



Roadmap for System Change

Personalized learning imagines a classroom where all students receive a customized learning experience that enables them to thrive. To achieve this, the existing framework in schools must become more flexible in certain areas so that personalized learning systems can truly enhance the learning experience of all students. This roadmap lays out how federal, state, and local education leaders can work collaboratively with policymakers to eliminate barriers and design a system where personalized learning can flourish and positively impact all students, including those with disabilities.

What is PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

Personalized learning allows all children to receive a customized learning experience. Students learn at their own pace with structure and support in challenging areas. Learning aligns with interests, needs and skills, and takes place in an engaging environment where students gain a better understanding of their strengths.

Personalized learning can come in many forms. Some ways it might be described include:

- Competency-based education
- Project-based learning
- Flexible learning environments
- Learner profile
- Personal learning path
- Digital learning
- Blended or online learning

LEARNING from the FIELD

As many districts and states are exploring personalized learning, continuously learning, and improving their practices, it is important to capture lessons learned and identify what works. Professional learning communities can be beneficial to the field and offer an opportunity to share successes and challenges and improve practices in districts and states along the way.

The ROLE of RESEARCH

As personalized learning practices are in the early, exploratory stages, continued investment in research is critical to identifying evidence-based and effective practices that serve the needs of all students. Research must also be put into practice and shared in the field to maximize its utility.



SPOTLIGHT on ESSA

The new federal education law, the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, includes greater flexibility and new pilot programs that will allow districts to advance personalized learning initiatives. These opportunities are essential for the growth and success of personalized learning.

PLANNING for SUSTAINABILITY

Use existing state and federal funds to support personalized learning initiatives

- Districts should designate a staff member who can develop a deep understanding of how federal and state funds can be used to support personalized learning, and train and support other members of the school community on those topics.
- States and the federal government should offer innovative pilots for districts to fund new systems and expand existing systems of personalized learning that fully meet the needs of students with disabilities.



PREPARING EDUCATORS

Enhance teacher preparation to meet the demands of personalized learning systems

- Teacher preparation programs can provide candidates with additional hands-on experience with students with disabilities and help candidates gain skills in collaboration with colleagues to meet student needs.
- Teacher preparation programs can partner with local districts to provide students with year-long residencies or student teaching programs to gain classroom experience using personalized learning in the education of students with disabilities.



Incentivize continuing education and professional development

- States can offer “badges” or “micro-credentialing” as a way to incentivize educators to seek higher-level training and reach more advanced competencies related to personalized learning for students with disabilities

ENSURING EQUITY

Strategies to ensure that all students benefit from personalized learning:

1. Schools can ensure that students have access to appropriate accommodations for all assessments.
2. States can develop procurement guidelines to encourage design and creation of software, hardware, and technology that can serve all students.
3. Federal policymakers can increase investments in research on personalized learning and its implications for students with disabilities.

