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Personalized Learning
Visioning Tool

Who can use this tool?

Anyone interested in implementing personalized learning, including states, districts, schools, and individuals.

What can this tool do?

Help create, refine, clarify, or communicate your vision for personalized learning.

How can this tool help us?

Create consensus around the vision for personalized learning in your community; create draft communications to share with your community.

Successful implementation of personalized learning requires clear and strategic communications.

Given the wide variety of personalized learning models and approaches, it is important that stakeholders understand not only what changes will take place, but also how those changes will align to larger district/state priorities and why they warrant investment. Crafting a vision for personalized learning can help you to more clearly define the "why" behind your efforts for all stakeholders. For parents, teachers, and students, a clear vision statement can foster better understanding of personalized learning shifts and lead to more community support. For decisionmakers, systematically defining the intended focus and impact of personalized learning efforts in a vision statement can help determine the scope of necessary implementation support.

This tool can be used in a variety of ways by anyone interested in implementing personalized learning. For example:

- Those new to personalized learning can use this tool to identify and refine the priorities and intended outcomes for their work. A team can use this tool collaboratively to drive decision making. Alternatively, individuals can complete the tool on their own and compare results. The draft vision statement generated by this tool can form the basis of initial personalized learning communications with the community.

- Those with experience implementing personalized learning can use this tool to confirm their continued vision for their work, check assumptions, and create clear, relevant communications to share with the community.

This tool will help you and your team craft a personalized learning vision statement to guide your work. Three key components should be included in your vision statement: the focus, impact, and implementation supports for your personalized learning efforts (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Personalized Learning Vision Statement Components

Focus	Impact	Implementation Supports
The focus of your personalized learning approach (at least during initial implementation) may be related to specific students (e.g., STEM students, ninth graders, English learners).	You may be looking to personalized learning to help meet a certain goal (e.g., better engaging students, helping students become more self-sufficient, closing achievement gaps).	Personalized learning implementation supports should, of course, be "personalized" to the intended foci and impacts. Having the appropriate supports in place can ease the transition for all stakeholders involved.

1 Personalized Learning **Focus**

Putting Students at the Center of Personalized Learning Approaches

The reasons for using a personalized learning approach can vary widely, but many of these reasons relate to issues of educational equity. Regardless of the intended focus or impact of personalized learning approaches, equity is often at the heart of these efforts. Making the shift to personalized learning is often an acknowledgment that current learning conditions do not serve all students equitably.

To begin crafting your vision for personalized learning, first consider **who** you want to influence. While you may hope to affect all students over time, there may be students on whom you plan to focus during initial implementation, such as those who need additional supports, those with achievement gaps, or those in specific grades or subjects. Likewise, you may wish to focus on training cohorts of teachers over time.

Identify **who** you want to influence through personalized learning by writing in any of the four boxes in the table below. If you wish to focus on all students, consider whether there are specific groups you plan to designate as "early implementers" of personalized learning. Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

Table 1. Personalized Learning Focus

Personalized Learning **Focus**

Students needing additional instructional supports:	Students with achievement gaps:
Students in specific grades or subjects:	Other:

Consider:

- English learners
- Refugees or recent immigrants
- Students with special needs (including students with disabilities)
- Students in "transition" grades (e.g., ninth graders)
- Low-performing students

- Gifted students
- Elementary, middle, or high school students
- Students in STEM courses
- Students in CTE pathways
- Students in humanities and arts courses
- Students with access to educational technology

Now, turn to the next page to move to Component 2: Personalized Learning Impact.

2 Personalized Learning **Impact**

Defining Success for Personalized Learning Efforts

Depending on the focus areas that are a priority for your personalized learning efforts, you may have different types of outcomes you hope to see as a result of your work. Many leaders invest in implementing personalized learning with the hope of eventually impacting all students, but they often start by focusing on a specific subgroup with the most pressing needs. If there are specific students you plan to prioritize during personalized learning implementation (e.g., English learners, students in STEM pathways), consider what specific outcomes you hope to see for them in the next few years. You also may wish to consider what long-term effects you hope to see for some or all students.

Identify **what** short- and long-term impacts you wish to produce as a result of your personalized learning efforts by writing in Table 2. Consider first what effects you wish to see for the students you plan to prioritize or focus on during initial implementation (from your selections in Component 1). You may wish to see similar outcomes across different types of students (e.g., increased academic growth for both English learners and students with disabilities); alternatively, you may wish to see different types of impacts for different groups of students (e.g., increased engagement for gifted students, increased on-time graduation rates for recent immigrants).

In addition, while you may hope to see many kinds of positive impacts over time, consider which impacts you wish to prioritize and strategically address through personalized learning efforts. For example, you might focus on the "top three" most important short- and long-term impacts. Also, consider what metrics you have to measure impact and whether you may need to change the way you gather student or teacher data. Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

Table 2. Personalized Learning Impacts

Personalized Learning **Impacts**

Short-term impacts:	Long-term impacts:

Consider:

- Accelerated learning or credit accrual
- Increased academic growth in tested subjects (e.g., reading language arts, mathematics, science, and history)
- Narrow or closed achievement gaps
- Increased on-time graduation rates
- Increased completion rates for career pathways
- Increased enrollment in advanced coursework
- Reduced dropout and retention rates
- Increased independence in learning

- Improved social-emotional and deeper learning skills
- Reduced behavioral and disciplinary incidents
- Improved attendance
- Improved employability skills
- Increased postsecondary matriculation and completion

3 Personalized Learning Implementation Supports

Setting Up Systems for Success

Personalized learning implementation supports can lead to intended outcomes when they are purposefully selected and designed to match the focus of the work. Likewise, having the right kinds of supports in place can ease the transition for all stakeholders involved in the learning process. Identify **how** you plan to implement personalized learning by writing in any of the four boxes in Table 3 (based on where you are in implementation and planning). Your entries will help to build your draft vision statement at the end of this tool.

Table 3. Personalized Learning Implementation Supports

Personalized Learning **Implementation Supports**

Phase I. Planning and Design	Phase II. Early Implementation	Phase III. Expanded Implementation	Phase IV. Refining and Scaling
Consider:	**Consider:**	**Consider:**	**Consider:**
• Establishing a personalized learning design committee	• Communicating about implementation, changes, successes, and lessons learned with invested stakeholder groups	• Providing professional learning, micro-credentials, or implementation monitoring around personalized learning	• Conducting an evaluation of the impact of personalized learning instructional approaches on select student outcomes
• Conducting a personalized learning needs assessment or readiness assessment	• Providing professional learning and personalized learning implementation monitoring	• Revising policies and protocols to reflect personalized learning practices	• Compiling and curating strategies, tools, and materials from personalized learning pilot for future use
• Conducting an environmental scan of current personalized learning structures, practices, and opportunities	• Providing access to coaching (on-site, virtual, or blended), demonstration classrooms, or other implementation supports	• Celebrating early adopters and champions by collecting and publishing stories from the field	• Holding planning sessions to determine next-level decisions regarding personalized learning program implementation
• Providing initial training and engagement opportunities around personalized learning	• Implementing the personalized learning pilot program with a group of students, teachers, schools, or districts (e.g., launching a "school within a school")	• Conducting "reality checks" with key stakeholders to recommend midcourse adjustments	
• Conducting a crosswalk of skills and competencies			
• Creating a monitoring and implementation plan (including baseline data)			

AIR can work with you to identify and customize supports to fit your overall personalized learning vision, design, and scope. To complete your draft personalized learning vision statement, please turn to the next page.

Personalized Learning
Vision Statement

Using your selections for components 1, 2, and 3, you can now begin to craft a draft personalized learning vision statement. While you may want to revise your vision statement further to ensure it is ready for mass communication, this initial draft vision statement may be a good starting place for you and your team.

To create your draft vision statement, populate the following template (Table 4) with the focus areas, impacts, and implementation supports you noted for components 1, 2, and 3.

Table 4. Personalized Learning Vision Statement Template

Personalized Learning Vision Statement Template

We are committed to ensuring that all students have the learning supports they need to succeed.	
To this end, we plan to focus our personalized efforts on:	*Write selected focus areas below.*
, leading to:	*Write selected impacts below.*
We plan to support these shifts to personalized learning through:	*Write selected implementation supports below.*

Here is an example of a draft vision statement generated through this tool:

We are committed to ensuring that all students have the learning supports they need to succeed.

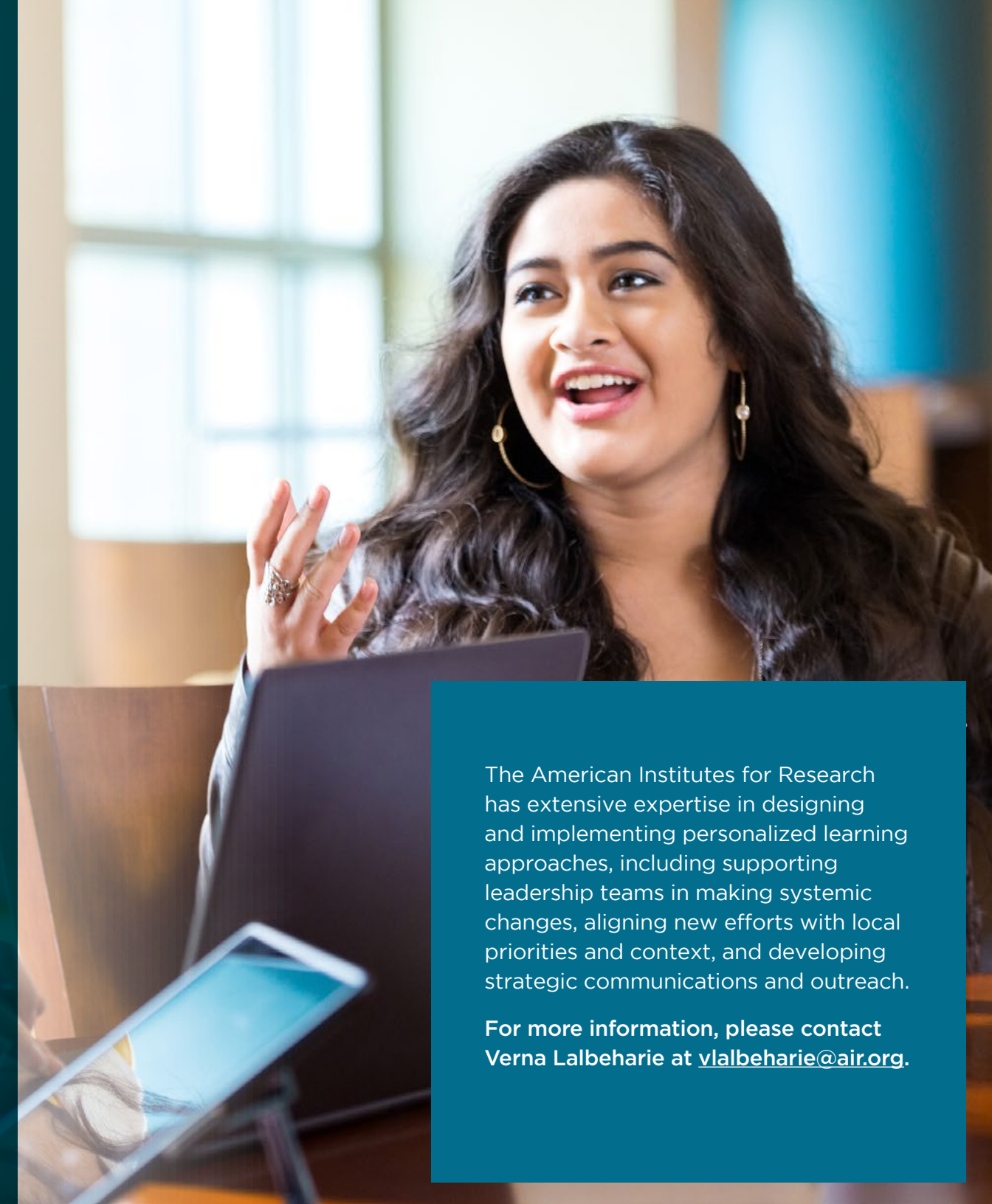| To this end, we plan to focus our personalized efforts on:	*Write selected focus areas below.*
	students in our lowest performing schools
, leading to:	*Write selected impacts below.*
	increased student engagement and
	increased academic growth.
We plan to support these shifts to personalized learning through:	*Write selected implementation supports below.*
	conducting a needs assessment (including a deep dive into student data), offering professional development to teachers on student choice and differentiation, and supporting peer learning networks to help make personalized learning a grassroots effort.

You may find after developing your draft vision statement that you need to revise the language, add more details, or even revisit the previous decisions you made when completing components 1, 2, and 3 of this tool.

Once you have crafted and refined your vision statement for personalized learning, consider how to expand strategic communication messages for key stakeholders.

- For parents, consider communicating not only what the positive outcomes are for students, but also what will stay the same. For example, "What students learn will stay the same, but *how* they learn will be more tailored to their individual needs and interests."

- For parents and community partners, consider communicating the specific knowledge and skills personalized learning will support. For example, "Students will have more opportunities to practice and develop self-regulation, communication, and reflection skills."

- For teachers, consider communicating what the specific changes are to their primary responsibilities as instructors. For example, "The learning standards, scope, and sequence of instruction will stay the same; however, you can expect much more individualized and independent learning activities as well as much more flexibility in pacing."

The American Institutes for Research has extensive expertise in designing and implementing personalized learning approaches, including supporting leadership teams in making systemic changes, aligning new efforts with local priorities and context, and developing strategic communications and outreach.

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