STUDENTS
AT THE
CENTER
Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind

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Foreword

There is no learning that is not personalized. Anything “learned” must first be taken in through the senses, processed and understood, interiorized in the mind and body, and emotionally charged and acted upon. In this book, Bena Kallick and Allison Zmuda brilliantly describe personalized learning in terms of four powerful defining attributes—voice, co-creation, social construction, and self-discovery—and propose using them as filters to examine and enhance practice in classrooms designed for personalized learning.

This view of personalized learning is more than just a helpful framework for educators; it’s also a way of thinking about an innate human quest that each of us is born into and pursues throughout our lifetime (Fogarty, 2016). Consider that the first action of newborn babies is to use their voice to announce themselves, crying to the world, “I’m here! I have arrived. Hear me, feed me, see me, cuddle me, change me, love me!” As children grow, their natural curiosity drives them to seek others who can help satisfy their urge to learn: “Teach me, show me, read to me, sing to me, answer my insatiable questions. And I want to do it myself!” Together—with parents or caregivers, teachers, and peers—children co-create an image of themselves, of the world and how it works, and of what it means to learn. Because human beings are social beings, young children soon discover the
process of social construction, the bonding with others that unleashes the power of camaraderie, cooperative learning, and interdependent thinking. Thus starts a lifelong journey of self-discovery. Through experimentation, feedback, persistent practice, risk taking, failure, and success, we human beings continue to discover our interests, passions, potentials, aversions, values, styles, and tastes. At age 85, I am still discovering myself, with even greater and more critical insights than I had during those awkward, moody, youthful outbursts of my teenage years!

The human journey is also one of growing intelligence. Lauren B. Resnick (1999) of the University of Pittsburgh reminds us, “One’s intelligence is the sum of one’s habits of mind.” It’s true that if our goals for education include having students eager to pursue individual and unique passions, sustain innate curiosity, and work collaboratively to create solutions to complex problems, then they need teachers who can not only model but also coach the self-direction, persistence, and reflective problem solving that is characterized by interdependent, flexible, and creative thinking. The Habits of Mind drive, motivate, activate, and direct our intellectual capacities. This book provides a framework for personalized learning and a blueprint for instruction that requires an explicit focus on and assessment of the Habits of Mind. In weaving together these two significant bodies of educational knowledge, theory, and practice, the authors present a holistic model of schooling that is a more accurate reflection of our curious and extraordinary human nature.

And yet, for all we have in common, our differences cannot be denied. Because we know that every learner is unique and that no two brains are wired exactly alike, a shift from standardizing and averaging to personalizing just makes sense. The approach to education in this book equips students to pursue their interests and passions and removes compliance-focused strictures on both student and teacher creativity. It’s about empowerment, about discovery and liberation, about recasting traditional roles, and about shifting our educational assumptions.

To that point, another consideration that drives this book is the futurist argument that teaching academics, although still
necessary, may no longer be enough. As Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD), notes, “The world economy no longer pays for what people know but for what they can do with what they know” (Big Think, 2014). Accordingly, the content and the disciplines that we traditionally teach must be reframed not only as outcomes but also as opportunities for experiencing, applying, and reflecting on essential dispositions represented in the Habits of Mind: persisting, remaining open to continuous learning, thinking interdependently, thinking flexibly, questioning and problem posing, and so on.

When the teaching of content is repositioned in this way, an array of new and powerful mental models become available. We realize that we must make personalized student self-evaluation as significant an influence as external evaluations have long been. We realize that if students graduate from our schools still dependent upon others to tell them when they are adequate, good, or excellent, then we’ve missed the whole point of what self-directed learning is about. We realize the value of using a feedback spiral as a planning tool and a guide for learning. In the pages ahead, you’ll find many models and examples of teachers shifting the evaluative responsibility to students by co-creating with them an enhanced capacity for self-analysis, self-referencing, and self-modification.

In a sense, all educators are futurists in that we are trying to prepare students for both the present and the ambiguous future that does not yet exist. We need a shared vision of the skills and dispositions that facilitate success across and beyond defined subject areas—a vision that reflects a curriculum of process that will support mastery of any content and give students personal practice engaging with complex problems, dilemmas, and conflicts that have no clear or immediate resolution. You’ll find this vision articulated in the pages ahead. And what is most significant about this vision is that it is as important for adults as it is for students.

—Arthur L. Costa
Granite Bay, California
Personalized learning. It has become a popular, even jargonized term. If asked, most educators could offer some explanation of what it means to “personalize learning.” In all likelihood, these explanations would differ wildly.

In this book, we hope to contribute some clarity on what personalized learning is, what it can look like in the classroom, and all that it can help students achieve. Although we use the past-tense term personalized, we do not mean to imply that the work of personalization is ever truly “complete.” It’s an ongoing process, a paradigm shift to a learner-centered approach to teaching. We delve into not just what it means to personalize students’ learning experiences and how educators can go about this but also why it matters so much that we do.

Our conclusions are based on considerable work in the field. We have the privilege of working with many educators who are struggling to give meaning to and respond to ever-changing targets. Standards: Which ones are best? Competencies: Which ones to prioritize? Assessments: Which ones tell the most complete story of student progress and learning? Legislators: What story do they want to hear? Parents: What do they most want to know and need to know about their children’s education? Having observed how the shifting responses to those questions cause people to lose their way, we hope to provide a
true north for educators—a set of values and a vision that will serve students well, both now and in the future.

In the first chapter, we clarify what we mean by true north, first positing that educators’ most important work is to help students develop the intellectual and social strength of character they need to live well in the world and then offering our best conclusion on how to achieve this: by embracing a transformative, student-driven model of personalized learning built on the set of dispositions known as the Habits of Mind. In Chapter 2, we take a hard look at the practical work of making curriculum more student-driven, paying close attention to something that is fundamental to all learning: teacher–student relationships. In Chapter 3, we consider how the roles of teacher and student change as they co-create a set of goals and determine what will drive their inquiry process. In Chapter 4, mindful of the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (1998, 2005), we explore the question *What do we want students to know and be able to do as a result of learning?* In Chapter 5, we focus on instruction, offering many examples of how to create a more independent and responsible classroom in which students are able to follow their interests with a commitment to deeper learning. In Chapter 6, we examine feedback as an excellent catalyst for continued growth. In our seventh and last chapter, we explore climate change—how to create the kind of culture for learning and thinking that transforms a classroom, a whole school, and an entire system into a personalized and student-driven learning environment.

Change does not come easily. It requires letting go of old habits and traditions and embracing a new mental model for this century and for the students we teach now. It means preparing these students for a world that is vastly different from the world that most of us were educated in. As Heidi Hayes Jacobs has reminded us,

> Schools are launching pads, launching our kids into their futures. Unfortunately, a lot of what we teach now looks identical to what we taught 40, 50, or 60 years ago. There’s a need for both timeless curriculum content and timely content. What seems to be falling by the wayside is timely content. (Perkins-Gough, 2003/2004, p. 13)
Personalized learning with Habits of Mind offers an entry point to timely content and, at the same time, invites students to join with teachers in the search for timely problems and queries. It sparks innovation and imagination, and it empowers students to take responsible risks on behalf of their own passions and aspirations. It is a pathway to true success.
Empowering Students to Find Their Own Way

The shift from industrialized to personalized is a global one, and it is revolutionizing medicine, journalism, music, television, publishing, politics, and self-expression. Yet in the school environment, life continues to be mostly standardized. We remain in a culture that promotes one curriculum for all, one age group and one grade at a time, and one set of tests to determine learning.

However, the fact is, the more challenging, complex, and uncertain the world becomes, the greater the need for education to transform our ways of customizing learning. We must encourage our students to become problem solvers and creative thinkers. If our students are to be successful, they will need to find work that is as satisfying to the human spirit as it is satisfying economically.

As teachers, we need to design learning experiences that help students get in touch with who they want to be and what they want to accomplish in the world. We must include opportunities for all students to build social capital and develop a voice for interaction with people in power positions. They must learn how to create and use professional networks and develop and promote their innovative ideas. Enter personalized learning.

*Personalized learning* is an umbrella term under which many practices fit, each designed to accelerate student learning by tailoring
instruction to individuals’ needs and skills as they go about fulfilling curricular requirements. We believe the scope of personalized learning, as it’s presently and generally understood, must expand to allow students opportunities to explore and develop their own passions and interests. One of its aims must be to unleash the power of students’ aspirations, which will strengthen their eventual participation in citizenship and the economy. As Tony Wagner and Ted Dintersmith (2015) have suggested, “The purpose of education is to engage students with their passions and growing sense of purpose, teach them critical skills needed for career and citizenship, and inspire them to do their very best to make their world better.”

This purpose, however, often remains unfulfilled. Students from even the most privileged schools may suppress their aspirations—their passions and intense interests—because their deepest desires are held captive to the practicality of what others call success. Likewise, students born into poverty may suppress their aspirations because their teachers deem those aspirations impossible to achieve. The promotion of college and career readiness often creates more hurdles for students to overcome as they face the gatekeepers of their future. We believe that the way to help students build the intellectual and social strength of character that everyone needs in the contemporary world is by attending to the dispositions for continuous learning and success through personalized experiences.

In this chapter, we first describe what personalized learning truly is and can be and then turn our attention to the dispositions necessary to bring this model of schooling to life—the Habits of Mind. We show how the fusion of the two provides a framework for creating learning spaces in which students thoughtfully solve problems and invent their own ideas.

The Four Attributes of Personalized Learning

Personalized learning is a progressively student-driven model of education that empowers students to pursue aspirations, investigate problems, design solutions, chase curiosities, and create
performances (Zmuda, Curtis, & Ullman, 2015). There are four defining attributes of personalized learning, each of which can be used as a filter to examine existing classroom practices or construct new ones. These are voice, co-creation, social construction, and self-discovery.

Voice

The first defining attribute is voice—the student’s involvement and engagement in “the what” and “the how” of learning early in the learning process. Instead of being passengers on the curricular journey that the adults have mapped out, students are valued participants, helping to set the curricular agenda and taking the wheel themselves. Personalized learning encourages students to recognize not just the power of their own ideas but also how their ideas can shift and evolve through exposure to the ideas of others.

Co-Creation

The second attribute is co-creation. In personalized learning, students work with the teacher to develop a challenge, problem, or idea; to clarify what is being measured (learning goals); to envision the product or performance (assessment); and to outline an action plan that will result in an outcome that achieves the desired results.
(learning actions). Through the regular co-creation personalized learning requires, students flex and build their innovative and creative muscles.

**Social Construction**

The third attribute of personalized learning is *social construction*, meaning that students build ideas through relationships with others as they theorize and investigate in pursuit of common learning goals. As one of us has written elsewhere, “Vygotsky (1978) refers to the social construction of knowledge—the idea that people learn through dialogue, discussion, building on one another’s ideas. … Teaching students to experience these processes help[s] learners to internalize and reshape, or transform, new information” (Kallick & Alcock, 2013, p. 51). There is real power in feeling that you are not alone, in the sense of camaraderie that comes from working collaboratively to effect a change, create a performance, or build a prototype. For students, the experience of individual bits of knowledge, ideas, and actions coalescing into a larger and better whole can be transformative, even magical.

**Self-Discovery**

The fourth defining attribute of personalized learning is *self-discovery*—the process of students’ coming to understand themselves as learners. They reflect on the development of ideas, skill sets, knowledge, and performances, and this helps them envision what might come next as well as what they might do next, explore next, create next. Our aim is for students to become self-directed learners who know how to manage themselves in a variety of situations. By helping them learn about themselves, we help them build the capacity to make wise decisions and navigate a turbulent and rapidly changing world.
A Pause for Clarification: How Do Individualization and Differentiation Differ from Personalized Learning?

When reflecting on the four attributes of personalized learning, some readers may connect them to other instructional models often referred to as “personalized”—specifically, individualization and differentiation. Although these models are similar to personalized learning in some respects, there are meaningful distinctions, particularly concerning the nature of the tasks and the level of control students have over the learning experience. Figure 1.1 (see p. 6) shows how the student’s and teacher’s roles evolve from model to model.

Individualization

Individualization, as with personalized learning, allows for instructional learning to happen anytime and anyplace. The blended learning approach is a well-known application of individualization. However, in individualization students are always assigned the learning tasks, and they go on to use technology, such as computer-adapted models, a software platform, or a teacher-generated playlist, to complete those tasks. Typically, the students control the pace of their learning experience on the road to demonstrating mastery of the material. They can replay videos, do practice problems, answer questions, and receive instant feedback on their work in preparation for a computer- or teacher-generated assessment.

Individualized learning is “personalized” in that it is a way to use the efficiencies of technology to adjust the assignment and pacing to reflect the needs of the learner. There might be an emphasis on students reflecting on their learning and deepening their understanding of how they learn best. However, the relational part of the learning may be overlooked.
## The Evolving Roles of Student and Teacher in Three Instructional Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>STUDENT’S ROLE</th>
<th>TEACHER’S ROLE</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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</table>
| Personalized Learning | Actively pursues authentic, complex problems that inspire co-creation in the inquiry, analysis, and final product and incorporate opportunities for voice, social construction, and self-discovery. | Facilitates learning through questions, conferences, and feedback. | • Student develops playlists (curation of texts, experiences)  
• Student leads conferences  
• Student achieves mastery based on demonstrated ability and performance |
| Individualization   | Controls the pace of the topic as well as when to demonstrate mastery.            | Drives instruction through teacher-created tasks and related lesson plans.       | • Teacher develops playlists  
• Khan Academy  
• Dreambox or Compass Learning |
| Differentiation     | Selects from a range of content, process, or product options.                    | Tailors instruction based on individual student needs and preferences.           | • Literature circles around different texts but on same theme  
• Student contracts  
• Choice boards |

With a blended learning approach, students may complete some of the work independently using technology. They may co-create projects in which they apply what they are learning in an experiential environment. They may also work with a group. The significant distinction of blended learning is not how much students do off site and how much they do on site. Rather, it is about how much say the students have in the work they are doing.

A *personalized learning model* involves students in the design and development of the tasks they engage in. There has been much talk about technology forcing "disruption" in the schools, but in our opinion, what technology is disrupting is an exclusively compliance-driven school. This is a welcome development. Engagement is not measured by how quickly a student races through the material; it comes from how relevant, interesting, and worthy the student finds the material. This kind of engagement is built into personalized learning, as the students themselves identify or create an idea, question, or problem; determine key actions, resources, and timelines; engage in an iterative cycle of drafts; receive and reflect on feedback; and pursue next steps until the task is completed. The teacher's role is to work with students to hone skills and acquire knowledge; to give that knowledge context; and to help students ground knowledge and skill development in authentic, complex, and problem-based endeavors.

**Differentiation**

*Differentiation* embraces the reality of all the learners in the room, with their range of skills, readiness levels, and areas of interest. In this model, teachers start where the students are to create a range of learning experiences that students can be assigned to or select themselves. It’s the latter form of differentiation—when students exercise choice—that can be confused with personalization, situations in which students can select the resources or topics to explore (content differentiation); how to investigate or develop an idea (process differentiation); and the form of the demonstration of learning will take (product differentiation). This differentiation encourages student choice within the confines of what the teacher
has developed as viable options. The teacher is still in control of the design and management of the experience.

In comparison, a **personalized learning model** opens up the door for students to significantly shape what they do and how they demonstrate learning. They have a seat at the design table, the evaluation table, and the exhibition table. They have more ownership from start to finish around the development of an idea, the investigation, the analysis, the refinement, and the presentation to an authentic audience.

Readers who are familiar with project-based learning might like to see it included for comparison in Figure 1.1. However, we see project-based learning as something that is under the umbrella of personalized learning. It is part of that progression in which students move from developing their thinking as part of a teacher-designed set of choices for a project to developing a project based on an independent, personal inquiry of their own. Project-based learning always includes a challenging problem or question, sustained inquiry, authenticity, student voice and choice, reflection, critique and revision, and a public product (Larmer, Mergendoller, & Boss, 2015). These experiences can be vetted by examining them for **voice, co-creation, social construction, and self-discovery**—in other words, by using the four attributes of personalized learning as filters to clarify the degree to which students have opportunities to think, create, share, and discover.

The student-centered personalized learning we explore in this book is a vibrant, dynamic, messy way of learning that breaks down the walls that separate subject areas into silos, the school world from the outside world, and individual achievement from community growth. Students learn from and are influenced by the adults, peers, and experts with whom they work as they socially construct knowledge. They use what they learn about themselves as a compass to direct their choices, decisions, and active engagement.

Frankly, this is demanding work. How can teachers equip their students to meet the challenge?
Habits of Mind—A Set of Dispositions for Engagement and Learning

If we want students to reach for higher levels of thinking and performing, they must have opportunities to engage in, develop, and demonstrate a much richer set of skills and dispositions than are measured in the narrowly defined tests so prevalent today. The emphasis of most standards-based tests is measuring and reporting on academic knowledge. Although that is important, our students need to build the habits necessary to embark on projects in which the outcome is not immediately apparent. They need to develop the Habits of Mind that direct their strategic abilities and expand their resourcefulness and capacity for engaging with and solving challenging problems.

A habit is something done automatically, without too much self-awareness. Consider driving a car, for example. Although there is a certain amount of automaticity in steering, accelerating, breaking, passing, and merging once someone has learned how to drive, a driver needs mindfulness when confronted with a disruption, such as an icy road or a pothole. These environmental disruptions demand considered decisions. Likewise, students often go “on automatic,” memorizing what is expected on a test. However, when they encounter a situation of uncertainty, a situation in which the answer is not immediately apparent, they need to be more considered in their thought processes. As Habits of Mind, such as thinking flexibly or questioning and problem posing, are brought to consciousness, students are able to confidently navigate the complexity of the situation. The Habits reside in that very important space in which we shift from automaticity to mindfulness.

The 16 Habits of Mind (Costa & Kallick, 2008), shown in Figure 1.2 (see p. 10), are drawn from a modern view of intelligence that casts off traditional abilities-centered theories and replaces them with a growth mindset. These habits are often called “soft skills” or “non-cognitive skills”—terminology that suggests something easy. In fact,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persisting: Stick to it! Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused.</th>
<th>Managing impulsivity: Take your time! Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful, and deliberative.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Listening with understanding and empathy: Understand others! Devoting mental energy to another person’s thoughts and ideas; holding in abeyance one’s own thoughts in order to perceive another’s point of view and emotions.</td>
<td>Thinking flexibly: Look at it another way! Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.</td>
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<td>Thinking about your thinking (metacognition): Know your knowing! Being aware of one’s own thoughts, strategies, feelings, and actions and their effects on others.</td>
<td>Striving for accuracy and precision: Check it again! Seeking exactness, fidelity, and craftsmanship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning and problem posing: How do you know? Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data.</td>
<td>Applying past knowledge to novel situations: Use what you learn! Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision: Be clear! Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding overgeneralizations, distortions, and deletions.</td>
<td>Gathering data through all senses: Use your natural pathways! Gathering data through all the sensory pathways—gustatory, olfactory, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating, imagining, and innovating: Try a different way! Generating new and novel ideas, striving for fluency and originality.</td>
<td>Responding with wonderment and awe: Have fun figuring it out! Finding the world awesome and mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking responsible risks: Venture out! Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one’s competence.</td>
<td>Finding humor: Laugh a little! Finding the whimsical, incongruous, and unexpected; being able to laugh at oneself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking interdependently: Work together! Being able to work with and learn from others in reciprocal situations.</td>
<td>Remaining open to continuous learning: Learn from experiences! Having humility and pride when admitting we don’t know; resisting complacency.</td>
</tr>
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these skills are among the most difficult to develop because they require a great deal of cognitive consciousness. Ultimately, they become an internal compass that answers the question “What is the most thought-full thing that I can do right now?” As the classroom and school focus on the four attributes—voice, co-creation, social construction, and self-discovery—the Habits of Mind become a set of behaviors that students and teachers build on, come to value in themselves and others, and ultimately use to navigate the complexities they face both inside and beyond school.

As teachers and students develop fluency with the Habits of Mind, they don’t have to always remind themselves about which habit is called for in a given situation. As with any habit, practice strengthens the likelihood that the person will use it without needing a reminder. For example, when students are given the opportunity to pursue a project, they develop their “mind muscles” by creating, imagining, and innovating. They become more fluent as they work together and learn how to think more flexibly, remaining open to one another’s ideas. They are able to sharpen the research they will do by questioning and problem posing. As they search the web for “how to” material, they will need to use precise language.

Foremost in this process, students and teachers persist in the face of uncertainty. Individuals who have adopted Habits of Mind as a way of being thought-full about life are more aware of and focused on the skills that affect their success. Similarly, schools that adopt the Habits of Mind as a part of their vision become learning communities in which all members—students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members—act with care and thought.

**Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind**

Personalized learning with Habits of Mind facilitate a more holistic approach to learning. *If* we want our students to pursue aspirations, investigate problems, design solutions, chase curiosities, and create performances, *then* they need opportunities to engage with and in meaningful problems and challenges and coaching in habits such as
thinking flexibly, listening with understanding and empathy, and questioning and problem posing. In other words, personalized learning is the organizational frame we need—the pedagogical structure that requires students to use the explicit thinking behaviors captured in the Habits of Mind.

Moving in this direction requires teachers and students to think differently and commit to a new process for learning. Let’s take a look at the are four key shifts in thinking that characterize personalized learning with Habits of Mind

**Learning Is Teacher Led and Student Directed**

The power of a teacher-determined curriculum ensures there is an agreed-upon set of goals and assessments that each student will experience. This curricular guide can be locally designed, implemented, monitored, and refined to evaluate the impact on student learning. Personalized learning means that students are invited to assume ownership of this guide by co-creating their tasks, projects, and assessments.

Some students may be unwilling or unexcited to have a voice in their own learning. Student apathy cannot be allowed to overwhelm potential engagement. It’s true that many students feel disengaged by the teacher-identified problems, challenges, or texts they’re expected to complete; our task is to teach them how to persist, apply past knowledge to new situations, and think about their thinking. This promotes self-management and a commitment to keep working toward a desired performance.

**Students Build Disciplinary Knowledge and Cross-Disciplinary Skills**

Discipline-specific organizations, such as the National Science Teachers Association and National Art Education Association, articulate key concepts, knowledge, and skills that anchor their discipline, periodically reviewing and refining their expectations to ensure those expectations are feasible, are up to date, and include broader perspectives. Other organizations, such as the Partnership
for 21st Century Skills and the National Governors Association for Best Practices, contend the focus of learning should be on the growth of cross-disciplinary skills.

The more we learn about personalized learning performances, the more we realize that discipline-specific goals, while important, are woefully insufficient if we want students to thrive in contemporary society. For example, instead of reading about what an engineer does and answering straightforward questions on the role of an engineer, students can leverage critical thinking and problem solving to create, imagine, and innovate by using the Engineering Design Process in combination with their courses in the arts. Instead of researching a current global conflict and reporting on their findings, students can use interview skills learned in English class to seek out and interview people affected by the conflict, demonstrating empathy for their plight and comparing how these person-centered views contrast with portrayals in the global media.

**Student Learning Requires Disciplinary Knowledge and Dispositional Thinking**

The teaching of disciplinary knowledge and dispositional thinking are complementary, not competing, aims. When schools include Habits of Mind as an intentional component of practice, they are acknowledging that teaching for thinking is as important as teaching content knowledge. Their curriculum, instruction, and assessment intentionally address how to think critically and creatively and how to problem-solve.

Consider that when a student is thinking creatively, he or she engages in at least two Habits of Mind: (1) *taking a responsible risk*, and (2) *creating, imagining, and innovating*. These habits can be deconstructed into a set of teachable behaviors. The teacher’s role is to continually model and use the Habits of Mind to draw out the best of the student’s thinking. The student’s role is to use—and further develop through use—the Habits of Mind needed to fully experience a self-directed performance. Not only should the level of cognition remain high in terms of the learning and the performance, but also the level
of metacognition should bring about a consciousness and an intention concerning decisions about where and when to use the habits for effective thinking.

**Standards Can Offer the Freedom to Create**

As educators, we can and should agree on common aims of schooling that are aligned with standards, but we should also honor the values and aspirations of the community we serve. By designing broader goals and associated competencies to measure progress, we invite students to create and pursue inquiries and ideas. Teacher and student can work together to identify how a personalized design aligns with learning goals as well as to discuss resources and actions. For example, teachers in North Carolina’s Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district came together and created their own personalized learning profiles, adapted from Habits of Mind (see Figure 1.3). While teachers in the district use the dispositions differently—for example, in morning meetings or in project-based learning—the district as a whole is creating common language around the dispositions for grades K–12.

**To Sum Up**

We must move toward schools that offer students more choices as they learn how to fully develop their voice, hone their capacities to co-create, and explore the benefits of social construction and self-discovery.

Teachers frequently ask if personalizing learning means that every student will be doing something different. What we are suggesting is that these kinds of interest-based experiences be offered as an additional opportunity for learning—more ways in which students will develop academic and dispositional competencies as they struggle through the process of innovating and inventing. So yes, when teachers provide these opportunities, it is likely that there will be many different projects going on simultaneously in the class. The choices that students make will be based on their curiosity and their interests.
Personalized Learning: Learner Profile

**Creative & Critical Thinkers:**
I think before I act. I routinely examine problems in new ways and seek to find creative solutions. My imagination allows me to express myself and develop new ideas. I use the design process to help guide my thinking.

**Entrepreneurs:**
I think differently and am resilient in my quest to be innovative. I persevere through difficult tasks. I identify needs or challenges and proactively find solutions to address those needs.

**Leaders:**
I do the right thing, even when no one is looking. I empower and support those around me. I am constantly finding ways to improve myself. I maintain a positive attitude and a sense of humor.

**Self-Directed Learners:**
I manage my goals and time. I am able to work independently, take initiative to advance my skill levels. I am committed to learning as a lifelong process. I take pride in my work.

**Effective Communicators:**
I clearly convey my thoughts, questions, solutions, and ideas in multiple ways, including verbally, written, and digitally.

**Flexible & Adaptable:**
I can adapt to change. I am able to work effectively in a variety of environments. I value other people’s strengths and learn from them.

**Receptive & Reflective to Feedback:**
I value feedback to help myself improve and further develop my skills to achieve personal growth. Reflecting critically about past experiences helps me to inform my future progress. I am aware of my own strategies, feelings, actions and their effects on others.

**Open-Minded:**
I am willing to consider and listen to new ideas and understand my first assumptions might not be accurate. I am respectful, objective and am able to see things from multiple perspectives.

**Collaborators:**
I effectively work with others to reach our goals—combining our talents, expertise, and smarts. I actively listen to others’ ideas and contribute my own, which allows me to function as part of a team.

**Academic Risk Takers:**
I am driven, determined, and willingly accept new and difficult challenges. I am resourceful and view mistakes and failures as opportunities to learn and grow.

Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, NC. Used with permission.
Personalized learning with Habits of Mind is a departure from the traditional interactions in which the teacher has a clearly defined curricular agenda—even in cases where that curricular agenda offers students creative options for fulfilling the requirements. When students are trusted to find their own way, teachers and students interact with one another differently. The experience of school and of learning is different—and better. We’ll explore this experience in the chapters ahead.
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Bena Kallick, PhD, is the co-director of the Institute for Habits of Mind and program director for Eduplanet21, a company dedicated to online professional learning and curriculum development based on the Understanding by Design® framework. She is a consultant providing services to school districts, state departments of education, professional organizations, and public agencies throughout the United States and abroad.

Her written works include *Assessment in the Learning Organization* (ASCD, 1998), the Habits of Mind series (ASCD, 2000), *Strategies for Self-Directed Learning* (Corwin, 2004), *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind* (ASCD, 2008), *Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum* (ASCD, 2009), and *Dispositions: Reframing Teaching and Learning* (Corwin, 2014), all co-authored with Arthur L. Costa, and *Using Curriculum Mapping and Assessment to Improve Student Learning* (Corwin Press, 2009), co-authored with Jeff
Colosimo. Kallick’s works have been translated into Dutch, Chinese, Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, and Arabic. Her work with Art Costa led to the development of the Institute for Habits of Mind (www.instituteforhabitsofmind.com), an international organization dedicated to transforming schools into places where thinking and the Habits of Mind are taught, practiced, and valued, and become infused into the culture of the school and community.

Kallick and Costa have an online course on the EduPlanet21 platform, and Kallick has taught at Yale University School of Organization and Management, University of Massachusetts Center for Creative and Critical Thinking, and Union Graduate School. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Apple Foundation, Jobs for the Future, Weston Woods Institute, and Communities for Learning.

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Zmuda has authored nine books, including The Competent Classroom (Teachers College Press, 2001), Transforming Schools (ASCD, 2004), and Breaking Free from Myths About Teaching and Learning (ASCD, 2010). Her book Learning Personalized (Jossey-Bass, 2015) to led her form a website for educators looking to grow in and around personalized learning (http://learningpersonalized.com). Before she made the transition to consulting full time, Zmuda was a public high school teacher. It was her students who inspired her to write her first book.

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