

Personalized Learning Plans at Main Street Middle School: Charting a Path to Engaged Student Learning

Video Transcript

Sonya, Student: A PLP is a Personalized Learning Plan that helps teachers know what they can do to alter the curriculum to further a student's understanding of the school work.

Pam Arnold, Principal: My definition of a PLP is a place where students can document and demonstrate who they are as a learner and their growth as a learner. One of the elements I really like about it is that students can document things that do not necessarily happen in school.

Alexia, Student: I like to set my own goals because I know what I'm focusing on and if I set my own goals I know that they're important to me.

Ruby, Student: It helps me think about what I want to do next year and even further into the future. I can reflect on what I did last year and the year before, and it's just helpful to be able to represent my learning.

Pam Arnold, Principal: They can bring in their outside interests or outside passions and connect it to again, either a standard, or just a piece of evidence to demonstrate who they are as a person.

Don Taylor, Teacher: I think they allow you to develop deeper relationships with kids. It empowers kids, and it allows kids to be creative and critical thinkers, and it allows them to explore their interests and by doing that the classroom becomes this dynamic learning environment where you can get things accomplished that you would never imagine in a traditional classroom.

Pam Arnold, Principal: About four years ago Don decided to be a pilot for PLPs, and so with his team he experimented with the PLP process. After those two years, he has been the lead for professional development for all of us.

Don Taylor, Teacher: We still have a lot of kids who are not successful in school, who are not engaged, who would rather not be here. Will personalized learning solve that problem? I'm not sure, but the traditional systems haven't seemed to work and the engagement factor to me is the number one piece when it comes to teaching. If you can get a kid engaged, you can get them to achieve.



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Evan, Student: I think it really changes the focus of school. It really changes what you're thinking of in school. If it's more personalized, you're usually more interested in it and you get more of a feel for it.

Don Taylor, Teacher: Last week I asked my 8th graders what does the PLP mean to you and an 8th grader said, "It helps me look at my past and it helps me to think about what I aspire to in the future." For me that seals the deal.

