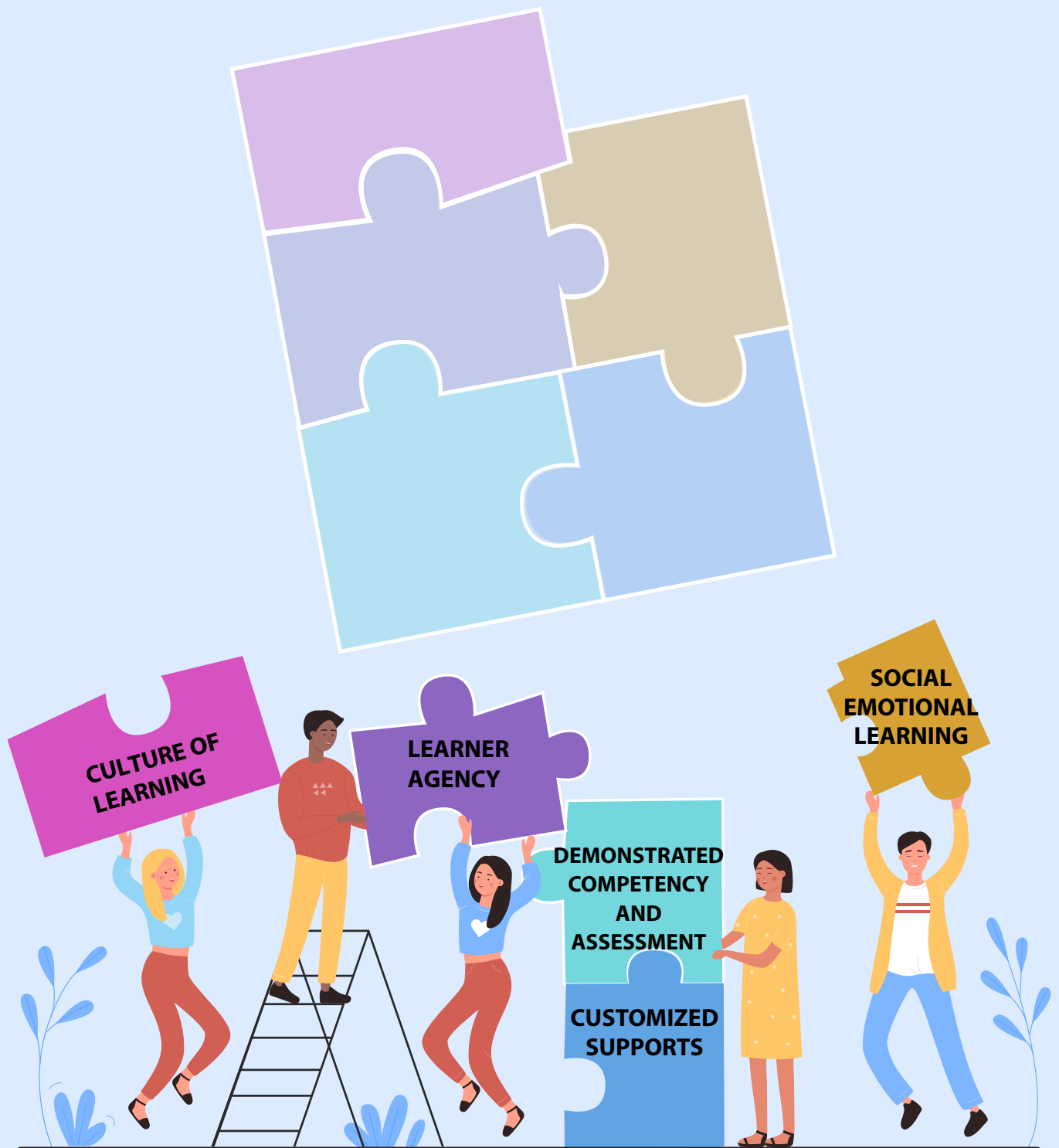


UTAH'S **PERSONALIZED, COMPETENCY BASED LEARNING**

PCBL

FRAMEWORK
SEPTEMBER 2023



UTAH'S PERSONALIZED, COMPETENCY BASED LEARNING (PCBL) FRAMEWORK



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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/competencybased>

JANUARY 2023



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Introduction

What is Personalized, Competency Based Learning (PCBL)?

In a Personalized, Competency Based Learning system, the following principles influence the daily actions of the educational community:

- ▶ Students are empowered daily to make important decisions about their learning experiences, how they will create and apply knowledge, and how they will demonstrate their learning.
- ▶ Assessment is a meaningful, positive, and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable evidence.
- ▶ Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- ▶ Students progress based on evidence of mastery, not seat time.
- ▶ Students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing.
- ▶ Strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of schools and education systems.
- ▶ Rigorous, common expectations for learning (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable.

[Utah Code 53F-5-501](#)

What are the benefits of Personalized, Competency Based Learning?

A Personalized, Competency Based Learning (PCBL) approach empowers students to take responsibility for their learning by giving them voice, choice and customized support to achieve success in the essential knowledge, skills and dispositions described in Utah's Portrait of a Graduate. PCBL shifts the focus of the classroom from teaching to a culture of learning, based on well-defined learning intentions for each learner. Through incorporating high expectations, executing teacher clarity and fostering meaningful relationships, PCBL provides equitable access for each learner to demonstrate core knowledge and skills in personalized and differentiated ways while fostering opportunities for deeper learning. The progress of each learner is maximized by the use of timely, effective feedback and data from a variety of formative assessment processes. By personalizing and focusing on competency, students experience greater achievement of the essential knowledge, skills and dispositions of Utah's Portrait of a Graduate.

How can Utah educators incorporate PCBL?

Personalized, Competency Based Learning creates equitable learning environments by communicating transparent learning intentions and success criteria. School personnel use evidence-based practices such as collaborative groups, classroom discussions, goals and engagement in small group instruction with customized support. Within this culture of learning, school personnel use a collective vision to create coherence through shared goals and similar expectations for student success. School personnel work collaboratively in professional learning communities to address each learner's needs. Job-embedded, personalized, professional learning opportunities are pursued by each school personnel with ongoing feedback and support.

What role do families play in PCBL?

Families are critical partners with the school community. By sharing their voices with school personnel, family members can help to define the desired outcomes for their students and are key in supporting their child in achieving those outcomes. Families collaborating with members of the school community help to establish clear expectations for students, to set goals, to monitor progress and achieve success.

How Is Utah's PCBL Framework Organized?

The Utah State Board of Education has engaged with stakeholders from across the state to create Utah's PCBL framework. This framework represents the three key educational partners required to achieve a personalized, competency based learning environment: school personnel, students and families. The term learner is used throughout the framework to represent all learners in the system, including students, educators, educational leaders, etc. As you review the framework, we encourage you to consider each of these learners and reflect on how to incorporate the elements of the framework for each type of learner.

The framework also includes evidence-based practices and conditions for success that can be used to advance personalized, competency based learning. Evidence-based practices (EBPs) are practices shown to be effective through high-quality research that has a positive impact on student learning. EBPs take the guesswork out of teaching by providing specific approaches that improve student performance and can be used across subject areas, grade levels and contexts. The evidence-based practices highlighted in the framework are all above an effect size (E.S.) of 0.40, which is a greater than average impact on student learning. Educational researchers identify an effect size of 0.40 or larger as at least one year of growth on student learning; therefore, using evidence-based practices will accelerate student learning and maximize educator impact. While

all EBPs are only listed once throughout the framework, several may be applicable in multiple components. Universal Design for Learning, for example, is listed in the customized supports component, yet it is also relevant to both the culture of learning and learner agency components. More information on the evidence-based practices and related effect sizes herein can be found at [Visible Learning MetaX](#).

Below the EBPs, you'll find conditions for success listed for each component of the PCBL Framework. The conditions for success provide examples of how educational leaders can cultivate systems that coordinate meaningful action to work towards achieving a more personalized, competency based learning environment.

Utah's PCBL Framework:

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

CULTURE OF LEARNING

Each learner is supported by communities committed to creating the culture, structure, policies and instructional practices that engage them in their journey towards college, career and life readiness. By leveraging a learner's unique assets and interests, holding high expectations, executing teacher clarity and fostering meaningful relationships, an inclusive culture of learning allows each learner to define their pathway to success.

LEARNER AGENCY

Each learner develops understanding, skill and responsibility for the learning design and process in pursuit of achieving the characteristic of Utah's Portrait of a Graduate. Learner agency is achieved through a broad range of instructional strategies including goal setting, choice in learning pathways, voice in how to demonstrate competency and learner self-assessment.

DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCY & ASSESSMENT

Each learner progresses through their learning based upon applying their knowledge, essential skills and dispositions. Timely, effective feedback and data from a variety of formative assessment processes are used to measure learner growth, progress and advancement based on high expectations.

CUSTOMIZED SUPPORTS

Each learner is provided with or selects appropriate and timely support to achieve growth or competency and to engage in personalized learning pathways. These customized supports are based on data about the learner's demonstrated strengths, interests and needs.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Each learner is provided with opportunities to acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for understanding and managing their emotions; setting and achieving positive goals; feeling and showing empathy for others; establishing and maintaining positive relationships; making responsible decisions; and self-advocating. The development of these characteristics is critical for a student to learn to effectively work with others, overcome challenges, and achieve success in multiple settings. Social Emotional Learning is intentionally and seamlessly integrated into classroom activities to allow students to continually build these skills.

1

CULTURE OF LEARNING

Each learner is supported by communities committed to creating the culture, structure, policies and instructional practices that engage them in their journey towards college, career and life readiness. By leveraging a learner's unique assets and interests, holding high expectations, executing teacher clarity and fostering meaningful relationships, an inclusive culture of learning allows each learner to define their pathway to success.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Educators:

- [Teacher Estimates of Achievement](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 1.29)
- [Teacher Credibility](#) (E.S. 1.09)
- [Success Criteria](#) (E.S. 0.64)
- [Teacher Clarity](#) (E.S. 0.85)
- [Teachers Not Labeling Students](#) (E.S. 0.61)
- [Clear Learning Intentions](#) (E.S. 0.44)
- [Teacher-Student Relationships](#) (E.S. 0.62)
- [Teacher Expectations](#) (E.S. 0.58)
- [Belonging](#) (E.S. 0.46)
- [Strong Classroom Cohesion](#) (E.S. 0.66)

Students:

- [Curiosity](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.74)
- [Transfer Strategies](#) (E.S. 0.75)
- [Prior Ability and Achievement](#) (E.S. 0.73)
- [Enjoyment](#) (E.S. 0.56)
- [Happiness](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Positive Self-Concept](#) (E.S. 0.46)
- [Attitude Towards Content Domains](#) (E.S. 0.45)

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Establish a common purpose and shared commitments to foster educator ownership through collective decision making and accountability.
- Develop an aligned and collaborative strategic planning process that empowers each person to understand their role in achieving equitable outcomes for each learner.
- Foster productive relationships through high expectations, asset-based mindsets, inclusivity, and celebrations of growth and continuous improvement.
- Design, adopt or adapt a Portrait of a Graduate that describes the knowledge, skills and dispositions for PreK–12 education embedded in the values of the local community.
- Articulate progressions of competencies aligned to the Portrait of a Graduate.
- Identify essential standards, define learning progressions, articulate learning intentions and success criteria to advance shared teacher clarity.
- Cultivate personalized learning environments built upon student assets.
- Use staff needs and voice to make decisions for personalizing professional learning while collaboratively monitoring the results for impact.

FAMILY SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Communicate with educators regularly about learning, with the emphasis on the process of learning and growth, not just the end grade.
- Collaborate with school staff and other community members on school improvement.
- Engage with their students to build on their strengths and nurture growth opportunities.

2

LEARNER AGENCY

Each learner develops understanding, skill and responsibility for the learning design and process in pursuit of achieving the characteristics of Utah's Portrait of a Graduate. Learner agency is achieved through a broad range of instructional strategies including goal setting, choice in learning pathways, voice in how to demonstrate competency, and learner self-assessment.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Educators:

- [Constructivist Teaching](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.92)
- [Metacognition](#) (E.S. 0.52)
- [Appropriately Challenging Goals](#) (E.S. 0.60)
- [Cooperative Learning](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Goal Commitment](#) (E.S. 0.44)

Students:

- Strategy to Integrate with Prior Knowledge (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.93)
- [Effort Management](#) (E.S. 0.77)
- [Self-Directed Learning](#) (E.S. 0.67)
- [Self-Verbalization/Self-Questioning](#) (E.S. 0.58)
- Strategy Monitoring (E.S. 0.58)
- Deep Motivation and Approach (E.S. 0.57)
- Perceived Task Value (E.S. 0.46)
- [Peer and Self-Grading](#) (E.S. 0.96)
- Time on Task (E.S. 0.42)
- [Engagement](#) (E.S. 0.41)

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Support learners in developing voice, ownership and self-determination by providing students autonomy over time, task, technique and team as they pursue learning intentions.
- Co-create collections of learner evidence of growth and competency through portfolios, performance assessments, self- and peer-assessments, etc.
- Build student support systems that praise effort instead of intelligence, and use evidence of learning to determine grades.
- Make success criteria transparent from the beginning of learning experiences to empower learners to develop their skills aligned with the learning intentions.
- Empower learners to lead conferencing efforts between families and teachers.
- Engage learners in setting personal and academic goals with periodic opportunities to monitor their own progress and use data/observations to adjust their actions accordingly.
- Create processes that value the voices of all members of the learning community (such as focus groups or stakeholder surveys) in order to inform decisions.

FAMILY SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Support their students by encouraging them in expressing their interests.
- Empower their students in taking ownership of their learning by talking about goals.
- Create a home environment that is supportive of each student in expressing their educational needs and wants.

3

DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCY AND ASSESSMENT

Each learner progresses through their learning based upon applying their knowledge, essential skills and dispositions. Timely, effective feedback and data from a variety of formative assessment processes are used to measure learner growth, progress and advancement based on high expectations.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Educators:

- [Deliberate Practice](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.49)
- [Feedback Via Technology](#) (E.S. 0.55)
 - Reinforcement (E.S. 0.92)
 - Tasks/Procedures (E.S. 0.64)
 - Technology (E.S. 0.55)
 - Timing (E.S. 0.49)
 - Tests (E.S. 0.48)
 - Effects of Testing (E.S. 0.58)
- [Mastery Learning](#) (E.S. 0.67)
- [Interleaved Practice](#) (E.S. 0.46)
- [Peer Assessment](#) (E.S. 0.41)
- [Formative Assessment Process](#) (E.S. 0.40)

Students:

- Spaced Practice vs Mass Practice (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.65)
- [Engagement](#) (E.S. 0.41)
- Study Skills (E.S. 0.49)
- Practice testing (E.S. 0.46)

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Meet regularly to engage in conversations around assessment to inform decisions based on evidence of student learning.
- Provide professional learning regarding performance-based assessments and other tools for assessing complex and hard-to-measure competencies.
- Curate a resource bank of high-quality, standards-aligned assessment resources.
- Design personalized, asset-based assessment practices by providing multiple ways for learners to demonstrate their learning.
- Use assessment recording and reporting systems that provide transparent and effective feedback to teachers, students and their families.
- Analyze assessment data to gauge impact on learning and to uncover inequities.
- Establish common assessment design criteria, including protocols for vetting assessment design, common design templates, etc.
- Monitor instructional practices for evidence of the High Quality Instruction Cycle to address ongoing formative assessment practices to collect evidence of and to advance learning.
- Align competencies and standards by identifying essential standards and creating learning progressions that articulate the path to achieving Portrait of a Graduate through the essential standards.

FAMILY SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Set high standards and clarify expectations for their students through consistent reinforcement.
- Provide feedback and encourage reflection to develop and reinforce self-awareness.
- Brainstorm ways their students can demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities through a variety of ways and at different points in the learning process.
- Support conversations and assessments that focus on growth, mastery and self-reflection over achievement of a particular grade.

4

CUSTOMIZED SUPPORTS

Each learner is provided with or selects appropriate and timely support to achieve growth or competency and to engage in personalized learning pathways. These customized supports are based on data about the learner’s demonstrated strengths, interests and needs.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Educators:

- [Collective Teacher Efficacy](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 1.34)
- [Response to Intervention](#) (E.S. 0.73)
- [Microteaching/Video Review of Lessons](#) (E.S. 1.01)
- [Planning and Prediction](#) (E.S. 0.76)
- [Problem-Solving Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.61)
- [Explicit Instruction](#) (E.S. 0.59)
- [Scaffolding](#) (E.S. 0.52)
- [Flipped Classrooms](#) (E.S. 0.56)
- [Intervention Programs](#) (E.S. 0.50)
- [Enrichment Programs](#) (E.S. 0.49)
- [Small Group Learning](#) (E.S. 0.46)
- [Differentiation With UDL Focus](#) (E.S. 0.51)
- [Inquiry-Based Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.53)

Students:

- [Jigsaw Method](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 1.20)
- [Classroom Discussion](#) (E.S. 0.82)
- [Reciprocal Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.74)
- [Summarization](#) (E.S. 0.74)
- [Outlining and Summarizing](#) (E.S. 0.71)
- [Concept Mapping](#) (E.S. 0.64)
- [Re-Reading](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Note-taking](#) (E.S. 0.51)
- [Questioning](#) (E.S. 0.49)
- [Critical Thinking](#) (E.S. 0.49)
- [Underlining and Highlighting](#) (E.S. 0.44)
- [Advanced Organizers](#) (E.S. 0.42)

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Create learning conditions in which each student actively engages in grade level instruction in the general education classroom.
- Facilitate professional learning to develop, extend and implement Universal Design for Learning Guidelines.
- Provide scaffolded and differentiated learning opportunities using the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines to support students in achieving grade level essential standards.
- Utilize tiered instruction interventions for students lacking essential foundational skills (reading, writing, just-in-time support course, etc).
- Engage educators in collaborative, data-driven discussions to determine the support students need within the learning environment.
- Facilitate learners deepening their understanding of their academic needs, strengths, interests, cognitive skills (for example, focus, working memory) to become self-directed.
- Solicit feedback from learners on the customized supports provided and ways to improve their impact.

FAMILY SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Communicate consistently with teachers regarding the strengths, weaknesses, goals and passions of their students.
- Make time, throughout the year, to talk with their students about their progress and advocate for additional supports as needed.
- Establish a positive home learning environment and set the stage for positive school behaviors.

5

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Each learner is provided with opportunities to acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for understanding and managing their emotions; setting and achieving positive goals; feeling and showing empathy for others; establishing and maintaining positive relationships; making responsible decisions; and self-advocating. The development of these characteristics is critical for a student to learn to effectively work with others, overcome challenges and achieve success in multiple settings. Social Emotional Learning is intentionally and seamlessly integrated into classroom activities to allow students to continually build these skills.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Educators:

- [Belonging](#) (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.46)
- [Positive Peer Influence](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Problem Solving Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.61)
- [Teacher-Student Relationships](#) (E.S. 0.62)

Students:

- Concentration, Persistence, Engagement (Effect Size [E.S.] 0.53)
- Critical Thinking (E.S. 0.49)
- [Emotional Intelligence](#) (E.S. 0.50)
- Happiness (E.S. 0.53)
- Help Seeking (E.S. 0.72)
- Positive Self Concept (E.S. 0.46)
- Self-Control (E.S. 0.49)
- Self Efficacy (E.S. 0.65)
- Self Judgment and Reflection (E.S. 0.75)
- Self Regulation Strategies (E.S. 0.54)

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Implement school-wide strategies and activities with students that allow them to identify and articulate a wide range of emotions and to practice using coping strategies to manage their emotions.
- Incorporate instruction that promotes students to contribute ideas and build on the ideas of others.
- Create a formalized, consistent structure that will help students identify and work towards developmentally appropriate and challenging goals based on their individual strengths, interests and needs.
- Design opportunities for students to practice examining issues from differing perspectives and articulate how others may be viewing a situation to encourage collaborative problem-solving.
- Teach, model and encourage the use of positive social skills in the classroom and school (for example, respecting personal space, using manners, following directions, sharing, listening and cooperating, etc.) to encourage a positive school culture.
- Establish a culture where students develop higher order thinking and metacognitive skills, supported through teaching practices and educator modeling.
- Reward, encourage and allow students opportunities to self-advocate.

FAMILY SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Demonstrate healthy social and emotional skills that promote growth and empowerment.
- Promote social and emotional self-awareness and self-control.
- Help their student build and maintain positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Provide opportunities for their student to take the lead when solving problems and making decisions.

Utah's PCBL Framework Initiative Alignment

To measure the effectiveness of a Personalized, Competency Based Learning system, it is important to identify the correct indicators and the timing for the associated data collection. While student outcomes should remain at the core of evaluating the impact of state programs, many of the recommended indicators below are particularly valuable in measuring innovation and program effectiveness when student outcome data is limited at the outset of planning and implementation.

PROGRAM QUALITY INDICATORS *4	
Leading Indicators <i>During Implementation</i>	Student Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Absenteeism rates ▶ Student surveys
	Instructional Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teacher survey of instructional practices ▶ Administrative observations ▶ Teacher turnover by teacher effectiveness ▶ External observation for fidelity of implementation ▶ Trend in students needing added instructional support/interventions
Primary Indicators <i>Once Fully Implemented for at Least Three Years</i>	Performance on Local Formative and Benchmark Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percent of students demonstrating at least a year's worth of improvement or more in core subject areas ▶ Percent of students demonstrating proficiency at a specific level in core subject areas ▶ Percent of students on-track to be college/career ready by the end of high school in core subject areas
	Performance on State Accountability Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percent of students making at least a year's worth of growth in tested subject areas ▶ Percent of students performing at proficient or above in tested subject areas ▶ Percent of students on-track to graduated college/career ready by the end of high school in math and ELA

PROGRAM QUALITY INDICATORS...*	
Long-Term Indicators <i>Student Outcomes Post-Graduation</i>	<p>High School Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percent of students graduating in 4-years or less ▶ Percent of students who have completed a rigorous high school curriculum as defined in R277-700 ▶ Percent of students proficient in a specific technical skill ▶ Percent of students demonstrating college/career readiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percent of students performing at the college ready benchmarks on college admissions tests (ACT) ▶ Percent of students having earned college credit in high school (CE, AP, IB, etc.) ▶ Percent of students who are Career Pathway Completers (3.0 credits in an approved sequence of courses) ▶ Percent of students who are Career Pathway Concentrators (1.5 credits in an approved sequence of courses, and the student earns an industry credential of value from an approved list of career and technical education (CTE) pathways)
	<p>Postsecondary Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percent of students enrolled in 2- or 4-year college within two years of graduation ▶ Percent of students who persisted from their 1st to 2nd year of college within 3 years of graduation ▶ Percent of students in 2- or 4-year college who enrolled in at least one remedial course ▶ Percent of students with an industry certification ▶ Percent of students not enrolled in college who have a full-time job with benefits

** All outcomes should always be disaggregated by subgroups.*

⁴Phillips, K. (2018). Excel in Ed's EVALUATING PROGRESS AND IMPACT Transitioning to Student-Centered Learning: Policy Solutions for States. Excel in Ed: Retrieved from <https://www.excelined.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ExcelinEd.Innovation.PersonalizedLearning.TransitioningtoStudentCenteredLearningSeries.Brief4EvaluatingImpact.October2018.2.pdf>

Extended Learning **Resources**



For extended learning resources, please visit:

<https://schools.utah.gov/curr/pcbl?mid=5288&tid=2>

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