
Indicators of Digital Readiness

Indicator	Student-Driven, Self-Directed Learning
Theme	Education and Classroom Practice
Priority Level	P1
Organizational Level	School

Description of Indicator

Student-driven, self-directed learning requires students to take ownership and play a role in their education. Students are largely responsible for developing their own projects and experiences that rely on creativity and complex problem solving to deepen their understanding of core academic subjects, individual interests and goals.

Why is this action important?

Students must possess skills and dispositions that support self-directed learning - learning motivated by their intrinsic desire to understand the world around them. In order to be digital ready, students need to be able to learn independently, which requires mastery of the essentials skills of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem solving. Learning no longer is centered on specific knowledge a teacher has to impart, but instead stems from students own personal learning goals and skills.

Teachers now need to harness student curiosity and develop authentic learning opportunities that provide choice and foster independence. Teachers no longer are there to impart specific knowledge, but instead facilitate student discovery. Digital Ready Classrooms properly integrate instructional technology to provide powerful tools that support students in creating and sharing ideas, making global connections, and designing solutions to real-world problems.

Independent student motivation, coupled with integrated technology and pedagogy, shifts the control of learning from the teacher to the student. Student-driven learning embraces a mindset that fully embraces students in becoming lifelong learners and prepares them for success in the digital age.

Indicator Rubric

Insufficient Evidence of	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No evidence of student-driven learning
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<p style="text-align: center;">Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(0 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student work is not self-directed
<p style="text-align: center;">Foundational Stage of Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(3 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrators have provided some professional development to staff to build familiarity with student driven learning and introduce 21st century skills and competencies that support self-directed student work ● A few teachers may be piloting student-driven learning activities in their classrooms
<p style="text-align: center;">Achieving Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(6 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students have exposure to lessons that provide opportunities to self-direct their own learning ● Teachers may share strategies and lesson ideas during PLCs, faculty meetings and other professional development opportunities ● Some teachers are implementing aspects of student-driven learning into their teaching
<p style="text-align: center;">Exemplary Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(9 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School faculty and administration are fully committed to student-driven learning and make it a primary approach to instruction ● Ongoing professional development supports and promotes teachers in further developing strategies and units capitalizing on student-driven learning ● Curriculum has been/or is being revised to reflect change in philosophy towards self-directed student work ● All students have consistent opportunities to create and direct their own learning ● A majority of teachers have implemented student-driven learning into their classrooms

Who in the school/district should lead and be involved with this action?

- Administrators

- Teachers
- Students
- School Library Media Specialists
- Technology Coaches/Specialists
- Curriculum Leaders
- IT/Assistive Professionals
- Board of Education Members

How to execute the action

Schools should begin by obtaining baseline data through the use of surveys. Combining this with input from administration will establish a starting point for professional development opportunities. School-wide study and discussion of books and/or case studies can augment any training. Ongoing assessment of any professional development provided should be obtained through staff feedback and used to inform future sessions. Staff should also be provided with opportunities for reflection on practice. In addition to assessing professional development, administrators may collect data through walkthroughs to determine impact on teaching practices.

Recommended evidence to submit for successful execution of this action

- **Evidence of student-directed learning/projects (student projects, videos, photographs, student designed project materials, student portfolios, rubrics project proposals etc.)**
- Action plan to address needs for supporting student-driven, self-directed learning specific to school/classroom
- Stakeholder surveys (teachers, students, community members, etc.)
- Artifacts from PLCs, Faculty Meetings, and other professional development opportunities demonstrating time spent exploring and engaging in examples of student-driven, self-directed learning
- School / district vision of college and career readiness that incorporates 21st Century skills/deeper learning.
- School collaboration among educators and students to plan, construct and encourage self-directed learning
- Curriculum that reflects commitment to student-centered learning
- School/classroom/district wide events that are student-run and reflect student-driven learning
- Teacher lesson plans that support student's self-directing their own learning
- School/classroom websites and social media accounts demonstrating student autonomy

Resources schools can use to complete this action successfully

- [Alan November - Who Owns the Learning?](#)
- [Deeper Learning - Hewlett Foundation](#)
- [NMC Horizon Report - Deeper Learning](#)
- [Social Media in Education](#)
- [NEA- Student-Centered Learning Strategies](#)
- [Learning To Give](#)
- [Personalized Learning Implementation Framework](#)
- [Education Elements: A Realistic View for Self-Directed Learning](#)

- [Charting New Frontiers in Student-Centered Learning](#)
- [Guiding Students to be Independent Learners](#)
- [Genius Hour Blueprint](#)
- [The Simple System for Planning Project Based Learning Experiences](#)
- [The Complete Guide to 20% Time & Genius Hour in the Classroom](#)
- [Meaningful Student Involvement Guide](#)

Certified Schools Exemplars: See links for school evidence

1. [Grenloch Terrace Early Childhood Center, Washington Township Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Choice Time: student-driven learning is most apparent in our school during one of our most valuable learning times, choice time. An example of this is Angela Otto's class, where clothespins are clipped to a chart and students select their own standards-based and curriculum-aligned activities. They move their clothespins to one of the following areas on the Choice Time chart: Art, Dramatic Play, Literacy, Blocks, Table Toys, Sensory, and Science. Reading, writing and drawing are often incorporated into this Choice Time block, so that it is truly cross-curricular. Over the course of several weeks, students are given the opportunity to explore all of the choices that are tied to a theme, and then the choices are changed.

Tools of the Mind: It is a student driven learning in the preschool and kindergarten learning through the curriculum Tools of the Mind and Choice Time. All students have multiple opportunities to create and direct their own learning. Ongoing professional development supports and promotes teachers in further developing strategies and units capitalizing on student-driven learning. <https://toolsofthemind.org/>