondus (lockdown browser)		\$9,295.00
Total	\$600,114	\$346,508
Savings for VBCPS	\$253,606	

*The total included under savings for the Schoology subscription fee/student license was based on the total per student cost for Schoology and the assessment management platform (AMP) for the 2021-2022 school year which VBCPS did not pay during 2023-2024.

**The Certica item bank was included in the cost for the Mastery Connect subscription fee/student licenses in 2023-2024.

For the 2023-2024 school year, the total cost for the subscription of Mastery Connect was \$337,213, which included the item bank. The Respondus lockdown browser, which ensures that website browsers were locked down during testing, totaled \$9,295.

Expenses not incurred by VBCPS due to utilizing Canvas during 2023-2024 included the total cost for the subscription of Schoology and AMP (estimated at \$417,520 based on a per student cost in 2021-2022 under the initial contract) as well as the total for the Certica item bank (\$182,594), which is now included in the cost for Mastery Connect. Therefore, although the cost to the school division was \$346,508, there was an estimated savings of \$600,114. This resulted in a net savings of \$253,606 during the 2023-2024 fiscal year for a learning management system and assessment platform due to VDOE providing Canvas for school divisions. Based on information received from Instructure, Canvas will be available for school divisions at no charge for the 2025–2026 school year, and negotiations beyond that time period are in process.³⁰

Summary

Canvas is an LMS adopted by the VDOE in 2020-2021 to deliver educational content to students online. VDOE offered to provide the Canvas LMS for all Virginia school divisions free of cost for five years through 2024-2025. In addition, based on information received from Instructure, Canvas will be available for school divisions at no charge during 2025-2026.³¹ Canvas provides an application for interacting with and accessing instructional content. In conjunction with Canvas, Mastery Connect provides an application for assessing student learning in a variety of ways. VBCPS began a pilot of Canvas with seven schools during the 2021-2022 school year, and all schools were expected to use Canvas during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years in grades 3 through 12. At the elementary school level, for grades 3 through 5, the expectations of using Canvas were more flexible. Teachers in grades 3 through 5 also had access to the Seesaw platform. Goals for the Canvas implementation focused on instructional material creation and course delivery, learning assessment and reporting, data management and integration, professional learning, communication and collaboration, and student agency and engagement.

The goal for instructional material creation and course delivery included objectives related to accessing division-created content, content design and storage, providing a variety of learning activities, and use of third-party resources and applications. To support school-based instructional staff with high-quality curricula, the Department of Teaching and Learning curriculum coordinators provided instructional resources through Google docs. These division resources may also be shared with teachers through Professional Learning Community (PLC) courses within Canvas or housed within their Sandbox. Regarding accessing these division resources, higher percentages of elementary school (83%) and middle school teachers (75%) indicated they used division-created instructional content for their Canvas course(s) than high school teachers (64%).

An LMS provides the ability to house and manage educational curricula and course content, which can include assignments, discussion boards, embedded content, pages, and third-party integrated resources and applications. Regarding designing and storing content in their courses, most elementary school teachers indicated they designed and stored content in one or more of their published courses (79%), while most secondary teachers indicated they designed and stored content in all of their published courses (89% at middle schools, 88% at high schools). When surveyed about using Canvas to provide a variety of learning activities for their students, 71 percent of elementary school teachers and 89 percent of secondary teachers agreed. In addition, 78 percent of elementary school and high school teachers indicated they used third-party resources in Canvas for students to interact with instructional content, while 88 percent of middle school teachers indicated they did.

Canvas offers the ability to monitor student learning through a variety of assessment methods, including discussion boards, assignments, Canvas Studio, and Canvas quizzes. In addition, although Canvas does not offer a way to administer divisionwide assessments with the platform itself, Mastery Connect was purchased by VBCPS to be integrated within Canvas to offer the ability to administer divisionwide assessments. Regarding the student learning assessment and reporting goal, objectives focused on assessment methods, students having the ability to show their knowledge in Canvas, formative feedback, monitoring student progress in Canvas, and monitoring student progress in Mastery Connect. When surveyed about the use of a variety of assessment methods, higher percentages of secondary teachers (from 82% to 86%) agreed they used a variety of assessment methods to check for student learning than elementary school teachers (61%). In addition, overall, from 86 to 88 percent of students depending on the school level agreed they can show what they know in a variety of ways in Canvas. Regarding the ability to provide formative feedback, the majority of secondary teachers agreed they used Canvas to provide students with formative feedback about their learning (76% to 84%), while 50 percent of elementary school teachers agreed. When surveyed about monitoring student progress, 83 percent of secondary teachers indicated that Canvas allowed them to effectively monitor

student progress through accessing and analyzing student data on assignments and quizzes in Canvas, while 62 percent of elementary school teachers agreed. In addition, 74 percent of middle school teachers agreed Mastery Connect allowed them to effectively monitor student learning on assessments through accessing and analyzing student data, while from 56 to 61 percent of elementary school and high school teachers agreed.

For Canvas to work effectively, there are various systems that it needs to integrate with, including the ability to import data to and from the Student Information System (i.e., to initially enroll students and import final grade data), third-party applications, and the assessment platform, Mastery Connect. Overall, staff were more likely to agree that the integration with various systems was accurate than efficient, but in terms of passing grades from Canvas to Synergy, relatively low percentages agreed the integration was efficient or accurate. Overall, from 91 to 100 percent of ITSs at all levels agreed the process of transitioning data from Synergy to Canvas was accurate, and from 70 to 91 percent of ITSs agreed the process of transitioning data from Synergy to Canvas was efficient. Similarly, from 91 to 94 percent of ITSs agreed the transition process between Canvas and Mastery Connect was accurate, while 77 to 82 percent of elementary school and middle school ITSs agreed the process was efficient. Agreement regarding the process being efficient was notably lower for high school ITSs (38%). Regarding the efficiency of accessing third-party resources, from 67 to 82 percent of teachers and from 64 to 97 percent of ITSs agreed it was efficient.

Due to low percentages of secondary ITSs and teachers (39% to 56%) agreeing the syncing from Canvas to Synergy was efficient and accurate in 2022-2023, one recommendation from the year-one implementation evaluation focused on developing a communication plan for disseminating resolutions to secondary classroom teachers for commonly experienced issues with the grade passback process. When surveyed in 2023-2024, there were increases in agreement percentages for teachers at both levels (from 38% to 44% at middle schools, from 39% to 47% at high schools) and high school ITSs (from 55% to 62%). Agreement remained low and there was a decrease for middle school ITSs (from 56% to 50%).

Professional learning and support opportunities for assistance with Canvas and Mastery Connect were primarily provided to teachers through self-guided opportunities accessible online and through the school ITSs and LMSs. When surveyed about the effectiveness of professional learning on Canvas, higher percentages of secondary teachers (from 86% to 90%) agreed the professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Canvas in their classroom than elementary school teachers (66%). From 83 to 100 percent of ITSs and administrators agreed the professional learning received on Canvas allowed them to support the teachers or school during implementation. When surveyed about the support they received related to Canvas, at least 71 percent of teachers, ITSs, and administrators at all levels indicated the help they received was available, resources were helpful, and there was a timely resolution of the issues.

Due to low percentages of teachers (49%-56%) agreeing professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classroom in 2022-2023, one recommendation from the year-one implementation evaluation focused on ensuring professional learning opportunities and support on utilizing Mastery Connect were provided for classroom teachers to have the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classrooms. When surveyed in 2023-2024, there were increases in the percentages of secondary teachers who participated in professional learning agreeing the professional learning provided them with the necessary knowledge to use Mastery Connect in their classroom (from 56% to 69% at middle schools, from 51% to 70% at high schools). At the elementary school level, teacher agreement remained low with 51 percent of elementary school teachers agreeing in 2023-2024. In addition, when surveyed about the support received related to Mastery Connect, higher percentages of secondary teachers (76%-82%) as well as ITSs (80%-100%) and administrators at all levels (84%-96%) agreed the help they received was available, resources were helpful, and there was a timely resolution of the issues compared to elementary school teachers (64%-69%).

Parents can access their child’s course information in Canvas through their ParentVue account. Parents can view information in Canvas as an observer, including modules, assignments, and assessments. When surveyed, a higher percentage of parents of middle school students (71%) indicated they accessed their child’s information in Canvas than parents of high school students (65%) or elementary school students in grades 3 through 5 (50%). Of those who indicated they did not access Canvas or didn’t know whether they did, 34 percent indicated they were aware they could access their child’s Canvas account. Higher percentages of secondary parents indicated they were aware (41%-42%) than elementary school parents (26%). When surveyed about the usefulness, from 87 to 92 percent of parents who accessed their child’s Canvas account indicated that accessing the information was very useful or somewhat useful.

Regarding the outcome goal related to communication and collaboration, results showed perceptions were notably higher at the secondary level than the elementary school level. When surveyed about communication between teachers and students, from 82 to 84 percent of secondary teachers indicated Canvas helped facilitate their communication with students through messaging and assignment feedback, whereas 45 percent of elementary school teachers agreed. Similarly, from 84 to 86 percent of secondary students indicated that Canvas helped them communicate with their teachers through messaging and assignment feedback, while 52 percent of elementary school students agreed. Regarding collaboration with other teachers, lower percentages of teachers agreed Canvas helped facilitate their collaboration with other teachers, although agreement was higher for secondary teachers (63%-68%) than elementary school teachers (43%).

For the outcome goal related to supporting student-centered practices, from 68 to 80 percent of students at all levels agreed Canvas allowed them to make choices about their learning, helped them monitor their learning progress, and helped encourage them to think creatively. When teachers were surveyed, higher percentages of secondary teachers (from 82% to 84%) agreed Canvas helped them provide instruction using student-centered practices compared to elementary school teachers (65%).

As an overall measure of how the implementation of Canvas was perceived, stakeholders were asked about their level of satisfaction with Canvas. Across all school levels, at least 83 percent of administrators, 80 percent of ITSs, 86 percent of students, and 80 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with Canvas. Due to low percentages of teachers indicating they were satisfied with Canvas during 2022-2023 (52%-67%), one recommendation from the year-one implementation evaluation was focused on exploring the reasons for lower satisfaction rates with Canvas among teachers to identify potential solutions. In 2023-2024, there were large improvements in teacher satisfaction at all school levels with satisfaction increasing 15 and 17 percentage points at the secondary levels and 12 percentage points at the elementary school level. Although satisfaction increased at the elementary school level, it was still relatively low with 64 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers indicating they were satisfied with Canvas. Teachers who indicated they were dissatisfied with Canvas were provided the opportunity to select the primary reason(s) for dissatisfaction. Overall, the most commonly selected reasons were related to difficulty with the system (i.e., difficulty navigating the system, difficulty moving or copying content across courses) or disliking the organization of content within Canvas. In addition, depending on school level, from 40 to 53 percent of teachers indicated that issues related to Mastery Connect were a primary reason for dissatisfaction. At the elementary school level, 49 percent of grades 3 to 5 teachers who were dissatisfied indicated they needed additional time to learn and 48 percent who were dissatisfied indicated Canvas was developmentally inappropriate for their students. When surveyed about whether their needs were met with Canvas, from 86 to 90 percent of secondary teachers indicated Canvas met all or some of their needs, while 67 percent of elementary school teachers did.

In 2023-2024, the cost to the school division for the implementation of Canvas, including an assessment platform, was \$346,508. However, there was an estimated savings of \$600,114 due to costs not incurred for a learning management system as a result of adopting Canvas. This resulted in a net savings of \$253,606 to

VBCPS during the 2023-2024 fiscal year for a learning management system and assessment platform due to VDOE providing Canvas for school divisions.

Recommendations and Rationales

Recommendation #1: Continue Canvas with modifications noted in recommendations 2 through 4. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: The first recommendation is to continue Canvas with modifications noted in the recommendations below. This recommendation is made within the context of the Virginia Department of Education continuing to fund Canvas for all school divisions. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, following an evaluation, a recommendation must be made to continue the initiative without modifications, continue the initiative with modifications, expand the initiative, or discontinue the initiative. Based on information received from Instructure, Canvas will be available for school divisions at no charge during 2025-2026. In the future, if the Virginia Department of Education no longer provides funding for Canvas, the results of the two years of evaluation should be considered to determine if it is cost effective to continue use of Canvas at grades 3 and 4 given the lower usage of Canvas for students in grades 3 and 4 and given that elementary schools also have an alternative available (i.e., the Seesaw platform). Student Canvas participation data showed 55 percent of grade 3 and 81 percent of grade 4 students participated in a Canvas course during 2023-2024, which decreased from the previous year. Discussions about using Canvas for students in grade 5 could determine the need for fifth graders to have experience with Canvas prior to entering middle school. In addition, although the percentage of grades 3 through 5 teachers who reported being satisfied with Canvas increased from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024, the percentage remained relatively low at 64 percent. Elementary teachers' satisfaction was notably lower than middle school (81%) and high school (84%) teachers' satisfaction.

Recommendation #2: Continue to encourage fourth- and fifth-grade teachers to expose students to Canvas to prepare for more regular use as they progress to higher grade levels. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: The second recommendation is to continue to encourage fourth- and fifth-grade teachers to expose students to Canvas to prepare for more regular use as they progress to higher grade levels. At the elementary school level, the expectations for Canvas use were flexible for grades 3 through 5 and teachers had access to an alternative platform, Seesaw. Overall, 84 percent of grades 3 through 5 teachers indicated they used Canvas during 2023-2024. In addition, of those who indicated they used Canvas, 79 percent of grades 3 through 5 teachers designed and stored course content in at least one of their courses, which decreased slightly from 2022-2023 (83%). Student Canvas participation data showed 55 percent of grade 3 and 81 percent of grade 4 students participated in a Canvas course during 2023-2024, which decreased from 2022-2023 (from 63% at grade 3 and 91% at grade 4). In comparison, nearly all grade 5 (98%) and secondary students (98%) had participation in a Canvas course in 2023-2024. When elementary school teachers were surveyed about using Canvas for a variety of learning activities for students and utilizing a variety of assessment methods, from 61 percent to 71 percent of grades 3 through 5 teachers agreed, while 50 percent indicated they used Canvas to provide formative feedback. In addition, from 56 to 62 percent of grades 3 through 5 teachers agreed Canvas and Mastery Connect allowed them to effectively monitor student progress or student learning. While there was improvement in teacher satisfaction at the elementary level, satisfaction remained lower at the elementary level (64%). In addition, 67 percent of elementary school teachers indicated Canvas met all or some of their needs. When teachers who indicated they were dissatisfied were asked about the primary reasons, approximately half indicated the platform was developmentally inappropriate for their students (48%) and that they needed additional time to learn (49%). Teachers also identified reasons for dissatisfaction that were related to systematic aspects of the platform that may need additional time to navigate (i.e., difficulty navigating system, moving or copying content).

Recommendation #3: Continue to encourage teachers to use Canvas for collaboration by providing examples of how other teachers across the division are successfully collaborating using Canvas. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

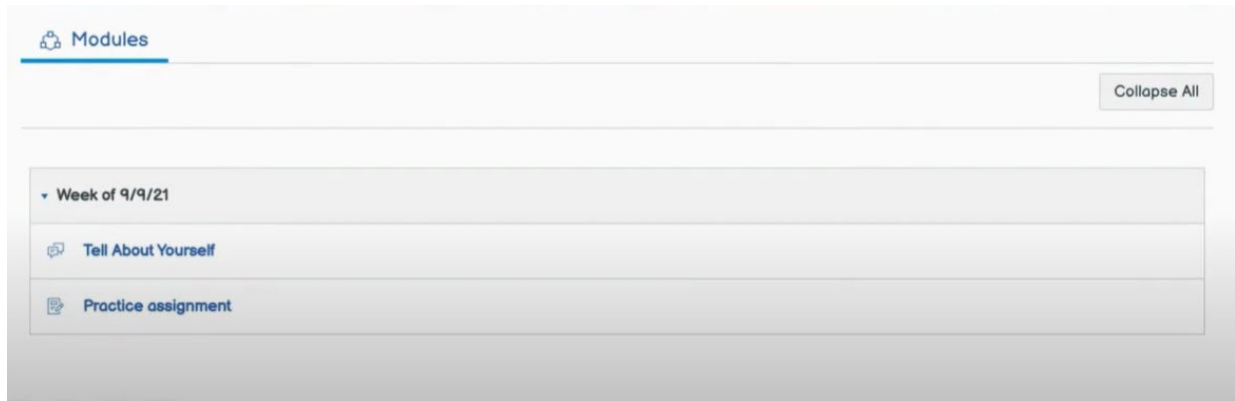
Rationale: The third recommendation is to continue to encourage teachers to use Canvas for collaboration by providing examples of how other teachers across the division are successfully collaborating using Canvas. A benefit of an LMS includes the ability to connect and communicate with others. Canvas allows teachers and students to communicate with each other through messaging and feedback on assignments. Canvas also allows teachers to connect, communicate, and collaborate within and across schools as well as with a broader online community. Canvas offers Canvas Commons, which is a learning objective repository where teachers can store course content for their own use and for collaboration with colleagues both within and outside the division. From 63 to 68 percent of secondary teachers agreed Canvas helped facilitate their collaboration with other teachers, and 43 percent of elementary school teachers agreed. From 78 to 81 percent of secondary teachers indicated they collaborated with other teachers regarding instructional materials through either PLC courses, all staff or all students courses, a sandbox course, and/or Course Commons, while 67 percent of elementary school teachers indicated collaborating with other teachers in one or more of these ways.

Recommendation #4: Continue to provide support to secondary classroom teachers and ITSs for issues related to the grade passback process between Canvas and Synergy to ensure the process is efficient and accurate for teachers. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

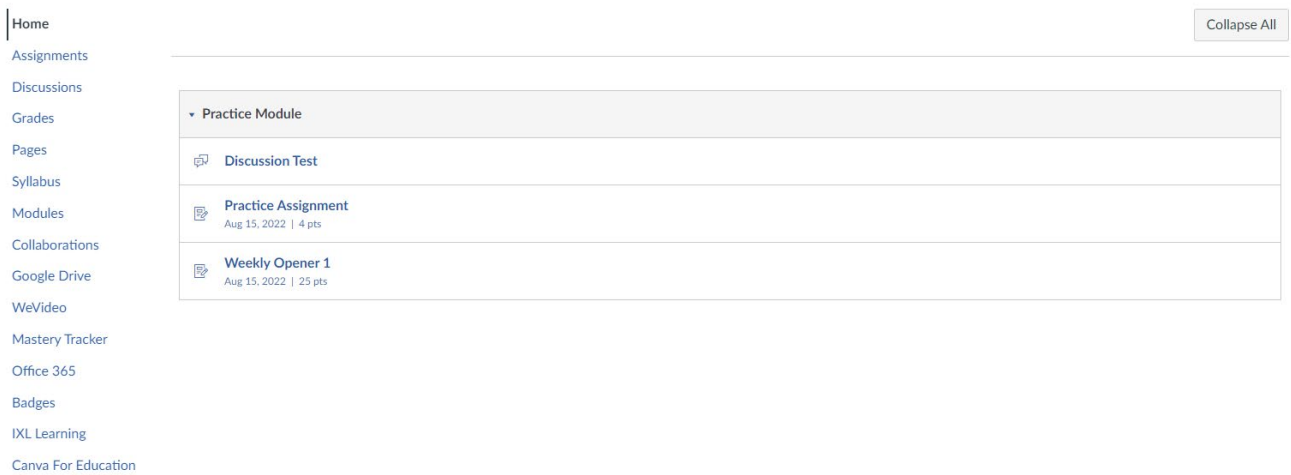
Rationale: The fourth recommendation is to continue to provide support to secondary classroom teachers and ITSs for issues related to the grade passback process between Canvas and Synergy to ensure the process is efficient and accurate for teachers. When surveyed about the efficiency and accuracy of passing grades from Canvas to Synergy in 2023-2024, from 44 to 50 percent of middle school teachers and ITSs and from 47 to 62 percent of high school teachers and ITSs agreed. Although in some cases there were increases in agreement percentages in 2023-2024, agreement remained relatively low. When surveyed about the help or support they received related to grade passback in 2023-2024, lower percentages of middle school (68%) and high school teachers (77%) agreed helpful resources or strategies were provided when they looked for help or support compared to middle school (80%) and high school ITSs (92%).

Appendix

Appendix A Example of Elementary School View (C4E)



Example of Secondary View



Endnotes

- ¹ <https://www.instructure.com/resources/blog/virtual-virginia-expands-instructure-relationship>
- ² <https://virtualvirginia.org/statewide-lms/>
- ³ S. Shewbridge. Canvas School Board Workshop Presentation. November 9, 2022.
- ⁴ S. Shewbridge. Canvas School Board Workshop Presentation. November 9, 2022.
- ⁵ M. Colohan, personal communication, November 13, 2024.
- ⁶ S. Shewbridge, L. Kelley, M. Colohan, J. Clements, C. Hinsch, and S. Teri, personal communication, March 10, 2023.
- ⁷ L. Kelley and S. Shewbridge, personal communication, October 28, 2024.
- ⁸ L. Kelley and S. Shewbridge, personal communication, October 28, 2024.
- ⁹ <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1675437195/vbschoolscom/met4r7uzxbnoudj9jhn4/StrategyMap.pdf>
- ¹⁰ S. Shewbridge, L. Kelley, M. Colohan, J. Clements, C. Hinsch, and S. Teri, personal communication, March 10, 2023.
- ¹¹ Curriculum Access Feedback and Canvas Learning Management System. Principals' Packet Memo. February 17, 2022.
- ¹² S. Shewbridge, L. Kelley, M. Colohan, J. Clements, C. Hinsch, and S. Teri, personal communication, March 10, 2023.
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- ¹⁴ L. Kelley, personal communication, August 18, 2023.
- ¹⁵ https://certicasolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Navigate_ProductSheet_11.2020-v2.pdf
- ¹⁶ T. LaGatta, personal communication, August 10, 2023.
- ¹⁷ M. Colohan, personal communication, November 13, 2024.
- ¹⁸ M. Colohan, personal communication, November 13, 2024.
- ¹⁹ M. Colohan, personal communication, October 29, 2024.
- ²⁰ M. Colohan, personal communication, October 29, 2024.
- ²¹ S. Shewbridge, M. Callahan, J. Clements, C. Hinsch, and S. Teri, personal communication, August 14, 2023.
- ²² T. LaGatta, personal communication, August 10, 2023.
- ²³ <https://sites.google.com/vbschools.com/instructionaltechnology/canvas>.
- ²⁴ L. Kelley, personal communication, August 10, 2023.
- ²⁵ Principals' Packet Memo. Mastery Connect Resources. Sept 29, 2022.
- ²⁶ Principals' Packet Memo. Mastery Connect Training – Fall 2022. Oct 6, 2022.
- ²⁷ Principals' Packet Memo. Mastery Connect Training – Fall 2022. Dec 15, 2022.
- ²⁸ S. Shewbridge, M. Colohan, J. Clements, C. Hinsch, and S. Teri, personal communication, August 14, 2023.
- ²⁹ VBCPS Canvas Best Practices – Secondary and Elementary.
- ³⁰ S. Shewbridge, personal communication, November 18, 2024.
- ³¹ S. Shewbridge, personal communication, November 18, 2024.

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