NATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT ACCELERATOR

equalizing access to quality tutoring

Personalizing Tutoring Sessions

In this National Student Support Accelerator webinar, we will be discussing a crucial component of any successful tutoring program: how to best personalize your program's tutoring sessions to students' individual needs and learning styles.

Throughout this video, we will walk through the importance of personalizing tutoring, traits to look or train for in your tutors, what data to utilize in order to measure student and tutor progress, and what potential learning barriers tutors may identify in students along the way.

When first considering why tutors should personalize their tutoring sessions, it is important to recognize that students' productivity and growth will increase when instruction is catered to their own specific learning needs. The more that sessions are catered to individual students, the more effective tutoring instruction will be as a whole.

Before considering how your tutors will personalize their sessions to students' needs, it is important to consider the skills tutors should have, or the skills you would like to develop in your tutors, in order to create this personalization later on. Examples of skills that could benefit tutors' personalization techniques are:

- Strong communication skills
- Strong listening skills
- Depending on your program's needs, strong foreign language skills

Data can also be a major component of effectively personalizing tutoring sessions. Utilizing "Mastery Data" is especially helpful, and can include any kind of data that provides information on students' content mastery, including student work, "exit ticket" data, standardized assessment data, and data from blended learning software.

Tutors should also focus on identifying potential student learning barriers before and during their instruction, and on developing a plan for how to help students with these barriers.

While there are a wide range of areas in which students can experience challenges throughout their learning process, tutors should ask themselves questions like the following to consider what may be leading to hindered student progress:

- How many opportunities for practice did the student have during the session?
- Did the content require previous knowledge or skills?
- Did the student come up with a wrong answer while following a reasonable logical process? Why?

- Did the student show correct conceptual understanding, but made a computational or thoughtless error? Did the student forget a crucial step while following the correct process? and,
- Did the student make a mistake that you didn't expect/ haven't seen before?

These barriers could be caused by a multitude of factors, including:

- Insufficient or misaligned practice
- Prior knowledge issue
- Common misconception
- Precision/ execution error
- Uncommon misunderstanding

To address these observations, tutors can take the following proactive steps in order to address student learning gaps and remedy them from their source:

- Monitor students' mastery during practice and provide feedback
- Review or re-teach prerequisite skills in upcoming sessions
- Analyze the errors made by the student to see where these misconceptions could come up in the future, and where they stem from
- Provide practice where students must correct errors in work samples that include precision or execution errors similar to those they demonstrate in their own work, and
- Consider re-teaching material in a new way

Thank you for watching this National Student Support Accelerator Video on tutoring personalization. Be sure to check out the Accelerator website at the link below to find the complete collection of Accelerator tutoring tools, including those utilized in this video. Thank you!