

Written Summary:

Learning and implementing Proficiency-Based Learning at Rutland High School over the past six years has encouraged professional and personal growth for me as a teacher and helped me to clearly outline my teaching for better learning. The three takeaways I have experienced through this process are:

1. Creating better teaching and learning in the classroom
2. Improving communications with students
3. Improving student outcomes

Throughout this time, I have noticed that as a Physical Education department we have strengthened our connections to real-life applications and created more meaningful learning. Elements that were once considered to be essential to the PE curriculum are now considered to be basic information, similar to 'vocabulary' in an English curriculum, which helps students in learning the main concepts. Students could theoretically find the history or rules of the games helpful in setting SMART goals to achieve a certain outcome, but the true learning outcome is understanding how to create SMART goals. The main focus of the PE curriculum is for students to learn how to manage a healthier lifestyle long after they graduate. The Proficiency-Based Learning implementation process has given us time to evaluate and realign our curriculum, develop proficiency scales, and have tough conversations on how and when will we know students have met the standards. I believe that we are all better teachers for having participated in this process.

The proficiency scales have helped teachers and students have a healthy and direct conversation about what has been learned. The scales give students tangible content of what to expect and provide opportunities for students to self-track their progress through matrices. Most importantly, students have a better picture of what the expectations are and how they will be evaluated. In the past, students and parents both had a general understanding of percentages. Because of this, they generally did not have to ask many questions or have a strong understanding of what was learned or expected to be learned. Proficiency-Based Learning has improved the conversation around that topic.

Overall in PE, we have noticed students have had a higher passing rate since changing to Proficiency-Based Learning. In recent years students would be penalized in their overall grade for not getting changed to participate. PBL separates a student's behavior and academic/physical performance so that student's behavior is not averaged into their grade, but does get measured in Habits of Work. Students who may be struggling with identity, trauma, or socio-economic challenges have a better chance to

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pass, and participate in a safer environment due to this simple change. In closing in PE, PBL encourages equity.

My professional experience with PBL is based on the past six years of adopting this grading process and leading the PE Department the last four years.