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Getting Personal: The Promise of Personalized Learning

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Action Principles

For the State Education Agency

a. Remove statutory and regulatory barriers that constrict a district’s or school’s ability to modify the time–pace–place structure of learning.
b. Provide information for districts and schools on emerging personalization practices that show promise.
c. Showcase districts that systematically and effectively utilize personalized learning methods.
d. Include preparation in personalized learning concepts and methods in leader and teacher licensure requirements.
e. Provide districts and schools with evaluative criteria to determine the effectiveness of personalized learning methods in their contexts.

For the Local Education Agency

a. Be cautious of programs described as “personalized”; the term is being used in various ways, so be sure the program fits your purposes.
b. Give parents a choice in selecting schools and programs, especially when introducing dramatically new methods that some parents may not desire for their children.
c. Provide technology for administrators and teachers to manage curriculum, instruction, student data, and communication.
d. Provide ample professional development for school leaders and teachers to successfully integrate technology and personalization methods into their instruction.
e. Consider the time–pace–place structures in the schools and how they can be changed to promote learning any time and everywhere.

For the School and Classroom

a. Provide teachers with bridges between conventional teaching methods and personalized methods (especially with technology) to allow them to assimilate the different ways of teaching.
b. Begin, as they say, with the end in mind—what you want students to acquire—and then consider if the new method or new technology is a better way to achieve the result.
c. When asking students to use technology outside of school, ensure that all students have access to the technology and know how to use it.
d. Balance the use of technology to facilitate communication among students and teachers with the need for face-to-face interaction.
e. Consider both technological and non-technological ways to tailor instruction for each student and to give students choice in directing their learning.
f. Intentionally build students’ skills with metacognition, self-direction, and use of multiple sources of information.