

An Analysis of a Canadian Personalized Learning Curriculum

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Abstract : The shift to a personalized learning (PL) curriculum in Canada represents an innovative approach to teaching and learning that is also evident in various initiatives across the 32-nation OECD. The premise behind PL is that empowering individual learners to have more input into how they access and construct knowledge, and express their understanding of it, will result in more meaningful school experiences and academic success. In this paper presentation, the author reports on a document analysis of the new curriculum in the province of British Columbia. Three theoretical frameworks are used to analyze the new curriculum. Framework 1 focuses on five dominant aspects (FDA) of PL at the classroom level. Framework 2 focuses on conceptualizing and enacting personalized learning (CEPL) within three spheres of influence. Framework 3 focuses on the integration of three types of knowledge (content, technological, and pedagogical). Analysis is ongoing, but preliminary findings suggest that the new curriculum addresses framework 1 quite well, which identifies five areas of personalized learning: 1) assessment for learning; 2) effective teaching and learning; 3) curriculum entitlement (choice); 4) school organization; and 5) "beyond the classroom walls" (learning in the community). Framework 2 appears to be less well developed in the new curriculum. This framework speaks to the dynamics of PL within three spheres of interaction: 1) nested agency, comprised of overarching constraints [and enablers] from policy makers, school administrators and community; 2) relational agency, which refers to a capacity for professionals to develop a network of expertise to serve shared goals; and 3) students' personalized learning experience, which integrates differentiation with self-regulation strategies. Framework 3 appears to be well executed in the new PL curriculum, as it employs the theoretical model of technological, pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) in which there are three interdependent bodies of knowledge. Notable within this framework is the emphasis on the pairing of technologies with excellent pedagogies to significantly assist students and teachers. This work will be of high relevance to educators interested in innovative school reform.

Keywords : curriculum reform, K-12 school change, innovations in education, personalized learning

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