Better Together: Connecting Project-Based Learning and Competency-Based Education

March 30, 2022
Welcome

• Introduce yourself in the chat box
• We welcome your questions, answers, and comments
• Share your learning on Twitter (we are @Aurora_Inst)
• We are recording and archiving the webinar
  • The slides and video will be available on aurora-institute.org
Presenters

Breonna Allah, Student, Building 21, Allentown
Telsa Comunale, Assistant School Leader, Building 21, Allentown
Kristin De Vivo, Executive Director, Lucas Education Research
Heather Harlen, Founding Teacher, Building 21, Allentown
Christy Kingham, Director, Leadership and School Design, Springpoint
Ayris Sanders, Director of Lab Schools, Building 21 Network
Rochelle Urban, Program Manager, Lucas Education Research
Nathan Warner, Director of Teaching and Learning, Lucas Education Research
Learning Goals

1. Understand the commonalities between PBL and CBE
2. Understand the ways CBE and PBL connect when implemented in classrooms, schools, and systems
3. Identify the big shifts needed to succeed with both of these approaches
OUR VISION

We believe authentic, challenging, active, and relevant learning experiences optimize opportunities for all students to productively participate and lead in an increasingly diverse and dynamic society.
Project-based learning (PBL) is an approach to education in which students explore real-world problems through individual and group projects.
LER Theory of Action

1. By co-creating high quality PBL curricula and aligned teacher supports
2. By working alongside schools and teachers to research these approaches
3. By creating proof points of PBL practice

We will strengthen the PBL evidence-base while providing educators with resources and support for PBL.
Key Principles for Project-Based Learning

1. Purposeful and authentic experiences
2. Deep integration with course content
3. Meaningful and supportive relationships
4. Evidence-based teaching and assessment practices
Key Findings

- Students in project-based learning classrooms significantly outperform students in typical classrooms.
- Students across racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds benefit from project-based learning.
PBL and CBE share the same values

- Equity is at the center
- Need to provide all students with meaningful and authentic experience
- Increase student engagement and agency
Christy Kingham

Former Teacher and Instructional coach - TYWLS of Astoria, NYC
Director, Leadership & School Design - Springpoint

PBL
CBE
ADVISORY /
PRIMARY PERSON
PBL
Competencies + PBL at TYWLS of Astoria

- **Argue**: Build a case for and defend conclusions reached, based in sound logic and valid evidence. Question and critique the arguments of others as warranted.

- **Create**: Construct or develop a product for expression.

- **Discern**: View, read and listen with focused attention to what matters. Examine closely and methodically, attending to easily overlooked details, logic and patterns.

- **Be Precise**: Accurately represents solutions, ideas and language.

- **Collaborate**: Work effectively with others to achieve common goals.

- **Innovate**: Develop new and helpful ways of looking at opportunities, challenges and problems.

- **Conclude**: Infer meanings, analyze information and develop valid ideas based on evidence and analysis.

- **Investigate**: Ask and refine a researchable question, design a valid experiment or inquiry and gather appropriate info to complete the inquiry.

- **Communicate**: Make ideas and information understood, mindful of audience, purpose and setting. Listen and respond to what others communicate.

- **Plan**: Frame and clarify goals and make deliberate plans for how to achieve them. Seek and obtain feedback and assess progress, make adjustments, as needed, to achieve goals. Persevere in the face of difficulty to search for multiple solutions.
Springpoint: Implementing CBE+ PBL with School Teams

- Competency Based Education
- Project Based Learning
- Primary Person Model
Why Building 21?

We believe that nurturing relationships, encouraging passion, and developing agency allows students to impact their today, their future, and the world around them.

We are reimagining education to meet the needs of all learners by personalizing learning and rethinking instruction and assessment. Building 21 operates two competency-based high schools and support schools and districts to implement Competency-Based and Project-Based learning.
The Building Blocks

With strong relationships as the foundation, students are supported and challenged as they master the competencies through real-world, relevant learning opportunities, discover their passions, and design their own personalized pathway into the postsecondary world.
The Studio Design Cycle

**LAUNCH**
Access prior knowledge. Develop shared understanding. Know the problem frame and the competencies in this studio.

**INVESTIGATE**
Ask important questions. Consider potential topics. Research and analyze texts and other resources. Formulate a main idea, hypothesis, or solution.

**CREATE**
Demonstration learning through a performance task.

**REVISE**
Get feedback. Revise and edit the task.

**IMPACT**
Demonstrate learning by implementing the task in the world to impact an authentic audience or user.

**REFLECT**
Engage in a reflection process about themselves and their learning.
Classroom Instruction
- Learner-centered
- Authentic work drives learning
- Emphasizes collaboration
- Teacher as facilitator
- Responsive and differentiated
- High cognitive demand
- Importance of metacognition

Classroom Assessment
- Authentic & performance-based
- Demonstrate learning multimodally
- Expectations are transparent
- Progress monitoring for individual learning goals
- Extends beyond disciplinary knowledge (e.g. SEL, other skills)

Systems Support
- Redefine student success
- Build capacity at teacher, school, district, & community levels
- Accountability for a balanced assessment system

Professional Learning
- Focus on mindset shifts
- Opportunities to experience the approach
- Need for reflection within a community of practice
- Supports deepening their relationships with students, leaders and each other
Building 21 Resources

- Building 21 Student Competencies and Continua
- Building 21 Teacher Competencies
- Studio Planner
- Studio Design Template
- Studio Design Feedback Checklist
- Platforms and Dashboards
Breakout Rooms


with Telsa Comunale, Breonna Allah, Heather Harlen,, Nathan Warner

Room B: *Ideas for Shifting Policy; Specific Steps Needed to Implement in a School/District; Ideas for Outreach to the “Unconverted”*

With Ayris Sanders, Christy Kingham, Eliot Levine
Quick Feedback

Stay Connected

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An invitation to join the two breakout rooms will appear on your screen. Choose the one you’d like to enter. (If you don’t see the prompt, please note in the chat box which breakout room you want to join and we will admit you.)