the future is bright

Preliminary Results From Dallas Independent School District's Personalized Learning Initiative

Office of Transformation and Innovation
Author: Courtney Rogers
Contributors: Angie Gaylord & Cecilia Oakeley

May 2018

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

table of contents

DALLAS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Dallas Independent School District sits in the heart of a large, diverse region with a metropolitan population of 6.5 million people in the 12 counties in North Central Texas. Dallas ISD comprises 384 square miles and encompasses the cities of Dallas, Cockrell Hill, Seagoville, Addison, Wilmer and parts of Carrollton, Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville, Farmers Branch, Garland, Grand Prairie, Highland Park, Hutchins, Lancaster and Mesquite. The district is the second-largest public school district in the state, and the 14th-largest district in the nation.

We are proud of our award-winning schools, outstanding teachers and staff, hard-working students and committed parents and volunteers. The school district serves approximately 157,000 students in pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade, in 230 schools, employing nearly 20,000 dedicated professionals.

To learn more about the District, visit www.dallasisd.org.

Dallas ISD
9400 North Central Expressway
Dallas, TX 75231

972-925-3700

Dallas ISD Personalized Learning

Email: personalizedlearning@dallasisd.org
Phone: 972-925-3127
Public Web: www.dallasisd.org/personalizedlearning
Practioner Web: www.thepltoolbox.com
Twitter: @PersonalizeDISD
Instagram: @PersonalizeDISD

a letter to our readers

On February 20th, 2014, following months of vision-setting, strategizing, and anticipation, staff members throughout Dallas ISD received an email announcing a new opportunity. The subject of the message read, "Dallas ISD embraces personalized learning to give families more education choices." What followed was a whirlwind of information sessions, community outreach, campus meetings, and task force development - everything that comes with the introduction of a major new initiative. As with any innovation, we weren't entirely sure where the journey would take us, but we knew we were headed down a bright path - one that would lead to positive outcomes for our students.

Four years later, nearly 100 Dallas ISD schools and 20,000 students are engaged in the Personalized Learning initiative. From campus leadership teams building wall-to-wall anchor models, to individual teachers pioneering next generation instruction in their classrooms, we have built a community of practitioners who exemplify the ideals of personalized instruction and work relentlessly to shape this initiative for the good of their students.

The journey has been an immense joy and an immense challenge, but through it all, it's been about kids. We have seen students who used to dread school rise up as leaders, students who thought they just "weren't smart" learn how to excel, and students who barely traveled beyond their neighborhood now regularly journey across the city to attend a Personalized Learning school - a place where feel they "belong." We've also seen increases in academic achievement, climate and culture ratings, and the other measures schools use to try and determine if we're reaching public education's ultimate goal: preparing students to lead successful, productive, and joyful lives.

Briana, a former student of Dallas ISD's Personalized Learning Director, Kristen Watkins, opens her college acceptance letter from the University of Chicago.

After two years of implementation, we are still relatively early in this journey, but we have already learned a great deal along the way. In this report, we attempt to capture the key practices, successes, lessons, and results we have seen during this time and to share our vision for the future of Personalized Learning in Dallas ISD. We have benefited greatly from the experiences of our fellow practitioners around Texas and throughout the country and hope the findings and stories we share here will play at least a small part in helping others who seek to begin this work take their first step. Though traveling this road at times means a long and challenging journey, we are continually spurred on by the achievements of our students - our city's and our country's next generation of leaders. We see their success and we know **the future is bright.**

Yours in service,

The Dallas ISD Personalized Learning Team

Introduction to Personalized Learning

As a burgeoning national initiative, Personalized Learning takes many forms. Some practitioners focus on students' interests and goals; others emphasize mastery-based progression and individualization of content. In many personalized classrooms, student-led projects drive learning, while others employ flexible learning environments and differentiated pathways through adaptive instruction. However it is practiced, Personalized Learning is about putting the child at the center of instruction.

In this respect, Personalized Learning is nothing new. Experienced teachers have always understood that students learn best when instruction is adapted to their needs and interests, and those same teachers served as the pioneers for Personalized Learning long before the term itself existed. At its heart, personalization is simply a codification of centuries of best practices that have been developed and refined by these pioneer teachers. The difference today, and one reason Personalized Learning has received so much attention over the past few years, is that the education system only recently adopted the tools to implement the practice at scale. Technology has been a driving force not only for enabling real-time personalization through key instructional practices such as differentiation and feedback, but also for spreading awareness and understanding of the model throughout the education field.

While technology has played an important role in helping teachers to both deepen and scale Personalized Learning, it is important to note that technology is simply a tool. True Personalized Learning, both with and without technology, runs much deeper. Although there is not yet a national consensus for how to define Personalized Learning, leading practitioners including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have coalesced around four "operational enablers" of the practice.[1]

Competency-Based Progression
Allow students to learn at their own pace. When a student demonstrates she has mastered a concept or skill, she can move on to the next one. Teachers work closely with students to understand what they have already mastered and what is coming up next so that students know exactly how they are progressing through content. Mastery means that a student is an expert. If she does not have complete command of a concept or skill, she continues to work on it.

---

[1] Adapted from framework developed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Afton Partners, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, CEE Trust, the Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation, Charter School Growth Fund, EDUCAUSE, iNACOL, the Learning Accelerator, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Silicon Schools, and educators. Learn more at tiny.cc/pldefinition.

Flexible Learning Environments
Allows students to have voice and choice in when, where, and how they learn. Depending on the student, he may learn in a large group, small group, or by himself - sometimes all in one day. Flexible furniture and learning spaces enable adaptive grouping and learning environments that are designed for students' comfort and engagement. Learning spaces are not just at school: with the help of technology, students can learn anytime and anywhere.

Personal Learning Paths
Customized roadmaps for all students to help them reach their academic destination. A personal learning path describes how a student will master a concept or skill - what lessons and activities she will engage in to become an expert in rigorous content.

Learner Profiles
Used to tell a student's academic and personal story. A learner profile includes a student's strengths, areas of growth, interests, aspirations, and how he learns best. A student's profile should empower him to own his learning and advocate for what he needs in order to be successful.

Just as instruction must be personalized for students, the way that teachers and schools implement this framework varies depending on their desired outcomes and needs. Focusing on foundational skills through student-led goal setting and data tracking with learner profiles is a common starting point. However, many educators dive directly into more advanced practices such as competency-based progressions and grading. At the district level, Personalized Learning is often implemented by setting expectations and providing support from the top, but can also be pursued through an approach such as an innovation zone that encourages successful practices to spread organically.

Each of these models has merit, and there is no single best practice for how to begin a Personalized Learning implementation. The most successful models are simply those that are tailored to the goals, needs, and perspectives of the practitioners and students who are at the forefront of the work. In this way, districts not only help to ensure a successful implementation but also model the core principles of Personalized Learning within the initiative itself.

The next section of this report will explore Dallas ISD's approach to Personalized Learning and the scope of the District's initiative to date.

Personalized Learning in Dallas ISD

Serving nearly 157,000 students across more than 230 schools, the Dallas Independent School District is the second largest school system in Texas and the 14th largest district in the country. Dallas ISD has a track-record for supporting innovative programs that help fulfill its mission of educating all students for success. As a result, the District is home to some of the top-performing schools in the country and has led the charge in implementing some of the most impactful programs in the state including its strategic staffing initiative for low-performing schools, its teacher compensation model, and its focus on supporting and opening new and innovative school models.[2,3] The District's investment in innovation has also empowered many campuses to adopt pioneering instructional models. This practice of supporting innovation at the district level while campuses lead from the ground has enabled effective new practices to take root and expand.

vision
Empowered kids who are college ready, career ready, and world ready.

mission
To equip educators and their partners to personalize learning for kids.

The District's Personalized Learning model grew out of this process. Building on the District's mission to educate all students for success, the Personalized Learning initiative is designed to develop empowered kids who are college ready, career ready, and world ready. To do so, the Personalized Learning central team provides professional development and support to school leaders, teachers, and District administrators to equip them to personalize learning for kids.

As a burgeoning national practice, Personalized Learning does not yet have a codified definition in the education field, leading many practitioners to develop their own definitions of the model. Dallas ISD began this process by examining existing elements and understandings of the practice, including the four operational enablers outlined in the previous section of this report. From there, the central planning team established the following working definition for the model, adapted from iNACOL:

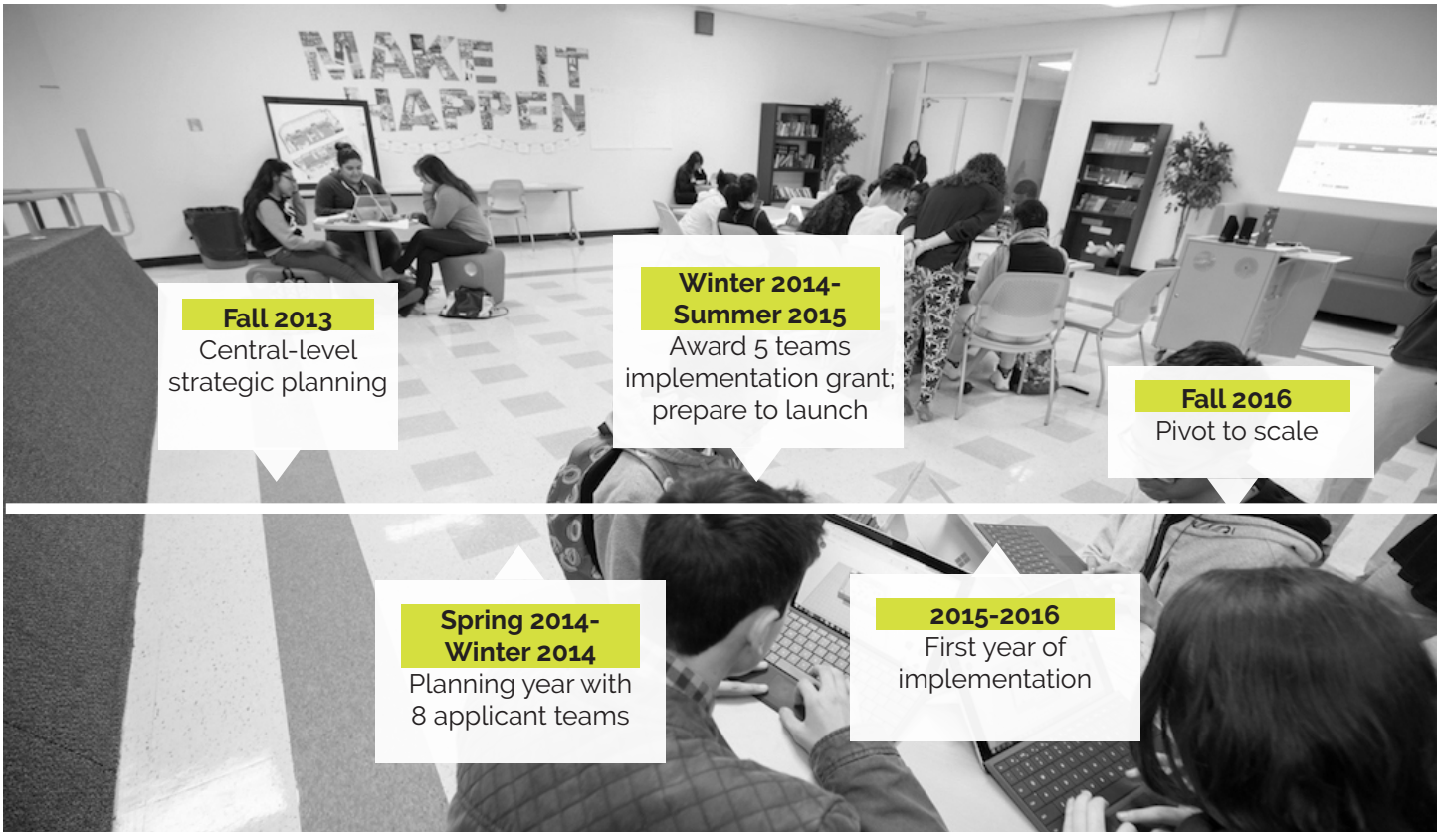
personalized learning is a **one-size-fits-one approach** to instruction that: (1) taps into each student's strengths, needs, and interests to customize learning and (2) supports student voice and choice in what, how, when, and where they learn to ensure that **all students achieve at their greatest potential.**

---

[2] "School for the Talented and Gifted, School of Science and Engineering named Texas' best," The Hub, April 2017. (tiny.cc/disdtopschools).
[3] Learn more about these programs at www.dallasisd.org and review their recent results at tiny.cc/disdevaluation.

Guided by this unified understanding of the practice, the District officially launched the Personalized Learning initiative in 2013 after receiving a Next Generation Systems Initiative (NGSI) grant through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The District's senior leadership ensured the initiative was set up for success by appointing an internal Director to lead the project and later allocating additional full-time staff members and resources to support the work. With the support of this network, Dallas ISD opened a districtwide application process to select its first cohort of wall-to-wall Personalized Learning campuses. Beginning with 36 applicants, an independent panel with representatives from within and outside the District selected eight teams to engage in a planning year. Following the planning process, **five applicants were awarded** funding and support to launch their school models in the 2015-16 school year.

Dallas ISD Timeline: 2013-2016



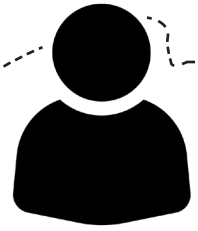
These five campuses formed the inaugural Personalized Learning cohort.[4] They are the trailblazers of this work and those to whom the initiative owes its greatest successes. As a result of their efforts and the lessons learned along the way, the district has expanded both the scope and reach of Personalized Learning every year since the initiative's launch. Rather than restricting these practices to school-wide models, educators can now pursue Personalized Learning through any of **four key pathways**, detailed on the following page. Through these pathways, the initiative has expanded to reach over **20,000 Dallas ISD students in every quadrant** of the district.

[4] For campus and District demographics, see the Appendix.

personalized learning pathways 2017-2018

cohort schools

- Wall-to-wall Personalized Learning implementation
- Launched with 5 campuses in Fall 2015
- Expanded to a total of 7 campuses by Fall 2017

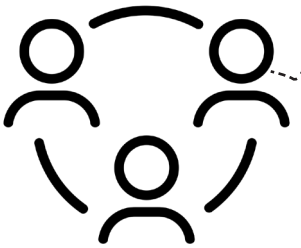


innovation in teaching fellowship

- 10-month fellowship for teachers districtwide
- Launched with 30 fellows in inaugural Fall 2016 cohort
- Over 100 teachers across three cohorts participated in the fellowship as of the 2017-2018 school year

feeder pattern partners

- Year-round professional development for principals across schools linked by geographic feeder patterns
- Launched with 1 feeder partner in Fall 2015
- Expanded to a total of 5 feeder partners by Fall 2017

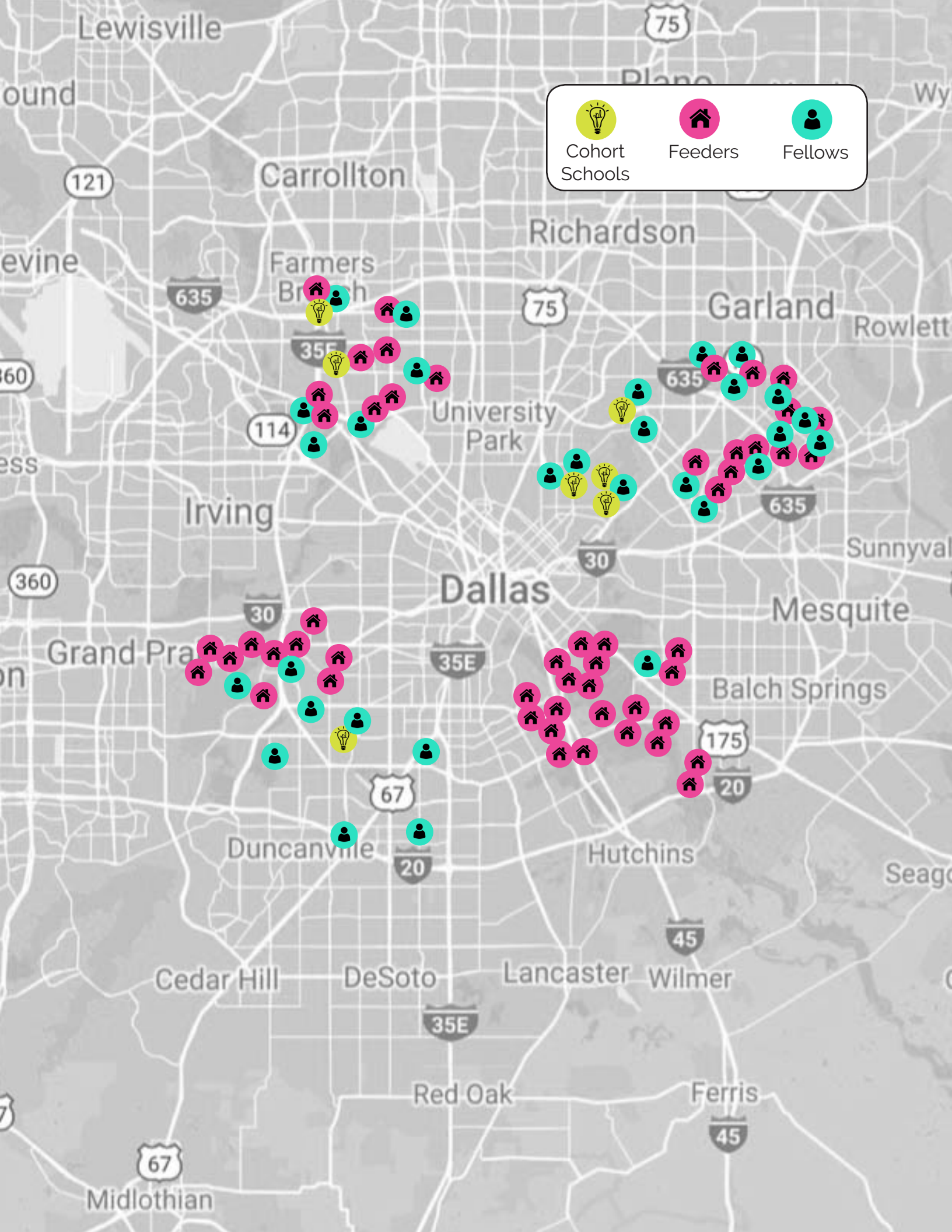


communities of practice

- Year-round virtual and in-person professional development communities centered on "passion projects"
- Open to teachers, administrators, and central staff districtwide
- Launched 8 inaugural CoPs in Fall 2017*

**Participants not included on map*

Due to the longer duration and deeper level of Personalized Learning implementation, **this report will focus on the experiences and results of the five original cohort campuses.** In future years, the team will examine the impact of these high-intensity models alongside the other pathways.


Cohort Schools
Feeders
Fellows
Lewisville
Carrollton
Farmers Branch
Richardson
Garland
Rowlett
University Park
Irving
Dallas
Mesquite
Sunnyvale
Grand Prairie
Balch Springs
Duncanville
Hutchins
Cedar Hill
DeSoto
Lancaster
Wilmer
Red Oak
Ferris
Midlothian
121
635
75
114
360
30
35E
67
20
175
45

spotlights

While examining quantitative results is critical to helping schools and districts understand the impact of any initiative, it is equally important to understand the context and activities that lead to those results. To help readers make these connections, this report will feature "Spotlights" on specific implementation elements and stories of impact to help bridge the gap between the numbers on the charts to the people in the classrooms.

In addition, since all District campuses work to achieve the initiative's vision of empowered students who are college, career, and world ready, Spotlights will highlight how students at Personalized Learning campuses engage in these activities within a context that is differentiated not only for their academic needs, but also for their personal interests and goals. Dive into the first Spotlight, Meet the Cohort, on the next page to learn more about the five campuses whose work is featured in this report.

spotlight
meet the cohort

In the fall of 2015, five Dallas ISD campuses adopted a new label: "Personalized Learning school." At the time, few in the region were familiar with the term, and with good reason - Personalized Learning (PL) had only recently developed into a national movement and even the veterans of the practice had not yet codified a single definition of the work. It was and remains true innovation with Dallas ISD as a pioneer in the field.

Following the core principles of the model, each school approached Personalized Learning in its own way based on the unique needs and goals of its students and community. These models, highlighted below, set the stage for the results that are featured in the remainder of this report and for the various pathways through which nearly 100 District schools and 20,000 students now engage with the work.

Chapel Hill Preparatory

567 Pre-K- 5th graders upon launch
Core tenets of PL include:
- Blended Learning station rotation
- Flexible learning spaces
- Social-Emotional Learning

Dan D. Rogers Elementary

503 PreK-5th graders upon launch
Core tenets of PL include:
- Blended Learning station rotation
- Student-led goal setting
- Project-Based Learning labs

Ignacio Zaragoza Elementary

503 PreK-5th graders upon launch
Core tenets of PL include:
- Standards-based grading
- Differentiated learning pathways
- Interest-based, integrated electives

T.C. Marsh Preparatory Academy

310 6th graders upon launch (expanded to 7th and 8th grade the following years)
Core tenets of PL include:
- Adaptive Learning Management System
- Small group instruction
- Technology-rich lessons

Innovation, Design, Entreneurship Academy (IDEA)

103 9th graders upon launch (adding one grade per year through 12th grade)
Core tenets of PL include:
- Individualized mentoring and internship programs
- Personalized instructional pathways
- Next Generation Skills rubrics

*Chapel Hill was formerly known as William L. Cabell Elementary School.

Learn more about the cohort at www.thepltoolbox.com/cohort.
For campus and District demographics, see the Appendix.

The Need for Personalized Learning

Most educators understand the challenges faced by the public education system and the need for change. They know that the current system was designed during the industrial revolution to prepare the country's future workforce for that era and are all too familiar with the tale of Sputnik - the foreign satellite that launched America's modern education reform movement.[5,6] Education practitioners generally agree on the system's problems; the question more likely to spark debate is what can be done to fix those problems.

Decades of innovation have yielded incremental change and pockets of excellence, but far too many students still leave school without the resources and skills they need for success. In 1997, Harvard University professor Roland Barth shared that U.S. students in the 1950's typically left school knowing about 75% of what they needed to ensure their future success. By the 1990's, that estimate had decreased to only 2%, not because schools stopped sharing knowledge, but because **knowledge itself was no longer enough.**[7] To ensure students' success in the modern era, schools must not only give students knowledge but also teach them how to learn and instill in them a drive for learning that will empower them to succeed in jobs and industries that do not exist today.

Personalized Learning is one way to address this need. By adapting instruction to their interests, students experience joy in learning and understand why school is relevant to them. In encouraging them to take ownership over their education, students become personally invested in their success from an early age. While research on Personalized Learning as a codified instructional model is relatively sparse, the positive impact of many of its core elements - from mastery learning to self-paced instruction - is widely understood.

In 1984, Benjamin Bloom published his "2 Sigma" study illustrating how mastery learning and personal tutoring could increase student performance by as much as two standard deviations - enough to bring an average student into the top percentile of performance.[8] More recently, John Hattie's effect size ranking placed acceleration - empowering high-performing students to move through the curriculum ahead of their peers - among the top positive influences on student achievement.[9] In addition to this and related research, teachers are often drawn to Personalized Learning because their own experiences have shown them that, just like adults, students learn better when instruction is focused on their unique needs and interests.

---

[5] TED, Changing Education Paradigms (tiny.cc/robinsonvideo).
[6] A Nation at Risk, 1983 (tiny.cc/natatrisk).
[7] The Leader as Learner, Education Week, March 1997 (tiny.cc/leaderaslearner).
[8] Bloom, B. (1984). "The 2 Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring", Educational Researcher, 13:6(4-16) (tiny.cc/2sigmastudy).
[9] Visible Learning, 2011 (tiny.cc/hattierankings).

Personalized Learning is not a panacea for the challenges faced by the public education system. To make meaningful changes, the field must identify multiple effective strategies and collaborate to bring them to scale. However, initial findings indicate that the model may play a key role in ensuring students are college, career, and world ready.[10, 11] In the modern era, jobs, industries, and society itself are continually evolving. Personalized Learning has the potential to build lifelong learners who can evolve with the world around them, not only answering the questions they are asked today but also asking the questions that will shape tomorrow. These are the kinds of leaders modern society requires; therefore, these are the kind of learners schools must develop.

> "It doesn't matter if we fail, we can just improve."
> - PL elementary student

[10] Pane, John F., Elizabeth D. Steiner, Matthew D. Baird, Laura S. Hamilton, and Joseph D. Pane. Informing Progress: Insights on Personalized Learning Implementation and Effects. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017. (tiny.cc/randplreport).

[11] Personalized Learning: A Journey Through Year One, Denver Public Schools (tiny.cc/dpsplreport).

Preliminary Findings

Dallas ISD launched its Personalized Learning initiative in 2013. Following a competitive, year-long application and planning process, five campuses (three elementary, one middle, and one high school) were awarded funding and support to implement their models beginning in the 2015-16 school year.[12] The leadership of these campus teams has since led Personalized Learning to evolve beyond the schoolwide model into multiple implementation pathways, reaching over 20,000 students across the District in the 2017-2018 school year. As the District's earliest Personalized Learning practitioners, this report focuses on the experiences and results of the five original cohort campuses. Future reports will examine results from the additional pathways.

To begin planning for this report, the District's central Personalized Learning team first identified the measurement tools and metrics most directly related to Personalized Learning practices. Following an extensive review of available metrics and consultations with both internal and external researchers, the team selected several key data points: Math and Reading results on the State Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), growth indicators on the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment, and staff and student surveys, among others. To better understand how students at Personalized Learning campuses were performing in comparison to their peers who were not exposed to these teaching strategies, the central team commissioned Dr. Candace Walkington and Dr. Akihito Kamata of Southern Methodist University (SMU) to complete a pro-bono, multi-year study of the initiative that included a scientifically matched comparison group.

It is important to note that the assessment and survey metrics used in this report were selected before examining available data for the measures. While the central team and campuses regularly review key metrics for continuous improvement purposes, these reviews were generally done with a focus on specific campuses, rather than the broader Personalized Learning initiative. In other words, they were selected without knowing whether or not the cohort schools were performing well in these areas overall.

[12] For campus and District demographics, see the Appendix.

Like many new initiatives, the data revealed areas of strength as well as areas for improvement. However, the cohort schools **generally outperformed both the District and their feeder patterns** (geographically grouped K-12 schools to which students are zoned) on the STAAR and on key campus survey questions, with the strongest results seen at the elementary level (three of the five cohort campuses). Results on these measures at the PL secondary schools were less consistent, though still positive overall, with the middle school showing particularly rapid growth in year two of the implementation. The independent study confirmed that students at the cohort schools outperformed their peers on the STAAR in many cases. MAP results and survey data related to change management were identified as key areas for improvement.

This report examines these results across three sections:

What's Working
An overview of key resources that have supported the growth and success of Personalized Learning in Dallas ISD, along with outcome measures that illustrate potential strengths of the initiative.

What We're Working On
An overview of outcome measures that illustrate potential areas for improvement within the District's Personalized Learning initiative.

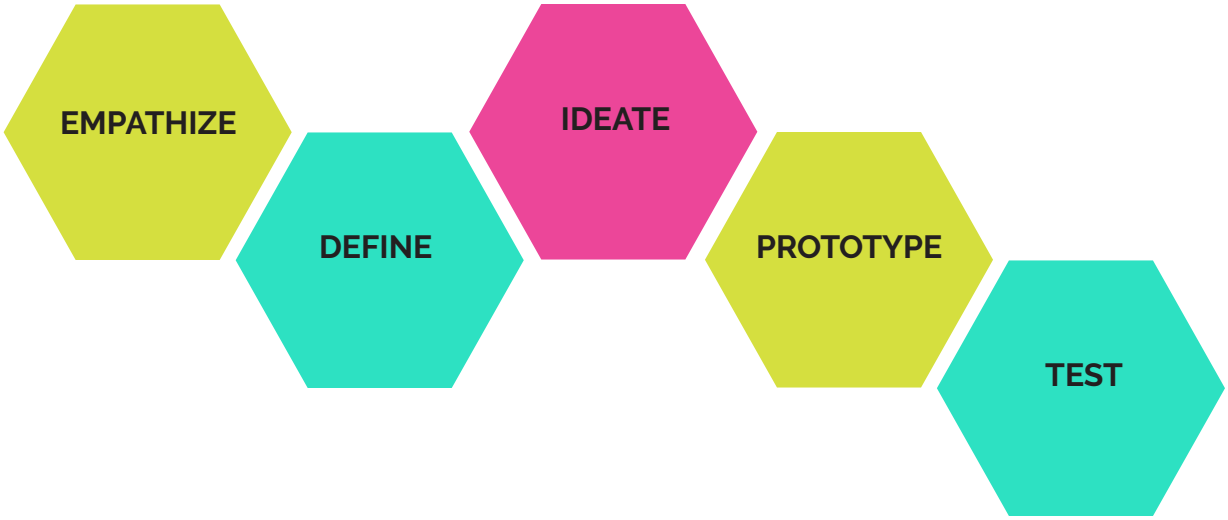
What We're Still Working Out
Larger questions about the work that still remain and the District's plans for exploring possible solutions.

By sharing a complete picture of both the successes and challenges of the initiative, the central team hopes to add a valuable case study to the field that may guide others who are pursuing this work and to support its own understanding of the initiative's impact so that the most effective practices can be brought to scale.

what's working

Like any innovation, the District's exploration of Personalized Learning is a composite of trial and error. To make sense of this process and ensure that student achievement is never hindered, the central team and cohort schools employ IDEO's Design Thinking framework- a creative problem-solving process that puts the user's needs (in this case, students) at the center of every strategy.[13]

The Design Thinking Framework



With the support of this framework, the District's practitioners have generated and iterated on creative solutions to key challenges for every aspect of the initiative. By learning from failures and building on successes, the District's Personalized Learning instructors and leaders have arisen as some of the top practitioners in their field. In the first two years of the initiative, over 300 educators and external partners traveled both locally and from across the country to see these instructors in action. The District's teams frequently reciprocate these visits; in fact, site visits to exemplary campuses nationwide have been one of the District's most valuable professional development strategies to date.

In addition to hosting fellow practitioners, the central Personalized Learning team has shared its work at several national conferences and convenings, including the iNACOL Symposium, the Blended and Personalized Learning Conference (BPLC), and the LEAP Summit, among others. Parents and students have made their voices heard as well. From the initiative's launch in 2015-16 through the current 2017-18 school year, over **250 students have chosen to transfer** to the District's four Personalized Learning neighborhood schools, and **1,969 students have applied for 718 seats** at the lottery-based Personalized Learning high school and new middle school scheduled to open in the fall of 2018.

---

[13] IDEO U- What is Design Thinking? (tiny.cc/designthinkingintro).

Although the initiative is relatively young, these rates of family demand indicate that it is resonating with the community. This section will explore aspects of the initiative that have been the most successful to date and will introduce some of the District's most impactful and widely-used resources, beginning with the District's Personalized Learning Teacher Competencies.

Hiring High-Quality, Best-Fit Teachers

There is no school-based factor more impactful to student learning than teacher quality.[14] For innovative models such as Personalized Learning, having high quality teachers who are the best fit for the instructional model becomes even more important. At the same time, Personalized Learning offers a new value proposition to the profession - one that highlights flexibility, collaboration, and innovation. When planning for the first year of implementation at cohort schools, the central planning team worked with the District's Human Capital Management (HCM) department to develop a comprehensive selection protocol and recruitment strategy. This strategy capitalized on the value proposition of a Personalized Learning teaching position and ultimately produced a candidate pool that outperformed the general applicant pool on every selection assessment.

To begin, the team developed a set of competencies that exemplify the qualities needed in a Personalized Learning teacher. Drawing on research from sources including The New Teacher Project, the U.S. Department of Education, various state departments of education, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, iNACOL, and Personalized Learning school visits in the Bay Area, they adapted the competencies used to identify high-quality candidates in the general teacher applicant pool to reflect PL-specific skills and mindsets. This resulted in a focus on identifying and screening for the following six characteristics:

Dallas ISD Personalized Learning Teacher Competencies:

Student-Centered

- Believes students need different and potentially unequal inputs to reach potential
- Acknowledges the positive contributions of students, their families, and the community

Technological comfortable

- Integrates technology purposefully into planning and instruction
- Able to functionally navigate through a variety of applicable tools; a quick study with new technology

Improving Continuously

- Overcomes obstacles and works relentlessly to pursue goals
- Reflective; possesses growth mindset
- Willfully seeks out and incorporates feedback to optimize performance

Entrepreneurial

- Demonstrates willingness to take risks to maximize outcomes
- Approaches problems in new and creative ways
- Overcomes obstacles and works relentlessly to pursue goals

Collaborative 2.0

- Willing to work in concert with colleagues to improve student outcomes
- Actively focuses on the assets in others
- Readily invests in shared team goals

Data- informed

- Tracks progress toward measurable goals
- Meaningfully differentiates instruction based on all available data
- Grounds decisions and plans in evidence

[14] Visible Learning, 2011 (tiny.cc/hattierankings).

In addition to traditional recruitment strategies to find best-fit candidates, the HCM team conducted pre-screening within the District's existing applicant pool and sent direct invitations to candidates who matched the identified competencies. While labor-intensive, this proved to be the most successful recruitment strategy, yielding **nearly half** of the total Personalized Learning applicant pool. In addition, a custom pre-work activity was added to the District's standard selection process to help Personalized Learning principals evaluate each candidate's skills in an authentic context.

These strategies were immensely successful. Relative to the general Dallas ISD applicant pool, Personalized Learning applicants reported more years of experience in the classroom, demonstrated stronger undergraduate academic achievement, and earned higher scores on all selection assessments. In fact, they **outperformed the general applicant pool on every metric**. In response to this success, the District has since integrated the pre-work activity into its standard hiring process. In addition, a number of schools have adapted the Personalized Learning pre-work to assess their current teachers' skills and design individualized professional development plans to further their growth.

As illustrated in the remainder of this report, securing a strong foundation of high quality teachers was and continues to be an indispensible strategy for the success of the Personalized Learning initiative. The next section details the main professional development resource provided to Dallas ISD teachers who engage in Personalized Learning (PL) - the PL Coaching and Development Rubric and The PL Toolbox.

Creating the "Look-Fors"

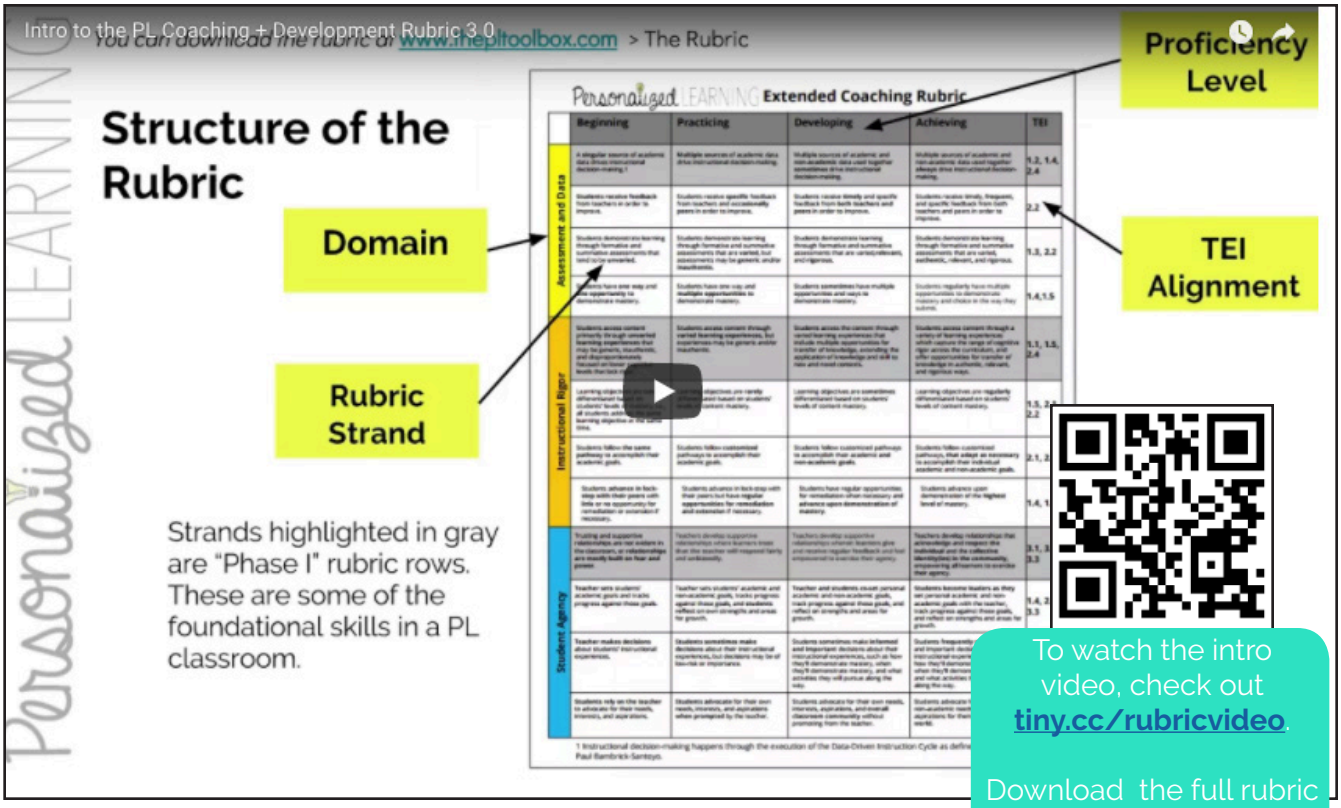
Before launching the initiative, the District developed a working definition for Personalized Learning that is still used.[15] However, once implementation began, it became clear that a definition was not sufficient to guide a unified, consistent strategy. While not all Personalized Learning implementations should look exactly alike, they should be united by an underlying set of practices that differentiate Personalized Learning from other instructional models. To meet this need, the central team set out to develop a Personalized Learning Coaching and Development Rubric with specific student and teacher actions to guide educators and campuses as they pursue and grow in this model.

---

[15] See the section "Personalized Learning in Dallas ISD" for the working definition.

By combining the strongest, most relevant aspects of existing teacher effectiveness models from sources including Dallas ISD's Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI), the iNACOL Blended Learning Teacher Competency Framework, and the SchoolWorks School Quality Review, among others, the central team developed a rubric that extends the District's existing teacher evaluation metrics and provides specific student and teacher actions that exemplify a Personalized Learning classroom. For an introduction to the rubric's components, view the short video linked below.

Dallas ISD Personalized Learning Coaching and Development Rubric



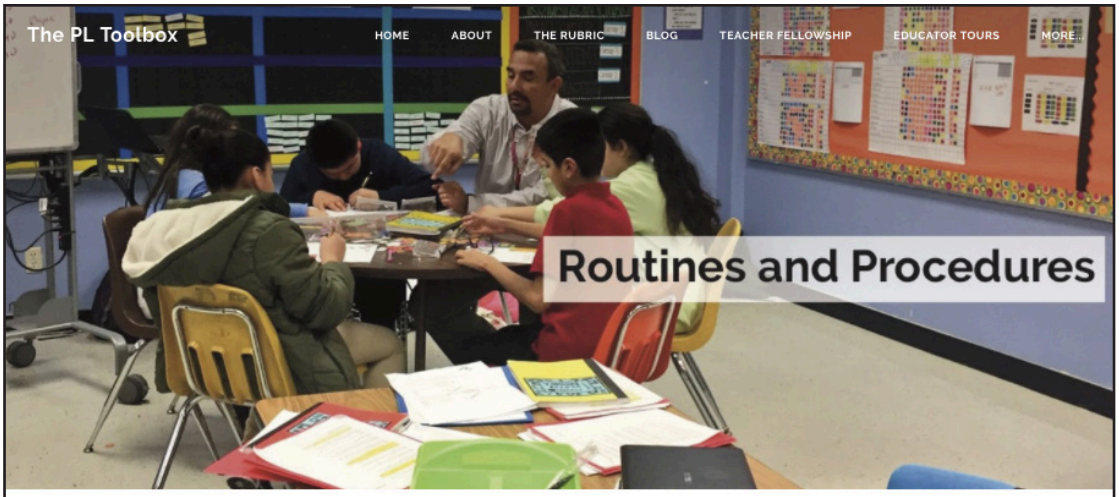
The five domains of the rubric - Assessment and Data, Instructional Rigor, Student Agency, Classroom Culture, and Equity - exemplify the core areas of classroom practice where personalization takes place. The final column of the rubric, "TEI Alignment," refers to the District's teacher evaluation system, reinforcing that this rubric is an extension, rather than a replacement of that system.[16] As such, the Personalized Learning rubric is designed as a guide for teachers and is not used for formal evaluations. This allows teachers to adapt the rubric to fit their own needs. Many use it for personal goal setting throughout the year - selecting one or two rubric rows on which they would like to improve and working with their campus administration to build their skills in those areas.

---

[16] Learn more about TEI and download the TEI performance rubric at tei.dallasisd.org.

To further support teachers in these efforts, the central team developed an online "toolbox" aligned to the Personalized Learning rubric. This resource, found at www.thepltoolbox.com, breaks the rubric into four phases, providing specific look-fors for each rubric domain and proficiency level within that phase. In addition, the toolbox provides guiding questions for classroom observations, aligned resources, and a password protected "In the Field" section that is packed with annotated photos of exemplary classroom practices in Dallas ISD for each rubric row.

The PL Toolbox: Phase 1 resource for Classroom Culture



Classroom Culture

Phase 1

Routines and Procedures (TEI Alignment 3.1, 3.2)			
Beginning	**Developing**	**Practicing**	**Achieving**
Established routines and procedures exist but **may be unclear to students** and are exclusively managed by the teacher.	Established routines and procedures are clear to students and are exclusively managed by the teacher.	Established routines and procedures maximize instructional time and are **sometimes** managed by	Established routines and procedures maximize instructional time and are **co-created with** and

"Look-Fors" During Observation

Remember: *The most helpful part of the observation is not checking off items, but the conversations and reflections that happen after the visit.*

Beginning/ Developing

- Students enter the classroom to sit and wait for directions/first activity, and to learn expectations for the day and what materials they will need for the lesson.
- Teacher pauses the class during transitions and informs students where to go, when, and in what manner (transitions).
- **Routines, procedures and directions may not be posted in the classroom** and are only told to students at the beginning of the lesson.
- Directions might be out of sequence, incomplete, and/or hard to follow. **Classroom setup makes it hard for students to move around efficiently** and without disruption to other students and/or the teacher.
- Teacher manages most equipment, materials and supplies for students. Students do not have roles and responsibilities.
- **Technology routines are not in place to maximize instructional time**, e.g., students do not know how to access various academic programs such as iStation

Practicing/ Achieving

- Students enter classroom and know where to look for directions on first activity.
- Non-verbals are used to inform students about expectations and materials needed.
- **Students do not wait for teacher to let them know where to go, when, and in what manner** (transitions).Routines, procedures and directions are posted in the classroom and/or on a virtual platform for students to reference during a lesson.
- Directions are specific, concrete, and sequential.
- Furniture allows for students to move around efficiently and without disruption to other students or the teacher.
- **Students take an active role in supporting an organized, safe classroom by assisting with transitions, equipment, materials and supplies** (i.e., students may have assigned class and/or group roles and responsibilities).
- **Technology routines are in place to maximize instructional time**, e.g., students maintain login cards for various academic programs such as iStation and can

Just as the Personalized Learning rubric is divided into phases, the District's cohort schools approach the practice using a tiered strategy. Thinking of Personalized Learning as an umbrella for relevant instructional strategies, the majority of practitioners begin their journey with a solid foundation in Data-Driven Instruction (DDI). Using DDI, they begin implementing the Clayton Christensen Institute's Blended Learning model. With proficiency in this strategy, practitioners typically proceed to Project-Based Learning as developed by The Buck Institute. Finally, advanced practitioners recently began working toward Competency-Based Learning. Within each instructional strategy, practitioners continue to embed and grow in the domains of the Personalized Learning rubric, continually advancing toward the "Achieving" level as they deepen their practice. This approach has allowed teachers to hone their Personalized Learning practice at a level and pace that works for them.

"Our teachers are really involved with the students - they pretty much know everything about us."
– PL student

Dallas ISD's Personalized Learning rubric and toolbox have formed a foundation for Personalized Learning practice in the District and have also been featured and implemented by partners across the country, including D.C. Public Schools, Texas Tech University, the Raising Blended Learners initiative, BetterLesson, Schoolworks, and The Learning Accelerator. In concert with these partners and the District's own practitioners, these resources are continually updated as teachers discover new and greater ways to personalize instruction for their students.

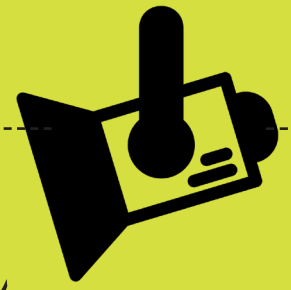
Personalized LEARNING Extended Coaching Rubric

	Beginning	Practicing	Developing	Achieving	TEI
Assessment and Data	A **singular source** of academic data drives instructional decision-making.1	**Multiple sources** of academic data drive instructional decision-making.	Multiple sources of academic and **non-academic** data used together **sometimes** drive instructional decision-making.	Multiple sources of academic and non-academic data used together **always** drive instructional decision-making.	**1.2, 1.4, 2.4**
	Students receive feedback from teachers in order to improve.	Students receive **specific** feedback from teachers and **occasionally peers** in order to improve.	Students receive **timely** and specific feedback from **both teachers and peers** in order to improve.	Students receive timely, **frequent**, and specific feedback from both teachers and peers in order to improve.	**2.2**
	Students demonstrate learning through formative and summative assessments that tend to be **unvaried**.	Students demonstrate learning through formative and summative assessments that are **varied**, but assessments may be **generic** and/or **inauthentic**.	Students demonstrate learning through formative and summative assessments that are varied,**relevant,** and **rigorous.**	Students demonstrate learning through formative and summative assessments that are varied, **authentic**, relevant, and rigorous.	**1.3, 2.2**
	Students have **one way** and **one opportunity** to demonstrate mastery.	Students have one way and **multiple opportunities** to demonstrate mastery.	Students **sometimes** have multiple opportunities and ways to demonstrate mastery.	Students **regularly** have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery and choice in the way they submit.	**1.4,1.5**
Instructional Rigor	Students access content primarily through **unvaried learning experiences** that may be generic, inauthentic, and disproportionately focused on lower cognitive levels that lack rigor.	Students access content through **varied learning experiences**, but experiences may be generic and/or inauthentic.	Students access the content through varied learning experiences that include multiple opportunities for transfer of knowledge, extending the application of knowledge and skill to new and novel contexts.	Students access content through a variety of learning experiences which capture the range of cognitive rigor across the curriculum, and offer opportunities for transfer of knowledge in authentic, relevant, and rigorous ways.	**1.1, 1.5, 2.4**
	Learning objectives are **never** differentiated based on students' levels of mastery, i.e., all students address the same learning objective at the same time.	Learning objectives are **rarely** differentiated based on students' levels of content mastery.	Learning objectives are **sometimes** differentiated based on students' levels of content mastery.	Learning objectives are **regularly** differentiated based on students' levels of content mastery.	**1.5, 2.1, 2.2**
	Students follow **the same pathway** to accomplish their academic goals.	Students follow **customized** pathways to accomplish their academic goals.	Students follow customized pathways to accomplish their academic **and non-academic goals**.	Students follow customized pathways, **that adapt as necessary** to accomplish their individual academic and non-academic goals.	**2.1, 2.3**
	Students **advance in lock-step with their peers** with little or no opportunity for remediation or extension if necessary.	Students advance in lock-step with their peers but have **regular opportunities for remediation and extension** if necessary.	Students have regular opportunities for remediation when necessary and **advance upon demonstration of mastery**.	Students advance upon demonstration of the **highest level** of mastery.	**1.4, 1.5**
Student Agency	Trusting and supportive relationships are not evident in the classroom, or **relationships are mostly built on fear and power**.	Teachers develop supportive relationships where learners **trust that the teacher will respond fairly** and **unbiasedly**.	Teachers develop supportive relationships wherein **learners give** and **receive regular feedback** and feel empowered to exercise their agency.	Teachers develop relationships that acknowledge and **respect the individual** and the **collective identity(ies) in the community**, empowering all learners to exercise their agency.	**3.1, 3.2. 3.3**
	Teacher sets students' academic goals and tracks progress against those goals.	Teacher sets students' academic and non-academic goals, tracks progress against those goals, and **students reflect** on own strengths and areas for growth.	**Teacher and students co-set** personal academic and non-academic goals, track progress against those goals, and reflect on strengths and areas for growth.	**Students become leaders as they set** personal academic and non-academic goals with the teacher, track progress against those goals, and reflect on strengths and areas for growth.	**1.4, 2.1, 3.3**
	Teacher makes decisions about students' instructional experiences.	**Students sometimes make decisions** about their instructional experiences, but decisions may be of low-risk or importance.	Students sometimes make **informed and important** decisions about their instructional experiences, such as how they'll demonstrate mastery, when they'll demonstrate mastery, and what activities they will pursue along the way.	Students **frequently** make informed and important decisions about their instructional experiences, such as how they'll demonstrate mastery, when they'll demonstrate mastery, and what activities they will pursue along the way.	**1.4, 2.2**
	Students rely on the teacher to advocate for their needs, interests, and aspirations.	**Students advocate** for their own needs, interests, and aspirations **when prompted** by the teacher.	Students advocate for their own needs, interests, aspirations, and **overall classroom community** without promoting from the teacher.	Students advocate for academic and non-academic needs, interests, and aspirations for themselves **and the world.**	**1.4, 2.2**

1 Instructional decision-making happens through the execution of the Data-Driven Instruction Cycle as defined in Driven by Data, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo.

spotlight

the personalized learning coaching and development rubric



Personalized LEARNING Extended Coaching Rubric

	Beginning	Practicing	Developing	Achieving	TEI
Classroom Culture	Established routines and procedures exist but **may be unclear to students** and are exclusively managed by the teacher.	Established routines and procedures are clear to students and are exclusively managed by the teacher.	Established routines and procedures maximize instructional time and are **sometimes** managed by students.	Established routines and procedures maximize instructional time and are **co-created with** and managed largely by students.	**3.1, 3.2**
	Teacher **directs improvements** to work and behavior.	Teacher **holds students accountable to high standards** and directs improvements to work and behavior.	**Teacher creates a learning environment where students are joyfully engaged in work, holding themselves accountable** to high standards and initiating improvements to work and behavior.	Students celebrate individual and collective successes, taking ownership of being joyfully engaged in their work and holding themselves **and each other** accountable to high standards and initiating improvements to work and behavior.	**3.1, 3.2, 3.3**
	Students believe their **knowledge and skills are fixed**.	Students sometimes **believe they can grow their knowledge and skills** and realize success through effort **when prompted** by the teacher.	Students **usually** believe they can grow their knowledge and skills and realize success through self-directed effort.	Students **always** believe they can grow their knowledge and skills and realize success through self-directed effort (growth mindset).	**3.2**
	Students may have **positive, respectful relationships** with peers but **do not feel a sense of belonging** to or ownership of the larger learning community.	**Students believe they belong** in the learning community.	Students believe they belong in the learning community and **actively contribute to nurturing a sense of belonging among their peers**.	Students' sense of belonging allows them to explore and define their purpose with support from the community of learners.	**3.3**
Equity	Teacher **understands that bias exists** but **does not** necessarily **recognize own personal bias.**	Teacher **recognizes personal bias** and can articulate how it might impact the learning space.	Teacher **recognizes historical** and **contemporary roots** of **personal bias** and **regularly reflects** on how individuals who are different are treated in the learning space.	Teacher recognizes personal bias and is **comfortable in leading discussions across lines of difference** with students.	**3.3**
	Teacher **does not adjust curriculum to reflect the cultural practices** within the school community.	Teacher regularly **seeks opportunities to learn about the cultural practices** within the school community and aligns curriculum units to those practices.	Teacher designs **culturally relevant lessons** that are **embedded in the day** to day teaching, **rather than taught in isolated units.**	Teacher designs learning experiences that **incorporate** the **experiences** and **strengths each student brings** and promote positive self-images and high academic expectations for all learners.	**1.2, 2.5, 3.3**
	Students have the opportunity to work independently and in **unchanging peer groups**, i.e., students are always in the same group.	Students have the opportunity to work independently and in **evolving peer groups**, but grouping strategies tend to be unvaried, e.g., students are always grouped based on mastery.	Students have the opportunity to work independently, in evolving peer groups **varied by size and make-up**, and **with teacher(s) to accomplish their academic goals**.	Working in groups of varied size and make-up to accomplish academic and non-academic goals, **students are supported in sharing their own and incorporating different perspectives based on the identities of the individuals in the group**.	**1.2, 2.6**
	Students **rely on teacher to access** most materials, or do not seek out materials unless instructed to do so by teacher directly.	Students are **sometimes able to access course materials** based on their needs.	Students are able to **access all course materials, at all times,** regardless of student group.	Students are **supported in developing their own mechanisms for accessing resources**, in designing physical spaces that meet their learning needs, and in identifying or **creating routines** or **practices**. which **empower them both inside and outside of school.**	**3.1**

The Dallas ISD PL Coaching and Development Rubric was informed by a number of sources, including: the iNACOL Blended Learning Teacher Competency Framework, the SchoolWorks, LLC School Quality Review – Personalized Learning Criteria and Indicators (4th edition), the Touchstone Education, Inc. 2013 Effective Teaching Performance Standards, and Education Elements' Blended Learning Rubric.

Alignment to TEI as of 01/2018

Access the rubric at **tiny.cc/plrubric**.

Early Successes
While the District's cohort schools are still relatively early in their practice, their data have already shown a number of promising trends. It is important to note that this analysis shows correlations but cannot indicate whether Personalized Learning is the cause of these results. However, the trends identified thus far are encouraging. Results on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) have been particularly positive, and campus survey data has consistently exceeded that of the cohort's feeder pattern schools as well as District averages on key measures. Finally, an independent study of the initiative recently completed by Southern Methodist University researchers has shown that students at cohort schools have in many instances shown more growth than their matched peers who were not exposed to these practices.

Math and Reading STAAR Results
In examining the performance of the cohort schools, the District selected several key measures as relevant benchmarks including math and reading performance on the STAAR. The Personalized Learning campuses, particularly those at the elementary level, not only consistently outperformed their peers on these measures but in many cases also saw **substantially higher rates of both absolute achievement and growth.** For instance, before launching the Personalized Learning initiative, Zaragoza Elementary scored only three percentage points above the District average on the Reading STAAR. However, after two years of the Personalized Learning implementation, their scores outpaced the District average by over 14 percentage points - a growth rate nearly **three times** that of the District. Campus scores in the charts below are highlighted to indicate when the Personalized Learning campus outperformed the District average and/or the average score of its geographic feeder pattern.

Math STAAR Grades 3-8

	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change
Campus	% Satisfactory			Percentage Points
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	41.87	46.6	61.7	19.83 pp
Chapel Hill Preparatory	63.72	67.4	67.9	4.18 pp
Comparison Schools Average (W.T. White Feeder)	*60.05*	*65.5*	*69.4*	*9.35 pp*
Rogers Elementary	78.46	85.8	87.1	8.64 pp
Comparison Schools Average (Hillcrest Feeder)	*65.19*	*69.4*	*73.4*	*8.21 pp*

	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change
Campus	% Satisfactory			Percentage Points
Zaragoza Elementary	60.28	73.8	86.4	26.12 pp
Comparison Schools Average (North Dallas Feeder)	*52.88*	*62.1*	*65.6*	*12.72 pp*
District Average	54.2	64.3	69	14.8 pp

-Comparison schools include all campuses within the PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder pattern.
-"Satisfactory" defined as 2016-17 levels of Approaching, Met, or Mastered Grade Level or equivalent levels from prior test administrations.

Reading STAAR Grades 3-8

	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change
Campus	% Satisfactory			Percentage Points
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	53.27	54.2	55.7	2.43 pp
Chapel Hill Preparatory	52.57	56.9	63	10.43 pp
Comparison Schools Average (W.T. White Feeder)	*64.74*	*66.8*	*67.5*	*2.76 pp*
Rogers Elementary	68.92	77	80.5	11.58 pp
Comparison Schools Average (Hillcrest Feeder)	*63.73*	*69.7*	*72*	*8.27 pp*
Zaragoza Elementary	61.53	63.9	78.4	16.88 pp
Comparison Schools Average (North Dallas Feeder)	*57.35*	*61.9*	*62.3*	*4.95 pp*
District Average	58.37	63.5	64	5.63 pp

-Comparison schools include all campuses within the PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder pattern.
-"Satisfactory" defined as 2016-17 levels of Approaching, Met, or Mastered Grade Level or equivalent levels from prior test administrations.

End of Course (EOC) Exams Grade 9

	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change
Campus	% Satisfactory		Percentage Points
English I EOC			
IDEA (High School)	68.3	60.8	-7.5 pp
Comparison Schools Average (Transformation Feeder)	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
District Summary	57.6	58.7	1.1 pp
Algebra I EOC			
IDEA (High School)	86.6	93.8	3.9 pp
Comparsion Schools Average (Transformation Feeder)	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
District Summary	77.7	83.5	3.4 pp

-Comparison schools include all those within the PL school's feeder pattern. IDEA lies within a feeder specifically for Transformation schools and was the only high school within the feeder pattern at the time of these assessments. Students transfer to IDEA from throughout the District.
-"Satisfactory" defined as 2016-17 levels of Approaching, Met, or Mastered Grade Level or equivalent levels from prior test administrations.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded that of the District.

Number of State Distinctions by Year

14-15: **7**
15-16: **8**
16-17: **13**

Nearly all Personalized Learning campuses achieved a state rating of "Met Standard" (the higher of the state's two available classifications) each year of their implementation.[17] In addition, the total number of state distinctions earned by these campuses has nearly doubled in the two years since the Personalized Learning implementation began, from a total of seven in 2014-15 to a total of 13 in 2016-17 for achievements in math, reading, and science, and top performance in student progress, closing achievement gaps, and postsecondary readiness.

[17] Marsh Preparatory Academy (middle school) earned an "Improvement Required" rating during the 2015-2016 school year and returned to "Met Standard" status the following year under new leadership.

STAAR Performance Index Ratings
In addition to absolute achievement, the Texas Education Agency rates campuses on four composite indices: (1) Student Achievement, (2) Student Progress, (3) Closing Performance Gaps, and (4) Postsecondary Readiness.[18] Due to the Personalized Learning initiative's focus on student growth and its mission to ensure students are college, career, and world ready, the District selected Indices 2 and 4 to be among the most relevant measures for benchmarking.

As detailed in the table below, the cohort campuses have shown steady growth on each index measure since the initiative first launched, and have **exceeded the state's targets by a greater margin each year**. Before the initiative's launch, the campuses' Index 4 scores exceeded the state's target by a minimum of 33%. By 2016-17, their scores exceeded the state's target by a minimum of 52% and **up to 333%**.

Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness Scores

	2014-15 (Before PL)			2015-16 (PL Year 1)			2016-17 (PL Year 2)		
	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target
IDEA High School	N/A			21	34	62%	21	32	52%
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	13	22	69%	13	18	38%	13	21	62%
Chapel Hill Preparatory	12	19	58%	12	23	92%	12	31	158%
Rogers Elementary	12	29	142%	12	43	258%	12	52	333%
Zaragoza Elementary	12	16	33%	12	26	167%	12	44	267%

-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded the state target.

[18] To learn more about the methodology used to develop these indices, visit tea.texas.gov/2017accountability.aspx.

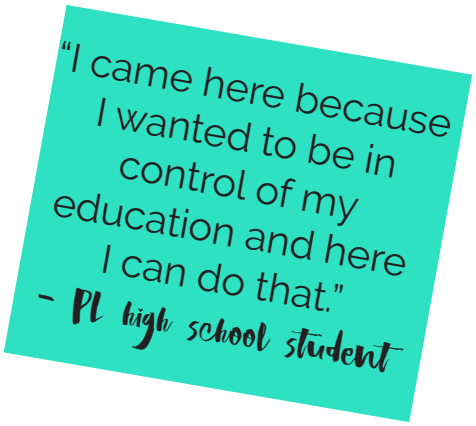
All Personalized Learning campuses also exceeded the Index 2 target each year, and the margin by which they exceeded it has increased steadily overall since the Personalized Learning initiative first launched. In fact, in the 2016-17 school year, **three of the five Personalized Learning campuses earned state distinctions of "Top 25% in Student Progress."**

Index 2: Student Progress

	14-15 (Before PL)			15-16 (PL Year 1)			16-17 (PL Year 2)		
	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target	Target Score	Campus Score	% Above Target
IDEA High School	N/A			17	37	118%	17	30	76%
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	28	30	7%	30	31	3%	30	36	20%
Chapel Hill Preparatory	30	34	13%	32	40	25%	32	48	50%
Rogers Elementary	30	40	33%	32	57	78%	32	52	63%
Zaragoza Elementary	30	50	67%	32	48	50%	32	66	106%

-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded the state target.

While these data and trends are promising, the District wished to gain a better understanding of how students at Personalized Learning campuses were performing in comparison to their peers who were not exposed to these teaching strategies. The central team therefore commissioned Dr. Candace Walkington and Dr. Akihito Kamata of Southern Methodist University (SMU) to complete a pro-bono, multi-year study of the initiative that included a scientifically matched comparison group. The results of the study confirmed that **students at the cohort schools are consistently outperforming their peers on key measures.**[19] A sample of the results follows; the full report can be found at tiny.cc/smuplreport.



[19] Walkington, Candace & Kamata, Akihito. (2018). An Evaluation of a District NGSI Personalized Learning Initiative. 10.13140/RG.2.2.17332.96645.

spotlight

personalizing the internship

At the Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship Academy - more commonly known as IDEA high school - Personalized Learning goes beyond the school walls. Through IDEA's innovative internship model, every student has the opportunity to participate in an internship that is unique to their personal interests and goals. To achieve this, IDEA's internship coordinator works tirelessly to cultivate partnerships and opportunities with local businesses, nonprofits, and corporations. Students are supported with a class specifically focused on career readiness including resume writing, professional dress, interview skills-building and practices sessions, and career exploration. With this focused support model, students don't only earn internships - they earn internships that give them direct contacts and experiences in the careers they plan to pursue.

Kimberly, a 10th grader at IDEA, proudly sporting her Gulfstream polo.

This model was particularly appealing to Kimberly, a 10th grader at IDEA who chose to attend the school partly because of the unique career preparation opportunities it offered. Kimberly knew she wanted to work in a STEM field and had a special interest in engineering. "I've always liked to put things together," she shared, "I wanted to do something related to that. When I learned that Gulfstream did that with airplanes, I was like wow! I wanted to see what I could learn in that area."

Kimberly says she was nervous when applying for the role. With the support of the IDEA team, however, she aced the interview and earned one of the coveted Gulfstream internship positions where she is spending two years working part-time during the school year and full time during the summer break. She says the most interesting thing she has learned so far is how much time it takes to build a single airplane. "There are really small pieces that are so important to the bigger project. Teamwork is also really important," she says. "If someone isn't pulling their weight or is out the whole team and timeline will be impacted."

Among her other important lessons learned so far are to be nice, get to sleep early, and to talk to as many people as she can. She says that it is also important to learn from other people. "You might not use [their knowledge] that day, but you will eventually."

Results of Independent Study
The study began by examining the performance of cohort school students on Math and Reading STAAR assessments in grades 4 through 8, with students' scores from the 2014-15 school year used as a baseline measure for matching purposes. Before a propensity score matching process, the data sample included 1,030 students from cohort schools matched with 3,551 students from non-Personalized Learning campuses. See the full study linked on page 26 for additional details on the matching process.

When examining overall Reading STAAR scores, the study found no statistically significant overall difference between the two groups. However, data did reveal a **significantly positive impact (p=0.027) on the reading scores of the lowest-performing students** (those performing below the 25th percentile on their baseline reading measure) equal to approximately one third of a standard deviation, indicating that Personalized Learning may be particularly helpful for struggling readers. The results also showed a **significant positive overall difference in math scores** in favor of students at Personalized Learning campuses. Personalized Learning students "scored on average a quarter of a standard deviation higher on mathematics standardized tests than matched students at comparison schools."

Similar results were seen in other areas when grouping students by various demographic and performance indicators. The table below details each instance in which these comparisons revealed a statistically significant difference in scores between Personalized Learning students and their matched peers.

As detailed in the chart on page 29, all instances of significance were positive in favor of Personalized Learning students with the exception of Talented and Gifted (TAG) students' 7th grade math test. However, the study notes that this result was not reliable due to the small sample size of this group - only 12 TAG 7th graders at Personalized Learning schools matched with 13 non-Personalized Learning TAG students. The study concluded by highlighting several key areas that indicated the positive impact of Personalized Learning, including:

- Overall Mathematics STAAR scores (with the strongest differences in 7th and 8th grade)
- Struggling student groups for both math and reading
- Mathematics scores of students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Reading scores of the highest achieving students (with the strongest differences in 7th and 8th grade)

Overall, the study concluded:

> The district examined in the present study seems to be off to a promising start on their PL journey – showing some initial positive results, and little to no evidence of a negative impact of the PL initiative on any grade levels or student groups. The teachers and leaders involved in this and other PL initiatives clearly have the students they serve as the central concern that drives everything they do.

Instances of significant differences between Personalized Learning students and non-Personalized Learning students according to grade level of test, subject of test, and student demographic characteristics.[19]

Demographics Subject and Grade Level	Limited English Proficiency	Special Education	Talented and Gifted	Below Median	Below 25th Percentile	Above Median	Above 75th Percentile
All Reading (4th-8th)					✓		
All Math (4th-8th)	✓			✓	✓		
No statistically significant differences: 4th Reading / 4th Math / 5th Reading/ 5th Math /6th Reading / 6th Math							
7th Reading			✓				
7th Math			−	✓			
8th Reading						✓	
8th Math		✓					

Key:

✓ *Statistically significant in favor of Personalized Learning students*

− *Statistically significant in favor of non-Personalized Learning students*

While further analyses are needed to confirm a causal relationship between Personalized Learning practices and these increases in student performance, the District is encouraged by the positive results seen thus far. As illustrated in the next section, perceptions of administrators, teachers, and students at cohort campuses reinforce these findings.

[19] For full details, see the Appendix.

Practitioner Perspectives

To supplement academic measures, the District utilizes three surveys at Personalized Learning campuses to measure a variety of factors related to student success. All District students take an annual survey to provide feedback to their teachers and administrators. Campus staff also take a climate survey in the fall and spring of each school year. Finally, Personalized Learning campuses engaged in the LEAP survey for the first time in the 2016-17 school year. LEAP is specifically designed to measure critical indicators relating to teacher practices and student experiences at Personalized Learning campuses across the country. The central team selected questions from each of these surveys prior to examination of response data. The selected questions are those that most closely reflect the instructional practices that should be present in the District's Personalized Learning classrooms.

This analysis begins with a focus on how cohort school staff feel about their campus' instructional plan with the Climate Survey question, "The key actions my school is working on this year are focused on what is best for students." As illustrated below, cohort staff have consistently rated their campuses highly on this measure, with ratings that are generally higher than those of the District overall, as detailed in the chart below.

District Climate Survey - Spring Administration

The key actions my school is working on this year are focused on what is best for students.				
	% Positive			
Campus	**2014-15 (Before PL)**	**2015-16 (PL Year 1)**	**2016-17 (PL Year 2)**	**2 Year Change** *(Percentage Points)*
IDEA (High School)	N/A	91.7	70	N/A
Comparison Schools Average (Transformation Feeder)	*N/A*	*74.6*	*86.6*	*N/A*
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	44.2	71	81.3	37.1 pp
Chapel Hill Preparatory	85.4	83.9	85.5	0.1 pp
Comparison Schools Average (W.T. White Feeder)	*70.9*	*74.6*	*81.0*	*10.1 pp*
Rogers Elementary	89.7	100	93.9	4.2 pp
Comparison Schools Average (Hillcrest Feeder)	82.3	83.6	92.3	10.0 pp

Zaragoza Elementary	93.5	94.1	97.9	4.4 pp
Comparison Schools Average (North Dallas Feeder)	*81.2*	*78.9*	*89.4*	*8.2 pp*
District Average	78.9	79.1	85.3	6.4 pp

-Comparison schools include all campuses within the PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder pattern.

"I see where we're headed and that there is a lot of work to do, but instruments are in place for us to act on this and we're supported in this effort."
– PL Teacher

The cohort's elementary campus data was particularly positive on this measure. While their two-year growth rates were lower than that of the District, they nonetheless increased those scores over that time period. In contrast, the cohort's middle school had a particularly low rating of 44.2% on this measure before the initiative launched. However, that rate increased rapidly to 81.3% with the introduction of new campus leadership and an intentional focus on building foundational skills for Personalized Learning in 2015-16. Finally, staff at the Personalized Learning high school - a brand new campus opened in the 2015-16 school year - were overwhelmingly positive about the school's practice during its first year, but showed a decrease in that measure by the end of the following year. IDEA's positive response rate for this question has since increased to 82.4% on the most recent climate survey in the fall of 2017, though it remains below that of the District and Transformation Feeder averages (85.6% and 89.1%, respectively).

"There's a willingness to be flexible in what education is; the administration is really good at questioning longstanding practices on what is really helping versus hindering progress and not being scared to confront old systems."
– PL Teacher

Other questions examined from the District Climate Survey, the District Student Survey, and the LEAP survey focus on student and teacher perspectives on key instructional and cultural aspects of Personalized Learning. The results show that perceptions of these measures are generally positive, and that **Personalized Learning campuses have outperformed the District** on the majority of these ratings both in positive response rates and increases in those rates over time.

District Climate Survey- Spring Administration

Instruction at this school is focused on helping students get ready for college.				
Group	% Positive			
	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change *(Percentage Points)*
PL Campuses Average	80.0*	81.1	86.8	6.8 pp
District Average	77.7	78.2	81.8	4.1 pp

-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL school's average score exceeded that of the District.
-Feeder participation rates unavailable; combined feeder average therefore cannot be calculated.
-2014-15 data does not include IDEA high school, which opened in 2015-16.
**Campus participation rates are unavailable where indicated; average is therefore not weighted.*

Teachers in this school accept nothing less from students than their full effort.				
Group	% Positive			
	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change *(Percentage Points)*
PL Campuses Average	73.1	75.1	80.2*	7.1 pp
District Average	80.4	78.9	80.6	0.2 pp

-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL school's average score exceeded that of the District.
-Feeder participation rates unavailable; combined feeder average therefore cannot be calculated.
-2014-15 data does not include IDEA high school, which opened in 2015-16.
**Campus participation rates are unavailable where indicated; average is therefore not weighted.*

Teachers at this school give students feedback to help them understand how to improve.				
Group	% Positive			
	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change *(Percentage Points)*
PL Campuses Average	91.0	87.5	91.4*	0.4 pp
District Average	88.4	87.2	88.1	-0.3 pp

-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL school's average score exceeded that of the District.
-Feeder participation rates unavailable; combined feeder average therefore cannot be calculated.
-2014-15 data does not include IDEA high school, which opened in 2015-16.
**Campus participation rates are unavailable where indicated; average is therefore not weighted.*

District Student Survey (Annual)

Elementary: How interested is this teacher in what you want to be when you grow up? Secondary: How interested is this teacher in your career after you finish school?				
Group	% Positive			
	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change *(Percentage Points)*
PL Campuses Average	56.8	65.3	64.8	8.0 pp
Comparison Feeders Average	52.2	61.2	64.1	11.9 pp
District Average	56.2	63.8	65.1	8.89 pp

-Comparison schools include all campuses within each PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL school's average score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder patterns.
-2014-15 data does not include IDEA high school, which opened in 2015-16.

How good is this teacher at teaching in the way that you learn best?				
Group	% Positive			
	2014-15 (Before PL)	2015-16 (PL Year 1)	2016-17 (PL Year 2)	2 Year Change *(Percentage Points)*
PL Campuses Average	91.0	92.1	93.5	2.48 pp
Comparison Feeders Average	86.0	87.2	88.4	2.4 pp
District Average	88.0	89.0	90.0	2.00 pp

-Comparison schools include all campuses within each PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL school's average score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder patterns.
-Elementary data only; this question was not included in the District's secondary student survey.

LEAP Survey- Spring 2017 Administration (Annual)

	Comparsion Schools	PL Campuses, Average
2016-2017 (PL Year 2)	% Positive	
LEARNER FOCUSED - I know my students' learning interests.	84	80
LEARNER FOCUSED - How often do you assign school work to individual students based on non-academic data (e.g. learning preferences, work habits, SEL)?	30	38
LEARNER DEMONSTRATED - If students master skills faster than others, they move ahead to a new topic, unit, or set of skills.	61	63
LEARNER DEMONSTRATED - Students are allowed to have more time to finish work, even if other students have already moved ahead.	81	79
LEARNER LED - Students have access to their own performance data.	58	73
LEARNER LED - Students create goals for their own learning (e.g. which academic skills to improve, what behaviors or work habits to strengthen).	31	44

-2016-17 was the first year the PL schools completed the LEAP survey.
-The comparison group includes all schools nationally taking this administration of the LEAP survey.
-PL camus participation rates unavailable; PL campus averages are therefore not weighted.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools' average score exceeded that of the comparison schools.

Promising Trends

The positive survey responses and student achievement data examined in this section are encouraging. It is also notable that these results show an upward trend in many cases, indicating that further growth and momentum may continue in future years.

The remaining results sections of this report - "What We're Working On" and "What We're Still Working Out" - will examine data that illustrate areas for improvement and explore remaining questions.

What is the LEAP Survey?

LEAP Surveys measure the degree to which teaching practices are personalizing learning for students by asking teachers about their practices. The LEAP teacher surveys administered at Dallas ISD measured teacher practices among three Personalized Learning domains: Learner Focused, Learner Demonstrated, and Learner Led. Participants who take the survey receive reports that describe the level of their personalized learning implementation measured against a set of nationally-normed standards, as well as compared to results from schools across the country. Survey reports contextualize a given school's data within LEAP's national standards, a scale that ranges from "Emerging Personalization" to "High Personalization," as well as against other schools taking the surveys.

LEAP surveys were developed in partnership with American Institutes for Research, an independent behavioral and social science research and evaluation organization. Last year, 2,000 teachers and 14,000 students across 12 states took part in the survey.

Learn more at **www.leaplearningframework.org**.

what we're working on

While the successes seen thus far are encouraging, Personalized Learning is still relatively new in the District and has plenty of room to grow. While the cohort campuses strive to make their successes even greater, they must also prioritize key areas for improvement. As detailed below, change management has been challenging, and data from the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP assessment has shown inconsistent results.

Practitioner Perceptions - Change Management

Responses from cohort school staff to the District Climate Survey question regarding change management were generally higher than the District average, but decreased in most cases over the two-year period of the initiative's implementation. Through the launch of Personalized Learning, cohort campuses were undergoing significantly more change than typical campuses during this time. However, these responses indicate that the transition may need to incorporate more input from staff and be communicated with greater transparency.

District Climate Survey- Spring Administration

My campus leadership helps me understand recent changes in the school's focus.				
	% Positive			
Campus	**2014-15 (Before PL)**	**2015-16 (PL Year 1)**	**2016-17 (PL Year 2)**	**2 Year Change** *(Percentage Points)*
IDEA (High School)	N/A	81.8	80	N/A
Comparison Schools Average (Transformation Feeder)	*N/A*	*66.1*	*81.3*	*N/A*
Marsh Preparatory Academy (Middle School)	56.6	72.1	73.7	17.1 pp
Chapel Hill Preparatory	83	63	74.2	-8.8 pp
Comparison Schools Average (W.T. White Feeder)	*66.9*	*66.1*	*68.3*	*1.4 pp*
Rogers Elementary	86	90.9	83.1	-2.9 pp
Comparison Schools Average (Hillcrest Feeder)	*81.7*	*79.6*	*87.4*	*5.7 pp*

Zaragoza Elementary	93.5	90	84.8	-8.7 pp
Comparison Schools Average (North Dallas Feeder)	*76.9*	*71.6*	*77.7*	*0.8 pp*
District Average	74	73.2	75.9	1.9 pp

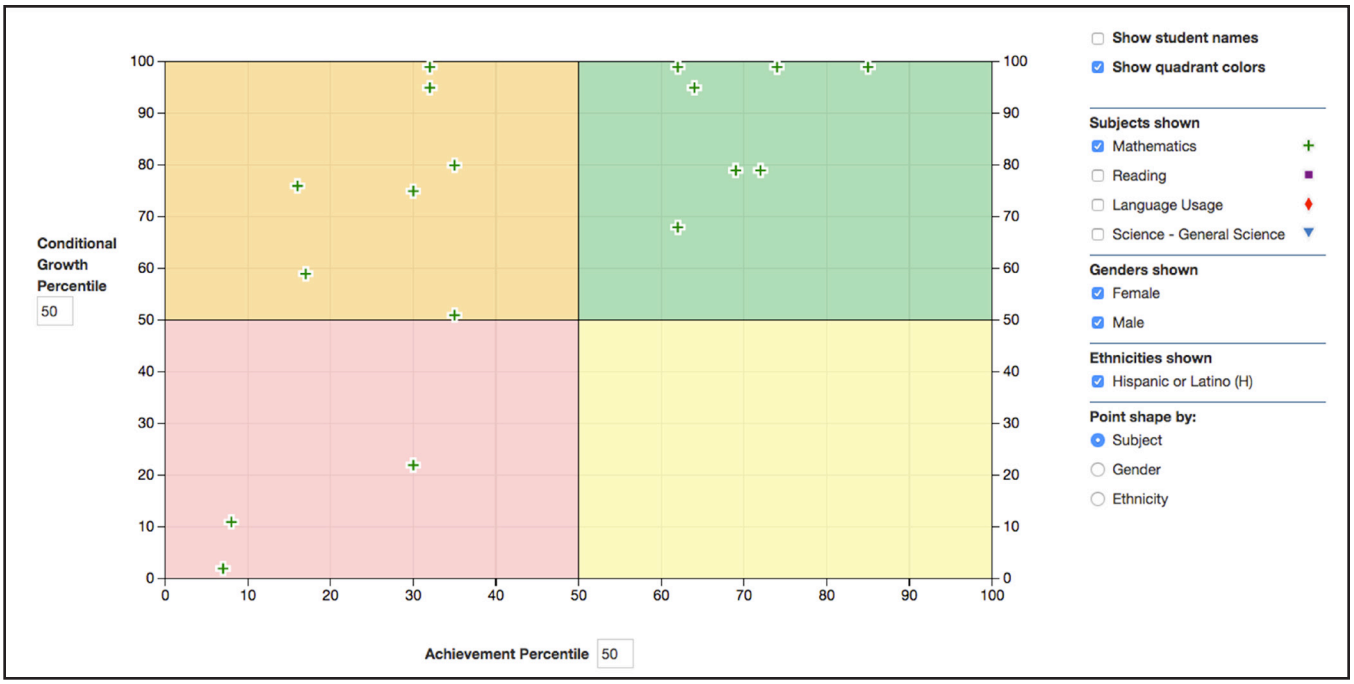
-Comparison schools include all campuses within the PL school's feeder pattern.
-Highlighted boxes indicate the PL schools's score exceeded that of the District and/or the comparison feeder pattern.

NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment Results

In addition to the STAAR, the District examined the cohort campuses' scores on the NWEA MAP - a nationally-normed, online, adaptive assessment administered to campuses beginning in 2015-2016. While the STAAR provides end-of-year, summative results, the MAP is a formative assessment taken multiple times throughout each school year. As such, the MAP results should not be thought of as outcomes, but rather as indicators or checkpoints that enable teachers to adapt instruction based on each student's needs.

To support this process, the online MAP portal provides teachers with in-depth analyses of their students' progress on various measures, such as the quadrant report pictured below. These results can be used directly or linked with certain online programs to create custom mastery pathways based on individual students' needs.

SAMPLE MATH MAP QUADRANT REPORT



-This classroom-level report can be customized by teachers to display their students' data from a single subject or multiple subjects within a selected time period (ex - Spring 2016 to Spring 2017).

-The report can also display student data based on gender and ethnicity to help teachers identify demographic trends.

what is the MAP and how does it compare to other assessments?

The NWEA MAP is a nationally-normed, online, adaptive assessment administered to campuses three times per year. Unlike summative assessments such as the STAAR that tell teachers how much students already learned, the MAP is a formative assessment that helps teachers determine what students are ready to learn next. To help drive this process, NWEA provides a suite of data reports and tools that enable teachers to precisely identify each student's areas of mastery and where they struggle, trends over time, and data by subject or demographic group. The MAP measures student mastery of content along a learning continuum, providing teachers with a picture of student progress and performance that is independent of grade level. In addition, NWEA provides linking studies that help teachers predict their students' performance on assessments like the STAAR or ACT.

While the linking studies provide helpful benchmarks, MAP results should not be confused with STAAR or ACT results. Due to the adaptive nature of the MAP, a student who performs well on the STAAR may demonstrate "low growth" on the MAP, while those demonstrating "high growth" on the MAP might still fall below grade level on the STAAR. It is up to the teacher and campus administrators to properly interpret the data and use it for its core purpose - not as a summative exam, but as a formative instructional tool to make differentiation easier and more effective.

To learn more, visit **www.nwea.org/the-map-suite/**.

Half (50%) of students at cohort campuses taking the math MAP assessment between Spring 2016 and Spring 2017 received ratings of "high achieving" and/or "high growth."[22] The weighted averages of these categories for all campuses during this time period is pictured in the chart on the next page.

The portion of students in the "high achieving" or "high growth" categories is lower than cohort schools would prefer. In response to this data, teachers at the cohort campuses have worked diligently to continue adapting instruction and deepening personalized practices in their classrooms. As a result, the campuses have already shown improvement on their growth rates within the current, third year of the initiative. In fact, in the fall of 2017, the portion of students who met their projected growth target **increased at every Personalized Learning campus** compared to the prior year. For example, while an average of 45% of Personalized Learning students met their growth target on the MAP Math and Reading assessments in the Spring of 2017, that rate increased to 50% by the Fall of 2017, demonstrating that these campuses are already on-track to improve both growth rates and achievement.

In addition to providing quadrant data, NWEA also conducts linking studies that use MAP data to predict student achievement on summative exams including the STAAR and the ACT college-entrance exam, further empowering teachers to adjust their instruction based on student needs.[23]

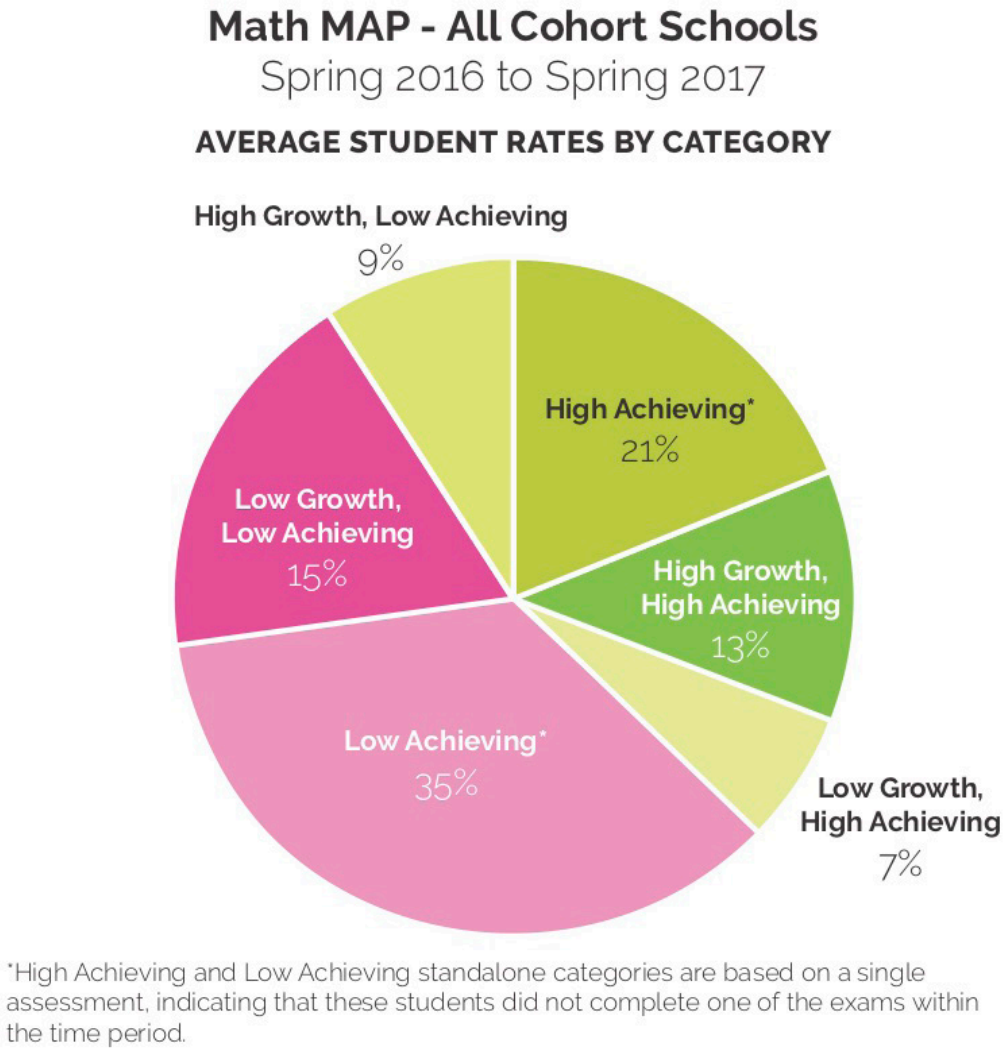
---

[22] MAP Reading assessment data is not included in this report. The assessment is only available in English. Since many of the cohort schools' students are English Language Learners and typically test in Spanish, MAP Reading data is not a reliable measure of their progress.

[23] See the NWEA ACT linking study at tiny.cc/nweacollege. The STAAR linking study can be found at tiny.cc/nweastaar.

The ACT projections for cohort school students to date have indicated that these students need additional support in order to achieve a "college-ready" score (22 or above) on the math portion of the ACT, with a wide range of between 9.33% and 40.28% of cohort schools' students, on average, reaching this target in the first two years of the initiative.[24] However, as illustrated throughout this report, multiple measures must always be considered when assessing student achievement. For example, while these projections are relatively low, the schools' TEA Postsecondary Readiness (Index 4) ratings have exceeded state targets at a greater rate each year, and the Personalized Learning high school's Spring 2017 ACP Algebra II scores were among the highest in the District.[25]

Since students at the cohort schools have not yet taken the ACT or SAT exam, it is not possible to say whether their actual scores will reflect the MAP projections. This data nonetheless provides an important indicator for cohort schools which they will use as one method for adapting instruction and measuring student progress as the initiative continues.



*High Achieving and Low Achieving standalone categories are based on a single assessment, indicating that these students did not complete one of the exams within the time period.

---

[24] The ACT cut score is based on the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing courses (tiny.cc/nweaact).

[25] The Assessment of Course Performance (ACP) is a Dallas ISD exam taken in select subject areas to benchmark student progress.

spotlight

using multiple measures

Personalized Learning is an intensive instructional practice requiring ongoing data-driven instruction in order to truly meet students' needs. While traditional assessments such as state standardized exams and college-entrance tests speak to summative achievement, by the time the results are revealed it is often too late to intervene. By conducting formative assessments throughout each school year, teachers can address the needs of both high-performers and struggling students to ensure every child achieves at their greatest potential.

To help meet this need, Dallas ISD's Personalized Learning cohort schools adopted the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) as a supplemental and formative measure of their students' progress. Taken at multiple points throughout each school year, the online, adaptive assessment empowers teachers to differentiate instruction by pinpointing what each student has learned and what they are ready to learn next. Using this data, teachers work with students to set specific goals and individualize instruction accordingly. In addition, the MAP's focus on student growth - a key measure of the effectiveness of Personalized Learning - helps teachers support struggling students before they fall behind and ensure high-achieving students are appropriately challenged and engaged throughout the year. Though each school's strategy for using MAP data differs, they have all experienced the positive effects of rigorous formative assessment.

Teachers at **Zaragoza Elementary** link students' MAP data directly with Study Island - an online program that provides students with extra practice on state standards for math, reading, and other core subjects. Once the MAP data is linked, Study Island generates a customized learning pathway for each student that helps them gain key skills in standards with which they are struggling and deepen their learning where they already excel.

A growth mindset underpins every aspect of learning at **Rogers Elementary**. As one way of reinforcing this, the campus celebrates student progress with "Growth Parties" in the school garden throughout the year in recognition of students meeting and exceeding their growth projections on the MAP.

MAP results are also a common topic of discussion during staff meetings at **Chapel Hill Preparatory**, and all cohort campuses use the data to target instruction for struggling students and push high-performing students to excel.

Personalized Learning campuses are not the only ones engaging in these practices. In fact, 14 schools throughout Dallas ISD used the MAP as of 2017. While the state standardized assessment provides valuable data on key student outcomes, implementing additional measures of progress such as the MAP helps ensure that students are given every opportunity to succeed on their summative exams.

what we're still working out

These results have revealed aspects of the Personalized Learning initiative that are working well and others that are not. However, there is a third category that is just as important to address: the questions that have not yet been answered. There are a number of questions and challenges regarding Personalized Learning for which the District and broader education field do not yet have a solution. Perhaps most important is the question of what metrics should be used to measure the initiative's impact. STAAR, MAP, and survey results are important, but they are also relatively traditional measures of success. Personalized Learning, in contrast, is anything but traditional.

Finding the Right Metrics

In its purest form, Personalized Learning will impact every aspect of a child's development from their social-emotional and 21st century skills, to their career interests and understanding of their place in the real world. It will change how they interact with the people around them and whether they strive for excellence or settle for good enough. While some of these targets will translate to higher test scores, academic achievement is not the only metric that matters. Gaining the ability to persevere in the face of challenges is a success in and of itself, whether or not it helps students ace the STAAR. Therefore, the question remains, what measures can be used to effectively and scientifically capture all of the aspects of a personalized education experience, and how can those measurements be collected in a formative way, at scale? The District does not yet have an answer, but this is a question the team and its partners will pursue in the years ahead.

How do we measure the full impact of Personalized Learning?

Confirming Cause and Effect

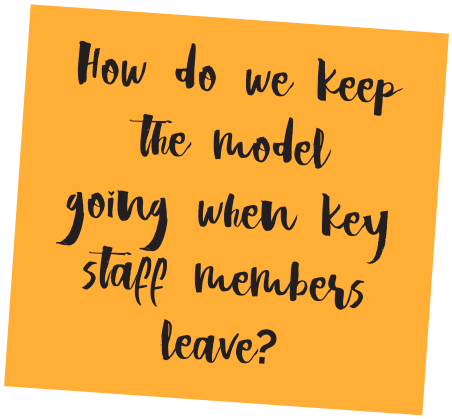
Even when solid measures of success have been identified, how can the results be effectively linked to an initiative that is as broad as Personalized Learning? While this may be possible in a lab setting, demonstrating causation in real classrooms is much more difficult given the high number of external factors that may influence results. Beyond a resource- and time-intensive randomized controlled trial, one solution may be to develop a reliable measure of the range of implementation fidelity for Personalized Learning against which results can be gauged.

How do we know which successes are a result of Personalized Learning?

To explore this possibility, the District has begun adapting how the Personalized Learning Coaching and Development Rubric is used in observations. While observation results will continue to have no bearing on teachers' official evaluations and ratings, they will, for the first time, provide a measure of the range of implementation fidelity that can be used to help determine whether and to what degree Personalized Learning instructional strategies may be impacting student data. This data, in combination with insights from the Personalized Learning continuum highlighted below, may begin to provide a clearer picture of how Personalized Learning environments impact students.

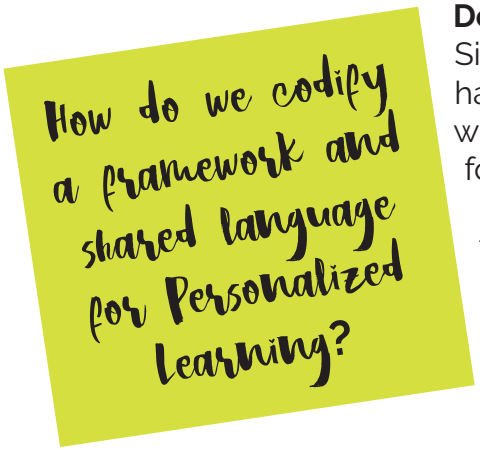
Maintaining Fidelity When Starting Fresh

Like any organization, every school grapples with staff transitions- how can a campus remain true to its instructional model once expert practitioners depart? Furthermore, how are new staff members effectively integrated into the practice even if they have no prior exposure to it? Staff transitions are a common challenge in any industry, but they are particularly difficult when they occur during the introduction of a new and innovative practice such as Personalized Learning.



The District's cohort campuses have confronted this issue head-on. As a brand new school, IDEA faced particular challenges. The school launched with 9th grade in 2015-2016 and has added one grade-level per year with the intent of serving grades 9-12 by 2018-19. Throughout this process, it not only underwent leadership transitions but also added a full set of teachers every year to serve each new grade level. Other cohort campuses have experienced administrator and teacher transitions as well. Some of these transitions have been smooth, while others have led to at least temporary drops in implementation fidelity.

Strategies such as proactive succession planning for key roles and gaining consistent staff buy-in for new initiatives can help mitigate the challenges of staff transitions, but the team has not been consistent in effectively executing these strategies. However, as noted earlier in this report, the cohort schools have seen success when hiring using the Personalized Learning teacher competencies. Based on these results, the team recommends consistent use of the teacher competencies at all Personalized Learning schools when hiring. In addition, the team plans to explore adaptation of the competencies for campus leadership hiring as a possible model for ensuring smooth succession planning.



Developing a Shared Understanding of the Model

Since the initiative's launch, the central Personalized Learning team has been working to create a shared language and understanding of what Personalized Learning looks like at a school, in a classroom, and for an individual student. Like many innovative and developing practices, there is not yet a codified framework for the model, and the term "Personalized Learning" is often used interchangeably with the related but distinct practices of Blended Learning and Competency-Based Education, or for any instruction that is in some way tailored to students' interests and needs.

As interest in the model grows nationally and throughout Dallas ISD, developing a shared understanding of and framework for the model becomes increasingly important. While the Coaching and Development Rubric featured earlier in this report captures key student and teacher actions within a Personalized Learning classroom, a similar framework was needed to identify and measure fidelity of implementation at the campus level. To meet this need, the central team partnered with 2Revolutions to develop a first-of-its-kind Personalized Learning Readiness Continuum - an expanded rubric that illustrates Personalized Learning practices at the campus level.

The continuum captures these practices across 12 domains and four proficiency levels, outlined below.

Dallas ISD Personalized Learning Readiness Continuum Outline

Download the PL Readiness Continuum at tiny.cc/PLcontinuum

Domains

1 Vision + Priorities
2 The PL Graduate
3 Principal/ Leader
4 PL Classroom Practices
5 Curriculum + Assessment
6 Data Driven Instruction
7 Collaborative Design
8 PL Campus Team
9 Personalized PD + Support
10 Culture of Innovation
11 Social Emotional Learning
12 Sustainability + Access

Proficiency Scale

Not PL Ready (Level 0)
PL Ready (Level 1)
Consistent Practice (Level 2)
Personalized (Level 3)

The District plans to use the new continuum, released April 2018, both as a readiness assessment for potential future Personalized Learning campuses and as an added support structure to help current campuses deepen their practices. The continuum will evolve along with the instructional model and the central team is confident that it will serve as a valuable framework for both identifying and expanding Personalized Learning practices throughout the District.

PL Readiness Continuum: Sample Domain 1

1 Vision + Priorities

The school community co-creates alongside all stakeholders (students, families, staff, communities, etc.) a campus vision with a relentless commitment to closing the opportunity gap through PL and aligns priorities that support implementation, so that all elements of the vision are operationalized in all school structures and programming.

	Not PL Ready *Level 0*	**PL Ready** *Level 1*	**Consistent Practice** *Level 2*	**Personalized** *Level 3*
Clear, well established campus vision	Vision either does not exist or exists only superficially and is not developed with by school community.	Vision with commitment to closing the opportunity gap is clearly articulated but may lack stakeholder engagement beyond leadership team or school staff.	Vision with commitment to closing the opportunity gap through Personalized Learning is clearly articulated but may lack stakeholder engagement beyond leadership team or school staff.	A vision with a relentless commitment to closing the opportunity gap through Personalized Learning in order to prepare all students for success in college and other post-secondary endeavors has been co-created with all stakeholders.
Vision + Values Alignment	Core values either don't exist or are not aligned to the vision.	Core values are clearly articulated and at least moderately aligned to the vision, although school community may not consistently demonstrate those values through their actions.	Entire staff knows the school's vision and works toward it by consistently demonstrating core values.	Vision and core values are in full alignment and values are consistently observable in all stakeholder actions within the school community, allowing the school to move toward its vision.
Execution of Strategy	Strategy is clearly articulated and some strategic planning has been completed but not executed consistently or with fidelity.	Strategy drives some school wide decisions, and/or priorities, and/or culture.	Strategy drives school-wide decision making, campus priorities and goals, school culture, and drives changes in practice.	The key priorities of the PL vision are operationalized in all school structures and programming and are continually monitored so that adjustments can be made as necessary.
Change Management	There is no evidence of an explicit organizational change management strategy that includes the role of innovation or building culture of innovation.	There is recognition of the need to actively manage the organizational change process, and some recognition of the potential for innovation to play an important role within the change process.	There is an explicit and clearly communicated organizational change process that highlights continual innovation as a core element.	A comprehensive organizational change management strategy that integrates the role of innovation exists and is managed consistently at all levels of the organization.

Looking Ahead

The successes and experiences shared in this report are the result of contributions from countless students, parents, teachers, school and district administrators, and internal and external partners. The results seen to date would not be possible and could not continue without consistent buy-in from every level of the organization and the community beginning with the District's senior leadership who set the vision and provided the resources to make Personalized Learning a reality in Dallas ISD. The past two years have been a journey these teams committed to taking together. They set out to implement a strategy that was largely untested and undefined, but that they knew from experience would be in the best interest of their students. They pursued innovation in the face of immense challenges and often prevailed. When they did not succeed, they learned from the experience and continued to move forward, ensuring their lessons learned would be shared with and benefit their teammates. While the initiative is still early in its implementation and there is plenty of room for improvement, the Personalized Learning team is encouraged by the successes seen to date. From high assessment scores and even higher growth, to family demand to attend Personalized Learning campuses, the initiative appears to be addressing key needs of the District's schools, students, and families.

In response to high family demand and successes of the Personalized Learning campuses, the initiative has already seen immense growth - evolving into four unique implementation pathways that now serve over 20,000 Dallas ISD students. Further growth is on the horizon for the coming year. In the fall of 2018, the District's Personalized Learning practitioners will include:

- 9 wall-to-wall schools (2 new)
- 11 feeder patterns (6 new)
- 140 Innovation in Teaching Fellows (30 new)
- 8 Communities of Practice (open districtwide)

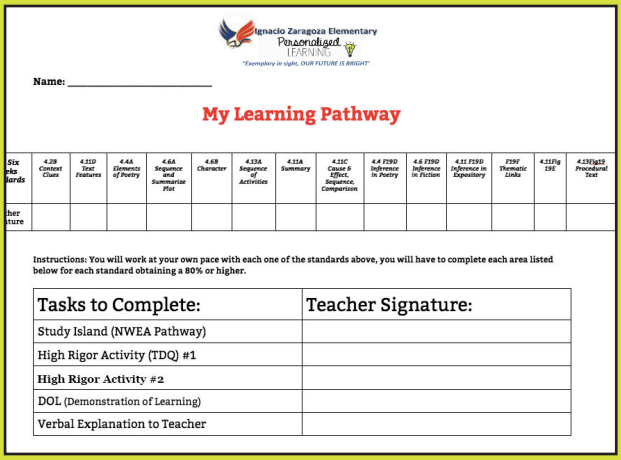
When the District began planning for the Personalized Learning initiative, there were a number of questions, some that the District has answered and others that still remain. However, one aspect of the work was always clear - it would be about kids. The photo of Briana opening her college acceptance letter, shared at the beginning of this report, represents the north star for this office and for the District. Personalized Learning is about developing kids who are college, career, and world ready. The results shared in this report indicate that the initiative is on the right track. It remains a challenging journey, but one through which the team will persevere, continually guided by that north star and the bright future it represents.

"Get [personalized learning] to more kids."
- PL student

spotlight

building self-directed learners

Zaragoza Elementary is the District's top-performing Personalized Learning campus across most measures examined in this report. While a number factors go into achieving this kind of success, one key differentiator for Zaragoza is their use of formative data to create rigorous learning pathways. Currently implemented in grades 4 and 5, learning pathways provide students with a list of all the skills necessary to master a particular standard in the curriculum. They include a set of activities for each standard which students choose to complete in order to demonstrate mastery. Students' demonstrations of mastery are each rated along a proficiency scale, allowing them to pinpoint the precise areas in which they need to improve and those they have already mastered.



Ignacio Zaragoza Elementary Personalized LEARNING

"Exemplary in sight, OUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT"

Name: _____

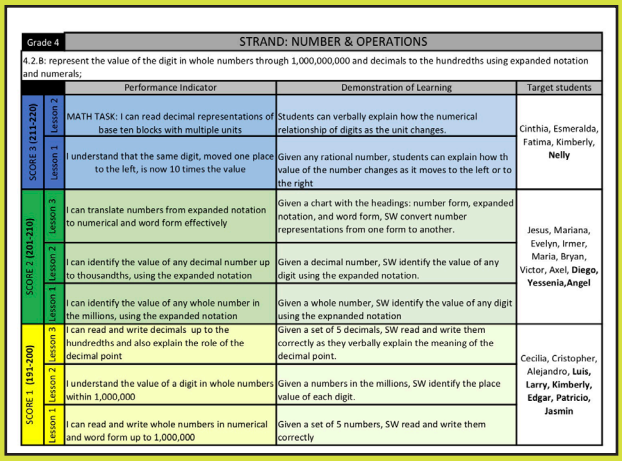
My Learning Pathway

Six Tasks Standards	4.2B Context Clues	4.11D Text Features	4.4A Elements of Poetry	4.6A Sequence and Summarize Plot	4.6B Character	4.13A Sequence of Activities	4.11A Summary	4.11C Cause & Effect, Sequence, Comparison	4.4 F19D Inference in Poetry	4.6 F19D Inference in Fiction	4.11 F19D Inference in Expository	F19F Thematic Links	4.15Fig 19E	4.13F&19 Procedural Text
Teacher Picture														

Instructions: You will work at your own pace with each one of the standards above, you will have to complete each area listed below for each standard obtaining a 80% or higher.

Tasks to Complete:	Teacher Signature:
Study Island (NWEA Pathway)	
High Rigor Activity (TDQ) #1	
High Rigor Activity #2	
DOL (Demonstration of Learning)	
Verbal Explanation to Teacher	

Snapshot of a student learning pathway showing the skills the student must gain and the five activities through which they can demonstrate mastery.



Grade 4 — STRAND: NUMBER & OPERATIONS

4.2.B: represent the value of the digit in whole numbers through 1,000,000,000 and decimals to the hundredths using expanded notation and numerals;

		Performance Indicator	Demonstration of Learning	Target students
SCORE 3 (211-220)	Lesson 2	MATH TASK: I can read decimal representations of base ten blocks with multiple units	Students can verbally explain how the numerical relationship of digits as the unit changes.	Cinthia, Esmeralda, Fatima, Kimberly, **Nelly**
	Lesson 1	I understand that the same digit, moved one place to the left, is now 10 times the value	Given any rational number, students can explain how th value of the number changes as it moves to the left or to the right	
SCORE 2 (201-210)	Lesson 3	I can translate numbers from expanded notation to numerical and word form effectively	Given a chart with the headings: number form, expanded notation, and word form, SW convert number representations from one form to another.	Jesus, Mariana, Evelyn, Irmer, Maria, Bryan, Victor, Axel, **Diego, Yessenia,Angel**
	Lesson 2	I can identify the value of any decimal number up to thousandths, using the expanded notation	Given a decimal number, SW identify the value of any digit using the expanded notation.	
	Lesson 1	I can identify the value of any whole number in the millions, using the expanded notation	Given a whole number, SW identify the value of any digit using the expnanded notation	
SCORE 1 (191-200)	Lesson 3	I can read and write decimals up to the hundredths and also explain the role of the decimal point	Given a set of 5 decimals, SW read and write them correctly as they verbally explain the meaning of the decimal point.	Cecilia, Cristopher, Alejandro, **Luis, Larry, Kimberly, Edgar, Patricio, Jasmin**
	Lesson 2	I understand the value of a digit in whole numbers within 1,000,000	Given a numbers in the millions, SW identify the place value of each digit.	
	Lesson 1	I can read and write whole numbers in numerical and word form up to 1,000,000	Given a set of 5 numbers, SW read and write them correctly	

A sample math proficiency scale from a fourth grade classroom at Zaragoza.

Zaragoza's Personalized Learning Coordinator, Nafia Hamilton, says the learning pathways not only help students take ownership of their learning but also differentiate instruction in a way that is manageable for the teacher. She explains, "Each student is working on the same standard but at their own level." The pathways have also been an excellent tool for increasing rigor - a common challenge when implementing next generation instructional models like Personalized Learning. She shared that through the pathways, "Every lesson is designed to meet the academic needs of each student, and each skill serves as a building block for the next one, so the instructional rigor increases as the student moves up on the proficiency scale."

To view a learning pathway for yourself, check out **tiny.cc/learningpathway**.

appendix

Appendix A - Personalized Learning Cohort School Demographics, By Campus

2014-2015 Personalized Learning Schools

School	Total # Students	% Low SES	% LEP	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% American Indian	% Asian	% Multi-Race	Poverty Index[26]
Chapel Hill	572	94.9%	66.8%	3.7%	89.7%	3.7%	0.2%	2.1%	0.2%	N/A
Rogers	502	89.0%	59.4%	15.5%	70.1%	11.4%	0.4%	2.0%	0.4%	N/A
Zaragoza	392	98.0%	66.8%	7.1%	90.1%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	N/A
Marsh (6th grade only)	309	88.4%	6.8%*	5.2%	90.9%	2.9%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%	N/A
IDEA	N/A									
Total	**1775**	**92.78%**	**54.26%**	**8.05%**	**84.45%**	**5.36%**	**0.18%**	**0.29%**	**0.46%**	**N/A**

2015-2016 Personalized Learning Schools

School	Total # Students	% Low SES	% LEP	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% American Indian	% Asian	% Multi-Race	Poverty Index
Chapel Hill	567	92.77%	66.84%	3.35%	91.53%	2.82%	0.53%	0.88%	0.35%	0.09
Rogers	503	85.29%	61.43%	14.31%	65.61%	14.12%	0.80%	4.37%	0.40%	0.48
Zaragoza	374	95.99%	63.10%	9.63%	86.90%	2.41%	0.00%	0.00%	1.07%	0.59
Marsh (6th grade only)	310	90.32%	54.84%	4.52%	90.32%	3.55%	0.00%	0.97%	0.32%	0.38
IDEA	103	83.50%	26.21%	34.95%	57.28%	5.83%	0.00%	0.97%	0.97%	0.62
Total	**1857**	**90.47%**	**60.37%**	**9.53%**	**81.48%**	**6.09%**	**0.38%**	**1.67%**	**0.54%**	**N/A**

---

[26] The Intensity of Poverty Index (IPI) was developed to improve Dallas ISD's analysis of student poverty, as an alternative to only using the current free/reduced lunch status methodology. The IPI generates a Socioeconomic Block Score for each Census Block within the district using Census data including a) Median Household Income, b) Owner Occupied Homes, c) Single Parent Homes, and d) Educational Attainment. A rating of '1' would indicate that the school's students live in the most socio-economically disadvantaged census blocks of the district. A rating of '0' would indicate that all of their students live in the least disadvantaged census blocks. The IPI can be used to respond more effectively to the varying levels of need across Dallas ISD schools.

2016-2017 Personalized Learning Schools

School	Total # Students	% Low SES	% LEP	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% American Indian	% Asian	% Multi-Race	Poverty Index
Chapel Hill	563	92.18%	68.56%	2.84%	92.18%	2.84%	0.36%	1.24%	0.00%	0.11
Rogers	510	78.63%	56.27%	15.10%	62.16%	16.67%	0.59%	4.31%	1.18%	0.45
Zaragoza	363	95.59%	65.84%	11.85%	85.12%	0.83%	0.00%	0.83%	1.38%	0.62
Marsh (6th grade only)	929	89.67%	63.19%	4.09%	91.28%	3.23%	0.22%	0.75%	0.43%	0.41
IDEA	207	78.26%	27.05%	35.27%	57.49%	5.80%	0.48%	0.48%	0.48%	0.58
Total	**2572**	**87.95%**	**60.46%**	**9.60%**	**82.12%**	**5.68%**	**0.31%**	**1.56%**	**0.62%**	**N/A**

Appendix B - Dallas ISD and Cohort Comparison Feeder Pattern Demographics

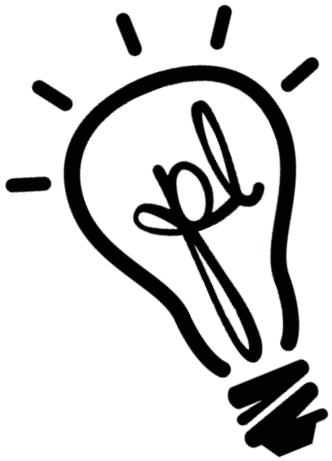
Year	Total # Students	% Low SES	% LEP	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% American Indian	% Asian	% Multi-Race
2014-15									
District	158,257	89.6%	42.2%	22.8%	70.4%	4.6%	0.3%	1.3%	0.5%
Hillcrest Feeder	5,353	86.8%	51.1%	16.0%	73.9%	0.4%	0.4%	1.7%	0.4%
North Dallas Feeder	6,637	94.9%	48.1%	20.6%	73.9%	2.0%	0.5%	2.4%	0.6%
W.T. White Feeder	9,247	83.4%	47.0%	10.7%	77.1%	8.7%	0.4%	1.8%	1.1%
Transformation Feeder	N/A								
2015-16									
District	156,665	89.6%	43.1%	22.6%	70.4%	4.7%	0.3%	1.4%	0.5%
Hillcrest Feeder	5,190	85.3%	51.5%	15.5%	73.8%	7.8%	0.3%	2.0%	0.6%
North Dallas Feeder	5,976	94.0%	48.8%	20.1%	74.1%	2.1%	0.3%	2.5%	0.7%
W.T. White Feeder	9,124	83.8%	48.7%	10.3%	78.2%	8.0%	0.5%	1.8%	1.1%
Transformation Feeder	N/A								

Year	Total # Students	% Low SES	% LEP	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% American Indian	% Asian	% Multi-Race
2016-17									
District	156,151	87.8%	44.5%	22.5%	70.3%	4.9%	0.3%	1.4%	0.6%
Hillcrest Feeder	5,201	78.5%	51.4%	16.7%	71.8%	8.4%	0.3%	1.9%	0.9%
North Dallas Feeder	6,166	92.6%	51.2%	19.6%	74.5%	2.6%	0.3%	2.3%	0.6%
W.T. White Feeder	9,012	83.4%	51.8%	10.3%	78.7%	7.4%	0.5%	1.9%	1.2%
Transformation Feeder	N/A								

Appendix C - Detailed Chart, Instances of significant differences between Personalized Learning students and non-Personalized Learning students according to grade level of test, subject of test, and student demographic characteristics.[27]

Year	All Students	LEP	SPED	TAG	Below Med	Below 25	Above Med	Above 75
All Reading						ATT=.350 p=.027		
All Math	ATT=.259 p<.001	ATT=.184 p=.008			ATT=.327 p<.001	ATT=.414 p=.008		
4th Reading								
4th Math								
5th Reading								
5th Math								
6th Reading								
6th Math								
7th Reading				ATT=.483 p=.001				
7th Math	ATT=.144 p=.049			ATT=-.360 p=.022	ATT=.231 p=.043			
8th Reading							ATT=.196 p=.040	
8th Math			ATT=0.577 p=.026					

[27] Walkington, Candace & Kamata, Akihito. (2018). An Evaluation of a District NGSI Personalized Learning Initiative. 10.13140/RG.2.2.17332.96645.



Thank you to our Partners

The work of Dallas ISD's Personalized Learning team is enabled, empowered, and elevated by the contributions of countless internal and external partners. Without them, the experiences and achievements outlined in this report would simply not be possible.

Thanks must first go to the school leaders, teachers, students, and families who so boldly embraced this work from the beginning. In addition, the strategic visioning and thoughtful guidance of Dallas ISD's Board of Trustees, executive team, and fellow central staff teams were critical in helping our practitioners to take the leap into Personalized Learning. Finally, many external partners supported the work from the beginning and played key roles in helping us deepen our practices as we moved forward.

On behalf of our students, our teachers, and our school teams, we thank you.

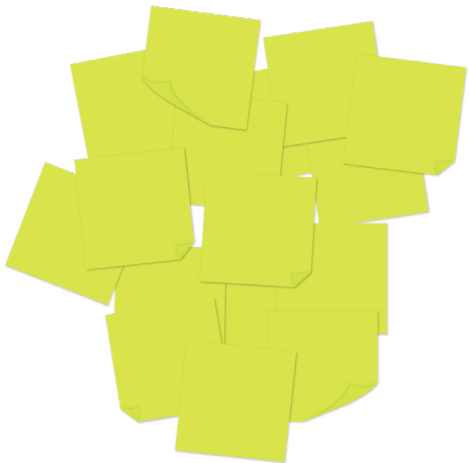
Supporters of this work include:

Donors
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
The Jiv Daya Foundation

Dallas ISD
Board of Trustees
Chapel Hill Preparatory School
Dan D. Rogers Elementary School
Executive Leadership Team
Evaluation and Assessment Department
Human Capital Management Department
Ignacio Zaragoza Elementary School
Information Technology Department
Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship Academy (IDEA)
Teaching and Learning Department
School Leadership Department
T.C. Marsh Preparatory Academy

Fellow Practitioners
D.C. Public Schools
Denver Public Schools
High Tech High
Summit Public Schools / Summit Learning

External Partners
2Revolutions, LLC
BetterLesson
Education Elements
HKS, Inc.
Raise Your Hand Texas
Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)
School Retool
SchoolWorks, LLC
Stanford University's d.school
Southern Methodist University
Texas Tech University
The Dallas Entrepreneur Center
The Learning Accelerator
University of Texas, Dallas



Learn more about Personalized Learning in Dallas ISD
www.dallasisd.org/personalizedlearning