

Foundational Principles for High School Redesign

A VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

Mastery Learning

This video is one of a series that presents the foundational principles of high school redesign in action. The schools showcased in these videos have been focused on redesign for five or more years and each video represents one way of implementing a foundational principle. It is important to keep in mind that there can be many ways to implement each principle.

As you view this series of videos, consider what you would want each foundational principle to look like in your school in five years. What would you want your students to say about the role each principle played in their success? What would you want your school's story to be?

Key understandings

- Mastery learning is an instructional strategy that results in a comprehensive grasp of curriculum as demonstrated through performance-based evaluations.
- Mastery learning is tied to a cycle of learn, assess, relearn and reassess.
- Formative assessment is integral to mastery learning; feedback is used to move the student forward.
- When mastery learning is the focus, time is no longer a barrier to learning.

“Mastery learning allows the student to be more responsible for their own learning.”

“I think students feel in charge of when things are finished....and it's not final until they say it's final.”

Conversation starters

In what ways does this video affirm or challenge your understanding of mastery learning?

What is the connection between mastery learning and success for all students? What role does the cycle of learn, assess, relearn and reassess play in mastery learning? What shifts in thinking are required in order to allow mastery learning to become the focus?

How could you use mastery learning in your school to increase students' ownership of their learning?

In your experience, how has changing the pace of learning for students allowed them to “grab hold of their education and take it where it needs to go?” Does this fit with the topic of mastery learning?

Discuss the statement “To build a culture of mastery learning you have to be willing to create opportunities in response to the needs that people are identifying.”

Discuss the statement “We need to remember that success and mastery for any student is going to be different.” How do we help students recognize their successes?

Related Resources

Alberta Regional Consortia: Moving Forward with High School Redesign
www.abhsredesign.ca

Mastery-Based Assessment Builds Accountability
<http://www.edutopia.org/stw-college-career-stem-assessment>

Edutopia
www.edutopia.org

Alberta
Government

www.education.alberta.ca/highschoolcompletion



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