NEXT GENERATION LEARNING CHALLENGES

How Next Generation Schools Define Success

From leading educators in public school redesign: What today's kids need to know and be able to do, and how we know they're learning it

Key Takeaways

Next Generation Learning Challenges asked 33 next generation educators how they define success for their students and schools, how they measure that success, and how they share their progress toward success with students, families, and others.

1. **What do students learn?** Particular emphasis is placed on developing student agency, responsibility, and initiative; building strong caring relationships; and "developing students who believe that the world can be a better place and that they can be the ones to make it happen." All of that is on a solid foundation of 21st century skills: problem-solving, communication, collaboration, knowing *how* to learn, and how to apply all of these skills in different contexts.

2. **How do students learn?** Innovative instructional practices include new roles for teachers, such as mentors and facilitators, as well as students, who often take on more self-direction based on their passions. Strong relationships are important and realized through small learning teams, multi-age classrooms, and team teaching. Common are personal learning plans, self-paced learning, and rotations among instructional methods like projects, discussion, instruction, and independent work, all with ongoing feedback.

3. **How is learning measured?** Next generation educators don't rely on just one measure of student success. They use multiple measures, from standardized to teacher-developed to surveys and self-reports. Assessments are often mastery-based, performance-based, and authentic, using observations, rubrics, micro-credentials, self-assessments, and portfolios. The particular assessment strategies used varies based on the specific competency domain being measured.

4. **How do schools know if they are succeeding?** Innovative program evaluation practices involve tracking progress against multiple criteria for success, primarily student outcomes. Other common practices are focus-group and exit interviews, family and teacher satisfaction ratings, college attendance and completion, and student-applicant lottery pool size.

5. **How do schools communicate their model and its successes?** Next generation educators report the need for increased time and energy devoted to communication with a greater focus on school philosophy and unique approaches as well as reporting on multiple indicators of success. They develop communications not only for parents and the community, but also for other schools and educators.

Key Takeaways

The innovative definitions of student success used by the next generation educators surveyed generally align with the four domains of the MyWays Student Success Framework: Content Knowledge, Creative Know How, Habits of Success, and Wayfinding Abilities. The **NGLC MyWays Project** offers additional resources for educators asking the same questions of their schools, to help them build on the strategies shared in this report.

Overview

The purpose of this guide is to help busy educators who are moving toward next generation learning build on the experiences of those already doing it. Current measures of success in K–12 education do not fully capture whether students are learning what they need to drive their life forward in today's world. For that reason, when educators redesign schools, current measures are incomplete for understanding their effectiveness. What measures, then, do next generation educators use to guide their work?

In 2016, Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) set out to answer this question. With funding from Overdeck Family Foundation, we surveyed 33 next generation educators in our national network, and followed up with interviews, to find out how these educators define, measure, and communicate success for their students and their innovative school designs. Survey respondents are listed on page 17.

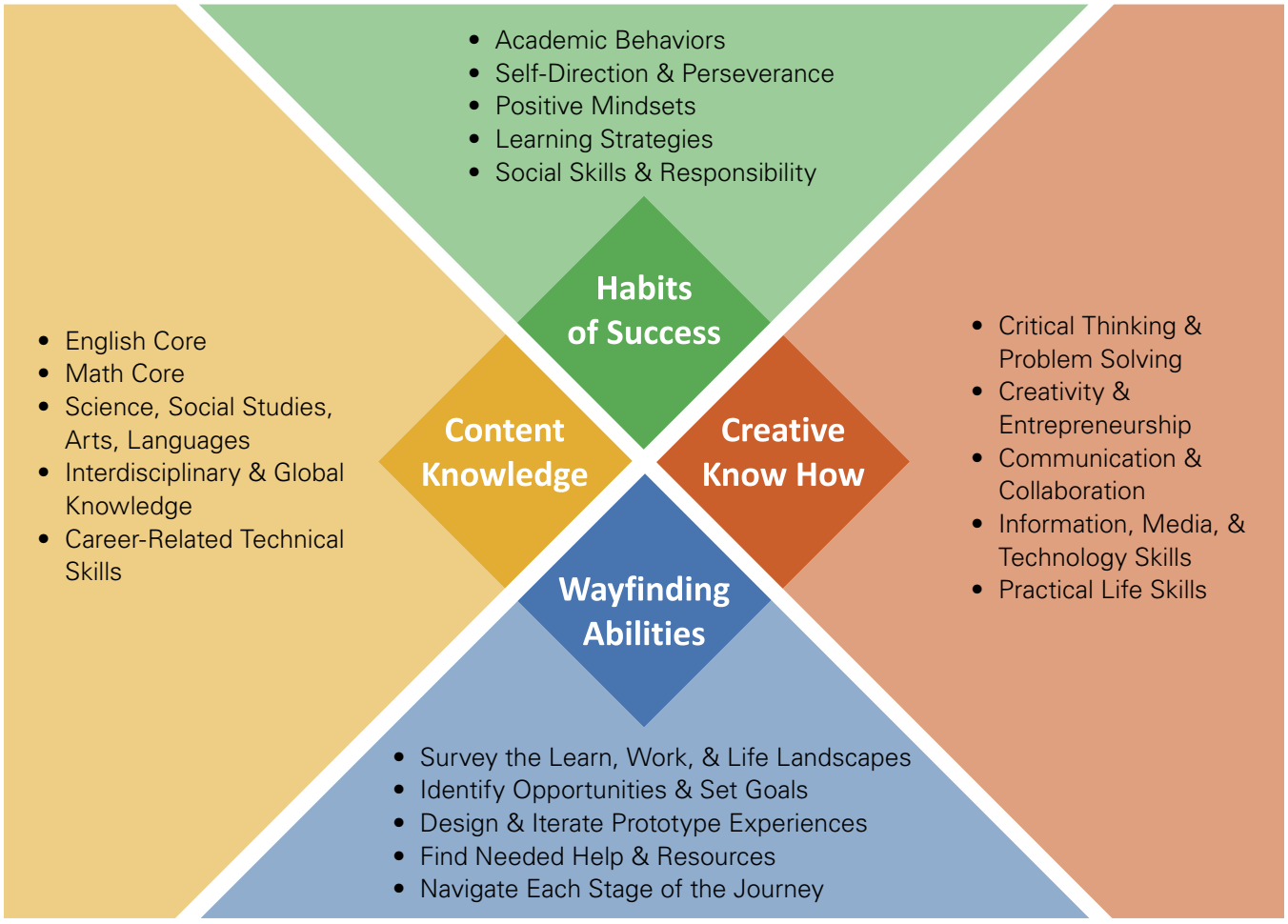
Interested education leaders may scan this summary of promising work underway and make use of the valuable practice-based resources, examples, and artifacts contained within it to better understand what success means in their own schools and districts.

The guide addresses five major questions:

1. **What do students learn?** What innovative definitions of student success—learning outcomes—are next generation educators using?
2. **How do students learn?** What innovative instructional practices are next generation educators using?
3. **How is learning measured?** What innovative assessment practices are next generation educators using to gauge student progress?
4. **How do schools know if they are succeeding?** What innovative program evaluation practices are next generation educators using?
5. **How do schools communicate their model and its successes?** What innovative communication practices are next generation educators using with stakeholders?

The survey was designed to gather information about student success aligned with NGLC's **MyWays Student Success Framework**—a set of 20 competencies across four domains reflecting a broader, deeper vision of success for today's students. This framework pulls together education, work, and human development research and reflects insights from the educators in the NGLC community. It's important to note that the survey participants did not design their schools using MyWays. Instead, their innovative efforts to redefine success and redesign learning led to the creation of the MyWays Project and the subsequent framework. This guide uses the four domains of competencies to frame the discussion of findings and to organize the various approaches used in the 33 next generation schools.

MyWays Competencies for Success in Learning, Work, and Life



Source: Next Generation Learning Challenges
To learn more about the MyWays Student Success Framework competencies, visit **https://myways.nextgenlearning.org/big-questions-success.**

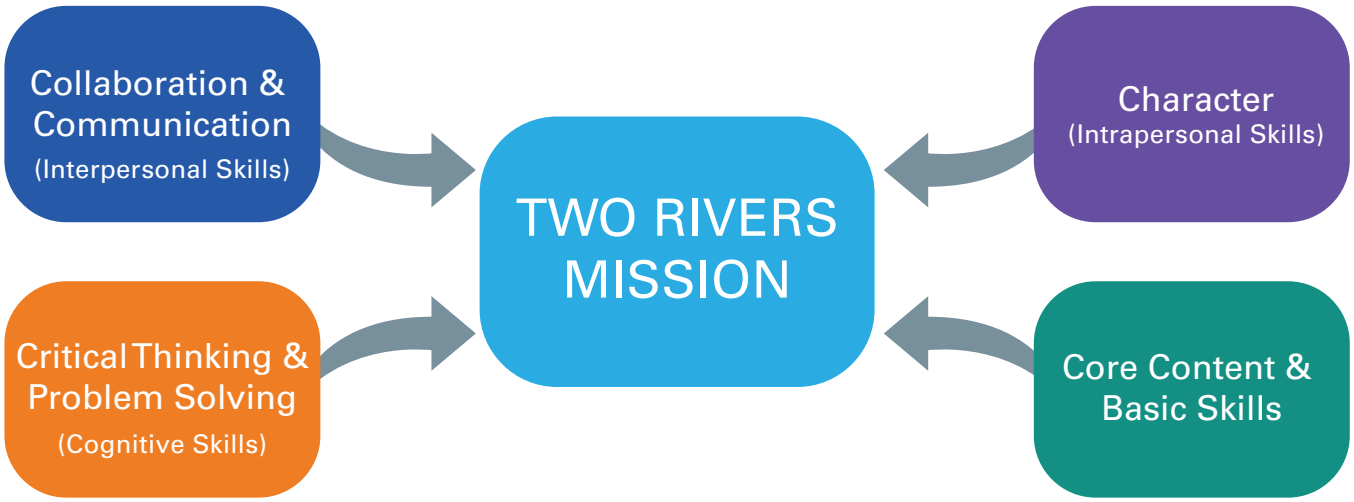
1 What Students Learn

Innovative definitions of student success

Next generation learning entails dramatic changes in both the experience of learning and the outcomes of learning: both are rich, deep, and meaningful. When asked how they define student success at their school(s), the next generation educators confirmed through their survey responses that all four domains of the MyWays Student Success Framework are essential. In addition to Content Knowledge, students also need Creative Know How, Habits of Success, and Wayfinding Abilities.

Among all the competencies they listed in their definitions, educators embarking on the journey to next generation learning might want to give special consideration to, as one respondent put it, "developing students who believe that the world can be a better place and that they can be the ones to make it happen." What would students need to learn and how would they need to learn it in order to become the people who make the world a better place? It's an inspiring place to begin redesigning a school.

Outcomes for Deeper Learning at Two Rivers Public Charter School



At the foundation of the respondents' definitions of success is **developing students who are responsible**—for their own learning, their conduct, and even their peers' learning. Also foundational is **developing students' initiative**—to identify real-world problems, to seek solutions to those problems, to inspire and organize others to help solve those problems (entrepreneurship), to identify and address their own shortcomings to reach their goals (self-direction), and to seek excellence in everything they do. Responsibility and initiative stand in stark contrast to the focus on compliance in traditional schools.

"Our mission is to unleash the creative and intellectual potential of young people to solve the world's toughest problems. We do this by putting real world challenges at the center of the curriculum."

–The Workshop School

Another foundation is **building strong, caring relationships**, both among students and between students and teachers. These are key to students' social-emotional development, their respect for others who are different from themselves, and to developing a healthy school culture.

Some schools focus on **health and wellness**, including having an annual physical, dental cleaning and exam, being physically fit, and feeling safe.

Four Pillars of Student Success at Caliber Schools

1. Emotional Intelligence: Manage internal and external conflicts, articulate personal areas of strength and growth, cope with emotions and challenges, be collaborative and sympathetic team members.

2. Academic College Readiness: Be critical readers, persuasive writers, mathematicians, scientists, and researchers; be prepared to attend selective universities; be owners of their own goal setting and progress tracking on personalized learning plans; be savvy computer programmers and engineers.

3. Critical Thinking: Be critical thinkers and problem solvers; regularly utilize creativity and applied skills; engage in peer to peer learning, collaboration, and evaluation; be fluent in programming languages.

4. Agents of Change: Be politically informed and active citizens; be determined to drive change within themselves and their communities; be passionate about broader issues within their school, community, and the world; be actively engaged in student government.

2 How Students Learn

Innovative instructional practices

We can examine how students in next generation schools learn along several lines of insight provided by the 33 next generation educators: roles of teachers and students; instructional and formative assessment strategies; and technology, curriculum, and school culture.

Roles of Teachers and Students

Teachers hold differentiated positions in many next generation schools, such as lead teachers, apprentice teachers, **Compass coaches**, and other positions. Teachers in next generation schools often serve as mentors who concern themselves with the whole student—that is, all aspects of a child's development. Typically, students stay with the same mentor for more than one year. Teachers serve multiple instructional roles, including project designer, facilitator, tutor, small-group instructor, lecturer, and provider of learning resources.

Students serve as self-directed learners—setting goals, choosing methods, and self-assessing their learning. They also are helped to find their passions, as the core of passion-based learning. The **student-led IEPs** at Two Rivers Public Charter School is an example of self-directed learning.

Grouping. Along with differentiated roles, we found that next generation schools may group teachers and students in ways that are distinct from one teacher in a classroom with 25–30 students. This includes team teaching (in one case, with three teachers for 60 students), multi-age classrooms, and small learning teams of 12–16 students with one teacher.

Instructional and Formative Assessment Strategies

Survey respondents selected three innovative approaches that best described their learning model among a list of 11 options. The following list orders these 11 options from the most commonly to least commonly used:

1. Personalized Learning
2. Student-Centered Learning
3. Focus on Social-Emotional Supports
4. Project-Based/Experiential Learning
5. Competency Based Learning
6. Deeper Learning Goals for Students
7. Community Partnerships, Externships, Authentic Learning
8. Blended Learning
9. Early College, Dual Enrollment, Pathways to College
10. Innovative Staffing Model
11. Gamified Learning

"Project-based learning is a learn-by-doing curriculum that integrates core subjects with real-life problems to be solved. Teachers work in teams with one another to identify content area essential skills that need to be addressed at the grade-level. Teachers work backwards to plan their curriculum, creating engaging, interdisciplinary projects that center on a big idea and a real-world connection that is rigorous, relevant and meaningful to students' lives. Students work in teams to create a final product that demonstrates mastery of content standards and a demonstration of key skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and communication."

(from **http://www.davincischools.org/about/signature-programs/**)

Instruction to support these learning approaches occurs in several overlapping ways. We found that next generation schools commonly use a variety of methods to meet each learner's needs. In addition to describing the strategies in use, we provide links to tools and samples for those who wish to deepen their understanding, consider adoption, or continue to iterate and improve upon the strategy.

- **A learner profile and personal learning plan (PLP) for every student, with weekly meetings to set goals, make plans, and monitor progress.** NGLC provides a **toolkit** for developing these personalization tools, including examples like the CICS West Belden **profile** and Caliber Schools **PLP**. Also, we describe **personalization practices** used by CICS West Belden, Thrive Public Schools, and Whittemore Park Middle School in Horry County Schools in one edition of NGLC's "Practitioner's Guide to Next Gen Learning" series.
- **Longer projects (with deep problems), followed by shorter performance-based tasks to demonstrate transfer.** Two Rivers Public Charter School has "**learning expeditions**" while Fullerton School District has "**quests**." For extended resources, see the High Tech High **library of projects**.

> *"The mission or quest that the student undertakes is one in which s/he will learn state standards in an applied context."*
>
> –Fullerton School District

- **Collaborative learning.** Da Vinci Schools offers some helpful guidance in a two-page brief on **collaborative classrooms**.
- **Self-paced learning within a flexible schedule.** Competency-based education is used at **Del Lago Academy–Campus of Applied Science** of the Escondido Union High School District, where learning is the constant and time is the variable. Fullerton School District allows students to **advance at their own rate** through quests that are tied to standards, using Marzano's **complete instructional design sequence**. Learning at **Building 21** of the School District of Philadelphia is not tied to year-long courses, course-based credit, or seat time. They ripped apart standards to develop competency statements so that student mastery can be tracked and measured along a continuum of levels which students can enter at their point of readiness.
- **Flexible learning pathways** that include courses, projects, experiences, teams, and early college.

> *"Every student has a unique learning pathway, designing around their unique competency level by subject, progressing based on mastery of said competencies in an applied, project-based way that is tracked individually and collectively through our open sourced technology platform Spark."*
>
> –Building 21

- **Three different types of rotations.** First, next generation schools use targeted rotations among collaborative projects, discussion, instruction, and independent work. Another rotation is between small-group instruction, leveled skill practice, and fill-in-the-gap remediation and enrichment. A third type of rotation is among short-term workshops, longer-term classes, learning labs, and extended learning.
- **Community-based authentic projects, service learning, and internships**, such as the Workshop School's **real world projects**. The High Tech High community-based sample project, "**Our Community, Our Stories**," is a great extended resource (High Tech High was not involved in the survey).
- **Methods for social-emotional learning.** Valor Collegiate Academies has developed a helpful **resource guide** for its Compass model of social-emotional learning.

Feedback or formative assessment is typically ongoing within each of these instructional methods, and is also done in a variety of ways. Teacher-developed diagnostic assessments and interim exams are common to find out what students need to continue to work on and to give them feedback that helps them master the content. Data from online programs also provide such feedback to students. Interestingly, student self-assessment is often used to develop students' self-regulated learning skills.

Perhaps most exciting is that, in some cases, the distinction between formative and summative assessment is blurred, based on the adage, "practice until perfect." Students practice a skill, receiving feedback when needed, until the criterion for mastery is reached—say, 10 items in a row correct unaided; at that point the summative evaluation has taken place, without wasting time on a test and allowing each student to move on to new competencies right away. As one respondent put it, "Every content assessment is formative until it's summative; thus, time is variable and learning is fixed."

Technology, Curriculum, and School Culture

In the next generation schools involved in the survey, **technology is typically used for blended learning**, with systems that offer access to quests or missions and tutorials or other kinds of instruction. **Summit Learning**, Fullerton's **iPersonalize system called Epic Learning**, and Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School's **Cortex** are three such examples. Some schools also have a learning management system (LMS), such as **Canvas, Schoology**, or **Buzz** to keep track of student progress and serve additional functions. In some cases, there is one device per student in the schools. Although technology does not lead instructional choices, next generation educators use it as a powerful tool for supporting students' personalized, self-directed learning and helping teachers manage it.

"We do not 'teach to the test' or follow the old factory-model of education where teachers lecture at the front of the class and students memorize facts that are quickly forgotten. ... we disrupt the assembly line approach to education by finding students' unique gifts and interests and cultivating them so students can change their world."

–Da Vinci Schools

Curriculum in these next generation schools is broader than in a traditional school, as described in "What Students Learn" above. The focus is often on whole-child development, encompassing such diverse areas as basic skills, deep learning, higher-order thinking skills (problem solving, critical thinking), innovation (creativity, entrepreneurship, risk-taking), interpersonal skills (communication, collaboration, empathy, leadership), intrapersonal skills (character, dispositions, emotional development, responsibility, community-mindedness), restorative justice, and more.

School culture is often focused on building strong relationships among students and between students and teachers. Student autonomy and choice are important elements in building this culture. In some cases teachers eat lunch with students in family-style meals, and students have chores like cleaning up after lunch to build work ethic and sense of commitment to the school. The Workshop School offers **compelling ideas about school culture**.

3 How Learning is Measured

Innovative assessment practices

Our survey asked respondents to report how they measure student competencies separately for each of the four MyWays competency domains: Content Knowledge, Creative Know How, Habits of Success, and Wayfinding Abilities. To understand trends, we categorized their responses into six types of assessment measures, then rank-ordered the types based on how frequently they were used.

Assessing Content Knowledge

Next generation educators reported a variety of ways for assessing student learning of content knowledge. The following is a rough rank ordering of measures used to assess student learning in this domain:

1. Standardized summative assessments
2. School climate and engagement surveys
3. Student self-reports
4. Longitudinal student data on longer-term outcomes
5. Student behavioral data from learning platforms
6. Simulations, games, and situational judgment

Furthermore, we found that teacher-generated measures are used extensively, and microcredentials and badging systems, while not yet widely used, are receiving increasing attention and piloting, as in **Fullerton School District**.

"Rubrics are customized to project deliverables, so evaluation criteria are clear and specific. All students self-assess on projects prior to teacher assessment."

–The Workshop School

Competency-based or mastery-based assessment is commonly used for determining when each student is ready to move on. Such assessment is often done with authentic tasks (performance-based assessment) and even through real-world applications. Rubrics play an important role in such assessment. (As an extended resource, see the extensive Institute for the Future of Learning **database of rubrics**.) Also, student self-assessment is often used prior to assessment by the teacher. Examples include Fullerton School District's **student engagement surveys**.

Discussion-based assessments are used by a few of the next generation educators. Interim assessments are used by some during a project, and portfolios and performance tasks are often used to assess mastery at the end of a project. Unit exams, mostly teacher-developed, are used by some to assess breadth of understanding and ability to transfer. In some cases, as described in "How Students Learn" above, each student "practices until perfect"—moving on to new competencies as soon as mastery is achieved without needing a separate test; Khan Academy was one tool cited to support this approach. Standardized tests, of course, are also used often to measure content knowledge, including NWEA MAP, PARCC, ANET, mClass, and ACT.

Assessing Creative Know How

Respondents reported multiple measures for assessing student learning of the academic skills in the Creative Know How domain. The following is a rough rank ordering of those measures:

1. School climate and engagement surveys
2. Student self-reports
3. Standardized summative assessments
4. Longitudinal student data on longer-term outcomes
5. Student behavioral data from learning platforms
6. Simulations, games, and situational judgment.

This list is similar to the one for Content Knowledge, with one exception: standardized summative assessments are used less frequently for measuring Creative Know How. We found again that teacher-generated measures are used extensively, and microcredentials and badging systems, while not yet widely used, are receiving increasing attention and piloting.

Assessments in this domain focus on a wide variety of higher-order thinking skills, namely:

- *Critical Thinking & Problem Solving*, including synthesis, evaluation, reasoning, sound judgment, open-mindedness, and metacognition. Two Rivers Public Charter School offers example **rubrics and performance tasks** for measuring critical thinking and problem solving.
- *Communication & Collaboration*. Two Rivers provides example **rubric and self-reflection worksheets** for measuring these competencies.
- *Creativity & Entrepreneurship*, including innovation.

Only a few respondents mentioned *Information, Media, & Technology Skills* or *Practical Life Skills*, two additional competencies in the MyWays Creative Know How domain, in spite of emphasis on technology throughout the curriculum for many next generation schools as well as evidence that both competencies are important to success in life. The skills may be addressed more broadly in the future.

"We are currently focused on developing tools to assess the cognitive skills of critical thinking and problem solving through short performance-based tasks that allow students to demonstrate transfer of skills beyond the longer projects that we use to teach the skills to students."

–Two Rivers Public Charter School

Methods of assessment used by respondents include performance assessments, presentations, observations, and projects. Student self-assessment is also used. Rubrics and scales are common. For extended resources, EdLeader21's **rubrics on the 'Four Cs'** (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity) are a helpful jumping off point for schools and districts to tailor their own rubrics. Also, the Buck Institute for Education has great **resources for rubrics**, and the Institute for the Future of Learning has an **extensive database of rubrics**.

Assessment tools include dashboards, self-assessment Likert-scale surveys, quarterly reports, and the **Summit Cognitive Skills Rubric** addressing 36 skills. For extended resources, the Institute for the Future of Learning report, ***Assessing the Learning that Matters Most***, identifies external assessments and surveys used by schools and districts such as the **College Work Readiness Assessment** (CWRA), **PISA Test for Schools**, **Mission Skills Assessment**, and the **HOPE**, **HSSSE**, **YouthTruth**, **LASSI**, and **Panorama** surveys.

Assessing Social-Emotional Habits of Success

Respondents again reported multiple measures for assessing student learning in this domain, in the following rough rank order:

1. Student self-reports
2. School climate and engagement surveys
3. Student behavioral data from learning platforms
4. Longitudinal student data on longer-term outcomes
5. Standardized summative assessments
6. Simulations, games, and situational judgment.

> *"We measure SEL in multiple ways. We use Kickboard, Six Seconds, internal trackers, and surveying to measure growth in our Compass dimensions."*
>
> –Valor Collegiate Academies

The major differences here compared to Creative Know How are that student self-reports are most commonly used to measure Habits of Success, and standardized assessments are used even less. Also, fewer of these measures are teacher-generated.

Assessments in this category focus on a variety of social-emotional habits, namely:

- *Social Skills & Responsibility*, including empathy, conflict resolution, project management, social belonging, leadership, community contribution
- *Self-Direction & Perseverance*, including stress management, work ethic, emotional self-awareness, self-management
- *Positive Mindsets*
- *Learning Strategies*, including self-regulated learning, goal setting, reflection, self-evaluation, strategy-shifting, help-seeking

Only a few respondents mentioned the MyWays competency, *Academic Behaviors*, in this domain, perhaps because it is so closely related to learning strategies, especially self-regulated learning.

Methods of assessment used by respondents include surveys and observations. Rubrics are common, as in this **self-reflection rubric** from Two Rivers Public Charter School. Summit Public Schools describes their approach in the document, **Habits of Success Common Assessment Plan**. Student self-assessment is also used. Next generation educators also report using assessment tools that include the **Character Growth Card**, **Class Dojo**, **Kickboard**, and **Six Seconds**.

For extended resources, the report, **Evolving Assessments for a 21st Century Education**, from the Assessment Research Consortium in the Center for Curriculum Redesign provides descriptions and reviews of selected assessment methods and instruments for Habits of Success and Creative Know How, including the following kinds of learning:

- **Skills:** the "Four Cs" (creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration)
- **Character:** mindfulness, curiosity, courage, resilience, ethics, leadership
- **Meta-learning:** metacognition, growth mindset

> *"We are in early stages of building Badge Projects for our Expedition courses that... measure SEL and use non-traditional academic measures. For example, the Badge Project for our Design Thinking class had measurements around creativity, empathy, collaboration, and kindness."*
>
> –Valor Collegiate Academies

Assessing Wayfinding Abilities

Wayfinding Abilities is the competency domain least addressed of the four, and only a handful of respondents are assessing it, perhaps largely because measures are difficult for this domain. But those who are assessing Wayfinding Abilities reported using multiple measures. The following is a rough rank ordering of the types of measures they use:

1. Student self-reports
2. School climate and engagement surveys
3. Longitudinal student data on longer-term outcomes
4. Student behavioral data from learning platforms
5. Standardized summative assessments
6. Simulations, games, and situational judgment.

The only difference here compared to the Habits of Success domain is that longitudinal student data on longer-term outcomes are more commonly used than student behavioral data from learning platforms. Furthermore, even fewer of these measures are teacher-generated.

Assessments used by respondents typically focus on three wayfinding skills:

- Capacity to navigate college, often measured by success in dual enrollment courses
- Capacity to navigate career, often measured by success in internships or by entrepreneurship growth
- Capacity to navigate life, often measured by a goal setting and tracking platform, observations of self-scheduling based on wants and needs, or a staff member in a course to prepare students for post-secondary transitions.

These skills align with the MyWays Wayfinding Abilities competency, *Survey the Learn, Work, & Life Landscapes*.

Very few respondents mentioned the other MyWays competencies in this domain: *Identify Opportunities & Set Goals, Design & Iterate Prototype Experiences, Find Needed Help & Resources*, and *Navigate Each Stage of the Journey*. This is not surprising given that, in the course of the MyWays research, Wayfinding Abilities were least consistently found in existing student success frameworks. Yet research on changes in the labor market, trends in postsecondary attendance patterns, and the continued accelerated pace of change in society (see Part A of the *MyWays Student Success Series*, **"Adolescence in an Age of Accelerations"**), suggests that the competencies of Wayfinding Abilities can contribute greatly to a student's success in life. We will continue to learn from those next generation educators—such as those at the Workshop School and

"This is what our model is all about. We call this our personal learning pathway ...

- *Student centered self-scheduling based on wants and needs.*
- *Goal setting and tracking platform.*
- *Personalized career based competency maps.*
- *Dual enrollment and internships.*
- *Staff member to teach a mandatory studio to prepare for post-secondary transitions.*
- *Recommendation engine for competency-based studios, online courses, and digital self-paced modules."*

–Building 21

Da Vinci Schools—who are leading the way when it comes to this domain, including how to measure it.

Methods of assessment used by respondents for *Survey the Learn, Work, & Life Landscapes* skills include surveys, observations, and successful completion of college and career activities and projects. Rubrics are common, and a badging system is being used by at least one respondent. **Naviance** and **Overgrad** are two tools that respondents are using. One next generation school uses a standard job readiness rubric to assess student readiness for part-time employment, while another is developing its own tool to measure a student's entrepreneurship growth. For extended resources, see the considerations for assessing Wayfinding Abilities in the MyWays report, ***Assessment Design for Broader, Deeper Competencies*** (p. 33).

> *"We are piloting a badging system integrating aspects of PBL, life, career and college skills, students can use to work on in a personalized, self-paced manner."*
>
> –Da Vinci Schools

4 How Schools Know if They Are Succeeding

Innovative program evaluation practices

Without answers to this particular question, next generation educators have no way to know how successful they are or what to work on to improve. One approach used by Fullerton School District is to compare their school to similar schools in the form of treatment and control groups. The most common approach, however, is to see how a school measures up on the **criteria for success** the school's leaders established. Respondents reported the following criteria:

- Achievement, time to mastery (pace), competency dashboards (showing both performance level and growth), progress data from online software
- Skills in self-direction (student agency), collaboration, communication, problem solving, thinking
- Student engagement, satisfaction, attendance, retention rate, disciplinary incidents
- Social-emotional health
- Character development
- Family satisfaction
- Teacher satisfaction, retention, ratings
- School culture and climate
- Internship evaluations
- Student applicant lottery pool size
- Course completion rate, completion time
- College attendance, acceptance rates, retention, completion
- Dual credit student performance

> *"We were the only school in the state of TN to be in the top 1% in both Academic Achievement and Academic Growth."*
>
> –Valor Collegiate Academies

The following instruments are used to assess these criteria:

- Teacher-generated tests
- Surveys
- Student artifacts, portfolios
- Exit interviews
- Focus-group interviews
- Observations
- Short-cycle tests to track and evaluate the effect of innovations
- Standardized assessment scores: PSAT, NWEA MAP (norm-referenced interim), Illuminate DnA (standards-based interim), SBAC, ACT, PARCC, ANET, DIBELS, DRA

Specific tools that next generation educators reported using included benchmarks, rubrics (including self-evaluation rubrics), social-emotional learning measures from **Six Seconds**, an adult-scored **character scorecard** from the Character Lab, and competency or mastery assessments from the **Achievement Network**.

5

How Schools Communicate their Model and Successes

Innovative communication practices

The next generation educators in NGLC's network, generally, have noted that as they were designing and launching their innovative school models, they recognized the need for open communication with families and their local community. Yet they vastly underestimated the amount of time and energy needed to fully communicate their model, its goals and strategies, and its successes and impacts on student skill levels.

How next generation educators choose to communicate "success" offers tangible insights into how they have redefined it. And it provides education leaders with tried and tested strategies for undertaking this critical step. Not only do we describe what the educators in the 33 next generation schools communicate, but we also share how they communicate it, and to whom they communicate it.

What is communicated:

- A profile or description of the school and its approach or philosophy
- Individual student performance, including progress in academics and social-emotional learning
- Overall student performance, including evaluation reports and survey results
- School news, such as results of student projects
- Annual reports
- Contract renewal reports

How it's communicated:

- Live events, such as town hall meetings, expo nights, open houses, school visits, workshops, meetings (e.g., school board, Parent-Teacher Association, advisory council), conferences, teacher-parent conferences, and collaborations (such as internships)
- Digitally, through the school website, social media, and a learning management system
- Email or postal service, such as a monthly newsletter

"Canvas provides students and parents with real-time feedback, including grades, and access to all the information on their courses. Parents have loved having this level of access to the students' learning."

–STEAM Academy

"We provide workshops to other educators and also parents on how to use the Compass in the classroom and as a parent."

–Valor Collegiate Academies

To whom it's communicated. Next generation educators have found the need to communicate about success with parents and students, the community, other schools and educators, and funders.

Communicating Success at Two Rivers Public Charter School

These documents and the messages within them demonstrate the multiple ways in which Two Rivers communicates its model, philosophy, performance, and successes to a variety of stakeholders using reports, digital resources, and events:

Mission, Culture and Transforming the Educational Landscape, website messaging

School Quality Report (by DC Charter School Board)

Family Handbook

Annual report

Community Showcase, student presentations of learning

Share Your D.C., example of parent & staff learning events

Learn with Two Rivers, website to disseminate best practices for new staff and the wider field

Evening of Learning seminars, for educators in the local area

Next Steps

How do you know whether your own efforts toward next generation learning are working? NGLC encourages all education leaders who are moving toward next generation learning to step back from the work of learning redesign in order to ask and develop their own answers to the foundational questions we asked in this report.

Through the MyWays project, we offer tools and resources to assist you in the process. We believe the result of stepping back will be schools that truly offer kids what they need to know and be able to do to drive their lives forward. And we believe that getting to that end goal will be much more effective by building on the expertise shared by the next generation educators in this report.

Tools: Engage your community in understanding why student success needs to be redefined and begin working together to develop a new definition for students in your community. NGLC's MyWays offers free, open-source community engagement tools and exercises to get you started.

Reports: The *MyWays Student Success Series* provides educators with a deep dive into the research and practice foundations of the MyWays competency framework. It also offers principles and strategies for redesigning learning and assessment to align with a new definition of success.

Website: For a general introduction to the four aspects of the MyWays project—Understand, Success, Learn, and Measure—visit the MyWays website. You'll also find all the tools and reports, a mailing list to stay connected for updates, and any forthcoming opportunities to engage with a community of practitioners who are all redefining student success.

Contact Us: If you are interested in additional support from NGLC in redefining success, please contact us directly.

**All of the survey and interview respondents, except one, received launch funding from NGLC. Fullerton School District never received grant funding from NGLC but has been innovating with personalized learning for five years. Two Rivers Public Charter School received funding, but via the NGLC Regional Fund in Washington, D.C., supported by CityBridge Education. Funding for NGLC has come from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.*

By Charles Reigeluth, Indiana University, and Kristen Vogt, Next Generation Learning Challenges

Survey Respondents

1. Intrinsic Schools (Chicago, IL)
2. Fullerton School District (Fullerton,CA)*
3. Design Tech High School (San Mateo, CA)
4. Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy (Cumberland, RI)
5. Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (New Hampshire)
6. Alpha Public Schools (San Jose, CA)
7. Two Rivers Public Charter School (Washington, DC)*
8. Generation Schools Network (Colorado and New York)
9. Foundations College Prep (Chicago, IL
10. Summit Public Schools (California and Washington State)
11. Alliance College-Ready Public Schools (Los Angeles, CA)
12. The Workshop School, School District of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)
13. Schools for the Future (Detroit, MI)
14. Building 21, School District of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)
15. STEAM Academy, Fayette County Public Schools (Lexington, KY)
16. The Incubator School, Los Angeles Public Schools (Los Angeles, CA)
17. Piedmont Middle School, Piedmont City Schools (Piedmont, AL)
18. Metro Institute of Technology, Columbus City Schools (Columbus, OH)
19. Thrive Public Schools (San Diego, CA)
20. Matchbook Learning (MI and NJ)
21. Vertus Charter School (Rochester, NY)
22. Venture Academy (Minneapolis, MN)
23. Montessori For All (Austin, TX)
24. Caliber Schools (Richmond, CA)
25. e^3 Civic High, San Diego Public Schools (San Diego, CA)
26. Valor Collegiate Academies (Nashville, TN)
27. Ednovate / USC Hybrid High (Los Angeles, CA)
28. Da Vinci Schools (Hawthorne, CA)
29. Cornerstone Charter Schools (Detroit, MI)
30. Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School (Brooklyn, NY)
31. Ingenuity Prep (Washington, DC)
32. Anonymous
33. Anonymous