

7 tips to better define personalized learning

Posted By *Laura Ascione* On May 16, 2018 @ 2:00 am In District Management, Featured on eSchool News, Teaching & Learning | [No Comments](#)

Personalized learning is a pretty well-known term, but educators have different definitions for personalized learning, making for a sometimes-confusing approach to its implementation.

Now, [a new report](#) ^[1] seeks to apply a common definition to personalized learning and outline best practices for educators to advocate for the practice in their districts.

The report comes from Education Elements and the Foundation for Excellence in Education, and it defines personalized learning as “tailoring learning for each student’s strengths, needs, and interests—including enabling student voice and choice in what, how, when, and where they learn—to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible.”

According to the report, the four core elements of personalized learning include:

Flexible content and tools: Instructional materials allow for differentiated path, pace, and performance tasks

Targeted instruction: Instruction aligns to specific student needs and learning goals

Student reflection and ownership: Ongoing student reflection promotes ownership of learning

Data driven decisions: Frequent data collection informs instructional decisions and groupings

The authors outline a handful of tips to help communicate ideas around personalized learning.

1. **Focus on the future.** The goal of personalized learning is to ensure that students will be adequately prepared with the knowledge and skills they need for college or career.
2. **Highlight benefits to families,** including the idea that personalized learning can give parents a deeper understanding of how their child is progressing and will improve opportunities for collaboration with teachers. It also can provide opportunities for increased interaction with teachers and peers, and can encourage higher levels of student engagement.
3. **Highlight benefits to students.** Students are encouraged to play a greater role—and be more invested—in their learning. Instruction will be tailored to a student’s strengths and interest to keep them more engaged in their learning. Students can learn at a flexible pace that’s right for them in order to ensure they have thoroughly learned the material.
4. **Highlight benefits to teachers.** Personalized learning will give teachers the flexibility and tools they need to meet the needs of each child.
5. **For district leaders:** Make sure the vision for personalizing learning is clear, that the “why” is commonly understood and that you develop messaging that makes sense for your entire community, not just those steeped in education jargon. Use words and phrases that work. Provide preferred messaging to your district staff and your principals so they don’t need to start from scratch. Communicate often with your teachers, families and community.
6. **For school leaders:** Talk about personalized learning whenever you can. Include examples in newsletters to highlight how it helps students, not the software you are using. Remember this is something

most families want, so celebrate that you are doing it... or starting it. There is tremendous momentum behind this evolution in teaching and learning. Whenever possible, share those stories from your own school.

7. **For teachers:** Hang signs in your classrooms; talk about personalized learning on Back to School Nights and during parent conferences. Help your students understand why things are different. While you are among the best messengers, your students can be a huge asset because what they perceive and what they say really impacts what families think. Invite families into your classroom and show them how you are now better supporting their children.

Article printed from eSchool News: <https://www.eschoolnews.com>