Personalized Learning Blueprint:
Implementation Guide

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Executive Summary

The notion of personalized learning stems from the realization that in any given classroom there are a vast array of learning styles, abilities and interests. While the pedagogy and practice of personalized learning is certainly not new, the rise of adaptive technologies and digital curriculum has generated an increased focus on the potential to reach each student where they are, and how they learn best. Rather than seeing the new focus on personalized learning as yet another mandate in a long litany of education theories, it is advantageous to any implementation to recognize it as a culmination of decades of research around effective teaching and learning, coupled with the digitization of curriculum tied to adaptive assessments. While neither the trends nor the theories are particularly new, there is still a great deal of confusion around:

- A clear definition of 21st Century personalized learning
- The role of competency based models
- The difference between independent learning and personalized learning
- How online and digital curriculum are leveraged in this model
- The role of the teacher in a personalized learning environment
- Clear implementation models that deliver authentic personalized learning
- The role of social-emotional and non-cognitive skill development in an autonomous classroom

It is critical that educators and all stakeholders clearly understand each of the aforementioned areas as they seek to design personalized learning systems and environments to meet the needs of their students. There is the potential to deliver a model of success that could provide a means to eradicate proficiency gaps, increase achievement and allow for higher levels of success for all students.

Where it all began

Educators have been through over twenty years of movements, theories and programs. After a careful examination of both the technologies and the pedagogy behind this latest call to action, it is clear that personalized learning has harnessed the power of multiple theories. However, unlike the prior movements, this theory is coupled with unprecedented capabilities. Thus, personalized learning is far more than an education trend. It is the future of how teachers will teach and students will learn.

Personalized Learning: A Definition

Personalized Learning is the tailoring of pedagogy, curriculum and learning environments to meet the needs of individual learners.

Supporting districts and teachers with models that work.

The personalization isn't solely through the technology. Rather, use of adaptive technologies and curriculum allows for teachers to focus on learners rather than content.
But that is just the beginning. This system allows not only for a new learning model, but also for a new instructional model – a facilitated approach to digital instruction.
In a personalized learning environment, systems and tools are in place to provide individualized, adaptive digital curriculum to each student based on daily formative assessment data. This is not driven not by a manual approach and teacher analysis of data, but rather a real-time adaptive approach, where teachers are free to work with students to apply, create, explore, design and do.

District level strategy

During our work with districts of every size, serving students with a wide range of needs, we have developed the following framework to ensure effective implementation of blended learning programs.

Blended Learning is a powerful tool to provide students a rich, engaging and personalized learning experience.

However, our work in schools across the nation has found an overwhelming need for a clear framework around the teacher's role in blended models. Teachers and districts have called for specific professional development and training to support effective blended instruction.

While every district is different, there are key questions that all districts must consider. As you plan, build and execute your blended learning programs, use this framework, and the accompanying evaluation tools, to provide teachers support for the innovative practice of personalized learning.

Instructional Leadership Discussion

DISCUSSION GUIDE: THE SHIFT TOWARDS PERSONALIZED AND DIGITAL LEARNING

1. What is driving the shift towards personalized learning at your schools? What existing goals does this advance?

2. What's the current prevailing practice we are seeking to improve?

3. What could be considered the first goals and priorities in the implementation of the framework? What makes them the most important priorities?

4. What is the research rationale/evidence base that convinces you (and will convince teachers) to make the shift towards personalized learning?

Instructional Leadership Discussion

DISCUSSION GUIDE: THE SHIFT TOWARDS PERSONALIZED AND DIGITAL LEARNING

5. Are there other priorities that should be in contention? Why do you think so? Are they actually competing priorities or is there a way to make them synergistic?

6. What would represent evidence that effective personalized learning is happening? How would we collect evidence (e.g, lesson plans, observations, assignments, formative and summative data, collaboration amongst staff)? What would we use to determine whether the evidence adequately reflects the demands of the Framework?

7. What domains of the Framework are already priorities? In what ways can we build on or leverage existing efforts to streamline efforts? What domains and elements will be a true paradigm shift? Should we focus our priorities and efforts on those? Can creating a solid plan and model based on the Framework allow both leveraging of existing efforts and genuine shifts?

8. What is needed for teachers and other school-based instructional personnel to deeply understand, embrace, and integrate this change? What experiences would they need to have? What resources do they need access to?

Individual School Analysis

As you begin implementation of personalized learning at the individual school, it is critical to consider not only vision and goals, but also potential obstacles and challenges. Each school will have a unique set of needs along with potential opportunities for innovation. A district-wide model must take those differences into account as they create a scalable model that is both consistent and flexible.

Building level analysis

Building and measuring implementation

1. To what degree do you feel your individual school is ready for teachers to make the shift towards personalized instruction? What are the areas of strength? What are potential needs for growth?

2. Do you feel your students are ready for autonomous learning and greater student ownership of learning? If so, what makes them ready? If not, what supports will they need to get ready?

3. Do you feel your learning space (including classrooms, technology components, physical layout and access to adaptive and digital curriculum) is ready for personalized learning? Explain readiness or needs.

4. Describe gains you hope to see in year one of implementation.

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Building level analysis

Building and measuring implementation

5. Describe obstacles you expect to face in year one.

6. Describe long-term goals and objectives.

Teacher as Facilitator

The rise of personalized learning has led to a "re-think" of the role of the classroom teacher. Teachers across the nation are embracing new roles as facilitators of learning, social emotional coaches and designers of the education experience. The facilitator approach to education is certainly not new. It is based on constructivist theories of teaching. One of the primary goals of using constructivist teaching is that students develop the skill of autonomous learning by giving them the training and ultimate responsibility to take initiative for their own learning experiences.

Let's Get to know you!

The Basics

I Teach at: _____

_____ is/are my favorite subject(s) to teach!

My Gender is:

_____Male

_____Female

_____Prefer not to Respond

I am _____ years young!

I have been Teaching for:

____ First Year

____ 2-5 Years

____ Lost Count (time flies when you're having fun!)

Position (check one):

_____ Full-time classroom teacher

_____ Library Media Specialist

_____ Technology Coordinator/Instr.

_____ Mentor

_____ Support Staff/Paraprofessional

_____ Other: _____

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Let's Get to know you!

Let's Dig a Little Deeper:

We would like to ask you some questions regarding your teaching experience. Please answer the questions that apply to you, and your experience with the personalized classroom.

1. Describe your current classroom environment and instructional approach.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What is your current understanding and use of a personalized learning model?

A. I am proficient in the pedagogy of personalized instruction and learning and have a fully implemented model in my classroom.
B. I fully understand personalized learning and the models but have not yet implemented a model in my own class.
C. I have heard of personalized learning and have a general understanding of the concept.
D. I have not yet learned the definition of personalized learning but I am looking forward to learning more about it.

3. On average, how satisfied you have been with your current teaching model?

5	4	3	2	1
Very Satisfied	Generally Satisfied	Neutral	Generally Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied

Comments:

4. If, on question 3, you indicated you have been dissatisfied with your current model what do you feel has contributed most to your dissatisfaction?

5. Are you excited about the move towards a more personalized approach?

Comments:

Let's Get to know you!

6. What is your biggest concern about the shift towards personalized learning?

_____

_____

7. How would you rate the quality of the educational experience in your current model? Quality could be defined as high levels of student performance and satisfaction, high levels of interaction and engagement, and high quality learning opportunities for students.

Comments:

8. Consider the amount of interaction in your current model. How much interaction would you say you have with your students?

9. Do you currently use the following approaches or technologies in your class?

Categories of Instructional Technologies	Currently Use	Planning to Use	Interested in Using	Not Planning to Use
Online curriculum/online courses for student instruction				
Data from the LMS on student completion rates of course				
Data from the LMS on student time on task				
Data from the LMS on student participation in discussion boards				
Additional open education resources to supplement online curriculum				
Project based learning options				
Additional differentiated options for students to demonstrate knowledge				
Student recognition/incentive models				
Earned autonomy models				
Goal setting/time management models or programs				

10. Is there any additional support, technology, or training you feel could be provided that you wish to receive in order to be prepared to move towards a personalized model?

The Zia framework measures teacher performance with 15 critical high impact teaching behaviors. We aggregate those behaviors into an automated KPI report of high impact measurable moves that tells teachers when they are in The Impact Zone!

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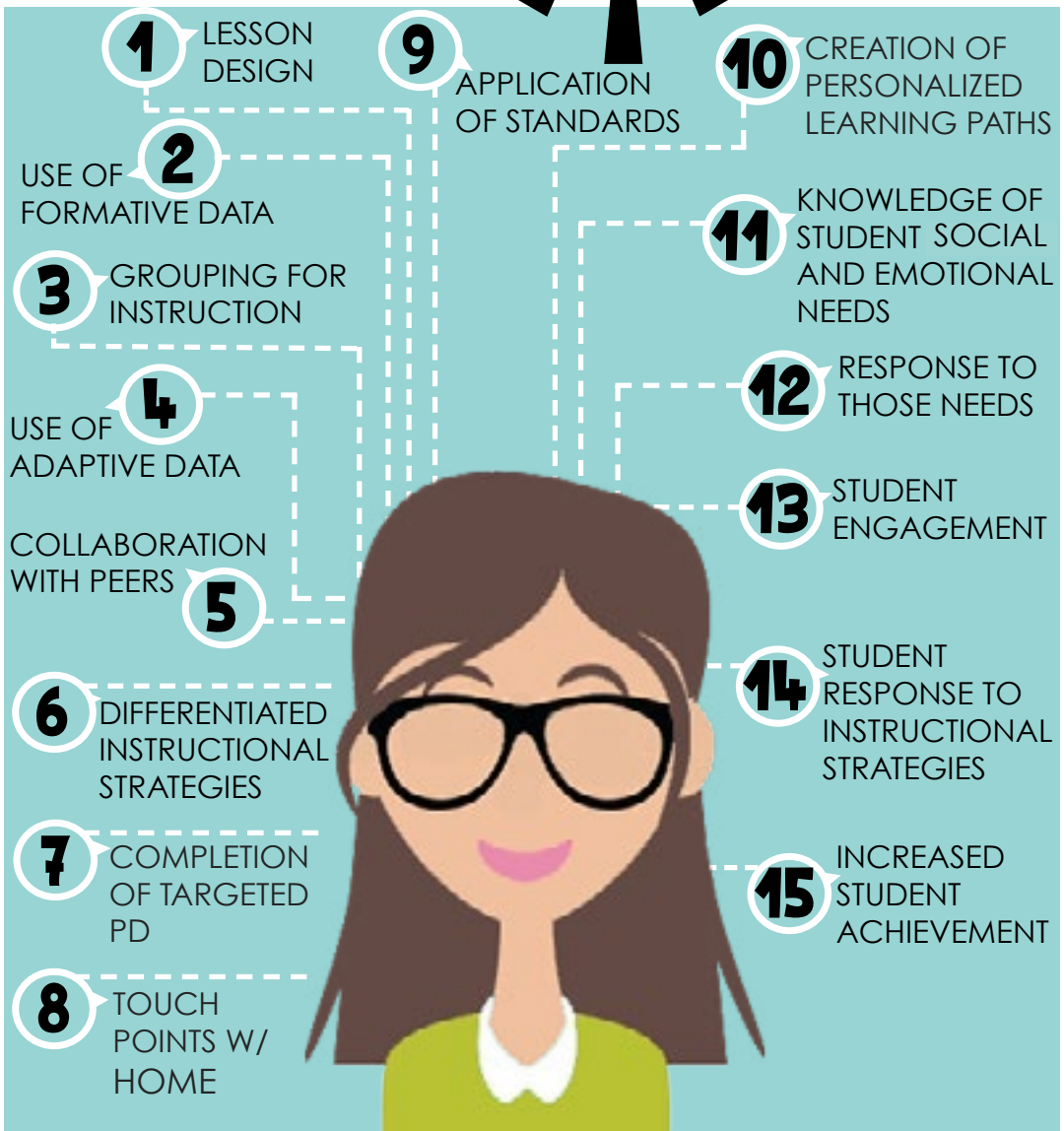
THE IMPACT ZONE!



The Importance of a Framework

A framework for teaching provides a common language and common understanding of high quality education experiences in the 21st century personalized classroom. In addition, it gives teachers and administrators clear guidelines and expectations. The following Framework for Facilitated Personalized Instruction takes into account the unique aspects of a personalized teaching environment including:

- Greater student autonomy and ownership
- Support of students' social and emotional needs
- Movement, grouping and individualized pacing
- Facilitation of learning rather than direct instruction

Zia Framework Executive Summary

The Framework for Facilitated Personalized Learning: A New Framework for a New Century of Teaching and Learning.

The rise of online learning, and in particular personalized learning, has led to a "re-think" of the role of the classroom teacher. Early implementations of online learning were either home-based endeavors, or single students learning online in a fully independent environment. New personalized models are mostly school-based, and are oftentimes in classrooms, with a face-to-face teacher overseeing the work of students.
Personalized Learning has gone beyond online students and courses, and has become a part of the digital curriculum and 1:1 movement. Schools are beginning to examine this promising practice as means to provide individualized, differentiated instruction for all students through a digital curriculum model. It has been observed that best-practice and successful

models have a teacher who not only monitors student work, but also serves as a genuine facilitator of learning.
The facilitator approach to education is certainly not new. It is based on constructivist theories of teaching. One of the primary goals of using constructivist teaching is that students develop the skill of autonomous learning by giving them the training and ultimate responsibility to take initiative for their own learning experiences.

In an effective personalized classroom:

- Learners are actively involved
- The environment is designed to meet all students' needs
- Activities are interactive and student-centered
- The teacher facilitates a process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous

Domain 1: Coach

Domain 1 calls upon the teacher's skill to coach a student. The primary functions of the teacher in this capacity are to observe student work, mentor students through the progression of digital/online coursework and encourage students in their completion of work.

Early adoptions of personalized learning, where students were typically taking a fully online course in a "school lab" environment leveraged this model, and oftentimes referred to the school-based person in charge of online learners as the mentor. Early definitions of mentors in blended learning environments defined the role as "primarily to encourage, motivate, and monitor the individual's learning."

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Domain 2: Direct

Domain 2 calls upon the teacher's skill to direct student learning. The primary functions of the teacher in this capactiy are to use data, reporting and other student infromation (including information gathered from mentoring/ observation) in order to ensure that all students' needs are addressed. The elements within this domain focus on teacher use of data and reporting to identify both proficiencies and learning gaps. Teachers are encouraged to design learning spaces and opportunities that ensure not merely progress and completion, but proficiency, mastery and application of learning.

Domain 3: Design

Domain 3 requires teachers to guide the learning process through grouping, interacting with and enabling students. Unlike traditional ability-based grouping, Personalized Grouping allows for students to work in cooperative learning environments that focus more on instructional mode and student interest. Domain 3 is directly related to the models of blended learning (including Station Rotation, Individual Rotation, Self-Blend, and Whole School Blend.) The primary functions of the teacher in this capacity are to design a learning environment that allows for effective grouping

and engaging learning stations, to interact with students in whole and small group learning, collaboration stations and self-blend - open learning environments, as well as to enable learning at all points in the learning environment. The teacher creates the active, engaged and effective learning space.

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Domain 4 : Apply

Domain 4 gives teachers a chance to connect the personalized digital curriculum to project based and applied learning options. Teachers leverage the additional class time yielded from off-loading content delivery to digital systems, in order to allow students to collaborate with one another, as well as the world around them. In this domain, students go beyond the digital curriculum and relate the content they are learning to expanded digital options, as well as traditional learning options. Those might include research, projects (both digital and traditional), and exploratory or real-world applied learning opportunities. Teachers allow students to take on challenges and use the new information in the context of both student and teacher created learning options.

On-Going support

Level of Engagement	What Does it look like?	Who in your school/ system is at this level now?	What strategies can be used to move people in your school to the next level of engagement?
Awareness – Individuals are aware of the new model and understand the impact that personalized learning has on their work			
Application and Experimentation – Individuals are attempting to try out personalized learning strategies and/or resources			
Ownership –Individuals are able to judge available resources and apply their understanding to making their own decisions about integrating personalized learning strategies into their daily practice			
Advocacy and Innovation – Individuals are able to support the development of their colleagues and/or they go beyond occasional use of blended tools and resources to full adoption of the tools, the framework and a model of implementation			