

Improving Upon the First Phase of the Assessment for Learning Project

The Results and Feedback Driving Curriculum Advancements for Improved Student Learning

In 2017, the New Hampshire Learning Initiative launched a new direction for its Next Generation Collaborative Learning Design project, part of the Assessment for Learning project (ALP).

This new direction was inspired by feedback from educators who had participated in the first phase of the Next Generation Collaborative Learning Design project, called No Grades No Grades. This first phase focused on the environments in which personalized learning can take place—specifically multi-age classrooms without traditional approaches to grading.

Outcomes and Learnings from No Grades No Grades

No Grades No Grades helped support teachers as they explored the ideas of competency learning and possible new ways of thinking about a student's learning trajectory—not connected to their age or the grade to which they are assigned.

Grounded in competency thinking, “grades” were replaced with feedback for learning. The project provided the foundational understanding for several teachers and districts to begin building a move-on-when-ready system for personalized learning within the classroom and as a structure within the school.

The first year of No Grades No Grades provided professional learning for teachers and the springboard for beginning to help students co-design their learning—a next step in the personalized learning design.

Leveraging Feedback From Phase I to Inform Phase II of the ALP Project

Reflective phase I feedback from participants in phase 1 helped pilot phase II of the Next Generation Collaborative Learning Design project. This feedback enabled the ALP project team to identify new key steps and strategies to more effectively support districts in moving forward with designing units of study and classroom structures that support student agency, competency, learning, equity, and deeper learning.

Districts and schools that were further down the road toward implementing competency education identified a need to better understand how to collaborate with learners as co-designers of their own learning.

Joining Forces to Advance ALP Phase II

The ALP project team enlisted the assistance of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (The Center for Assessment) to support teachers in curriculum unit replacement. The goal was to advance a redesign of an existing unit through the lens of co-design.

The ALP project team also turned to Envision Learning to help deepen the work toward student exhibition opportunities in 11 schools and districts. Both strands of the ALP focused on the heavy integration of the Work Study Practices as integral components of the work.

The phase II ALP project also expanded to align with other New Hampshire Learning Initiative projects advancing competency and personalized learning for K-12 students, such as New Hampshire Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE) initiative.

The Outlook for Phase II

ALP phase II Next Generation Collaborative Learning Design includes educators at the elementary, middle and high school levels who are working to create learning experiences for students that support student agency and deeper learning.