Performance-Based Learning and Assessment Networks (PLAN)

PROGRAM SUMMARY

LEARNING | OPPORTUNITY | PREPARATION | WHAT'S NEXT

PURPOSE

The Performance-Based Learning and Assessment Networks (PLAN) Program is exploring the potential for New York's educational assessment strategy to be reimagined in a way that purposefully fosters high-quality instructional opportunities, provides authentic measures of deeper learning, and better prepares students for college and the workplace.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT?

Performance-based assessment requires students to demonstrate or apply their knowledge, skills, and strategies by creating a response or product or doing a task. Students' responses or performances are typically judged against standards or criteria in a checklist or rubric focusing on the stages of skill development and what a student can do.

THREE TYPES OF PBLA APPROACHES

1 Career & Technical Education and Work-Based Learning

School networks and regional hubs that are implementing high-quality career and technical education and work-based learning in ways that prepare students for success in the workplace.

2 Inquiry-Based Approaches with Learner Profiles

School networks that use inquiry-based pedagogical approaches and assessments, designed around a learner profile, to measure students' individual performance on specified objectives.

3 Project-Based Learning and Performance-Based Assessment Tasks

School networks that use a project-based learning approach and practitioner-developed performance-based assessment tasks to determine student progress.

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Within a system that includes multiple assessment measures, each type of assessment has a valuable role to play, and different types of assessments work together to provide a picture of students' mastery of learning standards. New York's strategy values each type of assessment, from the classroom to the state level, and how they can add evidence to answer questions about student learning. Local assessments should support instruction and enable appropriate supports and learning opportunities to be provided to students, while state assessments provide critical evidence of students' access to opportunities to learn across the state.

WHY IT MATTERS

Because performance-based assessments require students to construct a response or perform an open-ended task, they are an important tool for measuring higher-order thinking and skills, such as the ability to apply knowledge and use reasoning to solve realistic problems, evaluate the reliability of sources of information, and synthesize and analyze information to draw conclusions.

POSSIBLE FEATURES OF PERFORMANCE-BASED APPROACHES

Performance-based approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment vary widely. Depending on the learning objectives and the context, tasks may be designed to incorporate some of the following features:

- Capstone projects
- Community projects
- Competency-based approaches
- Group projects or performances
- Hands-on projects
- Independent work or research
- Internships, work-based learning, and career and technical education
- Learning in more than one domain (interdisciplinary or both content knowledge and cross-cutting skills)
- Multiple opportunities to receive feedback and revise or re-do
- Multiple types of performance (e.g., written component plus an oral presentation, or a group component and an individual component)
- Presentation before an evaluation panel and/or audience of community members
- Student choice, within established parameters
- Student self-reflection