

Strategies for Supporting Mastery-Based Learning

Readiness	Pace	Motivation & Effort	Executive Skills & Agency
Guiding Question: How can I create mastery paths that align with students' readiness levels and provide targeted support for those who need extra help to progress?	Guiding Question: How can I support students in progressing at their own pace while ensuring fast- and slower-paced learners stay on track to meet their goals?	Guiding Question: How can I keep students engaged and motivated, helping them stay committed to their mastery goals and maintain steady progress?	Guiding Questions: How can I help students build the planning and organizational skills they need to succeed in a self-paced learning system?
Use pre-tests or diagnostic assessments to determine each student's starting point and design personalized mastery paths that build on their strengths and address gaps.	Incorporate weekly “goal time” blocks in the schedule, providing all students time to revisit challenging material, seek teacher or peer support, or advance their learning independently.	Integrate hands-on activities and real-world applications into mastery paths, making learning relevant and connected to students' interests.	Introduce daily or weekly planning sessions , where students set goals (based on what worked/didn't), prioritize tasks, and map out their learning for the week or day.
Use targeted mini-lessons at key points in the mastery path to address common challenges or reinforce foundational skills, ensuring students are equipped to progress independently.	Set expiring deadlines for corrections or revisions , balancing accountability with flexibility to keep all learners moving forward.	Reinforce effort and progress with rewards or celebrations , such as peer or family recognition, to foster a positive learning environment.	Model organizational strategies explicitly , such as using planners, to-do lists, and digital reminders, to teach effective time management skills.
Allow advanced learners to skip steps or move ahead after demonstrating mastery through pre-assessments, with opportunities to tackle deeper, more challenging tasks or projects.	Allow accelerated students to take mastery checks ahead of schedule through flexible assessment windows, enabling them to maintain momentum.	Create opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery in preferred formats , including videos, artwork, verbal explanations, or written work, catering to diverse strengths.	Teach self-regulation techniques , including mindfulness breaks and focus strategies, to help students manage stress and stay productive during self-paced learning.
Create opportunities for retakes or multiple attempts on assessments within a defined time frame , encouraging students to reflect, apply feedback, and deepen their understanding without penalty.	Encourage fast-paced learners to explore deeper topics during independent work time through research, case studies, or by mentoring peers to reinforce their learning.	Facilitate regular goal-setting exercises at the start of each week/unit, helping students define personal learning goals and track their progress to maintain motivation.	Offer clear guidelines on "What to do when I'm stuck," including resources, peer or teacher support, and self-assessment strategies.