

Personalizing Instruction to Address COVID-19 Learning Gaps

Regional Educational
Laboratory
Central

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Overview

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Transcript

DAVID YANOSKI: Hello everyone. And welcome to REL Central's Quick Chat webinar on personalizing instruction to address COVID-19 learning gaps. We'll get started here in about a minute. As you are logging in and entering, if you go ahead and use the chat feature in the webinar and introduce yourself, let us know where you're from. And when you do that, please make sure to send that to all panelists and attendees so that everyone can get a sense of who's with us. Again, we'll get started here in about a minute.

All right. Welcome, again, to everybody to REL Central's Quick Chat webinar on personalizing instruction to address COVID-19 learning gaps. We're happy that you're here and hope that you've had a chance to breathe after what ended up being a very chaotic and hectic end of the school year for everybody. We're going to go ahead and get started.

And what we want to do first is just get a quick sense of whether or not you've had a chance to think about next year yet. What are your plans? Are you going back full time? Or are you going full time in-person, full time remote, some sort of hybrid?

So, a poll is going to pop up. If you go ahead and select one of those options, we'd appreciate it. And we'll share out the results of that in a few minutes as we move forward. So, as you come in you might see that poll come up.

Hopefully, you've had a chance to answer that poll question. I'm going to give it about 30 more seconds or so. And then we're going to get started. But again, we're just interested in knowing what your district's plans are for moving forward in the fall, whether or not you guys have had a chance to think about that yet?

All right. Let's go ahead and get started. Again, welcome, everybody, to REL Central's Quick Chat on personalized instruction to address COVID-19 learning gaps. A couple of things to keep

in mind as we're moving forward, I know all of us are used to using the Zoom platform by now. But if for some reason you're not connected to audio, and you're not hearing me speak at this point, make sure that you click on "Join Audio" in the Zoom toolbar down at the bottom or top of your screen, depending on where it comes up.

If you want to use that chat function to go ahead and introduce yourself. We will also be posting resources, links to handouts and some other resources, websites, et cetera, as we're moving through. So you can look for those links in that chat box. Also, if you would like to have live captioning available, the link to accessing the live captioning will be in that chat box as well.

You can also let us know if you have any technical issues. We do have someone standing by to try to help you out the best we can. Unfortunately, there are certain things that we can't fix on this end. But you're welcome to give us a shout out and see if we can try to fix that for you.

Finally, throughout the presentation, the Q&A box will be available to you. Please use the Q&A box to go ahead and ask questions of our presenters. We will be curating those behind the scenes and addressing as many of those as we can throughout the course of the webinar. We may not get to them all. But we're going to go ahead, and if we see the same type of question come in, a lot of those, then we'll go ahead and make sure we ask those. So, use that Q&A box to submit any questions to the panelists as we're moving forward.

There also is a handout that's aligned to this presentation. It contains a number of different resources that we've pulled together on personalized learning, some of which are directly aligned to what we're going to talk about today and others that may provide some additional information. You can see the link to that handout. That'll be available in the chat box, and we'll put that up a couple times throughout the presentation. There will also be available at the end of the presentation, we're going to refer you to a website, where all of the RELs are compiling the various resources we've put together around COVID-19 and school closures. And the handouts and the recorded video of this webinar, when it becomes available, will be posted there as well.

So, the focus of our topic today is personalizing instruction to address COVID-19 learning gaps. Last week, REL Central did a webinar on assessment to address those learning gaps. We all know that things are going to be a little bit different in the fall.

And so we felt it was important to talk about, Okay, we've assessed to figure out where kiddos are at. Now let's figure out what we're going to do to provide differentiated, individualized instruction to students in the classroom. And in order to do that, before we do that, I should introduce REL Central a little bit. REL Central is one of 10 regional education laboratories that is funded by the United States Department of Education, specifically the Institute for Education Sciences.

Our job is to conduct applied research and provide technical assistance around the use of data and evidence to a seven-state region, from Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. And we serve that region. But this webinar today is going out

across the United States. And last week for our assessment webinar, we had representatives from 46 of the 50 states, including the District of Columbia. So, we're really excited to share our work a little bit more broadly.

So, our presenters today. First of all, my name is David Yanoski. I'm a researcher at REL Central. And then we have Jeni Gotto. Jeni is the executive director of teaching and learning at Westminster Public Schools here in Colorado. We have Dylan Shelofsky, who is an intermediate teacher at the Metropolitan Arts Academy at Westminster Public Schools. And Kody Kelly, an IB literacy teacher at Westminster High School.

Just a little bit about Westminster Public Schools, and the three of you can correct me if I'm wrong, but Westminster is a suburban school district to Denver on the northwest side of Denver. But it is a very unique school district in that it is a very, very, very diverse community not only linguistically, but racially and has a wide variety of SES present in its community. So it's a very, very diverse community in just about every way you can imagine.

One other critical thing to know about Westminster Public Schools is that they have implemented a competency-based system and have been doing so since approximately 2008. Somewhere back in there they first started talking about it and working on it and so have been working on improving and modifying their competency-based system throughout the remaining years, throughout the last 12 years, and are moving forward with it and are very proud of what they're doing.

This webinar today is not going to be about Westminster's competency-based system. Rather, we want to focus on what teachers are doing in the classroom. But because Westminster Public Schools really focuses on personal student needs and individual student needs, we felt that they would be ideal to speak about this.

So, before I bring the three of them in, I just want to set the stage a little bit. What are we talking about here? Why are we having this conversation right now?

Probably all of you by this point in time have seen these really rather scary numbers that are coming out from researchers across the country, these projective learning losses related to school closures, related to schools being essentially closed between March and May of this year. Their projection is that up to 63% to 68% of the normal gain that would have happened in those three months will be lost because of school closures in reading and then 37% to 50% of that normal gain in math. These are really, really scary numbers.

But let's offer a little bit of detail about how these numbers came about and what they really truly mean. First of all, the researchers have put this together made these projections based on the literature from chronic absenteeism and summer learning loss. And so these are simply projections about what they think could possibly happen and, most importantly, in the worst-case scenario.

The authors of this particular report themselves do say that these should be considered the upper bounds of what potentially could happen. And, most importantly, these projections do not account for the fact that instruction has occurred during these school closure times. Teachers and school districts around the country have made this remarkable, heroic shift to providing instruction very quickly, making a shift to providing instruction. So instruction has occurred, which is probably going to mitigate some of these losses as we move forward.

And the other thing to keep in mind is that the authors of this particular report do not believe that these losses are going to be universal. In fact, the top one-third of students do have the potential to make gains in reading. And, there are going to be students that thrive in this online environment. The problem with this is that is likely to exacerbate existing learning gaps.

Those students who thrive in the online environment are likely those students who were already excelling and succeeding. And those students who were not in the regular classroom are likely to be those that are now going to fall further and further behind. So although there is some good news here, that instruction that happened during this period of school closures will mitigate some of this learning loss and that some students will excel, the chances are that learning gaps will widen is pretty significant.

So, given that, there will likely be the need, when we start school up next year, to address individual learning needs. Not every student is going to be at the same place as every other student. And, in fact, it may be worse than it was before. And so that's why we're having this conversation today.

So, what is personalized learning? Personalized learning is a really broad construct. There's a lot of different things that could be considered personalized learning. And there's a lot of different systems have been put in place and ideas about what personalized learning is.

Generally, personalized learning includes some sort of student ownership into their individual learning, the provision of individual supports to learners, trying to provide as varied experiences in the classroom as possible to meet individual student needs, providing student voice and flexibility and choice. But these are all systemic-level supports. We are going to focus today on what an individual teacher can do in their classroom to try to provide some personalization.

We're not talking about systemic-level changes here today, rather what an individual teacher in any school system could do to personalize instruction. There is a growing movement around personalized learning. More and more school districts are experimenting with different forms of it throughout the country.

And in fact, the Department of Education and the Institute for Education Sciences has really put a lot more emphasis on it. For example, in the Race to the Top District program, there were grants put in place and supports put in place to allow school systems to move beyond one-size-fits-all models. And the Every Student Succeeds Act specifically allowed the use of federal funds in order to try to implement these systems. So, interest is growing in personalized learning.

With all that being said, the research base tends to be really rather thin at this point in time. And part of that is, it's just a complicated, messy construct to try to measure. There are so many pieces and parts and variables to measure that it's very difficult for researchers to really get a true sense of whether or not personalized learning is working. Most of the research that's being done so far has been descriptive, what are school districts are doing, and describing the practices that they're putting in place.

There have been some attempts to try to measure impact. There have been several studies in which researchers have compared students from one school that has implemented personalized learning to another school with a very similar demographic profile and looked at the difference between their performance. And there is some promising evidence that personalized approaches do have promise.

At this point, though, the research doesn't necessarily say that it will make a difference. But, logically, if we address individual student needs, it makes sense that students should perform better. It's just that the research hasn't been able to demonstrate that at this point in time.

There are a bunch of references. Those studies that I've talked about are referenced here. The handout, which the links should be available in your chat box now, does have many of these resources and references. So you can take a look at it at your leisure, look to see what some of the research is saying so far, and what some of those descriptive studies about different systems have done.

Well, we're going to focus again. We're going to focus our conversation on what an individual classroom teacher can do, not necessarily the large-scale big-picture systemic change, but rather individual classroom teachers. And so at this point, I want to bring in Dylan and Kody and Jeni and ask my first question. So if you were to meet this random person on the street and for some reason, conversation turned into personalized instruction, how would you define personalized instruction in three sentences or less? Let's start with Kody.

KODY KELLY: For me, it's really about meeting kids where they're at and then creating experiences and opportunities that will excite and inspire their own curiosity.

DAVID YANOSKI: All right. How about you, Dylan?

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: I'm going to use a bit of a metaphor. Since we're in Colorado, imagine you're going on a hike with your students. In a traditional classroom, the teacher would be leading the hike and moving as many rocks and things that are getting in the way, with the hope that as many kids as possible will get to the top. But with personalized learning, teachers are hiking alongside their students and, like Kody said, meeting them where they're at and making discoveries with them and being Okay that there might be some unknown, but getting messy with your kids.

DAVID YANOSKI: All right. Messy with your kids, that sounds dangerous. How about you, Jeni?

JENI GOTTO: So for me, it's just that a model where students are active and empowered to advance upon mastery based on a clearly defined set of competencies.

DAVID YANOSKI: Okay. So let's take a look at, more specifically, about what this looks like, what this can look like in the classroom. And Dylan and Kody, I want to start with this idea of using data. In order to personalize instruction, we probably need to have a pretty good sense of where kiddos are at, right? So, how do you use data to identify students' needs.

KODY KELLY: Go for it, Dylan.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: So, you need to constantly be taking a temperature gauge of your students' understanding. So, you are always using formative assessment, and it could be something as traditional as an exit ticket. Or beyond that, there's so many other means for your students to reflect and show. And then you have to also create this culture of revising goals. And it goes from students looking at their own data and tracking it and showing ownership over that, and it then extends to teachers and to the school in the district as a whole.

DAVID YANOSKI: When we think of data, I think there's a tendency to think of data as coming from assessments, traditional assessments quizzes, things like that. Is that the type of data we're talking about? Or is the idea of data expanded for you?

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: Oh, I totally 100% think it's expanded. I think your traditional assessment is obviously one piece of it. But we, even as adults, show our understanding of the world in so many different ways. And we have to offer that to our students too and not expect them to all conform to one test or to one project and really cultivate that choice and agency.

DAVID YANOSKI: Kody, how would you use data?

KODY KELLY: I think what's important in our school district, we are competency-based so all of our students know that within a given assignment, there is a specific skill they're working on. And you don't overwhelm them with too much. So I think sometimes in the traditional system, students complete an activity or a test, and then they end up with a percentage and then, thus, that corresponds to a grade.

And so they say, well, how do I get better? I have a 67. And the 67 isn't really a good definition of where they need to go or where they're at. So, instead if the assessment and the data is very skill-based then no matter how that data comes in, whether it be multiple choice or essay or discussion or just even a conversation with the teacher during a one-on-one, can provide evidence for a specific skill.

So, with that combined, with PLCs we use a lot of Professional Learning Communities in our in our schools. Every week, we sit down with our team department, all the teachers who teach that class at that level, and we take a look at, we were working on this skill last week, this one specific skill. How did the kids do? Let's look at some samples. Let's look at a high, medium, and low of each.

Let's compare and contrast. Let's do some, even, collaborating of our scoring, and then talk about, where is the kid missing this one little thing, right? So if it's an essay, there's a lot of components that make up an essay. So, to focus on all of it at once is not only cumbersome, but overwhelming for the brain for both the teacher and the student.

So instead, this first essay is focused on your ideas and themes. That's it. Try to do the best you can for the other stuff. But what I'm really assessing and teaching and looking for you to grow here is that particular skill. And then everything is narrowed down for the kids.

Then you can really kind of see what about the idea are they missing? What about this particular task are they just need to get by adding a certain step or adding a certain perspective?

DAVID YANOSKI: So, Dylan, you mentioned students tracking their own data. And Kody, you're talking about this idea of having to really hone in on particular skills. How do you know what a student is supposed to know?

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: So, our district, we use proficiency scales, which is our curriculum. And we as teachers worked alongside Jeni and other administrators to write the proficiency scales and using the Colorado academic standards. But that is the core of what we do. And, so, I think being aware of what your students are expected to know is foundational.

KODY KELLY: Yeah. And once you set that parameter, from there you can have vertical alignment between various grade levels and within the year itself. So, ideally, within the Eng-Lang 1 team, we would want each teacher to be progressing through those scales and those targets in the same order in the same timeline. So that when we do sit down for data digs or PLCs, we're all generally sort of working on the same skill with our kids at the same time. And in that way, we can collaborate and share data and connect ideas and build a more supportive instructional team, rather than just feeling like you're a teacher in a silo on an island or something.

DAVID YANOSKI: So, as a former teacher, this idea of constantly bringing in data and using it scares me a little bit. I'll be honest with you. Because I'm sitting there, I'm thinking, I'm sitting in front of a class of 30 kiddos. On a regular ongoing basis, how do you collect this data? How do you know where a kiddo is at, at any given point in time?

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: At the elementary level, we start at pre-K and kindergarten, where kids are already demonstrating the ownership over their learning. So, they're telling their teachers in the systems that the teachers have set up, like, I'm ready to show you that I can do this. And they're moving on to the next step. And then we jump right into data notebooks, where students are logging into our learning management system, called Empower, and tracking what they know and what they need to know next. And it's this constant state of revision.

You're never stagnant. You're never saying, "I'm done." There's always something to do afterwards.

KODY KELLY: Right. I agree. And I think our online management system is a big key piece of that because there, the students, the teacher, the parents, whoever might care about their success can see exactly the progression they've made on any given standard or target and what scores they're getting on those things. So kids can get on and say, oh, for ideas and themes, out of the six assignments Miss Kelly has worked on with me, I've only scored proficient on two of them.

And so then they can determine, hey, what did I do on those two assignments that didn't quite hit the mark on these ones? I could use that time to sit down with the kid and show them and say, hey, look at this one. You killed it on this one. And on this one, you just should have maybe added in this piece, like you did here with this assignment. And then they can see how their own work can be leveled up or compared to other kids. So they really can monitor their own progress.

It doesn't just fall on the teacher for us to keep track of all these numbers and all this data. It's all in that management system. And students can work independently through that system. Let's say a kid is ahead in class and feels maybe a little bored and wants a challenge and says, "hey, Miss, I really want to move on to the next target." I can get them going on a playlist in our system, and they can start completing some of that work and that practice independently.

So I think it does help if you have some sort of a place where this data goes, whether that just be a data notebook within the classroom or a chart that shows that kids, this is what we're going to do throughout the year on this timeline. And if you're caught up, you are right here. And if you're not, that's Okay. You just have to start back here and then keep moving, right? So they see it as a progression of things to learn, as opposed to a list of things they can't do.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: Yes, 100%. And I'd like to add on, too. I think it's really important we're teaching kids at a super young age how to have professional discourse and talk about their own learning. And we as adults have PLCs, and we set that up for our kids, too. So they're having conversations with one another about where they're at and what they want to do to continue learning. And it's transparent, but it creates a culture of trust and ownership.

DAVID YANOSKI: So, one more question, and then we're going to move on and see if there's any audience questions to address here. If you were trying to imagine you're working in a normal school system that doesn't have some of the supports in place, like the LMS and proficiency scales and those things. Where would you suggest a teacher start to try to collect and manage more data about what their students know and are able to do?

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: On your first day of school, start by creating a shared vision with your kids and ask them and I think it's more important now than ever, after COVID and then being outside the building, why is your education important? And that gives you a grounding to then start collecting the data. And start something small.

If you're a third-grade teacher, and your math standard is those multiplication facts, start by tracking their knowledge of the facts. Start with something that's not overwhelming. And then see if you can put that into the students' hands.

KODY KELLY: Yeah. And I think that that element of ensuring that when you're starting to work with the kids in this way, that you really have to build trust. They need to understand that you're there to support them and guide them through the process, not to judge them and evaluate them. Because I think that's the big difference, is that when you feel evaluated, you're less likely to open yourself up, be vulnerable, make mistakes. And failure and mistakes is the whole process. That's what it's all about.

And so you really have to try to turn that off for kids. And once you can kind of set that stage, like Dylan suggested, then when you're collecting data, it's not this overwhelming burden of, oh, look at all of my ugly data. This is what I am. Instead it's, oh, this is where I'm at.

And this is what I need to jump here. And then when they get more data, they see they make those jumps. And then it becomes almost like a game, right? They want to level up and move on to the next thing. And they get a bit of a joy around that.

So, I think Dylan's pretty good at doing those data notebooks and data charts in her classroom. And I've seen them work really well. So if you don't have a learning management system or a bigger program to use, you could easily just start with diagramming out the things, the most important essential skills you want your kids to know and understand that year. And it keep it low.

Like, if you look at the Colorado academic standards, there's a multitude of things. But that's where you could pull your skills from. Go check that out and pull the most essential 10 skills of the year. What should a ninth grader be able to do in this class by the end of the year? Lay those out. What should be taught first, second, third, fourth, fifth. And show them this is what we're going to walk through together.

And then as you move to those targets I think it's really important to give them the opportunity to show you what they already know. So, like Dylan said, the data pulling can be really small and non-threatening. It could be something that they already know, and they're giving that to you. And then from there, you're assessing, oh, they know this. They don't know this piece. So now we can add this in. And that's what allows for the personalization and kids to not feel either dumbed down or overwhelmed by content they don't understand.

DAVID YANOSKI: Great. So I'm going to throw it out there. Matt, Do we have any questions for our presenters so far?

MATT EIDE: Yeah. So Kody and Dylan, thank you very much for those specific examples about how students monitor their learning and sort of own the data. We have a request from some of the participants for a couple of specific examples of what that looks like in your classrooms.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: Sure. So, every day our students are working within those data notebooks. And it's everything from tracking their dibbles fluency and accuracy to self-reflecting

on their writing and using student-facing rubrics to check their understanding. And it's just built into what we do every single day.

It's using a lot of small group instruction to target skills that you've identified that one or two students might need, and being okay that it's not going to be the traditional teacher in front of the classroom. You have to be okay there might be some controlled chaos. But that means that every single kid in your class is actively learning.

KODY KELLY: Yeah, absolutely. I think within the classroom it looks like a lot of things. There's still some direct instruction, of course. That has to happen, but a lot of cooperative learning and students engaging with each other, students doing some awareness and thoughtful reflection on their own work and their own performance, constantly checking in.

So, every day we don't just come in I'm like, okay, let's get started open your books. We start by identifying what is our objective today? What are you supposed to be able to do when this 45, 55, whatever minutes are up. And that kind of sets that stage that they're focused on that target.

So, whenever they're lost in class or whenever they feel like they can level up, then they know that's the thing they're trying to do. And then within class, depending on what it is, if it's the beginning of something, I'm probably just building background information. I'm giving them some initial stuff. But once we really get into the thick of the work, it looks like having students determine what group they might need to go to for assistance today.

And then I can pull groups with kids. And we can sit there and work on a specific aspect of the target that they're confused by. But they get to decide that, right? They get to say, "this part is what I don't get. Can you help me with this?"

And then there's an assignment, or really, rather, an experience, like stations or some sort of multiple group system running in the class so that kids can do different things at different times and still get that individualized time. So, for me, it takes a lot of structure and planning. And once you have the plan, and once you've taught the kids how to do it, they can do it just fine.

But the beginning of the year requires a good month of just like, how do you log into the learning management system? How do you read the data and place it in your notebook? What are you looking for when you do that? How does it make you feel? What does it make you want immediately do, give up, go forward? How can you combat those feelings.

So there's a lot of hand-holding in the beginning, for sure. And then once that sort of settles in, the kids start just functioning on their own. And they start flying faster and higher than even they think they can.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: And celebrate success, celebrate their growth, celebrate when they've leveled up, and work that into your everyday experience in your classroom.

KODY KELLY: Yeah. And I think also, this might sound weird at first, but hang with me, celebrate failure. It is a natural part of everything. And I think that the more comfortable kids are with failure, the more comfortable they are at taking risks. So in my classroom, I am openly honest about my failures. I'm like, I didn't do this thing. And I'm feeling really bad about it. And maybe you feel that way too sometimes. And I'll try to give them something.

Or I love when kids correct me in class. It's, like, my favorite moment. And when they're right and I'm wrong, it's my favorite moment because it's an opportunity for me to be like, see, we're not perfect. And we're not right all the time, and that's good. That's the good stuff.

So, I think creating that community and culture within the walls of your room is probably the most important thing to do before you even consider anything else. Because if they don't trust being there, they won't trust themselves to push.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: And it can start in kindergarten.

DAVID YANOSKI: Yeah. So, I think we've already started to stray to this idea of addressing needs. And I have about three or four minutes, only, to get to this. So, can you describe what this instruction looks like in your classroom? Is this a case where every kid is on a computer, and you don't get to do anything with them? Or

KODY KELLY: No, and especially not every day. Every day is a bit different. My class is pretty structured, in that the first 5 to 10 minutes is what I call Mindful Minutes. We spend that time to check in on life, self, health, to-do lists, breathing, being grateful, considering which teacher you might talk to that week to get some help, meeting your neighbor and getting to know the names of the people in the room. These are all a little mindful awareness things.

And then we move into some sort of mini instruction. So, I don't speak for more than 20 minutes at any given day. And that instruction might be whole class, especially if we're early on in a unit, and it's the beginning foundation.

Or that might look like groups of instruction. So, in a high school IB class, I get a little bit of more leeway in that I can send my IB kids over to the corner. And they can work on something pretty solidly while I work with other kids. But even young kids do this. If they know the expectation, and they get positive reinforcement for doing it, they will.

And so then after they've had a little bit of instructional time, then either before or after that, I always incorporate cooperative learning. So this is where the students actually engage with each other about the content so that they can build ideas off of each other and not just think that I'm the only expert in the room, because I'm not. So, that's turn and talks or round robin shares within a table. Sometimes it's a more active up and moving activity.

And then by the end of the hour, they produce some sort of demonstration of knowledge. And that looks a lot of different ways. Maybe it's on a computer. Maybe it's on a slip. Maybe it's just a

raise of hands and a moving to certain corners of the room to show me where you're at with something. So depending on where you're at in the content, that looks different.

But it's not just a bunch of kids on a computer all the time. And if that's the way you're doing it, you're not doing personalized learning. You have to be engaging with the kids, and they need to be engaging with each other.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: Yeah. In my classroom, we are project-based And we use the workshop model often. Our computers are a tool, more or less, for researching and for extending learning. But, like Kody said, if that is all you are doing, then that is not being responsive to our kids.

DAVID YANOSKI: Well, great. So, Matt, any questions for our presenters?

MATT EIDE: Yeah. How do you use a personalized approach to address the needs of English learners and students accessing special education services?

KODY KELLY: Go ahead, Dylan.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: Okay. So our district is pretty wonderful about this, where our CLD and special-ed interventionists are really worked into our system. And I think personalized learning actually lends itself to helping those students even more than a traditional setting. Because, in our classrooms, every single kid is getting what they need individually. And so it lends it to offer the scaffolding and supports necessary for English language learners and special-ed students to also grow and also learn. It is built for that.

KODY KELLY: Yeah. And I think traditional scaffolding and differentiation techniques are really helpful in this system. If I'm meeting a kid where they're at, and they're at a certain level in their English proficiency, then it might behoove me to give the student sentence stems, to give them the start of the paragraph, and then they finish it, or they fill in the blanks. There's lots of things you can do to still obtain the knowledge and still allow them to practice their English.

I know in the beginning of the year, I tend to do a lot of translating at first just to make them feel comfortable. They don't have to perform right away. But, eventually, they need to be practicing English within the English class. And so that can be tough.

But I think the a lot of one-on-ones and working with them individually, noticing which words they can say. So we use the "we did" descriptors quite a bit. And that's where at the beginning, I said it's important to identify what can the student do, not what they can't do because that's massive. Any adult knows that I don't know anything like I thought I did when I was a kid, right?

And so it's not about what you can't do, but rather what you can. And so if you're actually intervening with kiddos, and you're having one-on-one conversations with them, then you know what the kid can do. And they can show that to you in a multitude of ways. It doesn't have to be verbal. It could be written. It could be a diagram. It could be in a photo story.

There's lots of ways that kids could demonstrate their knowledge. So it's about being flexible for those adaptations of demonstration, but also making sure you have that one-on-one understanding of where do they fall in this "I can" list. I can say complete sentences. Okay, great. So I know on my next assignment with that kiddo, rather than writing a five-paragraph essay, their goal is just to write complete sentences about this idea, right? And then I'm still getting that same standard and skill looked at, but doing it in a more approachable way for those folks.

DAVID YANOSKI: Well, Dylan and Kody, thank you so much for sharing your experiences and your knowledge and expertise. And thank you for being teachers. I'm going to turn it over Jeni now. We're going to talk very briefly about systemic supports. Jeni, I have about two minutes here, so...

JENI GOTTO: Okay.

DYLAN SHELOFSKY: [INAUDIBLE] Jeni.

KODY KELLY: [LAUGHING]

JENI GOTTO: That's okay. You're the experts.

DAVID YANOSKI: [INAUDIBLE] to allow this to happen?

JENI GOTTO: So, I think the ladies have talked about a lot of this. So, we started with that clearly defined set of competencies that I think is essential. And it's what allowed us to make this just immediate pivot to the remote learning model due to COVID. And Dylan was a little generous in saying she worked with me, where I brought together a group of teachers that created these competencies.

And I see some questions about how do you do this in small groups? And I would say, really, we just had three to five teachers, which you could do even in a building across a grade span, PK two, three, five. So I think even in an individual school, it is possible because that's the key is to start these students up in their data notebooks.

You need clearly defined expectations. And then our teachers just laid them out on the ground and said, and here's the order we would teach them in, to get to Kody's point around what's the order we would recommend, knowing that kids are going to pace differently through that. So it seems daunting. But even in small PLCs within an individual building, I believe you can do it.

But you have to be explicit with kids on the front end for them to be able to personalize and know how I progress through the expectations. So that, I think, is key. We've been able to do it at a district level. But I think it's possible. And there's tons of resources out there to be able to do it.

That also allows us to monitor progress. And a lot of questions, the ladies talked a lot about our learning management system. But we still in our early years, that wasn't clearly built out. So we had sheets of paper that had the instructional progression. And we still use them today because

kids need both modalities. Some kids love that computer, and some kids it's the tactile of crossing off a box.

And we created a 8-by-10 sheet of paper that has a box for each one of the competencies or proficiency scales, whatever you're going to call them. And then kids can, in their data notebook, say, "all right, I've completed that one. This is my next one." And that can be all done paper and pencil without a fancy system to back it up.

We use that system so that especially in this COVID era, my kiddo I believe strongly enough in the system I bring him to the district. And he ended the year with two proficiency scales left in his first-grade progression. And rather than him just missing those forever— and we socially promote him next year, our system monitors that so that when he starts next year, he'll finish those two, and then he will progress to the next level.

And that way we don't create gaps in his learning forever that we missed generating narratives, which is a really tough thing to teach in an online environment. And our teachers weren't trained to do that. So that's one that just was left open. And the teacher just didn't feel like I had enough evidence.

And so, he'll finish that one up and this, having clearly defined expectations, now he can move to the next teacher. Even if we switch to a different school, we've defined those, and he can finish those up and then progress at any time and celebrate them, as the ladies talked about. And I would say some silver linings, as Kody talked about, the playlist, some other big things as, I think, our kids taught us.

Even though we talk a lot about student agency, they demonstrate it even down to our kindergarten students that you know what? When we created these playlists, a lot of our teachers felt like they couldn't do this on their own. And they showed us pretty quickly that they can. And our teachers, our primary teachers said, I will never let go of these things now. So they're building playlists and thinking about now station rotations and centers in my classroom I am multiplied across that classroom.

And so now I think we've talked about these things a lot. And that's one of the silver linings out of this, that those things will make us stronger when we go back to face to face and when there's a good chance we have to go back out, that these learnings and because we have the competencies, then we can also share those things across the system.

DAVID YANOSKI: Well, I hate to cut everybody off. I think this is something that we could continue to talk about forever. But we're rapidly running out of time. So, thank you all very much for your time, your expertise, and being willing to share that. There's a couple of things that I need to go over very quickly.

So first of all, I want to share the poll results I never did get a chance to get back to that just so we can see where everybody is at. So, if we could just go ahead and share those results. Well, I

guess our tech person is having a problem with the poll results, and their Zoom locked up, which I think is a little bit ironic.

Here they are. So it looks like hybrid is going to be pretty important going back in the fall. And we're going to have to really think about how we can deliver some of these personalized strategies not only in person, but to do them online. So, it's going to be a very interesting fall for everybody as we move forward.

A couple last things, then we're going to wrap this up. So, just for everyone to know, there is the REL program has put together a variety of different resources available. And this link is actually available in the handout. So if you want to download that handout, you can look at that link, but in a variety of different there's handouts. There's what we call FAQs, Frequently Asked Question sheets.

There's a number of different videos, different aspects of dealing with the COVID-19 closures. And so there's a lot of different great resources there, all research-based put together by the REL programs across the country. So please check that out.

And finally, when you exit the webinar, you're going to get a link to a survey. Please fill that out. That allows us to figure out what we can do better next time and will also inform future events.

Again, thank you to our presenters. Thank you for joining us today. And I hope everyone has a great summer and recharges and is ready to run full into next year, because it's going to be a challenging one. Thanks, everybody. Bye. Thanks. Anything else, just let me know.

JENI GOTTO: Thank you.

DAVID YANOSKI: Bye.

JENI GOTTO: Thanks.

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