STATE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR PERSONALIZED LEARNING

DESIGNING EDUCATION SYSTEMS WHERE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS

A societal era is unfolding that demands a new approach to education. Exponential advances in technologies dominate the employment landscape, redefining industries and opening doors to new types of employment that never existed before. Demographics are also shifting, increasing the diversity and life experiences of the nation's school-age population. These new realities require a personalized approach to education that meets every student where they are; provides them with a network of high-quality customized supports; and ensures they graduate with the knowledge, skills and social-emotional competencies to navigate a lifetime of learning and career success.

Fortunately, state leaders and educators across the country have already begun to make this shift. Policymakers have empowered district leaders with waivers and pilot programs to support exploration of innovative personalized learning models, and educators have embraced new teaching roles and professional opportunities to better support student learning. While these efforts have yielded positive results for students and their communities, they are scattered throughout the country and remain in an exploratory phase. In fact, the nation has yet to see a state fully align its policy system to support a statewide shift toward personalized learning.

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12 POLICY CONDITIONS

FOUR STRATEGIES FOR SYSTEM DESIGN

The next frontier of this work is to build on the success of early innovators so all students benefit. Personalized learning can be a powerful approach for ensuring readiness for postsecondary education and career and for addressing racial, economic, gender and geographic disparities, but it will take hard work and collaboration at every level of the system to ensure it is implemented with fidelity.

The State Policy Framework for Personalized Learning will help states and stakeholders define and navigate their pathway from the exploratory phase of system design, where a limited number of districts engage in personalized learning practices, to state-wide transformation.

We recognize that states are at many different starting points as they consider a shift to personalized learning. We also recognize that the path to statewide transformation is not linear. This framework is designed to help states build awareness of what it will take to support personalized learning statewide and to consider important decision points with key stakeholders.
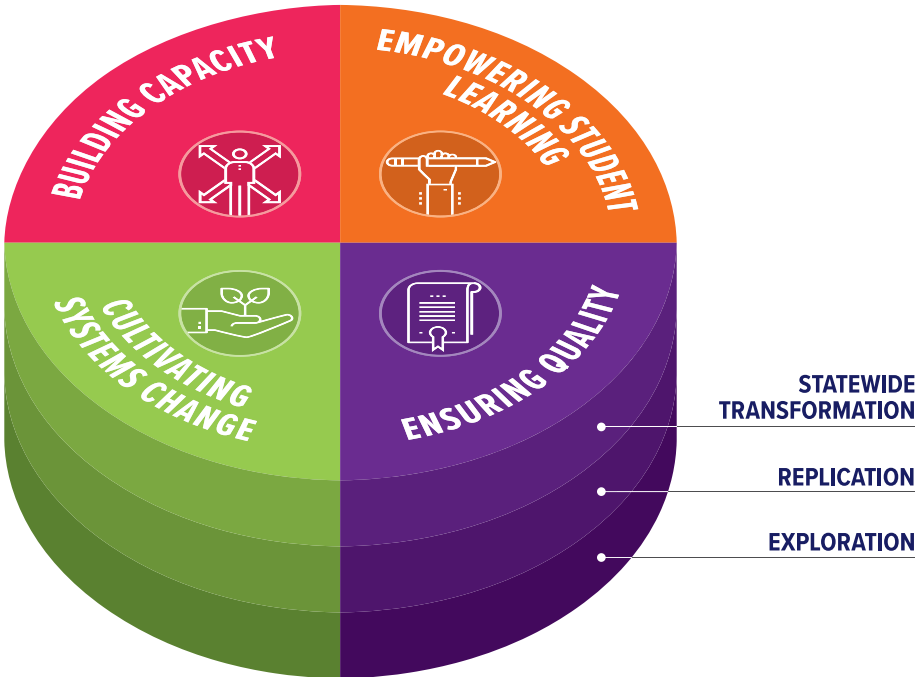
The framework is divided into four strategies for system design: Building Capacity, Empowering Student Learning, Cultivating Systems Change and Ensuring Quality.

Each of these strategies includes a set of policy conditions states will need to tackle as they refine and transform their policy system to one that ensures all students in the state benefit from high-quality personalized learning experiences.

BUILDING CAPACITY	EMPOWERING STUDENT LEARNING	ENSURING QUALITY	CULTIVATING SYSTEMS CHANGE
Vision for Student Success	Supports for Historically Underserved Students	Quality Frameworks for Student Success	Culture of Innovation
Collaborative Leadership	Equitable Conditions for Learning	Balanced Assessment*	Responsive Funding Systems
Comprehensive Supports for Educators and Leaders	Student Learning Pathways	Measuring Success	Continuous School Improvement
	Balanced Assessment*		

*The Balanced Assessment policy condition is unique in that it is critical to both the Ensuring Quality and Empowering Student Learning strategies. The purpose of a balanced assessment system is to evaluate the success of education systems and approaches while also empowering student learning through timely supports and interventions.

THREE TIERS OF IMPLEMENTATION

BUILDING CAPACITY

EMPOWERING STUDENT LEARNING

CULTIVATING SYSTEMS CHANGE

ENSURING QUALITY

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

REPLICATION

EXPLORATION

The framework presents clear goals, supporting actions and strategic questions that states should consider as they progress through the following three tiers of implementation:
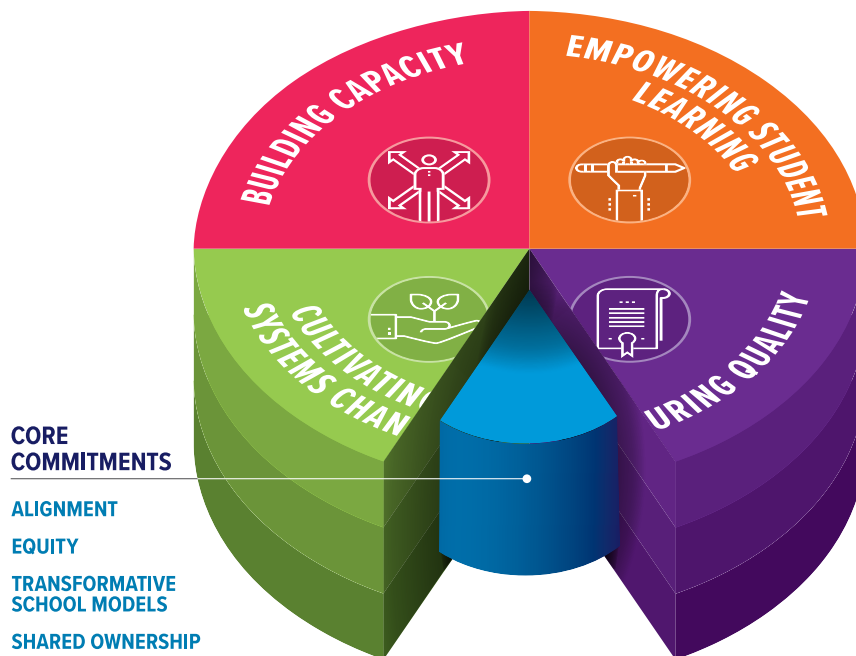
EXPLORATION
The state has collaborated with stakeholders to consider change, and communities are ready to pilot or test a personalized learning approach.

REPLICATION
The state and its stakeholders have evaluated the pilot strategy, identified key lessons and made necessary improvements and are ready to expand to additional schools so more students across the state can benefit.

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION
The state has evidence of success across diverse demographics and geographies, and stakeholders are ready to adopt the approach on a statewide basis.

Each section also highlights a state that is making progress in each policy area. These examples give stakeholders the opportunity to learn from early adopters and consider how an approach might look similar or different in their own state.

CORE COMMITMENTS FOR QUALITY TRANSFORMATION

BUILDING CAPACITY

EMPOWERING STUDENT LEARNING

CULTIVATIN SYSTEMS CHAN

URING QUALITY

CORE COMMITMENTS

ALIGNMENT

EQUITY

TRANSFORMATIVE SCHOOL MODELS

SHARED OWNERSHIP

States must develop a robust theory of change that will ensure quality across the system. Despite its strong potential, personalized learning will become meaningless if all stakeholders in the state do not uphold high expectations and standards for managing quality. States should be mindful of the following core commitments for quality transformation and should strive for increasing evidence of each commitment as they work to mature their policy systems.

ALIGNMENT
The state partners with a coalition of diverse stakeholders to create a shared vision for student success and increasingly aligns all levels of governance, functions and resources to that vision. Alignment should occur at the local and state levels, within the state education agency and across all relevant state agencies.

EQUITY
The state leverages data to illuminate opportunity gaps and disparities in outcomes and engages historically underserved communities to design solutions that improve equity across all levels of the system. Personalized learning ensures that no student is left behind, emphasizing student agency and targeted supports to accelerate student learning.

TRANSFORMATIVE SCHOOL MODELS
The state builds the capacity of districts to move from transitional pilot programs to mature, evidence-based personalized teaching and learning models. The state implements ongoing quality assurance measures to drive student success, leveraging transparency, stakeholder engagement and evidence-based decision-making for positive improvements along the way.

SHARED OWNERSHIP
The state proactively engages diverse stakeholders in the design and implementation of personalized learning systems, progressing toward shared ownership of system design and decision-making around implementation. Local communities are empowered to work alongside the state and share accountability for education practices and outcomes.

WHAT IS PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

Personalized learning means meeting each student at their own level, challenging them with high expectations for academic achievement and growing student agency through:

» Instruction aligned to rigorous academic standards and social-emotional skills students need to be ready for college, career and life

» Customized instruction that allows each student to design learning experiences aligned to his or her interests

» Varied pacing of instruction based on individual student needs, allowing students to accelerate or take additional time based on their level of mastery

» Real-time differentiation of instruction, supports and interventions based on data from formative assessments and student feedback to ensure every student remains on track to graduation

» Access to clear, transferable learning objectives and assessment results so students and families understand what is expected for mastery and advancement

VISION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The state has a clearly articulated vision for student success that emphasizes personalized learning to ensure every student graduates with the academic knowledge, skills and social-emotional competencies to succeed in postsecondary education and a rapidly changing workforce. A transparent vision statement is essential for aligning programs, resources, roles and initiatives to support high-quality implementation of personalized learning.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has engaged a diverse coalition of stakeholders to establish a vision for the state's education system that advances personalized learning practices to ensure every learner is prepared for success in postsecondary and a rapidly changing workforce.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state engages a diverse array of stakeholders, including PreK-12 educators, postsecondary providers, employers, community-based organizations, families and students to co-develop and formally adopt a vision for its education system that ensures learning is personalized, students can advance upon mastery and students are empowered to take ownership of their learning.

» The state engages in strategies to explore alignment of policy and practice to its new vision, including conducting a policy and resource audit to identify areas of misalignment and engaging educators, school leadership teams and district leaders to authentically explore personalized teaching and learning models.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state build on recent stakeholder engagement and visioning efforts to further emphasize a vision for personalized learning?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has assembled a broad coalition of state and local stakeholders to foster public will for personalized learning. The state's vision is amplified through shared advocacy efforts that reach every community in the state, and districts have created aligned local visions for student success.

» The state advances its vision for student success by leveraging federal and state resources and aligning policies to advance personalized learning in communities across the state. These policies exhibit a strong commitment to equity, ensuring that historically underserved students have greater access to high-quality personalized learning experiences.

» School districts convene diverse stakeholders, including educators, students, families and community partners, to create a local vision for student success that aligns to the state's vision while incorporating important local values and expectations for postsecondary and workforce success.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state partner with districts to deepen understanding and ownership of a shared vision for personalized learning?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL
State and district leaders have cultivated broad support for personalized learning and are leveraging partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders from the community, postsecondary and workforce systems to support the ongoing expansion of high-quality personalized learning experiences for students.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» State agencies, school districts, workforce systems, postsecondary partners and community organizations communicate with each other to operationalize a shared vision for student success, aligning policies and resources to build strong evidence of achievement gap closure and improvement in postsecondary and workforce success.

» Key education stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders, nonprofits and community leaders, provide compelling evidence of how their partnerships help advance state and local visions for student success, ensuring learning is personalized; students can advance upon mastery and students are empowered to take ownership of their learning.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What processes can the state implement to continuously evaluate its vision in light of emerging evidence, outcomes and research?

EARLY ADOPTER

TransformSC, an education initiative of the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness, helped spur a statewide conversation among business leaders, educators, students, parents and policymakers to ensure South Carolina's students graduate prepared for careers, college and citizenship. In 2013, these conversations culminated with the launch of the **Profile of the South Carolina Graduate**, a vision that outlines the world-class knowledge, skills and life and career characteristics that all graduates need upon high school graduation. This profile has been adopted by a diverse group of state stakeholders including the state board of education, department of education, education oversight committee, chamber of commerce, school boards association and TransformSC schools and districts.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

State leaders demonstrate support for personalized learning and partner with diverse stakeholders across all levels of the system to mobilize broad support for the creation and sustainability of personalized learning. Meaningful, transparent and ongoing engagement between state, district and community partners improves the quality of policy development, adoption, implementation and continuous improvement while cultivating champions across the system to advance personalized learning approaches that meet the needs of all students.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
State leaders have demonstrated support for personalized learning and have established partnerships with diverse stakeholders to identify barriers and strategies to advance personalized teaching and learning models.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state engages diverse stakeholders in the exploration of personalized learning policies, communicating proactively and clearly with culturally responsive education materials and multiple formats, platforms and venues.

» Policymakers, administrators, teacher unions, community-based organizations and other advocacy groups express support for personalized learning by backing policies or plans to advance high-quality personalized learning and by participating in inter-state learning opportunities.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
Which stakeholder groups should serve as partners in this work? Which groups and individuals are already paving the way for personalized learning in the state?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
State leaders have demonstrated deep commitment to personalized learning while building the capacity of districts to collaborate with diverse stakeholders across their communities to implement personalized teaching and learning models.

» The state demonstrates commitment to personalized learning by designating an entity, coalition or council focused on advancing personalized learning that works closely with stakeholders to advance personalized learning policy and to enhance communication and responsiveness to feedback for historically underserved groups.

» The state supports school districts by providing technical assistance, training, tools and financial support to encourage collaborative development and implementation of policies and programs aligned to personalized learning and facilitates networks of district leaders to share best practices and build capacity for personalized learning models.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state help districts and their communities leverage current policy opportunities to advance personalized learning? How can districts and their communities help the state improve policies to support ongoing district implementation?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL
State leaders have aligned their priorities and policies to support the advancement of personalized learning while empowering districts to engage deeply with diverse community partners in the ongoing implementation and improvement of personalized learning systems.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state demonstrates commitment to and builds local capacity and ownership for personalized learning by supporting the establishment or expansion of cross-sector community partnerships, helping advance the vision by aligning resources to support impactful education practices.

» Education leaders and diverse stakeholders participate in processes that ensure continuous improvement of the education system and hold each other accountable to maintain momentum toward achieving the state's vision for student success.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How will the state ensure ongoing commitment to its vision for personalized learning through leadership changes at the state and district levels?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2017, North Dakota created an innovative education program, allowing schools and districts to apply for a waiver from specific state laws. **SB 2186** passed with bipartisan support and emerged in part because the state superintendent engaged a variety of stakeholders, including administrators, educators, the governor, the state teacher's union and the state chamber of commerce. More recently, the state's Department of Public Instruction began a partnership with school districts and organizations to establish a statewide personalized, competency-based learning (PCBL) initiative. District teams represent five school districts across the state to lead local implementation of PCBL. Additionally, the **Superintendent's Student Cabinet** is designed for students to provide feedback to the state on education issues.

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS FOR EDUCATORS AND LEADERS

The state invests in systemic efforts to build professional capacity for the implementation of high-quality personalized learning systems. These systemic efforts align educator and school leader preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems into a seamless continuum that personalizes supports for educators and school leaders so they can deepen their professional expertise and raise the quality of leadership and instruction.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has engaged with diverse stakeholders to create a plan for aligning educator and school leader preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems that empowers educators and school leaders to succeed in personalized environments.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state convenes diverse stakeholders to define the competencies educators and school leaders need to have in personalized environments and to develop strategies that align and build capacity for personalized learning models across educator and school leader preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems.

» The state partners with diverse stakeholders to collect data on and increase student access to educators and school leaders with training and/or demonstrated capacity to teach in personalized environments, particularly for underserved student populations.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state empower educators and school leaders to lead state and local conversations about how to prepare the educator workforce to succeed in personalized learning environments?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has engaged with stakeholders to align programs and resources to ensure that educators and school leaders with training and experience in personalized learning models are equitably distributed across the state.

» The state collaborates with diverse stakeholders to implement strategies that align to and build capacity for personalized learning across educator and school leader preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems and leverages resources to address gaps in student access to educators and school leaders with expertise in personalized learning instruction.

» The state establishes partnerships with regional service entities or other collaborators that enable educators and school leaders to share best practices in personalized learning through a statewide learning network. Early adopter districts are supported to serve as innovation labs for the state.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state collaborate with regional entities to ensure students have equitable access to high-quality educators and school leaders with experience in personalized learning practices?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL
The state collaborates closely with diverse stakeholders, educators and school leaders to monitor the effectiveness of educator and school leader preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems to ensure that educators and school leaders are prepared and supported to deliver high-quality personalized instruction to all students.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state supports districts with resources, technical assistance and partnerships to continually identify high-impact strategies for building local capacity for high-quality personalized learning instruction, including strategies that enable educators and school leaders to lead their own career development.

» The state provides support for a seamless continuum of educator and school leader capacity-building systems that enable educators and school leaders to continually improve their personalized learning leadership and practice along a personalized learning career progression.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What other groups or institutions should be engaged in an ongoing way to ensure that alignment between educator and school leader support systems is maintained?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2011, a group of postsecondary leaders in New Hampshire formed the **IHE Network** to influence policymakers and engage practitioners to promote innovative programs and policies that link educator preparation, new educator induction and ongoing professional development in the state. One of the network's initiatives explored the changing role of school leaders in the state as they increasingly implement innovative and competency-based teaching and learning models. A leadership preparation programs committee convened to identify new collective and institutional approaches for ensuring leaders have the skills to succeed in these new learning environments.

SUPPORTS FOR HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED STUDENTS

The state supports historically underserved students by establishing equitable policies and practices aligned to culturally responsive and trauma-informed practices to intentionally address gaps in outcomes. Along with setting goals, monitoring progress, increasing transparency and mobilizing stakeholders to achieve greater equity, the state collaborates with local communities to examine state- and local-level systemic issues, including long-held beliefs and values, that result in the education system failing to acknowledge and support student identities.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has collaborated with a working group of diverse stakeholders to examine data on system inequities and to develop a plan that ensures historically underserved students benefit from high-quality personalized learning experiences.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state identifies and partners with regional agencies that have the capacity to collaborate with school districts and provide training and supports around cultural responsiveness and trauma-informed practices.

» The state uses data to illuminate inequities in the state's academic, discipline and whole child outcomes and develops a plan that leverages personalized teaching and learning to address those inequities. The state also uses accountability and reporting data to communicate to stakeholders how well the system serves historically underserved students and to track progress towards elimination of achievement gaps.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What systemic biases have created barriers to educational success for historically underserved students, and in what ways might personalized learning create more equitable systems?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has empowered school districts to implement personalized learning strategies to address system inequities and close gaps in both academic and whole child outcomes.

» The state prioritizes competitive or administrative funding for programs that benefit historically underserved students through mentorships or other opportunities that broaden students' access to informal community networks.

» The state empowers school districts to pilot reporting measures that demonstrate student success and account for various student identities, life experiences and goals and to communicate outcomes and progress toward goals to stakeholders.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What types of reporting measures would give stakeholders a more comprehensive picture of student success so they can better target supports to ensure the success of historically underserved students?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL
The state empowers districts to work with diverse community stakeholders to implement and continuously improve personalized teaching and learning solutions designed to eliminate gaps in student outcomes.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state engages diverse stakeholders during the policymaking and implementation process with the specific intent of ensuring that new policies eliminate rather than perpetuate systemic biases and the resulting inequities.

» The state collaborates with diverse community stakeholders to monitor the effectiveness of strategies to close gaps in academic, discipline and whole child outcomes and proposes strategies to better serve students with the greatest needs.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state continuously collaborate with stakeholders to monitor the impact of personalized learning policies on historically underserved students and make necessary improvements to maximize their success?

EARLY ADOPTER

In Massachusetts, state policy flexibility enabled the creation of the **Boston Day and Evening Academy** (BDEA), a student-centered, competency-based school which targets learners who are considered off-track and do not feel a sense of connection in a traditional high school. Many are over age for high school and many have dropped out due to family or life circumstances.

At BDEA, there are no grades of any kind. Instead, content areas are broken into 11-week modules— each with associated benchmarks against which learners demonstrate their competence. Students progress according to their skill development, not their age or time spent in a seat. In 2018, 97 percent of students graduated within three years, and 70 percent graduated in two years. These numbers are up from the previous year's rates of 81 percent and 55 percent respectively.

EQUITABLE CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

The state ensures that all students have access to whole child supports, including social-emotional supports; access to safe and healthy learning environments; and engaging, supportive and appropriately challenging instruction so they can develop the skills to drive their own learning and to engage deeply as members of their communities. Comprehensive and transparent data on whole child development enables partnerships between the state and its communities to advance strategies that meet the needs of all students.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has collaborated across agencies to align resources, funding and services to support the whole child and ensure access to safe and healthy learning environments.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state convenes a set of diverse stakeholders and representatives from state agencies that cover K-12, higher education, workforce, health, social services, juvenile justice and early childhood to establish goals for supporting the whole child; to align funding, resources and services to this goal; and to provide professional development opportunities for educators and leaders to better support the whole child.

» The state leverages reporting data on discipline, attendance and safe and healthy learning environments to prioritize resources and support students with the greatest needs, including by developing and expanding programs focused on social-emotional development, such as community schools, integrated student supports, Promise Neighborhoods, after-school programs and children's councils.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What whole child supports, resources and services does the state currently provide, and what are the strengths, areas for improvement and areas of overlap within and between agencies?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has partnered with diverse stakeholders and cross-agency representatives to ensure that gaps in whole child outcomes are being addressed, to provide training and supports for educators and school leaders and to support districts to pilot whole child competencies and reporting measures.

» The state builds the capacity of districts to incorporate social-emotional or whole child indicators in the state's performance measurement system by encouraging districts to report on student mastery of social-emotional competencies; providing opportunities for cross-district networking around new indicators; providing technical assistance; and investing in research and development partnerships to identify indicators that are valid, reliable and actionable.

» The state creates a new funding stream to address gaps in whole child data, empowering districts to leverage state resources to improve student access to whole child and social-emotional supports.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How does the state's performance measurement system, which includes its accountability and reporting systems, encourage whole child supports, and how could the state make improvements to further incentivize whole child supports?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state regularly communicates and holds districts and schools accountable on a range of whole child performance indicators, empowering diverse stakeholders at the state and district levels to respond to the data with strategies to improve whole child supports and address system inequities.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state empowers districts and diverse stakeholders to improve equitable access to social-emotional supports by continually monitoring and adjusting resources to ensure students most in need benefit from high-quality programs and services.

» The state establishes a system to improve alignment and monitoring of in-school and out-of-school learning and provides professional development for educators and community partners that helps integrate social-emotional and whole child elements across learning environments.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state leverage partnerships with stakeholders to ensure that students' whole child needs are being met during in-school and out-of-school learning opportunities?

EARLY ADOPTER

Pennsylvania's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan is leveraging a **community schools** model to mitigate the impact of poverty on academic performance by meeting the needs of students and families through locally-driven partnerships. Community schools create vibrant, safe and welcoming environments where students are challenged and supported to achieve their maximum potential.

A community school is both a place and set of partnerships that help address health, wellness and the social needs of its students, families and the surrounding neighborhood. **Schools become centers of the community**, open to everyone, all day, every day, including evenings and weekends.

STUDENT LEARNING PATHWAYS

The state empowers all students to access and complete equally rigorous pathways that enable exploration of career interests while gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for success in postsecondary and the workforce. Opportunities such as work-based learning, internships, Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, college in high school programs and service-based learning experiences are paired with supports to address opportunity and achievement gaps and ensure that every student can advance to deeper levels of mastery regardless of their starting place.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has incentivized and invested in the creation of student learning pathways that enable learners to explore their interests and career aspirations and has begun to build a pipeline of educators and partners with the expertise to create and implement pathway opportunities.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state audits available courses and pathways to identify gaps in access across the state and partners with districts to explore funding opportunities to address those gaps, including funding provided under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

» The state enacts policies, including improvements to graduation requirements, accountability systems and educator development, to incentivize the creation of pathways and aligned supports to ensure students can explore interests from elementary to secondary school and successfully transition to postsecondary and career.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What partnerships can the state cultivate to allow local leaders to create learning pathways that enable students to develop critical knowledge and skills in engaging and relevant ways?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has established policies and processes to ensure student learning pathways are high-quality and equally rigorous, focusing specifically on strategies to address opportunity and achievement gaps and increase participation and completion of students from underrepresented groups.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state establishes a goal and interim benchmarks to increase historically underserved students' participation, performance and completion of pathway opportunities and prioritizes state and federal resources, including ESEA and CTE funding, to advance this goal.

» The state adjusts existing policies and systems, including improving its accountability and reporting systems, to ensure pathway options are equally rigorous, incentivize deeper levels of mastery and align to postsecondary and career expectations.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state ensure equitable student access to rigorous pathways that are aligned to current and future workforce needs?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state and its districts ensure all students can access and master high-quality learning pathways aligned to their postsecondary and career interests, and districts have set rigorous goals to close gaps in student access and completion.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» All school districts establish equity-focused goals and interim benchmarks to close gaps in pathway participation or completion and partner with community organizations and businesses to ensure students benefit from pathways aligned to their interests.

» The state dedicates funding to ensure that all K-12 students can access, move between and complete high-quality pathways aligned to their interests and postsecondary and career goals and partners with districts and community partners on a continuous improvement process to uphold rigor, target student supports and ensure all students advance to deeper levels of mastery.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state empower local communities to build and sustain a network of high-quality learning pathways that close opportunity and achievement gaps and increase student ownership of learning?

EARLY ADOPTER

To incentivize growth and mastery of fundamental skills, Louisiana created a **Strength of Diploma** indicator in its accountability system. This indicator awards increasing points when students graduate with a high school diploma and postsecondary credit or credentials, including completing an associate degree; passing an Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or College-Level Examination Program exam; or earning an industry credential.

CULTURE OF INNOVATION

The state advances personalized learning by empowering educators, researchers, communities and families to design, refine, evaluate and advance new learning models that better support student needs. A culture of innovation leverages policy flexibility coupled with necessary resources and supports to identify and advance practices and aligned policies that drive equity and maximize student outcomes.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has empowered districts with flexibility and resources to advance personalized teaching and learning strategies and has begun to build research capacity to evaluate their impact.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state empowers districts with policy flexibility and resources to implement personalized learning models or practices, such as the ability to modify how credits and diplomas are awarded, establish new educator roles or design balanced assessment systems that support personalized learning and further the state's vision for student success.

» The state develops a cross-agency research and development team to evaluate the efficacy of personalized learning practices and communicates findings with districts, school leaders and educators and targets federal and state resources to build local capacity to design, refine, evaluate and advance personalized learning systems that drive equity and maximize student success.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How does the state currently enable local innovation, and how can it build on these efforts to accelerate improvements in teaching and learning?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has established learning networks and resources to support the growth of high-impact personalized learning strategies and models, prioritizing resources and knowledge-building for areas of greatest need in the state.

» The state creates learning networks to leverage the knowledge of educators and school leaders who have a strong track record of success with personalized learning so other districts can learn lessons to advance their own personalized teaching and learning models.

» The state engages with diverse stakeholders to align federal, state and community resources to establish structures and systems for scaling personalized learning practices statewide and directs targeted resources to ensure maximum impact on student learning and development, particularly for student populations farthest from proficiency.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

What communities in the state have the most compelling evidence for leveraging personalized learning to improve student learning, and how can the state partner with those communities to ensure other districts benefit?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state has empowered districts and communities to continuously innovate and refine their learning models and has invested in ongoing research, development and scaling of personalized learning strategies with strong evidence of driving equity and achievement statewide.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state refines a process that enables districts, in partnership with their communities, to seek flexibility to advance personalized learning strategies with high potential to improve student learning and development.

» The state creates a dedicated funding stream to ensure ongoing research, development, evaluation and dissemination of proven personalized learning practices, models and trends to inform policymaking, direct education investments and empower stakeholders to advance the state's vision for student success.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state sustain an ongoing culture of innovation that supports exploration, replication and scale of practices and models that have the potential to transform teaching and learning?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2012, Kentucky established the Districts of Innovation program by enacting **KRS 156.108** and **160.107**. This program gives public school districts the opportunity to apply to the Kentucky Board of Education to waive certain administrative regulations, statutory provisions and local board policy to advance strategies that will improve student learning. In re-thinking what a school might look like, districts are empowered to redesign learning to engage and motivate more students and increase the numbers of those who are prepared for what comes next.

RESPONSIVE FUNDING SYSTEMS

The state supports adequate, equitable and flexible funding and resource systems that enable educators to advance personalized learning and address educational inequities in real-time. These funding and resource systems support the launch and growth of exploratory pilots and professional learning communities that identify, scale and sustain equitable funding practices that advance high-quality personalized learning experiences for all students.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has partnered with a diverse coalition of stakeholders to take preliminary steps to identify and address funding barriers to implementation of personalized teaching and learning models.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state collaborates with diverse stakeholders to identify funding streams that can be leveraged to support a vision for personalized learning and to identify the barriers that make it difficult for local innovators to pilot new learning models. Strategies to improve funding systems should address:

- State and local revenue adequacy and sustainability

- Equitable and flexible distribution of state and local education funding to target resources where they are needed the most

- Flexibility and incentives to ensure equitable access to high-quality learning experiences and instruction

» State policymakers analyze inequities in the state's school funding formula, including gaps in per-pupil expenditures between schools, and partner with district leaders, educators, communities and other stakeholders to create a plan that ensures sufficient funding to meet the needs of every student.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What types of funding barriers make it difficult for districts and schools to advance personalized learning models?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL

The state has supported district and regional exploration of innovative funding strategies and has leveraged multiple funding sources to advance personalized learning systems.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state commits resources to ensure equitable funding and expanded student access to personalized learning. The state also provides technical support to help districts target local funding for student groups with the greatest need, including exploration and participation in the federal weighted-student-funding program.

» The state leverages federal funding to advance personalized learning, prioritizing resources for districts with schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support. The state also supports districts to leverage federal funding to implement high-quality personalized learning.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state leverage federal and state funding along with greater funding flexibility to help districts advance innovative personalized learning approaches?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state has adopted a new flexible funding system that enables all districts to sustain personalized teaching and learning models and has established dedicated funding to support the continued growth and refinement of statewide personalized learning systems.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state helps districts reallocate local resources to support personalized learning and to engage in cross-sector regional partnerships that leverage public-private resources to scale practices with the greatest potential to address achievement gaps.

» The state supports the scale and sustainability of personalized learning by aligning its funding system to the state's vision for student success and by establishing collaborative partnerships that marshal third-party and local school district funding to sustain high-impact personalized learning approaches.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state mobilize regions, communities and philanthropic partners to sustain equitable and responsive funding systems that enable high-quality personalized learning?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2015, **Idaho's H.B. 110** supported the state's shift to mastery-based education, requiring the state to conduct a statewide campaign to promote understanding of mastery education, establish a committee of educators to identify barriers to implementing mastery education and create a process for incubating district-level mastery learning initiatives. The Idaho Legislature appropriated a $1.4 million annual line-item in FY 2018 to support continuation of the mastery education pilot program.

CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The state supports the continuous improvement of all schools with transparent, dynamic systems that empower local leaders and their communities to diagnose, analyze and address the needs of all students in real-time. An effective school improvement system supports the continuous growth of all schools and prioritizes resources for schools with the greatest need for improvement. High-quality personalized learning strategies are embedded in school transformation efforts, ensuring that all students have access to personalized learning.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has established a system of continuous school improvement that empowers all districts to identify and address conditions impacting performance while giving local leaders the autonomy to implement improvement plans that increase personalized learning experiences for students.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state engages education stakeholders to identify a core set of school improvement principles that advance high-quality personalized learning opportunities for students and uses those principles to structure its technical and financial supports to districts.

» The state's school improvement system identifies schools most in need of improvement and builds district capacity to conduct a thorough needs assessment and to implement evidence-based personalized learning strategies that maximize student academic and social-emotional growth.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state support the continuous growth of all schools while ensuring schools most in need of support benefit from high-quality personalized learning approaches?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state supports all schools interested in implementing high-quality personalized learning strategies while prioritizing additional technical assistance and funding flexibility for district and community partnerships to implement personalized teaching and learning models in schools most in need of improvement.

» The state prioritizes federal and state resources for districts that submit high-quality plans to implement personalized learning models and strategies in schools identified for comprehensive and targeted improvement under ESEA, including ESEA Title IV dollars for programs and strategies that improve the social-emotional and physical health of students

» The state partners with educators, district leaders and community partners to improve real-time diagnostic supports and has begun to provide funding flexibility to pilot these strategies in select districts across the state, particularly districts with schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state establish peer learning networks to leverage insights from districts and schools that have achieved significant growth after implementing personalized learning models?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state has empowered district and community partnerships with additional expertise, resources and real-time data so regions can work together to proactively address student needs and scale personalized learning practices with the greatest potential to maximize student success.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state develops a proactive and responsive school improvement system that supports schools and builds the capacity of districts, communities and stakeholders to analyze comprehensive data on student learning and development in real-time and to implement strategies that ensure all students benefit from a high-quality personalized education.

» The state aligns educator preparation, credentialing, professional development and evaluation systems to ensure all school leaders and educators have the expertise to diagnose students' academic and social-emotional needs and design aligned interventions that advance personalized experiences for students.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state build capacity of communities and regions to design, implement and monitor systems that support the continuous growth of all schools?

EARLY ADOPTER

In Rhode Island's **ESSA plan**, five core principles—personalized learning, innovation, flexibility, shared ownership and diverse stakeholder engagement—guide school improvement efforts. The state has also launched a **School Redesign Program** that empowers communities and schools with greater flexibility and autonomy to design school improvement efforts. Districts, in conjunction with Community Advisory Boards and schools, may select or develop a school improvement plan that best meets their local needs.

QUALITY FRAMEWORKS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The state has a learning framework, or set of standards, that represents the full range of knowledge, skills and social-emotional competencies students need to graduate ready for postsecondary education and a rapidly changing workforce. This framework provides transparent learning expectations that help organize a personalized education system, empowering local leaders and educators to create or leverage aligned competencies and empirically-based learning progressions that map how students learn so educators can more effectively address learning needs.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has aligned its K-12 standards to its vision for student success and has begun to pilot the use of competencies and empirically-based learning progressions in districts to help educators more effectively map student progress toward mastery of the standards.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state convenes a diverse array of stakeholders to align the state's K-12 standards to its vision for student success and establishes a plan to create aligned competencies either at the state level or in partnership with districts.

» The state establishes a pilot with demographically and geographically diverse districts to pilot competencies, empirically-based learning progressions and formative assessment practices to help educators design personalized learning pathways that ensure all students achieve mastery, especially students that are behind and require accelerated growth.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How can the state build on its current K-12 standards to ensure students are ready for success in a rapidly changing workforce?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
Districts have adopted competencies aligned to state K-12 standards and are increasingly integrating empirically-based learning progressions to improve instruction and close disparities in outcomes.

» The state develops a process for ensuring districts are implementing high-quality competencies, either by creating state-level competencies for districts to adopt or by developing state tools and review processes that support districts to create their own competencies.

» The state evaluates, refines and expands its district competencies and learning progressions pilot program to high-need communities and develops new growth mechanisms to ensure students farthest from proficiency experience the greatest learning gains.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How has student learning changed in communities across the state where districts are piloting competencies and learning progressions to personalize instruction? If it has changed in positive ways, how can the state ensure more students benefit from these innovations?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state clearly outlines a continuum of expectations for learner knowledge and skills ranging from preschool through postsecondary and all districts in the state are leveraging aligned empirically-based learning progressions to create high-quality curriculum and instruction.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state engages PreK-12, postsecondary and workforce leaders to create state standards and aligned competencies that span the learning continuum from preschool through postsecondary and identifies strategies to improve postsecondary and career transitions, particularly for student groups with disparities in college access, completion and meaningful employment.

» All districts and their community partners leverage empirically-based learning progressions and culturally responsive practices to support individual learning pathways to mastery. Districts engage in a review of their curriculum and instructional materials, assessment systems and strategies for measuring success and make necessary changes to ensure alignment.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

What lessons have emerged from a statewide shift toward integration of competencies and learning progressions that could help the state better measure student success?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2013, the New Hampshire Department of Education partnered with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment and the Center for Collaborative Education to design **voluntary state-level competencies** that districts could use to support a shift to competency-based instruction. The department involved educators representing the K-16 education spectrum to support this process, including representatives from the state's teacher associations. The competencies, which have been approved by the state board of education, align to the state's standards for mathematics, English language arts, science and work-study practices.

BALANCED ASSESSMENT

The state supports the development and implementation of balanced systems of formative, benchmark, interim and summative assessments at the state and district levels that empower educators; deepen student learning; and validate student mastery of complex knowledge, skills and social-emotional competencies. These systems empower educators to focus instruction where it is needed most while providing important information to help states and districts better target resources to close achievement gaps and improve student success.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has developed a vision for balanced assessment systems that aligns to the state's vision for student success and has begun to build these systems by adjusting state policies, investing in educator assessment capacity and partnering with districts to pilot innovative assessment designs.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» A state leadership team comprised of diverse stakeholders, district leaders and educators studies examples of local balanced assessment systems that align to personalized and competency-based learning environments and develops a plan to support the creation or adoption of high-quality balanced assessment systems that align to the state's vision for student success.

» The state invests significant state and federal resources to deepen educators' assessment literacy so educators have the skills to leverage student work and assessment data to close achievement gaps and begins to pilot innovative assessment designs in districts that demonstrate readiness.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
How does the state's current assessment system empower or impede personalized teaching and learning models?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has evaluated the impact of balanced assessment pilots and has invested in learning networks to replicate high-quality practices and systems to additional cohorts of demographically and geographically diverse districts.

» A leadership team convened by the state evaluates the progress of district pilot sites; makes necessary improvements to manage the quality of district implementation; and creates a process to enable additional demographically and geographically diverse districts to implement balanced assessment systems that support personalized, competency-based learning environments.

» The state has established professional learning networks to support district implementation of balanced assessment systems, integrating best practices into professional development opportunities for all districts in the state, particularly practices from districts that have demonstrated success in addressing the needs of diverse student populations.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

What insights are emerging from district leaders, educators and parents participating in the innovative assessment pilot, and how can those lessons inform improvements for future cohorts of districts?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state has aligned policies and resources to scale balanced assessment practices to every district in the state, ensuring educators are essential partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of these systems.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» State and district resources and policies are aligned to support statewide implementation of balanced assessment systems, ensuring that under-resourced districts have the capacity to implement new assessments with fidelity. A state-level sustainability plan ensures ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement of the state assessment system including strategies for incorporating student, parent and educator feedback.

» Educator preparation programs focus on assessment literacy, ensuring graduates can design and interpret assessment results for diverse student populations and make necessary changes to curriculum and instruction.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How has the state's balanced assessment system enabled improvements in teaching and learning, and what further refinements are necessary to sustain high-quality implementation?

EARLY ADOPTER

After adopting the Next Generation Science Standards in 2013, the Delaware Department of Education aspired to create a system of science assessments that emphasizes real-world application of the standards. **Delaware's Next Generation Science Assessment** spans grades 3 to 10 and consists of multiple distinct types of assessment. Students will apply their knowledge in science through writing or performance tasks where they solve unique, real-life problems. In addition to the assessment, educators have the option of using end-of-unit tests that help identify student strengths and areas for improvement as well as short course quizzes that can be administered in real-time throughout the year to support student learning.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The state has a robust performance measurement system, including accountability and reporting tools, that aligns to its vision for student success, helps prioritize schools for additional supports and empowers stakeholders to design strategies that ensure continuous and sufficient progress on student learning outcomes. This system provides useful, timely and appropriate information to support the individual success of students, measuring personalized growth in academics, social-emotional development and educational opportunity.

EXPLORATION

THE GOAL
The state has enhanced its performance measurement system to communicate deeper context on how well the state, districts and schools are progressing on the state's vision for student success while a cross-agency team advances strategies to improve data sharing, security, collection and use.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS
» The state establishes rigorous goals and interim benchmarks aligned to its vision for student success. The state also begins to align its performance measurement system to ensure stakeholders have a comprehensive picture of student growth, academic mastery and completion of learning pathways to better target interventions, resources and personalized supports that address achievement gaps.

» The state establishes a cross-agency governance structure to improve data sharing, ensure data security and identify and authorize appropriate data usage, providing stakeholders a comprehensive picture of system performance.

STRATEGIC QUESTION
What new types of data do stakeholders need to evaluate progress toward the state's vision? How can the state communicate new data in a meaningful and actionable way?

REPLICATION

THE GOAL
The state has integrated state and local measures in its performance measurement system, empowering communities to design personalized strategies for addressing disparities in outcomes

and conditions for learning. A statewide dialogue emerges on how to consistently measure success in personalized learning environments.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state demonstrates a commitment to equity by improving its performance measurement system and partnering with districts to identify state and local measures that emphasize acceleration for students farthest behind, whole child outcomes, equitable resources and access to safe and healthy learning environments.

» A statewide coalition of diverse stakeholders begins to explore a new measurement framework for student success that transcends time-based measurements such as annual, end-of-year determinations and age-based cohorts. The coalition advocates for policy change that will enable the state to better align accountability and reporting systems to personalized learning environments.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state build the capacity of communities to identify, collect and disseminate valid and reliable measures of student success that lead to more equitable personalized learning systems?

STATEWIDE TRANSFORMATION

THE GOAL

The state has partnered with local educators and policymakers to design a student-centered performance measurement system that provides each level of the system the data they need to proactively target resources and supports to accelerate student learning and reduce disparities.

SUPPORTING ACTIONS

» The state partners with educators to design and implement a student-centered performance measurement system that empowers decisionmakers at all levels with information to address student needs as they arise. This system empowers stakeholders to accelerate student mastery of learning expectations from preschool through postsecondary and career.

» The state, districts and community partners have clear systems and processes for collecting, aggregating and reporting data to provide a comprehensive picture of system performance so policymakers, educators and community partners can collaborate to target resources and strategies as needs arise.

STRATEGIC QUESTION

How can the state support the design of student-centered performance measurement systems that emphasize student growth and mastery rather than time- and age-based structures?

EARLY ADOPTER

In 2018, Pennsylvania launched the **Future Ready PA Index** to provide comprehensive information on student and school success. The digital dashboard disaggregates data by student group and provides data on academic performance, on-track measurements and preparation for college and career. The state hopes to provide stakeholders with a more holistic picture of student and school performance to drive community conversations about improving student opportunities and outcomes.

LOOKING FORWARD

Statewide policy transformation is challenging and will require meaningful partnerships with national, state and local stakeholders. As you engage in this work, we hope you consider KnowledgeWorks as a resource. With nearly 20 years of experience exploring the future of learning, growing educator impact and working with state and federal policymakers, our team welcomes partnerships to grow a statewide approach to personalized learning.

We encourage you to also leverage **KnowledgeWorks** resources to deepen your understanding of personalized learning and to increase buy-in and urgency for a new approach to education. The following resources may be of particular interest as you partner with stakeholders toward statewide transformation.

An Introduction to Personalized Learning
Get an overview of personalized learning, learn about key concepts and get answers to frequently asked questions about personalized learning and competency-based learning.

Developing Shared Ownership for Personalized Learning
Learn how state policymakers can identify key partners and build shared ownership for systems transformation.
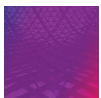
Navigating the Future of Learning: Key Considerations for Policymakers
Learn about KnowledgeWorks' fifth forecast on the future of learning, Navigating the Future of Learning, and use discussion questions to help you explore the future of learning in your community and state.

ONLINE ASSESSMENT Is your state ready for personalized learning? Find out what your state needs to do next. Take a short online assessment aimed to help state policymakers and partners get more information on ways to advance personalized learning across all 12 policy conditions. **Start your quiz at KnowledgeWorks.org/Policy-Quiz**

LINKS TO STATE RESOURCES

Boston Day and Evening Academy: https://www.bdea.com/

Community Schools: http://8rri53pm0cs22jk3vvqna1ub-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/RFA-PACER-Brief-Community-Schools-in-Practice-January-2016-v2.pdf

Delaware's Next Generation Science Assessment: https://www.doe.k12.de.us/domain/519

Idaho's H.B. 110: https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2015/legislation/H0110.pdf

Kentucky KRS 156.108: https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=40161

Kentucky KRS 160.107: https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=46302

Louisiana Strength of Diploma indicator: https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-leader-summit/2018-teacher-leader-summit/s030--what's-new-in-louisiana's-school-and-school-system-accountability-policies.pdf?sfvrsn=2

New Hampshire IHE Network: http://ihenetwork.org/

New Hampshire voluntary state-level competencies: https://www.education.nh.gov/innovations/hs_redesign/competencies.htm

North Dakota SB 2186: http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/65-2017/documents/17-0695-03000.pdf

North Dakota Superintendent's Student Cabinet: https://www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/ICR/press_releases/NewSuperintendentsStudentCabinetChosen/

Pennsylvania Future Ready PA Index: https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/FutureReady/Pages/default.aspx

Pennsylvania Leveraging Community Schools: https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/ESSA/Resources/PA%20ESSA%20Consolidated%20State%20Plan%20Final.pdf

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate: https://ed.sc.gov/about/profile-of-sc-graduate/

Rhode Island's ESSA plan: http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Information-and-Accountability-User-Friendly-Data/ESSA/RhodeIsland-ESSA-State-Plan-Final-032918.pdf

Rhode Island's School Redesign Program: http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Information-and-Accountability-User-Friendly-Data/Accountability/SchoolImprovement/RI-Practitioners-Guide-to-School-ImprovementPlanning-1.8.19-151.pdf

Schools become centers of the community: https://www.eriesd.org/communityschools

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

KnowledgeWorks is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing personalized learning that empowers every child to take ownership of their success. With nearly 20 years of experience exploring the future of learning, growing educator impact and working with state and federal policymakers, our passionate team partners with schools and communities to grow a system-wide approach to sustain student-centered practices so that every child graduates ready for what's next.

Get more resources to help make personalized learning a reality at **KnowledgeWorks.org.**