Selected Improvement Plan
Measuring Impact on Student Learning in a Proficiency-Based System

Introduction

Our Selected Improvement Plan focuses on CAEP Standard 4.1 - the impact of our graduates on student learning growth. In June 2013, the state of Vermont passed legislation in Act 77 which requires schools to develop personalized learning plans (PLPs) for each student in grades 7-12 that include flexible pathways to graduation. Flexible pathways include options like work-based learning, service-learning, and dual enrollment. This type of system requires a shift to proficiency-based education because student progress toward graduation is no longer based on seat time and grades. In this new paradigm, students navigate through middle and high school based on their attainment of skills and knowledge identified as proficiencies. These proficiencies are developed by each school district in alignment with the Education Quality Standards developed by the state.

The shift to proficiency-based education has been a complex undertaking for schools in Vermont. Though the requirement for personalized learning plans is specific to grades 7-12, the shift to proficiency-based systems is happening across all grade levels and content areas. The purpose of this Selected Improvement Plan is to examine the impact that our alumni have on their students' learning in proficiency-based systems. The research findings will be used to improve how we prepare future teachers to effectively teach in a proficiency-based system.

Our overall objective is to answer this primary question—How do teachers define impact on student learning in a proficiency-based system?

Sub-questions include:

- How do alumni define student growth in a proficiency-based system?
- How do they implement principles of proficiency-based systems in their classrooms?
- What types of assessments do alumni develop and use in a proficiency-based system?
- How do school structures/policies support or interfere with implementation?
- How effective are proficiency-based systems for all students (e.g. students with special needs and ELLs)?

Methods

In accordance with our plan, data were collected using an online survey that includes both open-ended and closed-ended response items.

Survey Development
The survey design process followed guidelines for development of high quality survey instruments as outlined by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014). This included a review in fall

2016 of existing literature on proficiency-based systems, including a survey featured in an American Institutes of Research study on teacher practices in proficiency-based education models (Haynes, et.al, 2016). This review informed the development of our survey framework which is aligned to our Selected Improvement Plan goals and objectives. It also informed, development of items for the initial survey draft. Three UVM educator preparation faculty participated in cognitive interviews about the initial draft, and their responses and comments informed revisions of survey items and structure. The survey was then piloted with two in-service Vermont educators who have expertise in proficiency-based learning, and was again refined based on their feedback. The survey instrument is included in Appendix A.

Participant Selection

The sample is from the population of UVM educator preparation program graduates who completed in 2013 and 2014, and thus are likely to have had four or five years of teaching experience. The sample was obtained by first narrowing the list of all 2013 and 2014 educator preparation program graduates (n=252) to those we were able to confirm were employed in a Vermont school in the 2017-2018 academic year and for whom we were able to obtain email contact information. Narrowing the list based on these criteria resulted in a study sample of 86 recent graduates. This is a convenience sample and therefore not necessarily representative of the entire population.

Data Collection

The survey was administered in January-February 2018 using the LimeSurvey platform at UVM. Graduates in the survey sample were sent an initial notice via email with information about the purpose and importance of the survey. A total of five invitations were sent over the course of six weeks.

Survey Response Rate

The response rate was 41% (n=35). Of those 35 respondents, 54% primarily teach in grades PK-6 and 45% primarily teach in grades 7-12.

Those teaching at the PK-6 levels were asked whether they work in a proficiency-based system. Thirty-seven percent (n=7) of these respondents indicated that they did not work in proficiency-based system and thus did not qualify to continue with the survey. While Act 77 only requires PLPs and Flexible Pathways for 7-12 grades, Vermont's Education Quality Standards also refer more broadly to the expectation that schools offer students flexibility in learning pathways and demonstration of their learning. It is noteworthy that 63% of survey respondents teaching in PK-6th grades report they are teaching in proficiency-based systems. ***(Question 2)***

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 28 respondents who do work in proficiency-based systems and thus qualified to complete the survey, 61% (n=17) worked through all the survey pages. Of that group, approximately 40% teach in grades PK-6 and approximately 60% teach in grades 7-12. As shown in Table 1 below, most of these respondents had been teaching for four or five years, as would be expected with a January 2018 survey of 2013 and 2014 graduates. It is noteworthy that 40% reported teaching one-to-three years. ***(Question 25)***

Table 1
Survey Respondents – Years Teaching

1 – 3 Years	7	*PK-6th Grade -3* *7th-12th Grade - 4*
4 – 5 Years	10	*PK-6th Grade -4* *7th-12th Grade - 6*

As shown in Table 2 below, respondents' primary content teaching areas include PK and elementary self-contained classrooms (all core subjects), English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, special education, and English language learning. ***(Question 26)***

Table 2
Survey Respondents – Primary Content Teaching Area(s)

Pre-School Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)	1	
Elementary Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)	3	
English Language Arts	3	7th-12th Grade
Mathematics	2	7th-12th Grade
Science	4	7th-12th Grade
Social Studies	2	7th-12th Grade
Art	0	
Music	0	
Physical Education	0	
Special Education	3	PK-6th Grade -2 7th-12th Grade - 1
Other (ELL)	1	7th-12th Grade

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with creation of charts and tables from the raw data for each question. Then charts and tables were created for data disaggregated by teaching grade span (PK-6 and 7-12) for each question. These data displays were then reviewed for themes, especially as they relate to the study questions. Tables and charts with the full disaggregated survey results are included in Appendix B.

Results

What follows are results of our survey of how 2013 and 2014 graduates define student growth in a proficiency-based system, including how they implement proficiency-based principles in their classrooms, the types of assessments they use, school policies and practices that support or inhibit their implementation of proficiency-based learning, and their thoughts on the effectiveness of proficiency-based systems to support learning for all students.

How do alumni define student growth in a proficiency-based system?
Student growth in a proficiency-based system is primarily defined in terms of progress toward academic learning targets (proficiencies), improved social skills, and/or increased self-direction and independence. Two of the seven respondents teaching in grades Pk-6 also include the idea of students applying or using new knowledge. One refers specifically to "child driven classrooms" with flexible learning options and pacing. Several of the eleven respondents teaching grades 7-12 refer specifically to increased student engagement with learning and increased confidence. Several also describe a focus on growth mindset, including multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency and look back to see change over time. ***(Question 6)***

Respondents at all grade levels (n=21) report knowing that their students are learning when students:

- Can transfer learning to a new context. (n=4)
- Can teach others. (n=4)
- Are engaged in learning, including asking question, participating in class discussions, taking initiative for learning, and smiling. (n=10)
- Demonstrate growth or show their learning on formative and/or summative assessments. (n=6). ***(Question 5)***

The Teacher's Role
Descriptors of a teacher's role in a proficiency-based system mostly group around the ideas of guiding or facilitating student learning (n=24). Several respondents also included reference to working with other teachers and one listed connection with parents. ***(Question 3)***

Figure 1
Word Cloud of PK-6th
Teacher Responses (n=9)

Figure 2
Word Cloud of 7th-9th
Teacher Responses (n=15)

The Student's Role
Most respondents (n=21) describe the role of a student in a proficiency-based system as active participant or leader in their learning, using terms such as "leader," "goal setter," "grit," "invested," and "collaborating with teachers." Several responses did point to less active roles for students. One intriguing outlier response from a 7-12 teacher was "guinea pig." Another 7-12 teacher included "absorber of information," and a third chose "individualized," "collaborative," and "technology." ***(Question 4)***

How do alumni implement principles of proficiency-based systems in their classrooms?
The responses from our graduates suggest that they are aligning their classroom practice with principles of proficiency-based learning as articulated by Vermont's Agency of Education (https://education.vermont.gov/documents/what-proficiency-based-learning) and Great Schools Partnership (https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/GSP_Ten_Principles_of_PBL-2.pdf).

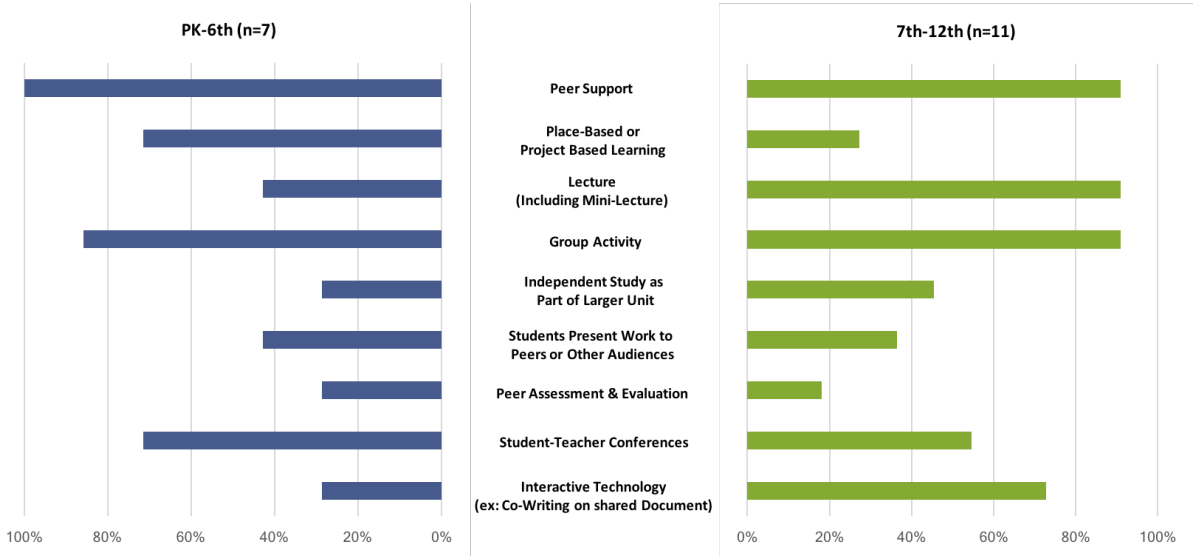
Clear Learning Targets and Performance Expectations
All respondents (n=18) agree, and most strongly agree, that they provide their students with clear written and/or verbal learning targets and performance expectations. ***(Questions 7 and 8)***

Mastery
Eight of eighteen respondents somewhat agree that their students need to demonstrate proficiency (or mastery) of specific learning targets (or learning objectives) to move forward to the next learning opportunity. Only three of eighteen respondents strongly agree, and seven disagree. Middle and high school teachers are more likely than PK-6th grade teachers to agree. ***(Question 9)***

Co-Designing Learning Experiences and Demonstrations of Proficiency
Teachers are more likely to ask students to co-design learning experiences than demonstrations of proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc.). PK-6th grade teachers are more likely than 7th-12th grade teachers to co-design learning experiences with students; the reverse is true for design of proficiency demonstrations. ***(Questions 11 and 12)***

Instructional Practices
As shown in Figure 3, most PK-6th grade teachers report typically using peer support/help, place-based or project-based learning, group activity, and student-teacher conferences *at least once a week*. There is some overlap with 7th-12th grade teachers, most of whom also report typically using peer support/help and group activities. Middle and high school teachers also report typically using lecture and interactive technology. ***(Question 13)***

Figure 3
Typically graduates report using these instructional practices at least once per week.



Flexible Pathways
The types of flexible pathways available to students are more often decided at the school rather than classroom level, and most PK-6th grade teachers report that flexible pathways to demonstrate proficiency are not possible in their schools. When they are available, it is through online courses and community service. Most 7th-12th grade teachers report that their schools allow some combination of online courses, independent study, courses from a different institution, and community service as flexible pathways to proficiency. One school allows internships or community-based learning upon student request. Another school offers 6th-8th grade students six-week long "Flexible Learning Opportunity" sessions in which students choose from a range of electives and accumulate evidence toward proficiency in Vermont's transferable skills. ***(Question 14)***

Common Standards and Performance Expectations
Most teachers report using the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of learning pathway, to evaluate all students. In comments, most refer to standards and common learning goals designed to apply to a wide range of learning contexts and demonstrations of proficiency. Comments from those who do not use the same expectations for all students include differences for students on Individual Learning Plans (IEPs) and cases where extensions are available to only some students. ***(Question 15)***

Progress Monitoring with Students
Approximately half of respondents (nine of 17) report typically meeting with individual students weekly or bi-weekly regarding their progress. Comments suggest that some meet much more frequently and some have difficulty finding time or place for check-ins. **(Question 10)**

Student Understanding of Assessment Process
Approximately half of the respondents in both grade spans report that their students understand the evaluation process and are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway. Comments from these teachers point to frequent student reflections on their learning, access to rubrics, and online systems that track progress toward proficiencies. Three PK-6th grade teachers who report that their students do not understand the evaluation process or tracking progress commented that their students are too young for this. Comments from four 7th-12th grade teachers whose students are old enough suggest that students may not be interested or systems are not yet in place to support this type of student involvement. ***(Question 16)***

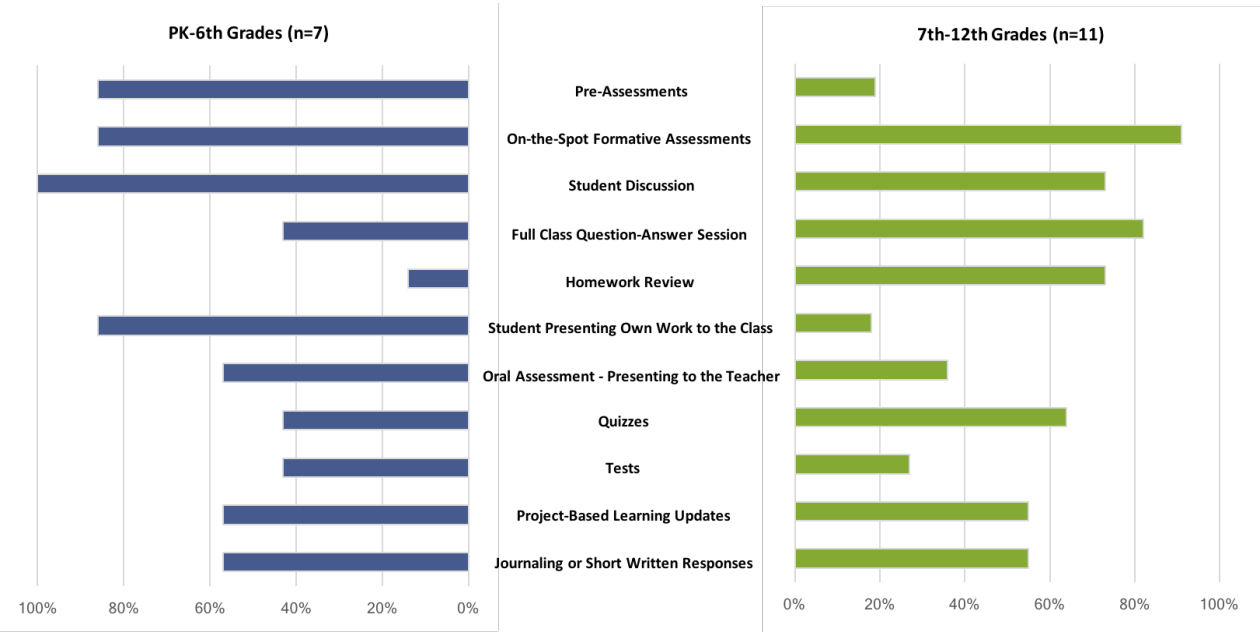
Balancing the Demands of State-Level Accountability Testing with Personalized Learning in a Proficiency-Based System
Eighteen respondents shared how they balance state-level accountability testing (such as SBAC) with personalized learning in a proficiency-based system. Their responses fall into the five categories listed below. Note that some respondents' descriptions included more than one idea.

- Not Applicable – These teachers do not see accountability testing as relevant to their practice, either because they work in a private school or their students are so young that they are not required to participate in this type of testing (n=4).
- Accountability Testing Not A Major Concern – These teachers are aware of SBAC and NECAP, but do not "teach to the test" or emphasize test preparation. (n=3).

- Focus on Personalized and Proficiency-Based Learning – These teachers assume that proficiencies are aligned with the standards that are tested on the SBAC and NECAP (n=7).
- Attend to Test Preparation – These teachers provide opportunities to practice computer-based testing and help students design personal learning plans aligned with content on state tests (n=4).
- No Balance – These teachers report that they had not yet found a balance or their school systems either are not yet fully proficiency-based (n=3). ***(Question 17)***

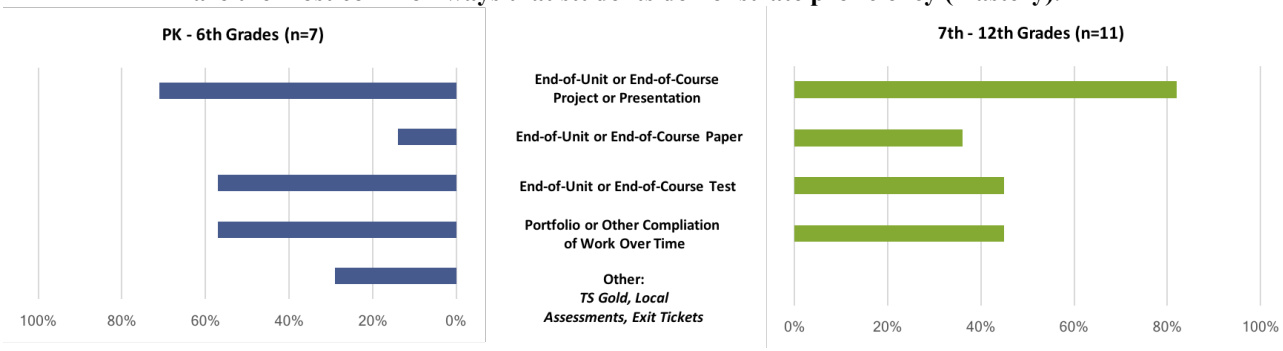
What types of assessments do alumni develop and use in a proficiency-based system?
Survey respondents report using a wide range of assessment strategies at *least once a week*. As shown in Figure 4, almost all at both the PK-6 and 7-12 teaching grades report using on-the-spot formative assessment, and approximately 50% use project-based learning updates, quizzes, and/or journaling or short written responses. PK-6 teachers are much more likely to regularly use pre-assessments and have students present their own work to the class than 7^{th}-12^{th} grade teachers. PK-6 teachers also report more use of student discussion as a form of assessment than 7^{th}-12^{th} grade teachers. 7^{th}-12^{th} grade teachers typically make greater use of homework review and full-class question-answer sessions. PK-6 teachers report more use of tests, but this is less than 50% at both the PK-6 and 7-12 levels. ***(Question 18)***

Figure 4
Typically graduates report using these assessment strategies at least once per week.



The most commonly reported mechanisms for student demonstration of proficiency are end-of-unit or end-of-course projects or presentations. As shown in Figure 5, Approximately 65% of PK-6th grade teachers and 80% of 7th-12th grade teachers assess proficiency this way. Middle and high school teachers are more likely than PK- 6th grade teachers to use final papers. Approximately 50% of respondents in both grade spans report using tests and portfolios. PK-6th teachers indicated that students also demonstrate proficiency on local assessments, exit tickets, and Teaching Strategies Gold (https://education.vermont.gov/documents/my-teaching-strategies-gold-2018-2019-vermont-requirements-and-guidelines) objectives. ***(Question 19)***

Figure 5
End-of-course and end-of-unit projects or presentations are the most common ways that students demonstrate proficiency (mastery).



The majority of respondents (71% of PK-6 teachers and 91% of 7-12 teachers) report allowing their students to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency. Comments from PK-6th grade teachers suggest that resubmission is not applicable to preschool. One teacher at this level who does not allow students to resubmit work noted that there is no "time to do that if we are expected to teach all the standards." The one 7th-12th grade teacher who does not allow resubmission commented that the decision depends on how her teaching team decides to handle the issue, and most veteran teachers "do not want to deal with reassessment." One PK-6th grade teacher who does allow resubmission noted that assessments are used "for data tracking and informed teaching." Comments by 7th-12th grade teachers who allow resubmission suggest that this applies primarily to summative projects or assessments designed to allow students to demonstrate proficiency rather than for all assignments. ***(Question 20)***

How do school structures/policies support or interfere with implementation?
The primary supportive school system policy or practice that supports implementation of proficiency-based learning mentioned by respondents at both teaching grade spans is opportunity for collaborative learning and decision-making. Primary barriers include insufficient time and the pace of change, resulting in insufficient support for full and consistent implementation across the system.

Supportive Policies or Practices
Most of the policies and practices that PK-6th grade teachers (n=7) report as supporting their efforts to implement proficiency-based principles cluster around the idea of professional

collaboration. This includes in-service time, professional learning communities (PLC) for assessment development, "curriculum camp," data reviews, co-teaching, work with instructional coaches, and general discussion and reflection. Shared processes across a system, including a grade book system, clearly articulated content skills by course, scoring guides, project-based learning, and multi-tiered systems of support were also mentioned.

Teachers at the middle and high school levels (n=10) also mentioned opportunities for collaboration, including in-service, other ongoing forms of professional learning, and instructional coaching. More frequently, however, they referred to practices that resulted in consistency across the system. Proficiency-based grading, whether using a 1-4 scale or letters to represent categories (Basic, Approaching, Meets, Exceeds) in an online system that allows for data tracking and reporting, and common expectation across all sections of a particular course were included as examples of consistency. Student-centered learning that includes tutorial blocks or flexible scheduling are also important structural supports. ***(Question 21)***

Inhibiting Policies or Practices

All three PK-6 teacher respondents listed insufficient time as a policy or practice that inhibits their efforts to implement proficiency-based principles. Other barriers include "inefficient" social and emotional supports for children, curriculum, and schedules.

Half of the ten middle and high school respondents also listed time, or lack thereof, as a barrier to implementation. They report too much change too quickly. One also listed lack of time to "rigorously assess all students all the time." Electronic grading systems that some in the previous question viewed as supports, others experience as barriers because these systems are not flexible enough for diverse student populations. Some also struggle with inadequate professional development around proficiency-based learning, mandated content, and lack of community support for change. Inconsistent approaches to assessment for all students – either across schools or across all grades within a school – also inhibited implementation. One respondent indicates that no current school system policies or practices inhibit implementation. ***(Question 22)***

How effective are proficiency-based systems for all students (e.g. students with special needs and ELLs)?

When thinking about opportunities for all students to learn, including English language learners and those with special needs, the vast majority (16 of 17) of respondents indicate that proficiency-based education is either very or somewhat effective. As detailed in Figure 6 below, those who find it very effective highlight individualized learning, clear expectations, and modified scales. Others raise concerns about truly meeting each individual student's needs. ***(Question 23)***

Figure 6
Most Respondents Report that Proficiency-Based Education is Effective for all Students.
17 Responses (Note: One teacher indicated both "very" and "somewhat.")

5	*PK-6th Grade -3* *7th-12th Grade - 2*	More access to individualized learning that show what they really know
		Clear expectations and accountability make learning easier for ALL students
Very Effective		modified scales are great for those students
12	*PK-6th Grade -3* *7th-12th Grade - 9*	Can be difficult if foundational learning is missing for lower students- must meet them where they are and meet their individualized needs.
		Sometimes, they have harder time understanding what they need to demonstrate when given too much freedom with curriculum
		some students, it is better than others
		The chance to learn from past attempts to perfect a skill is useful.
Somewhat Effective		It has the potential to increase student learning. I have seen it work in Math...but I worry about my students ability to put all of the little standards and concepts together in the big picture.
1	*7th-12th Grade - 1*	There are only a few teachers that are flexible to allow special educators the freedom to modify/accommodate their lesons and the ways in which they assess student learning
Neutral		

Assessing Impact on Student Learning
When asked what advice they would give to a teacher new to working in a proficiency-based system on how to assess their own impact on student learning, responses from six PK-6th grade teachers clustered around three big ideas:

1. Know your students: Recognize that students come with different backgrounds and learn in different ways and at different speeds. Use pre-post assessments to make growth visible and discover foundational information about students' "strengths and needs."
2. Foster a growth mindset for yourself and your students. This can help you to reflect on how students respond to learning opportunities you present, and support them to "drive their learning."
3. Understand proficiency-based learning, which includes teachers knowing how to collaborate with each other. This involves significant planning time.

Responses from ten 7th-12th grade teachers include these big ideas, and also highlighted the importance of focusing time and attention on specific learning targets and proficiencies.

1. Build strong relationships with students. This requires reflective practice and willingness to "adapt your instruction for the next day based on what happened today." Responding to student need might involve letting go of how quickly you think students should be learning, and instead attending to how they are actually learning.
2. Foster a growth mindset by presenting learning as a process and sharing with students their progress along the way.
3. Focus on learning targets and proficiencies. Be clear about what is included in each learning target, and use pre-post assessment to monitor student growth. Keep careful and complete records, including copies of student work, to document your decisions about student proficiency levels.
4. Collaborate with peers to build a strong understanding of proficiency-based learning and learn from the experiences of others. ***(Question 24)***

Anything Else?
Five teacher responded to the final survey question that asked if there is anything else they wanted to share about how they understand their impact on student learning. Their comments do not cluster around particular themes. One PK-6th grade teacher asked that the educator preparation program "be more honest" about the realities of teaching and incorporate more self-care strategies in the preparation programs. The other PK-6th respondent highlighted a connection between teacher passion and student "joy of learning." Of the three 7th-12th grade teachers who shared other thoughts, one described the importance of focusing on student needs rather than teacher needs. The other two made specific comments about their experience in the UVM educator preparation programs: the first suggested need for more content-specific courses and the other expressed gratitude for the "fantastic job to set me up for success as a teacher." ***(Question 27)***

Conclusion

How do teachers define impact on student learning in a proficiency-based system?
Our 2013 and 2014 graduates completed their educator preparation programs at the same time that statewide policies for personalization, flexible pathways, and proficiency-based learning were launched in Vermont. Those who took positions in Vermont schools began their careers as their school systems were undergoing profound shifts away from student graduation based on credits and seat time and toward high school completion contingent upon demonstration of proficiency in identified areas. While the change is required for all students beginning in 7th grade, 63% of respondents teaching at the PL-6 levels noted that they are teaching in proficiency-based systems. This is evidence that the shift to proficiency-based education is affecting most Vermont students and teachers regardless of grade level.

Our survey respondents report that they define student growth in a proficiency-based system largely in terms of progress toward academic learning targets (proficiencies), improved social skills, and increased self-direction and independence. In general, they understand the teacher role in this type of system to be that of guide or facilitator, one who supports students to grow academically and socially. Students are viewed as active participants in the learning process. Teacher impact on student learning sometimes involves helping students to "lead their own learning" through collaboration with teachers to monitor their own progress, as well as design learning experiences and demonstrations of their proficiency. Aligned with the principles of proficiency-based learning, we find that our graduates impact student learning by setting clear learning targets and clear performance expectations, and regularly structuring student-centered leaning opportunities that encourage students to engage with each other in activities, explorations, or reflection. The teacher role still includes some formal lecturing, especially at the 7th-12th grade levels. Flexible pathways are generally not a classroom teacher level decision, but most of the survey respondents report that the same standards and performance expectations apply to all students, regardless of the learning pathway.

Our survey respondents indicate that they regularly use a range of assessment strategies to monitor student growth. While PK-6th grade teacher respondents are more likely to use formal pre-assessments, almost all respondents report using on-the-spot formative assessments and student discussion. Presentations, journaling, project updates, quizzes and tests are also used to varying degrees. Across both teaching grade spans, the most commonly reported assessment for students to demonstrate proficiency is end-of-course or end-of-unit project or presentation, and most allow students to resubmit work on these types of summative assessments until students reach proficiency.

Central to impact on student learning in a proficiency-based system is strong working relationships not only between teachers and students, but also between teachers within a school. Knowing their students well allows teachers to better support student academic and social development. Close collaboration with colleagues allows teacher to deepen their own understanding of this new education paradigm.

References

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Great Schools Partnership. Ten principles of proficiency-based learning. https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/GSP_Ten_Principles_of_PBL-2.pdf

Haynes, E., Zeiser, K., Surr, W., Hauser, A., Clymer, L., Walston, J., Bitter, C., & Yang, R. (2016) *Looking under the hood of competency-based education: The relationship between competency-based education practices and students' learning skill, behaviors, and dispositions.* Washington, DC: American Institutes of Research.

What is proficiency-based learning? VT AOE web site (2017) (https://education.vermont.gov/documents/what-proficiency-based-learning)

Appendix A
UVM Educator Preparation Program Graduate Impact Survey
UVM SIP Survey Questions – January 2018 Administration
*Questions modified from *Looking Under the Hood*…. (Haynes, et. al. 2016)

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to collect information on how graduates of UVM's teacher education programs define their impact in schools implementing proficiency-based systems. The information will be used as part of a continuous improvement process in UVM's teacher education programs and as evidence in reporting to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Results may also be disseminated more widely, such as in publications and presentations. Individual responses will be compiled with those of other who respond to the survey and will not be personally identifiable in any sharing of results. By completing this survey, you agree to participate in this research.

We anticipate that this survey will take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. We hope that participation in this survey will be an opportunity to reflect on your professional practice as a K-12 teacher and we very much appreciate your participation. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dr. Barri Tinkler, Associate Professor, in the University of Vermont's Department of Education (btinkler@uvm.edu).

Some of the questions in the survey are multiple choice and some ask for short narrative responses. **We recognize that narrative responses require more work on your part, and we appreciate your willingness to contribute to deeper understanding of how teachers define impact in proficiency-based systems.** Using the Vermont Agency of Education's definition, in proficiency-based systems students know the learning expectations, receive personalized feedback and support as they work toward proficiency, and choose from flexible pathways to meet proficiency-based graduation requirements. See http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/eduproficiencybasededucationwhatisproficiencybasedlearning.pdf for the agency's full definition.

There are 27 questions in this survey.

Do you work in a Proficiency-Based System?

1. In which grade span(s) do you work? (check all that apply)
   - PreK
   - K-2nd
   - 3rd-4th
   - 5th-6th
   - 7th-8th
   - 9th-10th
   - 11th-12th

If responded with only 7th-8th grades or higher, automatically skip to question 3.

2. Some elementary school are beginning to implement proficiency-based education. Do you work in this type of school? (For example, does your school use proficiency-based

report cards? Do your students have at least some choice about how they demonstrate their learning?)

- Yes
- No

If responded yes, then continue to question 3. If no, then exit the survey.

Defining Impact

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

3. Please list three words or phrases that best describe your role as a teacher in a proficiency-based education system.
   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____

4. Please list three words or phrases that best describe the role of a student in a proficiency-based education system.
   1. _____
   2. _____
   3. _____

5. Please complete the following sentence: I know my students are learning when _____.

6. As a teacher in a proficiency-based system, please describe in a few sentences what "student growth" means to you?

Implementing Proficiency-Based Education

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

7. I provide clear written and/or verbal learning (sometimes known as objectives) for my students.
   - Strongly agree
   - Somewhat agree
   - Somewhat disagree
   - Strongly disagree

8. I provide clear performance expectations (written and/or verbal) for my students.
   - Strongly agree
   - Somewhat agree
   - Somewhat disagree
   - Strongly disagree

9. My students need to demonstrate proficiency (or mastery) of a specific set of learning targets (or learning objectives) in order to move forward to the next learning opportunity. *
    - Strongly agree
    - Somewhat agree
    - Somewhat disagree
    - Strongly disagree

10. Typically, I meet with individual students regarding their progress:
    - Weekly
    - Bi-weekly
    - Monthly
    - Once per quarter
    - Twice a year
    - Never
    - Other – Please Comment: _____

11. My students co-design their own learning experiences.
    - Almost always
    - Frequently
    - Sometimes
    - Seldom
    - Never

12. My students design their own demonstrations of their proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc.):
    - Almost always
    - Frequently
    - Sometimes
    - Seldom
    - Never

13. Typically, I use the following instructional practices at least once a week: (Check all that apply.) *
    - Peer Support/Help
    - Place-Based or Project-Based Learning
    - Lecture (Including Mini-Lecture)
    - Group Activity
    - Independent Study as Part of Larger Unit Project
    - Students Present their Work to Peers or Other Audience
    - Peer Assessment and Evaluation
    - Interactive Technology (for example, Co-Writing on Shared Document)
    - Other: Please List

14. At my school it is possible for students to demonstrate proficiency through flexible pathways including (Check all that apply.) *
    - Online Courses
    - Independent Study
    - Courses from a Different Institution
    - Community Service
    - Other: Please List

15. I use the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of the learning pathway, to evaluate all my students. *
    - Yes. Please Explain: _____
    - No. Please Explain: _____

16. My students understand the evaluation process and are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway. *
    - Yes. Please Explain: _____
    - No. Please Explain: _____

17. Please describe in several sentences how you balance the demands of state-level accountability testing (SBAC and NECAP) with personalized learning in a proficiency-based system.

Types of Assessment

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

18. Typically, I use the following strategies to assess student learning at least once during a week: (Check all that apply)
    - Pre-Assessments
    - On-the-Spot Formative Assessments
    - Student Discussion
    - Full-Class Question-Answer Session
    - Homework Review
    - Student Presenting Own Work to the Class
    - Oral Assessment – Student Presenting to Teacher
    - Quizzes
    - Tests
    - Project-Based Learning Updates
    - Journaling or Short Written Responses
    - Other: Please List

19. My students demonstrate proficiency (mastery) through: (Check all that apply) *
    - End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Project or Presentation
    - End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Paper
    - End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Test
    - Portfolio or other Compilation of Work Over Time
    - Other: _____

20. My students are allowed to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency (mastery). *
    - Yes. Please Explain: _____
    - No. Please Explain: _____

School Structures/Policies
Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

21. Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that support your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles.
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____

22. Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that inhibit your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles.
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____

Equity
Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

23. When thinking about opportunities for all students to learn, including English language learners and those with special needs, how effective or ineffective is proficiency-based education?
    - Very effective. Please Explain: _____
    - Somewhat effective. Please Explain: _____
    - Neutral. Please Explain: _____
    - Somewhat ineffective. Please Explain: _____
    - Very ineffective. Please Explain: _____

24. What advice would you give a teacher new to working in a proficiency-based system on how to assess their own impact on student learning?

About You

25. How many years have you been a teacher?
    - 1 – 3
    - 4 – 5
    - 6 – 10
    - 11 or more

26. Which of the following best describes your primary content teaching area(s)? (Check all that apply.)
    - Pre-School Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)
    - Elementary Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)
    - English Language Arts
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - Social Studies
    - Art
    - Music

- Physical Education
- Special Education
- Other: _____

Closing

27. Is there anything else you would like to share as as we build a picture of how graduates of UMV teacher preparation programs understand their impact on student learning?

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix B
Survey Results Disaggregated by Teaching Grade Span

SECTION 1: DO YOU WORK IN A PROFICIENCY-BASED SYSTEM?

Question 1

In which grade span(s) do you primarily work this year?
35 Responses

PreK	4
K – 2nd	5
3rd – 4th	6
5th – 6th	4
7th – 8th	11
9th – 10th	10
11th 12th	9

Question 2

Some elementary schools are beginning to implement proficiency-based education. Do you work in this type of school? (For example, does your school use proficiency-based report cards? Do your students have at least some choice about how they demonstrate their learning?)
19 Responses (This question for respondents who indicated teaching only at grade 6 and/or below.)

Yes	12
No	7

SECTION 2: DEFINING IMPACT

Question 3

Please list three words or phrases that best describe your role as a teacher in a proficiency-based education system.

24 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades		
Challenging	Engaging	Hands-on
Innovation	Flexibility	Learning
Differentiation	Scaffolding	Flexible grouping
Bridge the gap	Meet individualized needs	Utilize strength based teaching
guide	support	facilitator
Mission Control	Target Setter	Guide
Guide	Support	Reinforce
Professional Learning Community	Data Driven	
student based learning	creativity	choice
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades		
flexible	feedback	multiple
guide on the side	students work at their own pace	giving timely feedback on student's abilities
forefront	connection between parents and school	student support
Facilitator	Student Choice	Multiple Pathways
Special Educator	Advisor	
Educator	Mentor	Literacy enhancer
Support	Facilitator	Counselor
Coach	Process over product	Chance to work at a skill again
Mentor	Advisor	Instructor
Facilitator	Curriculum developer	Consultant for other teachers
Opportunity creator	Understanding	Advisor
advocate	encourage both staff and students	creating new pathways
Learner	Beginner	Practice
Pass/Fail	Scaling back targets	Helping teachers grade my students
Objective	Clear	Guide

Question 4

Please list three words or phrases that best describe the role of a student in a proficiency-based education system.

21 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades		
engaged	hands on	encouraged
Creativity	Flexibility	learning
Participant	Ownership	Engaged
Mastery of skills	Essential elements of basic skill areas	Gradual progression
leader	choice	not YET
Doer	Goal Setter	Worker
Teacher	Questu	
guides learning	self driven	engaged
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades		
explorer	problem solver	trial and error
flexible	Choice	Individual
learner	continuing to grow/improve	flexible pathways
Individualized	Collaborative	Technology
mentee	absorber of information	seeing the bigger picutre
Grit	Listener	Practice
Skills	Mastery	Retake
Accountable	Self-directed	Motivated
Ownership of learning	Responsibility for time management and performance	Self-Direction
Invested	Explorer	Understanding
guinea pig	redesigning	collaborating with teachers
no more grades	skills instead of concepts	more feedback
Persistent	Clear Expectations	Connect the dots

Question 5

Please complete the following sentence: I know my students are learning when...

21 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
they apply their learning in different settings.
they are engaged
I reflect on their formative and summarize assessments.
they ask deep questions about what they are working on!
I know my students are learning when they can teach me a concept.
they are smiling and making progress in their skills
They can teach other and are engaged
they are able to teach others
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
they have genuine inquiry and participate in class discussion.
students transfer content and skills to a new context without prompting
They ask me or their peers insightful questions to improve their work on formative assessments before they attempt a summative assessment
They are engaged and can explain topics to others
they show engagement and initiative for learning.
can verbally identify the main concepts of the content
they can transfer a skill
they are able to demonstrate growth in one skill area
I see them present their learning in a medium of their choice and being meta (reflecting on their learning process)
They show what they know on assessments. (exit cards, standards checks, quiz/test)
they are actively engaging with the content.
they are engaged with the content.
They are able to apply their learning or make connections to real-life.

Question 6

As a teacher in a proficiency-based system, please describe in a few sentences what "student growth" means to you.

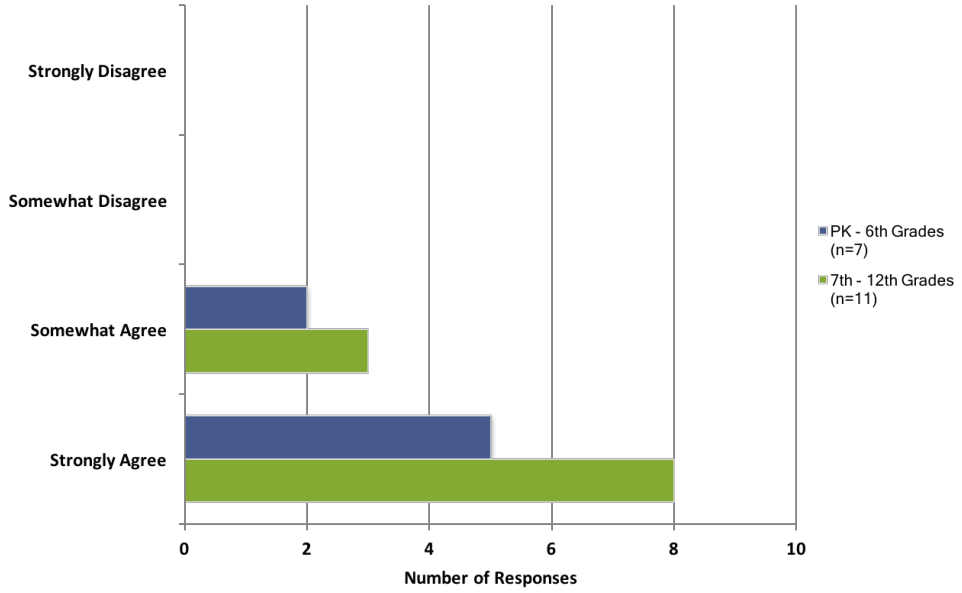
18 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
To me, student growth is each student increasing their understanding of the world and people around them. Once this knowledge is acquired, the student then independently applies their new learning across different settings.
growth is progress toward proficiency in any area of learning, curriculum or social skills.
They are progressing.
Student growth is when a student gains proficiency in applying a skill or skillset. For example, they start writing a narrative with one set of skills, the teacher provides instruction and opportunities to apply this instruction and show that they are actively using the new skill.
Student growth is when students make progress from their own baseline of learning.
They are learning the material I am targeting at their own pace and are still are still learning the material with more flexibility in the way they are learning it. Child driven classrooms
Student growth can be shown in many ways. Looking at my teaching this year, I would say that I can see growth when students become more independent.
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Student growth is when you see a positive change in a given student. This could be anything from improved retention to improved writing, editing, contribution to class, and inquiry.
In a proficiency-based system, students have multiple tries at learning. Students receive feedback on their progress. Students are demanded to show growth as they work towards being proficient at a skill. Growth is celebrated more than just a one and done, one try assessment or activity.
Student growth happens both academically and in work habits. Academic growth occurs when students revise their work to earn higher proficiency scores, and when they are able to perform well on increasingly complex tasks over the course of a year or several years. Student growth in work habits happens as they take responsibility for the decisions they make surrounding the use of learning time, set goals for themselves, and learn to be increasingly self-directed between 9th and 12th grade.
Student growth is students digging deeper into material so they feel invested
Student growth means continual progress and willingness/drive to continue to improve. Student growth is understanding that intelligence/knowledge is fluid and not fixed. Student growth is always striving to learn more and understand more.
Student growth is the student's capability to increase his/her learning based on their specific needs and pace. This can look different for a student with an Intellectual Disability compared to a student learning the English language compared to a typically developed student.
Student growth occurs when kids master a new concept or work towards proficiency on a concept they were not able to master. (the first time)
progress over time.
Student growth to me occurs on multiple levels. With our student population, it may be small, incremental improvements in learning and recall (e.g. understanding scientific concepts and vocabulary). On a deeper level, it is the application and engagement in content in and out of the classroom. When students and I can look back and identify how they have grown in the context of the material we are studying - that's growth.
Student growth means the progression of skills. The improvement on personal bests, according to a class standard. An increase in confidence in a given skill and the knowledge to be able to achieve it.
Student growth means that students are improving in specific areas and/or are becoming more engaged and self-directed. So, either their writing is becoming clearer and they are writing with more depth and detail, e.g., or they are able to find and design a learning project more and more independently.

SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTING PROFICIENCY-BASED EDUCATION

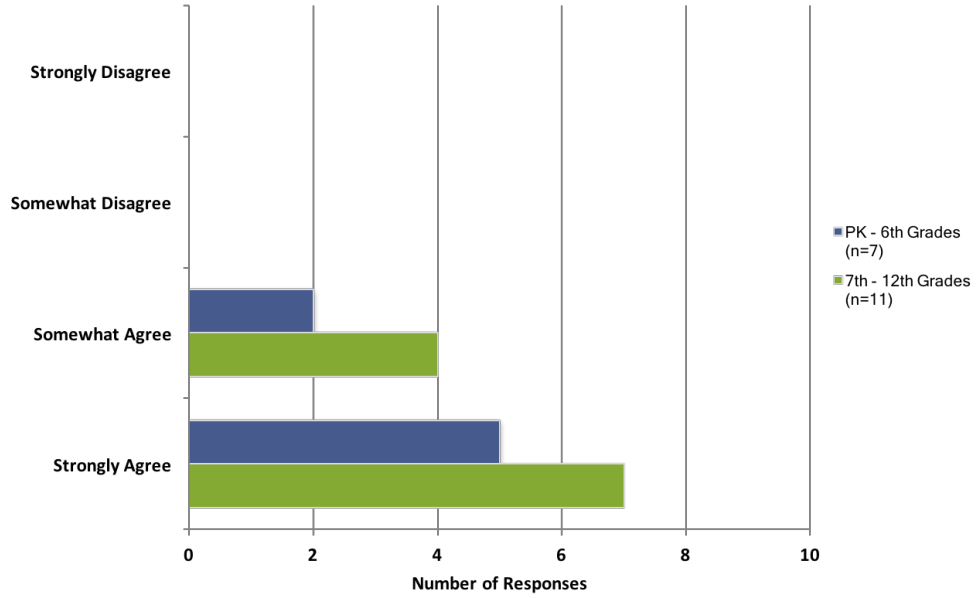
Question 7

I provide clear written and/or verbal learning targets (sometimes known as objectives) for my students.



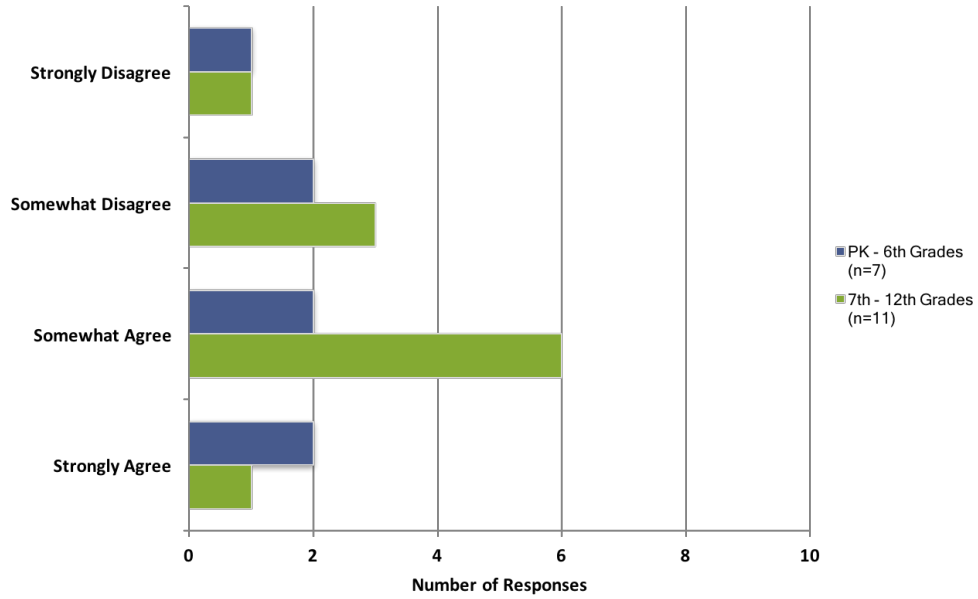
Question 8

I provide clear performance expectations (written and/or verbal)for my students.



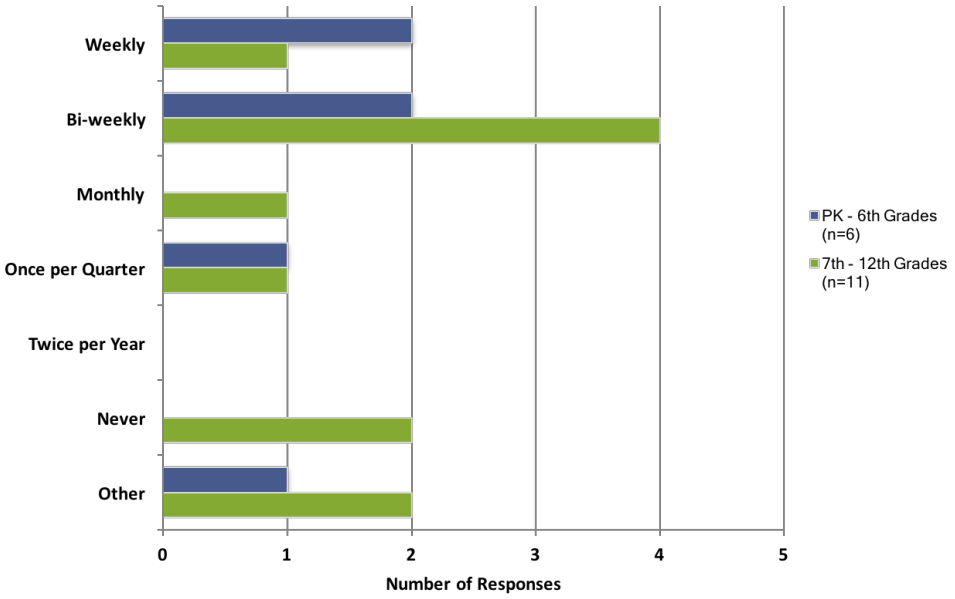
Question 9

My students need to demonstrate proficiency (or mastery) of a specific set of learning targets (or learning objectives) to move forward to the next learning opportunity.



Question 10

Typically, I meet with individual students regarding their progress:



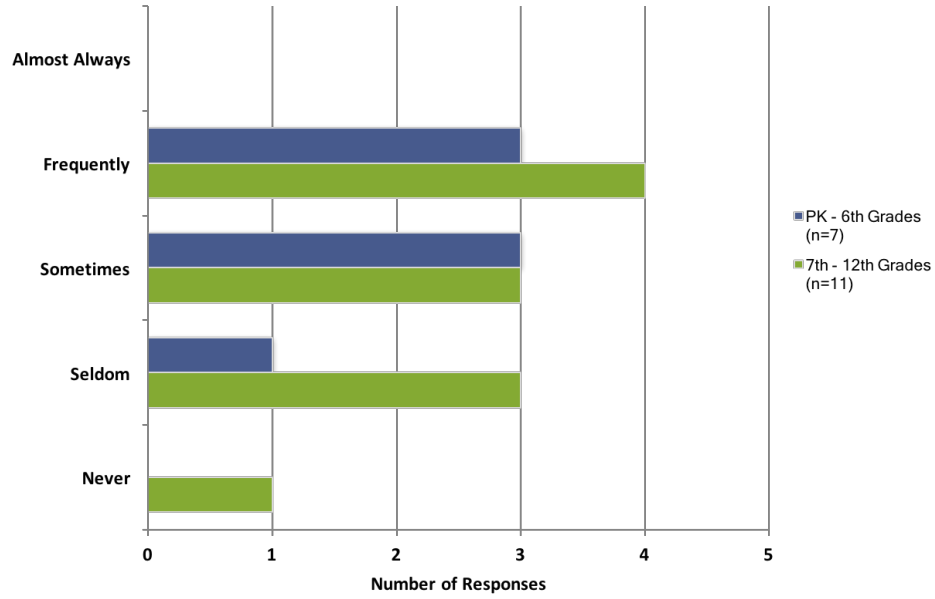
Comments.

7 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
My students are very young. We talk about their progress all the time. We meet formally with families three times a year to discuss progress.
check-ins, exit tickets, formative assessments, and summative assessments.
I feel like I am struggling to find gentle and efficient ways to check in with students.
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
On an as needed basis. Being in a private school, we do not have in class supports and little interaction with special educators. With students on IEP's and 504's I tend to meet with them every other day. A typical student…once every two weeks or if they start to slip in class.
My school's advisory time (30 minutes every day) allows me to meet with individual students in an informal way. I do not have individual meetings often. My school does not really embrace proficiencies and many of my coworkers are very opposed to change.
The classroom is very project-based so I do little direct instruction and this leaves me with more time to check-in with students 1:1 on a regular basis (nearly daily).
My advisory is almost daily, but my own students is every few weeks and not in a structured way

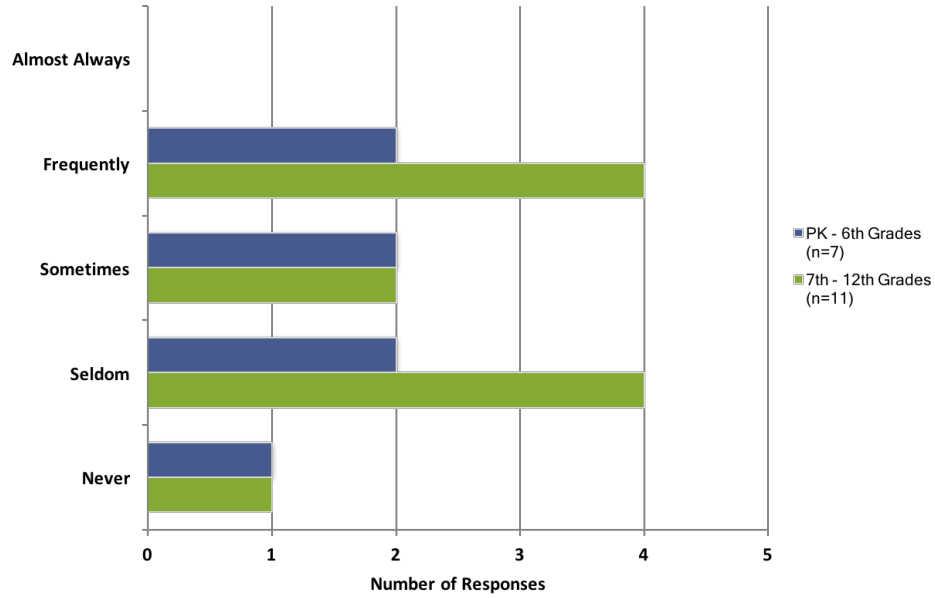
Question 11

My students co-design their own learning experiences:

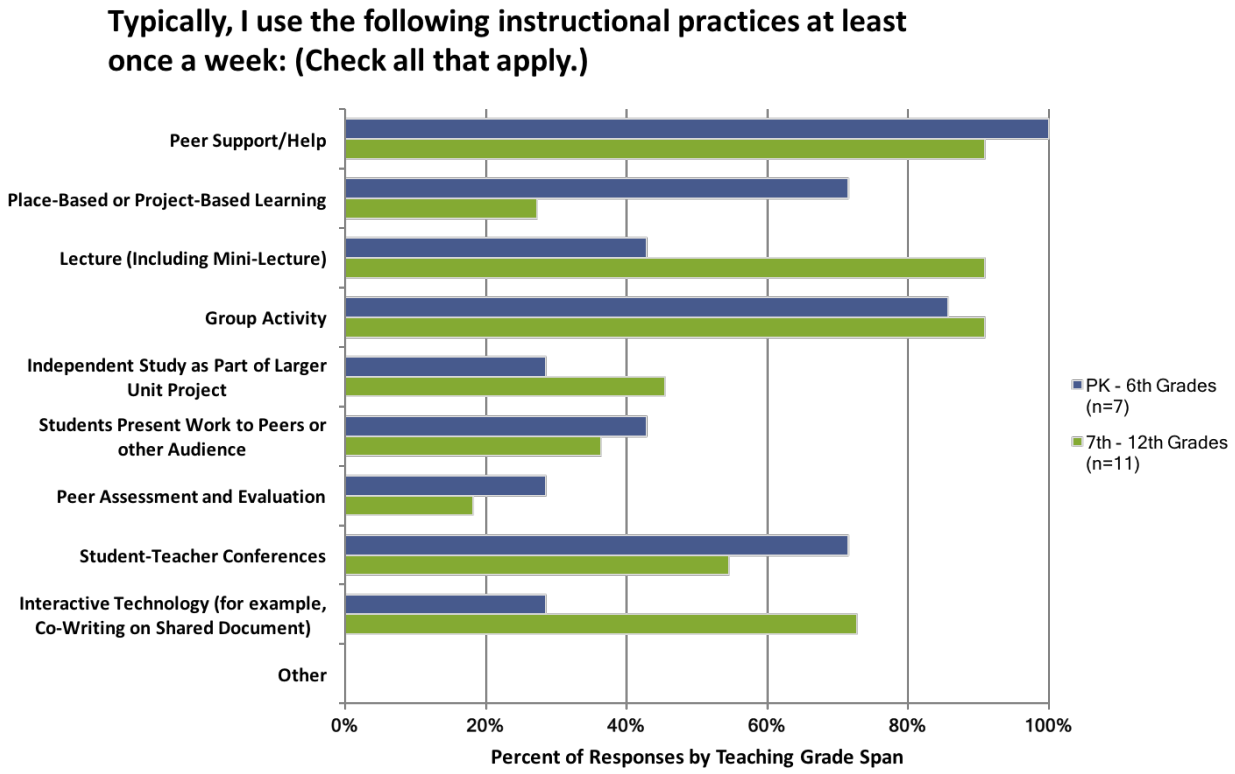


Question 12

My students design their own demonstrations of their proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc.):

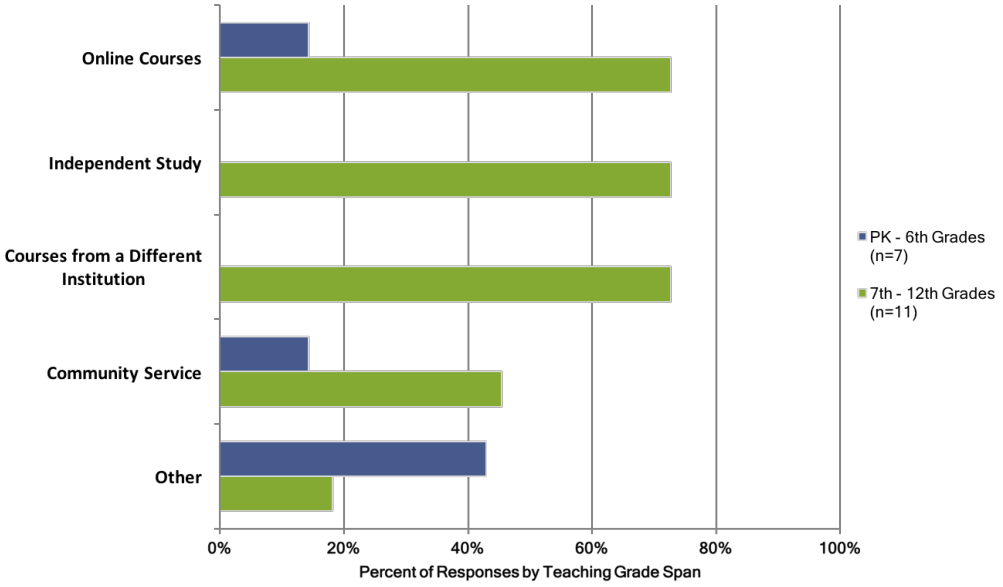


Question 13


Typically, I use the following instructional practices at least once a week: (Check all that apply.)
Peer Support/Help
Place-Based or Project-Based Learning
Lecture (Including Mini-Lecture)
Group Activity
Independent Study as Part of Larger Unit Project
Students Present Work to Peers or other Audience
Peer Assessment and Evaluation
Student-Teacher Conferences
Interactive Technology (for example, Co-Writing on Shared Document)
Other
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Percent of Responses by Teaching Grade Span
PK - 6th Grades (n=7)
7th - 12th Grades (n=11)

Question 14

At my school it is possible for students to demonstrate proficiency through flexible pathways including: (Check all that apply.)



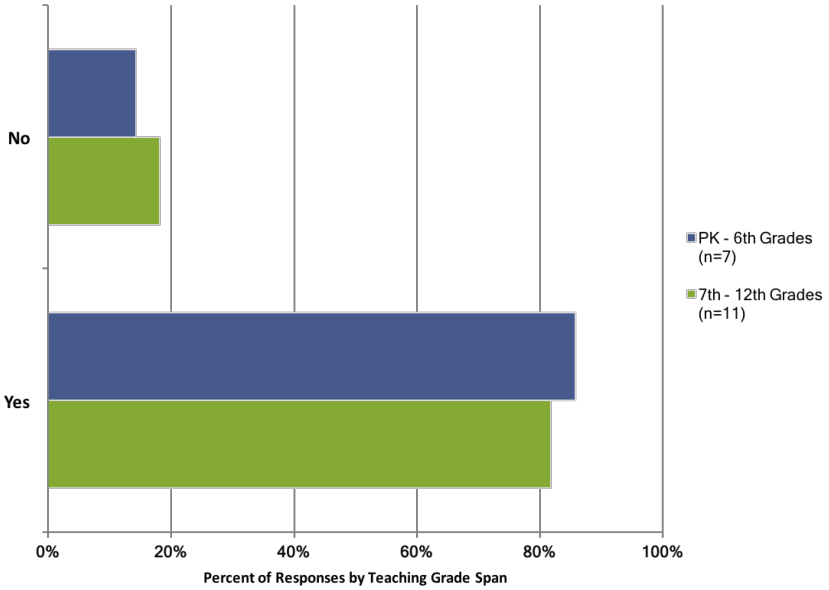
Other:

5 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
N/A
None of these apply at the elementary level. Not sure for middle and high.
doesnt apply to preschool
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Flexible Learning Opportunities are available for students that run in sessions lasting 6 weeks as an "extra" on top of the core classes. These FLO session include grades 6-8 in groups of 15 or less and students have choice in which session they will attend from coding/programming to music to carpentry and many more. Students gather evidence toward proficiency in the VT Transferable Skills while in these sessions and roughly 12 options are offered during each session.
Internships or CBL as requested by students

Question 15

I use the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of the learning pathway, to evaluate all my students.



See next page for comments

Question 15 - Comments

Please Explain.
13 Responses

Yes

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
Our expectations are the same, but everyone's pathways are individualized based on their needs, developmental level
All students start with the same rubric/expectations
Standards
Yes T.S Gold and the VELS
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
All students are expected to meet NGSS performance indicators which have been divided between the three required science courses
Student expectations are based on VT Transferable Skills as well as NGSS standards. Students are required to provide evidence for proficiency in specific targets for each project. They have choice in how they provide evidence.
The students are expected to demonstrate a set of learning goals whether they are completing an internship or in a high school class or in a college level course for dual enrollment. They methods in which they present their learning, however, can be unique to the student.
The standards remain the same.
The standards/scales are written in such a way that content or project doesn't matter- the skill is transferable to any context.
I apply the NGSS science content standards and also our school now is experimenting with school wide standards for graduation.
Kids do not follow alternate pathways in my courses. Some students on plans are assessed differently or given modified assessments.
The standards are the same, just the way students display their knowledge is different
Performance tasks and uniform scales

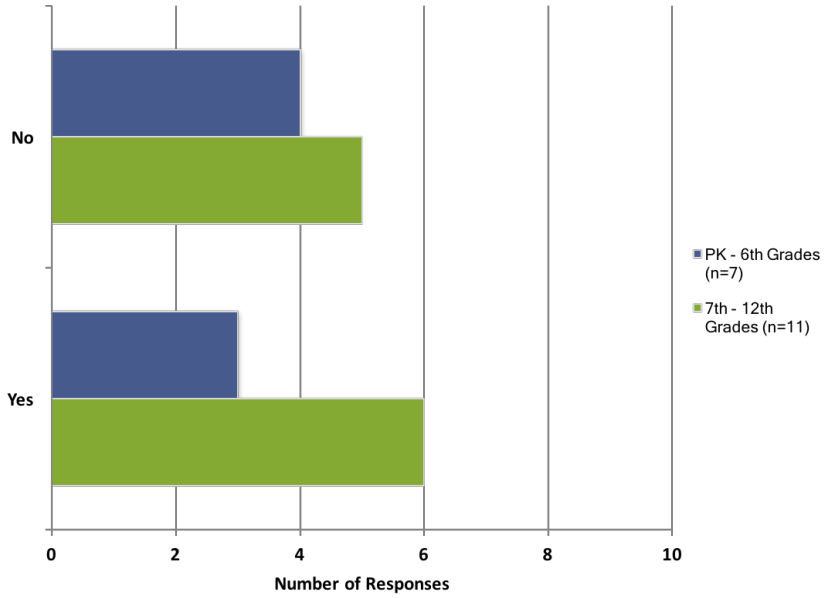
Question 15 - Comments

Please Explain.
3 Responses

No
Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
There are extensions provided that some students may not get to.
We have learning scales that have a range of skill levels for a given standard.
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Different students have different defintions of "Excellence." I adjust grade scales accordingly (mainly for students on severe IEP's)

Question 16

My students understand the evaluation process and are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway.



See next page for comments

Question 16 – Comments

Please Explain.
8 Responses

Yes

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
daily reflections
The have a rubric that they work from. If they don't meet the standards, they conference with me and figure how to teach that goal
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
All of my assignments/assessments have grade scales available to students. They can track their progress through google classroom
They are asked to reflect on their learning experiences in their PLP.
Kids understand and track grades through PowerSchool.
Students know rubrics and expectations of proficiency.
Students follow progress in JumpRope, maintain unit checklists, and check in verbally as needed.
Students all have an online portfolio that they update a few times weekly where they are collecting evidence toward proficiency in both content area targets as well as VT Transferable Skills.

Please Explain.
7 Responses

No

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
They are very young - they're just happy to be at school!
Not always. 4th grade is a bit young.
Doesn't apply to preschool
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Some of my students can. Others are still fixated on the numeric grades they are receiving.
They don’t often keep track yet because we don’t have a strong system in place across the school
My students are a) not concerned with how they are evaluated or b) do not understand the evaluation process and are unwilling to ask questions
The students understand but they don't track their own progress.

Question 17

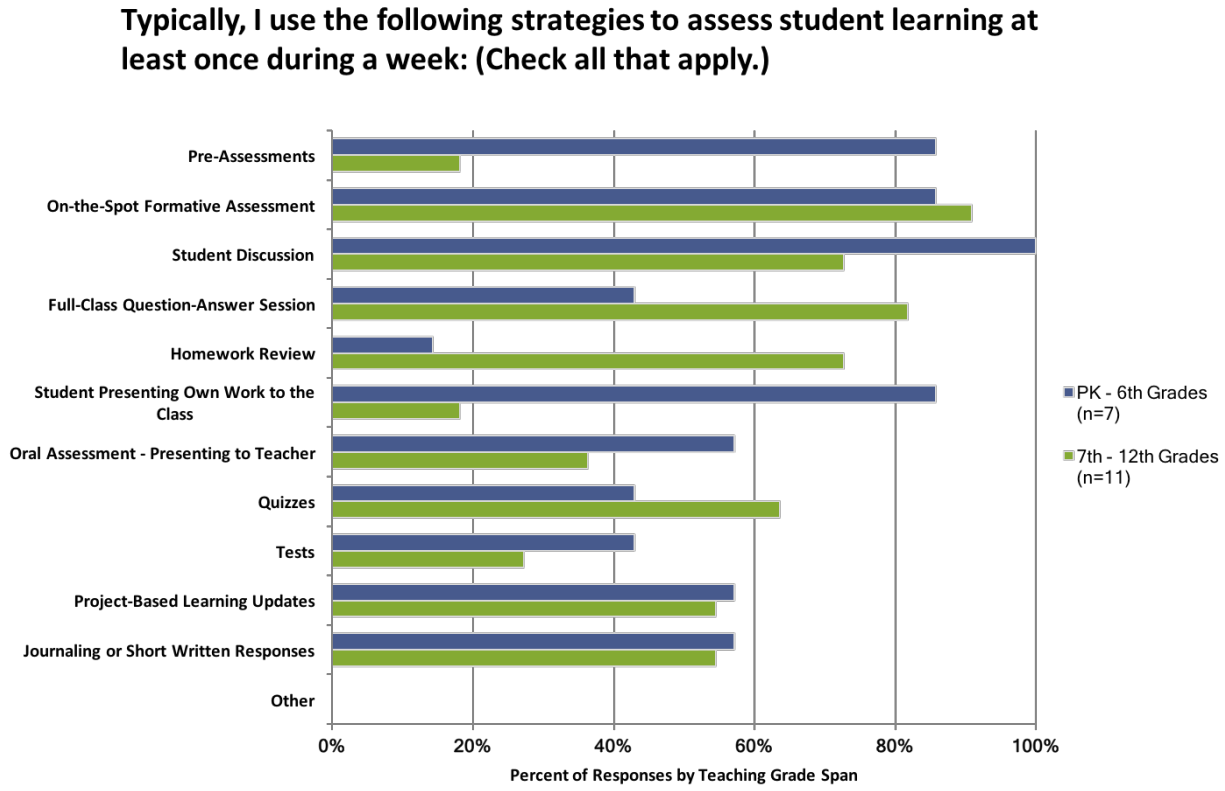
Please describe in several sentences how you balance the demands of state-level accountability testing (SBAC and NECAP) with personalized learning in a proficiency-based system.

18 Responses

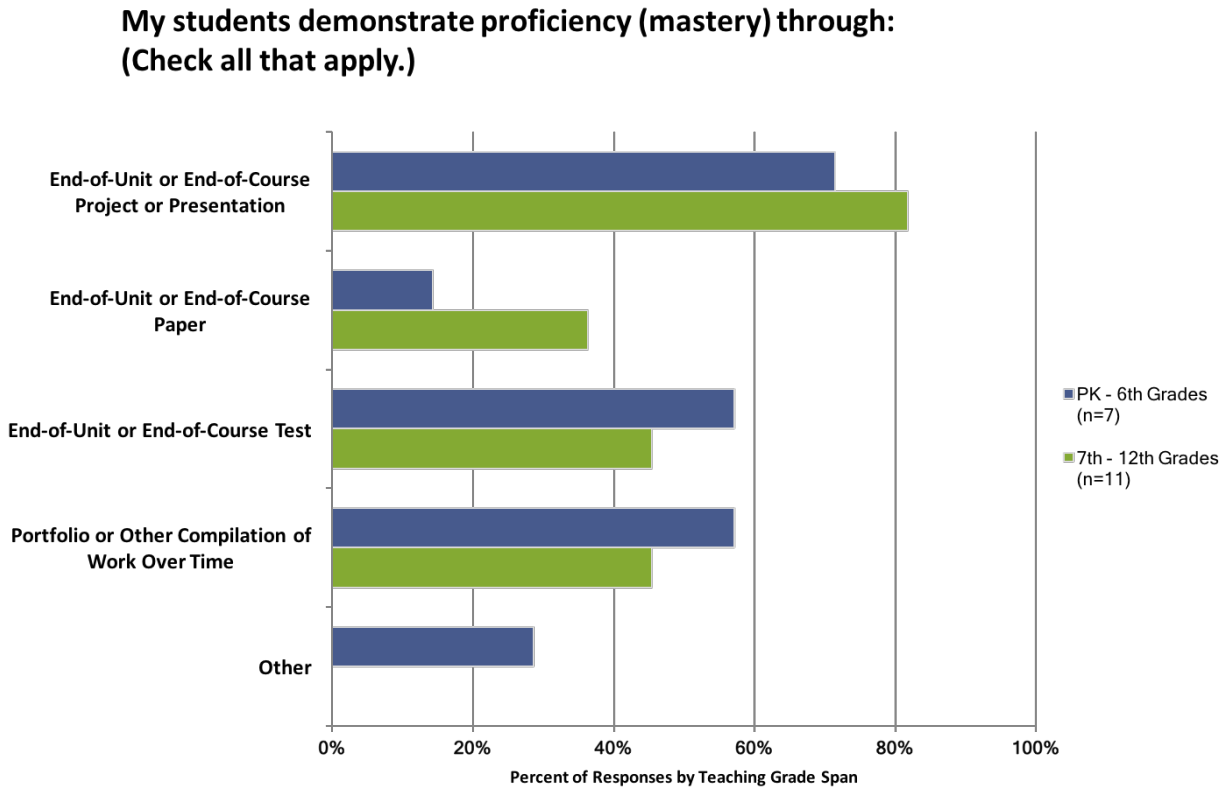
Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
My students are too young to take these types of accountability testing.
We use a co-teaching model with other teachers and special educators to make sure we are meeting the needs of all students. We make sure that our curriculum is standards-based, while also implementing a Project Based Learning model that promotes proficiency-based learning.
My students don't take those tests.
I haven't found a balance yet. I wish we could do more project-based learning.
I utilize Common Core State Standards to help my students meet their own needs as well as the CCSS. As a special educator, it is important to me to help students make progress from their own baseline while also trying to meet their own individual needs that may not yet be close to the grade level expectations.
Doesn't apply to preschool
Throughout the year, I do my best for students to choose options that help them display their knowledge in a variety of ways. I also try teaching with different tools, so that students are flexible and comfortable with different types of questions, learning, and tools. Students use technology often so that it doesn't seem out of place when they take SBAC.
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Being a private school, state level accountability is significantly lower than in that of a public school. This is not so much of an issue.
I know that the learning targets students are working on are based on the standards that are assessed in the SBAC and NECAP. I know that it is impossible to cover all the skills, regardless of what accountability test is provided. I feel that circling back and 'catching' students so they are making gains is probably helpful for assessment results. I honestly do not think about the tests much at all on a day to day basis.
We hold all students accountable for the performance indicators outlined in each set of standards for each content area. We personalize learning by providing choices around how to demonstrate proficiency for certain indicators, allowing students to select whether they are working towards meets or exceeds overall, offering flexible pacing for each course, and building in opportunities to explore their interests outside the standards.
I still teach rigorous material but the targets are very clear and i allow students to have multiple attempts to reach the standards
Honestly, we don't do much with SBAC other than to look at the data. We teach our classes, run our Flexible Learning Opportunities (like a choice class) and support students with their portfolios. We do minimal "teaching to the test" prior to testing except to help students become prepared for taking such a test. We do frequently use the data from the SBAC to inform teaching afterwards and provide students with directed intervention and skill building sessions.
The students understand that the SBAC and NECAP are required of them. Because of this, we try hard to teach them critically in order to align with their personalize learning plan while also teaching them the skills needed to master specific content that will be addressed with the state-level accountability testing
Our school has aligned some of its curriculum to make sure kids are exposed to content that will be on standardized tests. It is a difficult balance. Math is a challenging subject to create "personalized learning" opportunities, especially at a school that is very skill-focused and likes to cover a lot of content. I teach at a very old-school traditional place.
I am not sure that my school is quite at this point yet. PLPs act as a portfolio but students have little autonomy in designing their education. We are not quite at a fully proficiency based system.
SBAC and NECAPS are administered by the school during designated days. We don't teach to those tests or spend any other time other than testing day on them. They are not time-consuming, in that respect. We therefore have quite a bit of time to allow students to personalize their learning through self-designed projects/experiences and choice in expression of learning for more classroom-based material.
Not there yet.
I try to offer computer-based, formative and summative quizzes in all my classes on a regular basis. This at least, exposes students to testing procedures, formats, etc. which they may encounter on SBAC. Additionally, I typically make these timed assessments, so students have the added layer of time limitations in their assessment.

Section 4: ASSESSMENT IN PROFICIENY-BASED EDUCATION

Question 18



Question 19



Other:

2 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
TS Gold, other local assessments, data collection
Exit Tickets

Question 20

My students are allowed to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency (mastery).

18 Responses

No

3

PK-6th Grade -2
7th-12th Grade - 1

- N/A to our PreK friends
- We don't have time to do that if we are expected to teach all the standards. If the school year was able to go on longer it might be possible.
- Some of the courses at my school allow re-assessment. These may include a total replacement of a grade, earning some points back, etc. Some of my classes allow it and some do not. This is decided by my teaching team (whoever is also teaching the same courses) and mostly comes down to older teachers saying they do not want to deal with reassessment. I am personally in favor or reassessment and would like to give kids the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency on a certain topic until they get it. I think grades should reflect what kids know and can do

Yes

15

PK-6th Grade -5
7th-12th Grade - 10

- There are no "penalties" for wrong answers on assessments, we use assessments for data tracking and informed teaching
- Doesn't apply to preschool
- They can make changes to their final project until they have masted the skill
- As important as grades are, it is more important that they understand the material but, more importantly, how their brains work
- Not only are they allowed, it is a requirement.
- However, only larger assignments - day to day practice is not "accepted" as part of habits and trait grade, but it can be completed later to demonstrate targets
- They have time up until the end of grading period for smaller assessments, and also up until final project date.
- Any students that haven't demonstrated proficiency are always allowed to resubmit work until they reach the proficiency.
- My students have accommodations in their IEP allowing them to resubmit multiple times prior to the end of the grading period. They must also demonstrate mastery prior to moving on to the next unit.
- Summative assessments that assess proficiencies, students may resubmit.
- They are allowed to revise work and resubmit on all Summatives.

SECTION 5: SCHOOL STRUCTURES AND POLICIES

Question 21

Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that support your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles.

17 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades		
PLC time to create assessments	Data reviews	MTSS process
The school has developed scoring guides for transferable skills	The school has developed content skills for each course students may take	The school uses most recent data in the gradebook (old grades are replaced)
Project Based Learning Model	Co-teaching Model	Data Driven Teaching
Curriculum camp	Computers for the classroom	collaborative inservice time
Work with literacy and math coaches monthly	Project based learning	Personalized learning
Collaboration	Discussion	Reflection
Tech support	Flexibity	Math/literacy support
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades		
Allow for resubmissions	Stress grammar	Thorough walk through's of primary sources
??SU Learner Centered Model	Proficiency based grading codes in JumpRope (B A M E) - no numerical scores	Tutorial block (45 minutes flexibly scheduled, 3x, per week)
Grading scales - uniform	Intercessions	Seminars
4 point grading scale based on 3 as proficient	online portfolios that act as a collection of student evidence	"grades" can always be improved until they are proficient
Weekly meetings with the GX/GP coach to help create and design classroom structures		
Unsure at this time. I wish there was PD on this topic.		
Flexible Scheduling (on Wednesdays)	Using Jumprope as a grading software	Autonomy in designing materials
Consistency with teachers of the same course. Every kid should see the same content in a class regardless of teacher, be assessed the same way, etc.	Inservice Trainings	Different Grading/Reporting Structures
Professional development time to work towards proficiency based teaching/learning		
Flexible approaches and encouragement for teachers to implement.	Regular, on-going PD and staff discussions facilitated over multiple years.	Incremental roll-out of system-wide changes (e.g. report card modifications).

Question 22

Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that inhibit your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles.

13 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades		
There's little time to plan	There's little vertical planning/assessments happening	Inefficient supports around social emotional needs of children
Curriculum	Expectations	Time
Time	Schedule	Ratios
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades		
Using Powerschool to report out on student progress	Still using 0-100 numeric scale to report grades	Lack of flexible pathways
NA - we are a fully proficiency based school district and the administration supports our efforts to improve our practice		
Some students are still on credits - 10th grade and up until they graduate out	Not enough time to really rigorously assess all students all the time.	Not much time to adapt was given
Elementary, Middle and High School are working with different learning scales (HS is using no #s and only words, MS is using a 1-4 scale and ES is using both)	online platform Schoology doesn't allow us much flexibility	lack of time and funding
administration directed inservice work prevents certain collaboration between teachers from occuring	lack of time to plan with general ed teachers and special ed teachers	
Lack of PD	Grading software is limited -- Powerschool	Canvas allows "Outcomes" but all grades are transferred to numericals in Powerschool for report cards
Some mandated content	Scheduling	
Time is a barrier.	Lack of buy in from faculty as a whole.	Traditional grades are very important in our community.
traditional report card		
Trying to implement too many changes at once.	Lack of focused in-service on core challenges with implementation of reforms.	Lack of adequate knowledge management/grading software that satisfies diverse needs of our population and proficiency-based learning.

SECTION 6: EQUITY

Question 23

When thinking about opportunities for all students to learn, including English language learners and those with special needs, how effective or ineffective is proficiency-based education? Please comment.

17 Responses (Note: One teacher indicated both "very" and "somewhat.")

5	*PK-6th Grade -3* *7th-12th Grade - 2*	More access to individualized learning that show what they really know
		Clear expectations and accountability make learning easier for ALL students
Very Effective		modified scales are great for those students
12	*PK-6th Grade -3* *7th-12th Grade - 9*	Can be difficult if foundational learning is missing for lower students- must meet them where they are and meet their individualized needs.
		Sometimes, they have harder time understanding what they need to demonstrate when given too much freedom with curriculum
		some students, it is better than others
		The chance to learn from past attempts to perfect a skill is useful.
Somewhat Effective		It has the potential to increase student learning. I have seen it work in Math...but I worry about my students ability to put all of the little standards and concepts together in the big picture.
1	*7th-12th Grade - 1*	There are only a few teachers that are flexible to allow special educators the freedom to modify/accommodate their lesons and the ways in which they assess student learning
Neutral		

Question 24

What advice would you give a teacher new to working in a proficiency-based system on how to assess their own impact on student learning?

16 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
Learn more skills around collaboration with teams and colleagues. This is vital to student learning!
Have a growth mindset- and teach your students to do the same. Use pre-assessments and post-assessments to show growth.
Understand it. Allow time to plan.
Identify students strengths and needs and work from there.
Reflect on the way your students are responding to the themes and project. Let the children drive their learning.
Understand that some students will go above and beyond to demonstrated learning, while others will show the bare minimum (and should not be penalized)
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
Do not be afraid to ask for support from your peers. Most have been around a while and can give valuable insight
Reflection is key. Take the time every day to look back at what happened in your classroom. What worked well? What didn't go so well? Adapt your instruction for the next day based on what happened today. Let go of your ideas about what the 'pace' of your class will be and try and find learners where they are. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS with your students!!! This is as important (or more than) anything else you can do, and I don't think you can do a great job "personalizing" learning if you don't know your kids very well.
Constantly check to make sure that everything you ask students to do has a purpose to further their learning or help them progress toward meeting proficiency, make sure you are using assessments to communicate information about student progress at a given point in time, report academic work separately from habits of work, provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning, make sure students have multiple opportunities to improve their work, and use formative assessment data to inform instruction.
Keep copies of student work to back your grading! Also, plan multiple attempts for demonstrations of understanding and don't bite off more than you can chew!
My biggest advice is to be flexible and prioritize learning targets. Some are essential...some are not and based on your content area and how your district tracks progress, some things are more important for student growth than others.
Proficiency-based learning places students on a spectrum of skills. I advise that teachers present this information to students as what they CAN do verses where they SHOULD be (what they are NOT doing).
I am not sure yet. My system is not quite there yet.
Keep records of work!
Compare old grades to new grades. Decide what score on a 0-100 scale means a kid is really proficient. I would tell them that the system doesn't always work as well as it does in theory. Ultimately, students have to be willing to put in the work and contribute extra effort to meet difficult proficiencies.
Talk to experienced teachers. Continually look for applied examples vs. theoretical discussions.

SECTION 6: ABOUT YOU

Question 25

How many years have you been a teacher?
17 Responses

1 – 3 Years	7	PK-6th Grade -3 7th-12th Grade - 4
4 – 5 Years	10	PK-6th Grade -4 7th-12th Grade - 6

Question 26

Which of the following best describes your primary content teaching area(s)? (Check all that apply.)
17 Responses

Pre-School Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)	1	
Elementary Self-Contained (All Core Subjects)	3	
English Language Arts	3	7th-12th Grade
Mathematics	2	7th-12th Grade
Science	4	7th-12th Grade
Social Studies	2	7th-12th Grade
Art	0	
Music	0	
Physical Education	0	
Special Education	3	PK-6th Grade -2 7th-12th Grade - 1
Other (ELL)	1	7th-12th Grade

SECTION 7: CLOSING

Question 27

Is there anything else you would like to share as we build a picture of how graduates of UVM teacher preparation programs understand their impact on student learning?

5 Responses

Primarily Working in PK – 6th Grades
Please be more honest with potential teachers around the challenges of teaching in our current education system. Please give them more tools and strategies to support and care for themselves while teaching. This includes mindfulness, wellness, self-care, etc.
Be passionate about what you do, this will feed into your students joy of learning. Be flexible and adapt to the environment.
Primarily Working in 7th – 12th Grades
The College of Education at UVM did a fantastic job to set me up for success as a teacher. Thank you for everything you have done!
When teachers were asked to think about their own learning experiences and when they felt they learned the most, none of the examples came from school-based learning. They were all experiences students have outside of the school environment. It is important to recognize the student as a whole person and not focus on our own needs as teachers (student-centered).
I wish there were more courses in CESS that were specific to my content area. [mathematics]