Insights from Ohio's Personalized Learning Network
Getting Started with a Learner Driven Approach

In a learner driven classroom, learners navigate their learning by co-constructing goals, making choices, and collaboratively monitoring their progress (Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, 2023). Learner driven is a component of the Ohio Personalized Learning (Ohio PL) Framework that emphasizes learner agency. In these early years of implementation, educators reported how they (1) created opportunities for learners to take ownership of their learning and (2) introduced learners to voice and choice. Goal setting and learner profiles are two learner driven approaches.

Goal Setting

Educators incorporated goal setting as a learner driven approach where they co-constructed goals with learners. Some educators reported that "learners don't always understand what agency looks like as a learner" and were overwhelmed with the prospect of having options. Educators provided guidance and structure to support learners and shared that once learners understood what true agency was, "they really appreciated it." Providing learners options also elicited creativity, engagement, and excitement for both learners and educators.

Examples

➜ A second grade educator applied goal setting to fact fluency in mathematics. While they had set goals in the past, the educator shared how it was more intentional this year by using data and goal setting folders with color coding to show progress. The learners were excited to look at their folders every few weeks to see their progress. "Their motivation is kind of keeping us going right now, just with the choice and seeing their progress."

➜ In another school, when the educators would return assignments to their learners, the learners analyzed their mistakes and set their learning goals based on their misconceptions. At the end of a learning experience, the educators turned to the learners and said, "What did you do as a learner that helped you learn during this unit? What would you do differently next unit? What did I do as an educator that helped you learn?"

➜ An educator shared how they added conferencing to the goal setting process. Learners picked a writing goal, worked on that goal, and then met with the educator to reflect on their progress. "We conference and we talk about the rubric and where they think they fall in the rubric."

> **"I try to keep this [quote] in the back of my head...'What am I doing that the kids can do for themselves?'"**
>
> – Teacher, elementary school

Zweig, J., & Kennedy, K. (2024). Insights from Ohio's Personalized Learning Network: Getting Started with a Learner Driven Approach. Retrieved from education.ohio.gov/Personalized-Learning.

WHAT IS PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

Personalized learning is a learner driven approach to education that empowers students to take ownership of their learning.

HOW ARE SCHOOLS ENGAGED WITH PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

Schools across Ohio engaged in the LAUNCH pathway — a professional learning cohort that introduced teams of educators to personalized learning strategies. Schools received ongoing support from regional educational service centers (ESCs) and KnowledgeWorks.

LAUNCH PATHWAY ACTIVITIES:

→ Regular coaching

→ In-person and virtual convenings

→ Optional personalized learning implementation surveys with continuous quality improvement supports

→ Collaborative engagements with a national and state network of personalized learning practitioners

RESOURCES:

Ohio Department of Education and Workforce: Personalized Learning
education.ohio.gov/Personalized-Learning

Learner Profiles

After focusing on learner driven approaches at an Ohio Personalized Learning Network convening, many school design teams introduced learner profiles at their schools and shared their experiences afterward. Learner profiles are typically developed by students to describe who they are as learners, their interests, motivations, passions, learning styles and preferences, challenges and where they may need support.

Examples

➔ A rural district shared how they ended last school year and started this school year "talking about learner profiles and how we could implement those as a staff." The school leaders created a template. Educators created their own learner profiles and displayed them for learners and their guardians to see at the school's open house.

➔ An instructional coach shared the connection between learner profiles and learning progressions. Learner profiles helped the staff understand "Who are these kids?" and "What is going to motivate them?" Educators used the profiles to create learning progressions with the learners and answer the questions: "What are the learning targets, and how can you prove that you have learned this and then move on to the more rigorous challenge?" After piloting learner profiles in one classroom, they hope to "see every learner in the middle school create one," and have the high school educators learn from the middle school.

I'M BECOMING AN EXPERT LEARNER!

My Learner Profile - Part 1

To become an expert leaner you have to reflect on the following areas

What are my strengths?

What are my challenges?

What are my preferences and needs?

What are my interests, talents aspirations, and passions?

Prompts:	My Answers:
I am really interested in...	
I like to do this in school...	
For fun, I like to do...	
If I could tell others one thing unique or special about me, that would be...	
I am really good at...	
I would like to learn how to be or do...	
This really concerns me and I want to do something to make a difference about...	

Note: This learner profile was adapted by educators at East Clinton Middle School who participated in the LAUNCH pathway. Original source: How to Personalize Learning: A Practical Guide for Getting Started and Going Deeper by Barbara Bray and Kathleen McClaskey, 2016. Copyright 2016 by Corwin.

Access

How do I learn new information best?

I learn new information the best when I am building or reading. (usually by myself or with partner)

Engage

What helps me to learn better? What do I need to learn?

Things that help me learn are:

✓ working at my own pace

✓ I'ts hard for me to work by writing and I prefer typing but I love to draw

✓ And if I am in a group I learn best with a group that I want to be with.

Express

Best ways I can show that I have learned something

I learn best by:

✓ A test (preferably online)

✓ By building something

✓ Or typing a paragraph.

✓ I have horrible handwriting

✓ It's hard for me to put my thoughts on paper

✓ I like to build things

Note: This learner profile was adapted by educators at Indian Hill Elementary School who participated in the LAUNCH pathway. Original source: How to Personalize Learning: A Practical Guide for Getting Started and Going Deeper by Barbara Bray and Kathleen McClaskey, 2016. Copyright 2016 by Corwin.

? Questions to Consider:

✓ How will my learners know what they are learning, why they are learning it, where they are in their learning process, and where they go next?

✓ What am I or my colleagues already doing related to goal setting or learner profiles that I can build from?

✓ What am I doing that my learners can do for themselves?