Proficiency-Based Learning: A National Perspective

Summit on Informing & Aligning ME Public Higher Education Institutions
November 6, 2015

Mark Kostin
associate director
Materials for Today:
greatschoolspartnership.org/me_ihe
Summit on Informing and Aligning ME Public Higher Institutions with ME Public K12: Proficiency & Assessment Activities

By Natasha Piirainen On November 4, 2015 · Add Comment · In Presentations

UMA, Bangor, ME | November 6, 2015

Presenter

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→ Session One Materials - Lessons Learned: Best Practices Nationally

→ Session Two Materials - Proficiency-Based Transcripts & Assessment Tools
Outcomes

I can describe the principles that support PBL.
Outcomes

I can explain the core components that make up a PBL system
Outcomes

I have a sense of where PBL is taking place across the country, K-12
Outcomes

I can consider how I might refine my practice and support aspects of PBL in my network.
Agenda

Context

Why PBL?

What is PBL?

Where is PBL?

Implications?
Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland, ME working nationally with schools, districts and state agencies, providing coaching, and developing tools.
We Believe

In equitable, personalized, rigorous learning for all students leading to readiness for college, careers, and citizenship
We Believe

That schools must simultaneously attend to policy, practice, and community engagement.
We Believe

School improvement is context-based, not one-size fits all
GSP has served as the coordinator of the New England Secondary School Consortium since its inception in 2009
Why PBL?
Students succeed when...

- Clear, universal, college-/career-ready standards we believe all can achieve
- Progression & diploma-granting by demonstration of proficiency
- Multiple flexible pathways & agency
- Feedback & data-informed supports + interventions
- Ongoing professional learning and growth
Goals

• Increase Graduation Rate
• Decrease Drop-out Rate
• Increase College Readiness
• Increase College Enrollment Rate
Personalized Learning = Proficiency-Based Graduation + Multiple & Flexible Pathways + Learner-Centered Accountability
Strategies

• Policy: State and Local
• Practice: League of Innovative Schools
• Public Will + Understanding
1.1 Graduation Rates: Six-Year Trend

Guiding Question
To what degree did graduation rates change over the past six years?

Major Findings
All member states demonstrated graduation rate improvements since the baseline year (2009).

The NESSC change rate was approximately 7 percentage points and the largest change rate was 7.7 percentage points (New Hampshire and Connecticut).

Most states are on a trajectory to reach or exceed the 90 percent goal within the next five years.

National trends in graduation have been trending upward since 2009.

*NOTE: The 2009 New Hampshire data were estimated and the 2009 Connecticut data may not be comparable with previous years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2009</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>NESSC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.1 College Enrollment Rates: Four-Year Trend

Guiding Question
To what degree did college enrollment rates change over the past four years?

Major Findings
- College enrollment rates among some states (exceptions being New Hampshire and Connecticut) have slowly increased since the baseline year (2011).
- The NESSC change in college enrollment was .3 percentage points and the largest change was a 2.2 percentage point decrease (New Hampshire).
- All states will need more than five years to reach the long-term goal of 80 percent.
- The enrollment data does not reflect an upward trend in the percent of students who enroll in postsecondary education immediately after graduation.

By comparison, the national enrollment rates have decreased by 4 percentage points since 2009 (NCES 2015-144, The Condition of Education 2015, p. 184).
GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

An Internationally Benchmarked Self-Assessment Tool for Secondary Learning
PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING

Has the greatest chance of success when educators in the school:

1. Share a commitment to continuous improvement
2. Believe all students can learn
3. Have a collective understanding of the school’s vision and the plan to realize it
4. Have the time, supports, and structures in place to learn with and from one another (e.g. Professional Learning Groups)
What is PBL?
Proficiency is a student’s ability to transfer learning in and/or across content areas.
10 Principles Of Proficiency-Based Learning
Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning

Over the past decade, the movement to adopt proficiency-based approaches to teaching, learning, and graduating has gained momentum throughout the United States, as more educators, parents, business leaders, and elected officials recognize that high academic expectations and strong educational preparation are essential to success in today’s world. Schools use proficiency-based learning to raise academic standards, ensure that more students meet those higher expectations, and graduate more students better prepared for adult life.

To help schools establish a philosophical and pedagogical foundation for their work, the Great Schools Partnership created the following “Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning,” which describe the common features found in the most effective proficiency-based systems:

1. All learning expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to students and families, including long-term expectations (such as graduation requirements and graduation standards), short-term expectations (such as the specific learning objectives for a course or other learning experience), and general expectations (such as the performance levels used in the school’s grading and reporting system).

2. Student achievement is evaluated against common learning standards and performance expectations that are consistently applied to all students regardless of whether they are enrolled in traditional courses or pursuing alternative learning pathways.

3. All forms of assessment are standards-based and criterion-referenced, and success is defined by the achievement of expected standards, not relative measures of performance or student-to-student comparisons.

4. Formative assessments measure learning progress during the instructional process, and formative-assessment results are used to inform instructional adjustments, teaching practices, and academic support.

5. Summative assessments evaluate learning achievement, and summative-assessment results record a student’s level of proficiency at a specific point in time.

6. Academic progress and achievement are monitored and reported separately from work habits, character traits, and behaviors such as attendance and class participation, which are also monitored and reported.

7. Academic grades communicate learning progress and achievement to students and families, and grades are used to facilitate and improve the learning process.

8. Students are given multiple opportunities to improve their work when they fail to meet expected standards.

9. Students can demonstrate learning progress and achievement in multiple ways through differentiated assessments, personalized-learning options, or alternative learning pathways.

10. Students are given opportunities to make important decisions about their learning, which includes contributing to the design of learning experiences and learning pathways.
Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning

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1. Review the Principles

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To help educators and leaders establish effective proficiency-based learning programs, the Great Schools Partnership created the following “Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning,” which describe the common features found in the most effective proficiency-based systems:

1. **Learning Standards**
   - All learning expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to students and families, including long-term expectations (such as graduation requirements and graduation standards), short-term expectations (such as the specific learning objectives for a course or learning experience), and general expectations (such as performance levels used in the school’s grading and reporting system).

2. **Assessment Practices**
   - Student achievement is evaluated against common learning standards and performance expectations that are consistently applied to all students regardless of whether they are enrolled in traditional courses or pursuing alternative learning pathways.

3. **Grading + Reporting**
   - All forms of assessment are standards-based and criterion-referenced, and success is defined by the achievement of expected standards, not relative measures of performance or student-to-student comparisons.

4. **Instructional Strategies**
   - Formative assessments measure learning progress during the instructional process, and formative-assessment results are used to inform instructional adjustments, teaching practices, and academic support.

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Is not a stand-alone intervention
Is a suite of practices resulting from the thoughtful combination of best practices currently used by expert educators with solid support in the literature
Standard

Established norms or benchmarks for learning that define what students need to know and be able to do.
(Un)Common Terms for “Standards”

- Graduation Standard
- Priority Standard
- Proficiency Standards
- Competencies
- Learning Objectives
- Leadership Targets
- Performance Indicators
- Mastery Objectives
- Descriptors
- Measurement Targets
- Power Standards
- Benchmarks
So, what’s the problem with standards?

3,500 performance indicators across 14 content areas K-12.
So, what’s the problem with standards?

“You would have to change schooling from K-12 to K-22. The sheer number of standards is the biggest impediment to implementing standards.”

— Robert Marzano (2001)
Proficiency-Based Learning Simplified
A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation Requirement</th>
<th>Reporting Method</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Transcripts and Report Cards</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Graduation Standards 5–8 standards taught in all content areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Body of Evidence Students demonstrate achievement of standards through a body of evidence evaluated using common rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Progress Reports</td>
<td>Verification of Proficiency Students demonstrate achievement of content-area graduation standards through their aggregate performance on summative assessments over time</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Teacher Feedback</td>
<td>Summative Assessment Graded summative assessments are used to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators</td>
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<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Formative Assessment Ungraded formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning progress</th>
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Graduation Standard

Performance Indicator

Learning Objective
A Graduation Standard Is...

a standard that focuses instruction on the most foundational, enduring, and leveraged concepts and skills within a discipline.
A Performance Indicator

Describes or defines what students need to know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery of a graduation standard.
A Performance Indicator

Is measurable.
A Performance Indicator

Is demonstrable over time.
A Performance Indicator

Provides data points that can be aggregated to determine when a student has met the graduation standard.
The component parts of a performance indicator - that is, the performance indicator has been broken down into a series of progressive steps and digestible chunks.
Proficiency-Based Learning Simplified
A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

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<td>5–10 indicators for each cross-curricular and content-</td>
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<td>area standard that move students toward proficiency</td>
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<td>and the achievement of graduation standards</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Learning Objectives</td>
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<td>Learning objectives guide the design of curriculum</td>
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### English Language Arts

#### Sample Graduation Standards and Performance Indicators

**English Language Arts: Reading Foundations**

**READING FOUNDATIONS**
Understand concepts of print and basic conventions of English (CCRF). *Proficiency in this area should be demonstrated by the end of grade 5, at which point students should apply these skills into their daily reading routine.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth-Grade Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Eighth-Grade Performance Indicators</th>
<th>High School Performance Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Demonstrate an understanding of spoken words, syllables and sounds (phonemes). (RF.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Know and apply grade level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words. (RF.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. (RF.4)</td>
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**English Language Arts Graduation Standard 1**

**READING COMPREHENSION**
Read and comprehend appropriately complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. (CCRA 10)

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<th>High School Performance Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Determine the theme of a story, drama or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. (RL.2)</td>
<td>A. Determine the theme or central ideas of the text, analyze its development including its relationship to character, setting, and plot, and provide an objective summary. (RL.2)</td>
<td>A. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. (RL.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. (RI.2)</td>
<td>B. Determine a central idea of the text, analyze its development including its relationship to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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C. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a literary or informational text based on specific information in the text. (RL+RI.3)

D. Determine the meaning of academic and domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language. (RL+RI.4; L.4,5,6)

**English Language Arts Graduation Standard 2**

**READING INTERPRETATION**

Interpret, analyze, and evaluate appropriately complex literary and informational texts. (CCRA 7, 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (RL+RI.1)</td>
<td>A. Cite textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text. (RL+RI.1)</td>
<td>A. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support an analysis of the text, including any applicable primary or secondary sources, and determine both explicit and implicit meanings, such as inferences that can be drawn from the text and where the text leaves matters uncertain. (RL+RI.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more literary and informational texts. (RL+RI.5)</td>
<td>B. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more literary and informational texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. (RL+RI.5)</td>
<td>B. Analyze how an author chose to structure a text and how that structure contributes to the text’s meaning and its aesthetic and rhetorical impact. (RL+RI.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. (RL+RI.6)</td>
<td>C. Determine an author’s point of view, purpose, or rhetorical strategies in a text, analyzing how conflicting evidence and points of view impact the text, or how a character’s point of view creates effects such as suspense or humor. (RI+RL.6)</td>
<td>C. Determine an author’s point of view, purpose, or rhetorical strategies in a text, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text. (RL+RI.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text. (RL.7)</td>
<td>D. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different media to present a topic, idea, or literary work. (RL+RI.7)</td>
<td>D. Evaluate content and multiple sources of information presented in diverse media and formats to interpret literature, address a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to supporting ideas, and provide an objective summary. (RI.2)</td>
<td>E. Delineate and evaluate the argument and supporting ideas, and provide an objective summary. (RI.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Determine the central ideas of a text, analyze their development, and provide an objective summary. (RI.2)</td>
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<td>C. Analyze how any genre of text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events. (RL+RI.3)</td>
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<td>D. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. (RL+RI.4; L.4,5,6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics Graduation Standard 5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STATISTICS &amp; PROBABILITY</strong></td>
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<td>Interpret, infer and apply statistics and probability to analyze data and reach and justify conclusions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Measure, compare and estimate lengths in length units and standard units. (CCSS K.MD.A, 1.MD.A, 2.MD.A-B)</td>
<td>A. Develop understanding of statistical variability. (CCSS 6.SP.A)</td>
<td>A. Summarize, represent, and interpret data on a single count or measurement variable. (CCSS HSS.ID.A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Represent and interpret data. (CCSS K.MD.B, 1.MD.C, 2.MD.D, 3.MD.B, 4.MD.B, 5.MD.B)</td>
<td>B. Summarize and describe distributions. (CCSS 6.SP.B)</td>
<td>B. Summarize, represent, and interpret data on two categorical and quantitative variables. (CCSS HSS.ID.B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Tell and write time. (CCSS 1.MD.B, 2.MD.C.7)</td>
<td>C. Use random sampling to draw inferences about a population. (CCSS 7.SP.B)</td>
<td>C. Interpret linear models. (CCSS HSS.ID.C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Solve word problems involving money. (CCSS 2.MD.C.8)</td>
<td>D. Investigate chance processes and develop, use, and evaluate probability models. (CCSS 7.SP.C)</td>
<td>D. Understand and evaluate random processes underlying statistical experiments. (CCSS HSS IC.A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Geometric measurement: recognize perimeter as an attribute of plane figures and distinguish between linear and area measures. (CCSS 3.MD.D)</td>
<td>E. Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data. (CCSS 8.SP.A)</td>
<td>E. Make inferences and justify conclusions from sample surveys, experiments, and observational studies. (CCSS HSS IC.B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and volume and relate to multiplication and to addition. (CCSS 3.MD.C, 5.MD.C.3-4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>F. Understand independence and conditional probability and use them to interpret data. (CCSS HSS.CP.A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Geometric measurement: understand concepts of angle and measure angles. (CCSS 4.MD.C)</td>
<td></td>
<td>G. Use the rules of probability to compute probabilities of compound events in a uniform probability model. (CCSS HSS.CP.B.6-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects. (CCSS 3.MD.A)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Health Education Graduation Standard 5**

**Advocacy, Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Skills:** Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication and advocacy skills; make decisions; and set goals to enhance personal, family, and community health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formulate a long-term personal health plan, incorporating decision-making and goal-setting strategies.</td>
<td>I can <strong>list</strong> goals I have for my own health.</td>
<td>I can <strong>explain</strong> ways I can reach a goal I set for my own health.</td>
<td>I can <strong>create</strong> a plan to meet immediate and long-term health goals.</td>
<td>I can <strong>adapt</strong> my plan and <strong>evaluate</strong> my progress so I can continue to positively impact my personal health.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where is PBL?
State Policies

ME, VT, NH Lead Nation

**Advanced States**
Those states with clear policies that are moving towards proficiency-based education; more than just an option.

**Developing States**
Those states with pilots of competency education, credit flexibility policies, or advanced next gen policies for equivalents to seat-time.

**Emerging States**
Those states with waivers, task forces, and limited policies.

**No Policies in Competency Education**
States with seat-time and no competency education policies.

**ILN States**
The Council of Chief State School Officers is working with states to identify new designs to be scaled for widespread implementation.

Source: iNACOL
GSP Partner Districts

- CO
- CT
- ME
- MA
- GA
- FL
- IL
- RI
- VT
- NH
112 LIS Members!
Doing PBL Well
## Proficiency-Based Learning Simplified

A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation Requirement</th>
<th>Reporting Method</th>
<th>Cross-Curricular Graduation Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Transcripts and Report Cards</td>
<td>5–8 standards taught in all content areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Transcripts and Report Cards</td>
<td>Content-Area Graduation Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5–8 standards for each content area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Progress Reports</td>
<td>Performance Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5–10 indicators for each cross-curricular and content-area standard that move students toward proficiency and the achievement of graduation standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Teacher Feedback</td>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning objectives guide the design of curriculum units that move students toward proficiency and the achievement of performance indicators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body of Evidence</td>
<td>Students demonstrate achievement of standards through a body of evidence evaluated using common rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification of Proficiency</td>
<td>Students demonstrate achievement of content-area graduation standards through their aggregate performance on summative assessments over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative Assessment</td>
<td>Graded summative assessments are used to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment</td>
<td>Ungraded formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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We believe that reliability results from the careful alignment of demonstration tasks and instruction with intended learning outcomes. Comparability is possible when teachers assess student work with task-neutral common scoring guides and have time to calibrate their understanding and use. The graphic below represents five general learning pathways and how they can be assessed. While each of these has instructional value, only the first four will lead to greater comparability over time because they are assessed using common scoring criteria. We believe that these pathways are valuable and represent the many ways educators are personalizing learning for students in a proficiency-based learning system.
Alignment in a **Traditional Model**

- Cognitive Demand
- Intention
- Reality

| Standards | Instruction+ Feedback | Assessment | Scoring |
Alignment in a **Proficiency-Based** Model

Cognitive Demand

Standards | Assessment Design | Demonstration

- Scoring Criteria
- Instruction+ Feedback
- Scoring
Implications

1. What are the consensus core learning expectations of your discipline? How aligned are they?

2. How do you communicate them?

3. What do they look like when demonstrated?
Implications

4. How can you provide clear, timely, actionable feedback?

5. How might you meet students’ expectations around personalization?

6. What is in place to support your continued pedagogical learning?
Summary

- It’s about transfer, not a checklist of activities
- Personalization does not mean personalized standards
…nor does it occur by pace alone

Technology is an enabler and tool
THANK YOU

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