Competency-Based Learning and Student Engagement

Dover School District

June 23, 2017
Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland 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

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

School improvement is context-based, not one-size fits all
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
Research Evidence

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.

“Clear learning goals help students learn better (Seidel, Rimmele, & Prenzel, 2005). When students understand exactly what they’re supposed to learn and what their work will look like when they learn it, they’re better able to monitor and adjust their work, select effective strategies, and connect current work to prior learning (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2004; Moss, Brookhart, & Long, 2011). This point has been demonstrated for all age groups, from young children (Higgins, Harris, & Kuehn, 1994) through high school students (Ross & Starling, 2008), and in a variety of subjects—in writing (Andrade, Du, & Mycek, 2010); mathematics (Ross, Hogaboam-Gray, & Rolheiser, 2002); and social studies (Ross & Starling, 2008). The important point here is that students should have clear goals. If the teacher is the only one who understands where learning should be headed, students are flying blind. In all the studies we just cited, students were taught the learning goals and criteria for success, and that’s what made the difference.” —Brookhart, S. M., & Moss, C. M. (2014, October). Learning targets on parade. Educational Leadership, 72(7), 28-33.

“The most effective teaching and the most meaningful student learning happen when teachers design the right learning target for today’s lesson and use it along with their students to aim for and assess understanding. Our theory grew from continuous research with educators focused on raising student achievement through formative assessment processes (e.g., Brookhart, Moss, & Long, 2009, 2010, 2011; Moss, Brookhart, & Long 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). What we discovered and continue to refine is an understanding of the central role that learning targets play in schools. Learning targets are student-friendly descriptions—via words, pictures, actions, or some combination of the three—of what you intend students to learn or accomplish in a given lesson. When shared meaningfully, they become actual targets that students can see and understand what they need to do.” —Brookhart, S. M. (2011). Learning Targets: Accessing the Why, What, and How of Learning.
GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

2ND EDITION

An Internationally Benchmarked
Self-Assessment Tool
for Secondary Learning
Competency is a student’s ability to transfer learning in and/or across content areas.
10 Principles of Competency-Based Learning
Learning Standards

1. All learning expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to students + families

2. Student achievement is evaluated against common learning standards and performance expectations that are consistently applied to all students
Assessment Practices

3. All forms of assessment are standards-based and criterion-referenced

4. Formative assessments measure learning progress during the instructional process

5. Summative assessments - which are integrated tasks requiring transfer of knowledge and skills, application, and performance in novel settings
6. Academic progress and achievement are monitored and reported separately from work habits - which are also monitored and reported.

7. Academic grades communicate learning progress and achievement.

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

9. Students can demonstrate learning progress and achievement in multiple ways

10. Students are given opportunities to make important decisions about their learning
TURN + TALK

Which principle resonates most with you?

Which principle might be the greatest stretch to implement?
Competency leads to...
Personalization
Alignment in a **Traditional Model**
Alignment in a Competency-Based Model

Cognitive Demand

Standards  Assessment Design  Demonstration

Scoring Criteria  Instruction+ Feedback  Scoring
Agency
We believe that reliability results from the careful alignment of demonstrations 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.
Assessment Pathways Simplified
A Great Schools Partnership Learning Model

many ways educators are personalizing learning for students in a proficiency-based learning system.

greater comparability over time because they are assessed using common scoring criteria. We believe that these pathways are valuable and represent the 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

We believe that reliability results from the careful alignment of demonstrations tasks and instruction with intended learning outcomes. Comparability is

© 2015 This work by Great Schools Partnership is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

PATHWAY 1
LESS
Student Choice
in Learning

PATHWAY 2
COMMON
Learning Experiences
COMMON
Demonstration Tasks
COMMON
Scoring Guides

PATHWAY 3
UNIQUE
Learning Experiences
COMMON
Demonstration Tasks
COMMON
Scoring Guides

PATHWAY 4
UNIQUE
Learning Experiences
UNIQUE
Demonstration Tasks
COMMON
Scoring Guides
Feedback

- Clear
- Actionable
- Corrective
Supports
Reporting

WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE

SEPT         JUNE

JUNE         SEPT

Weight of Evidence
Nick
12th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>70.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s up with Nick?

Possible reasons?

What does he know / not know?

How does he do his work?
| Understand and analyze matter, reactions and physical systems. | Meets |
| Understand and analyze energy and the characteristics and dynamics of waves. | Does Not Meet |
| Understand and analyze the origins, interactions and relationships between and among the earth, our solar system, and the universe. | Does Not Meet |
| Understand and analyze earth’s systems and the relationship between human activity and the earth. | Meets |
| Demonstrate engineering concepts across multiple disciplines and novel situations. | Meets |
| Conduct research projects. | Incomplete |
| Initiate and participate effectively in a range of discussions. | Meets |
| Prepare and present arguments using supporting evidence. | Meets |
| Habits of Work | Does Not Meet |
From Competencies to Practice:

Phase I: District-Wide Planning
- Design Instruction
- Phase II: Design for Learning
  - Design Summative Task
  - Design Unit
  - Write Performance Indicators
  - Develop Scoring Criteria
- Phase III: Instruction, Feedback, Evaluation
  - Assess Formatively
  - Assess Summatively
  - Provide Supports + Interventions
- Phase IV: Reporting, Reflection, Refinement
  - Instruct
  - Assess Summatively
  - Report Learning
  - Score with Criteria
  - Provide Supports + Interventions
  - Reflect + Refine
  - Identify Graduation Standards
  - Map Curriculum
  - Write Performance Indicators
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?
THANK YOU

Mark Kostin
Associate Director
mkostin@greatschoolspartnership.org