



Measuring the implementation and  
impact of student-centered learning:  
Students' experience and attitudes.

# The EDC/NMEF Student-Centered Learning (SCL) Questionnaire for Students 2016

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## **Education Development Center, Inc.**

EDC is a nonprofit organization that creates and delivers effective programs, services, materials, and products to improve learning and teaching, health and human development, and economic opportunity for people of all ages worldwide. Collaborating with both public and private partners, we strive for a world where all people are empowered to live healthy, productive lives. EDC is committed to education that builds knowledge and skill, makes possible a deeper understanding of the world, and engages learners as active, problem-solving participants. While the issues we address are diverse, all that we do is united by our conviction that learning is the liberating force in human development. Founded in 1958, EDC currently employs 1,200 staff in the United States and around the world, including teachers, health and social science professionals, mathematicians, professional development experts, scientists, researchers, and management and technology specialists.

## **Nellie Mae Education Foundation**

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation is the largest philanthropic organization in New England that focuses exclusively on education. The Foundation supports the promotion and integration of student-centered approaches to learning at the high school level across New England—where learning is personalized; learning is competency-based; learning takes place anytime, anywhere; and students exert ownership over their own learning. To elevate student-centered approaches, the Foundation utilizes a four-part strategy that focuses on: building educator ownership, understanding and capacity; advancing quality and rigor of SCL practices; developing effective systems designs; and building public understanding and demand. Since 1998, the Foundation has distributed over \$210 million in grants. For more information about the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, visit [www.nmefoundation.org](http://www.nmefoundation.org).

# Background

In 2010, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation (NMEF) launched the District Level Systems Change (DLSC) initiative, an effort to establish, sustain, and expand student-centered learning (SCL) in a select set of public school districts in the New England region. The initiative aimed to support sites in their efforts to accomplish the four SCL core components:

1. Extend learning beyond the four walls of the school and beyond the traditional school day, school week, and school year
2. Engage students in authentic tasks that improve the acquisition of 21st century knowledge and skills
3. Build a system in which learners' progress would be measured by demonstration of proficiency, not credits or seat time
4. Incorporate youth leadership and youth voice in determining the "what" and "how" of learning, and support students in shaping their own pathways toward college or career

These core components have evolved in NMEF's recent funding strategy and are now represented as four tenets of student-centered learning: personalized learning, competency-based learning, anytime/anywhere learning, and student-owned learning." (To learn more, visit [http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/interactive-framework/.](http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/interactive-framework/))

Central to NMEF's change strategy was the view that progress in improving student engagement and student achievement depended on sites' willingness and capacity to implement each of the four core components together or through careful staging over a period of three to six years. The foundation was encouraging systemic change, not small-scale programs.

As part of this effort, NMEF awarded a grant to EDC to evaluate the implementation and impact of the initiative's core components as they are articulated in the foundation's DLSC Logic Model. The aim of the evaluation was to provide NMEF and the participating DLSC sites with accurate and timely information about each site's progress in achieving the outcomes envisioned in the Logic Model and proposed in the site's annual work plan. Key among these outcomes was the effect of DLSC investments on teaching and learning in participating high schools.

One of the principal components of the evaluation was the annual administration of a student questionnaire in each of the high schools. This questionnaire, developed by the EDC evaluation team in consultation with NMEF research and program staff, was wide in scope (to match the breadth of SCL interventions across the sites) yet grounded in school and classroom



practices (to provide empirical support for NMEF's ideas). The questionnaire was designed to work alongside other evaluation instruments—a student-group interview protocol and a classroom observation protocol—to provide an annual snapshot of SCL implementation in each of the sites and, over time, to create a rich set of trend data for the DLSC initiative.

## Creating the Questionnaire

To create the original questionnaire, the EDC evaluation team conducted an extensive review of the literature on student-centered learning, competency-based learning, proficiency-based learning, and standards-based learning, as this literature appeared in 2010. The team also reviewed existing questionnaires and analytic frameworks that addressed the major topics identified by NMEF in its change strategy.

These included a draft version of the Innovative Teaching and Learning questionnaire, the 2009 PISA Student Questionnaire, the Horizon Institute LSC Teacher Questionnaire (HRI LSC Teacher Questionnaire 1997), the Research Assessment Package for Schools (RAPS), the Quantifying Student Engagement Research Report (by the National Center for Student Engagement), and the Stanford CRC Questionnaire. (We acknowledge our debt to the developers of each of these instruments and analytic frameworks.)

**The team developed the first DLSC student questionnaire in 2011 and administered the questionnaire in DLSC schools for the next four years. During that time, the questionnaire was administered in 23 schools in 11 DLSC districts with over 10,000 respondents.**

Building on this review and in close consultation with NMEF, the team developed the first DLSC student questionnaire in 2011; piloted the questionnaire with local high school students to determine its clarity, technical functionality, and capacity to measure underlying constructs; made indicated adjustments; and then administered the questionnaire in DLSC schools for the next four years. During that time, the questionnaire was administered in 23 schools in 11 DLSC districts with over 10,000 respondents.

The team repeated the development process in 2015, expanding the literature review to include college and career readiness, deeper learning, continuous improvement, growth mindset, and academic tenacity. Relying on a thorough review of the original student questionnaire and the results it generated, the EDC team developed a revised and expanded version (appended to this document) for use in Phase 2 of the DLSC initiative. Here, we acknowledge our debt

to recent literature on these topics, including contributions by Sandra Park, Eleanor Duckworth, and Carol Dweck.

# The Structure of the Questionnaire

The 2016 DLSC student questionnaire contains 18 items and 54 sub-items, organized into six sections.



## Section 1

### Individual Background Information, 6 items:

1. Student identification
2. School identification
3. Race
4. Gender
5. Grade level
6. Years in the identified school

These items provide essential identifying information to support disaggregation of data.



## Section 2

### Classroom Experience, 4 items:

7. Frequency of various student activities in three subjects (9 sub-items x 3 subjects)
8. Frequency of various teacher activities in three subjects (4 sub-items x 3 subjects)
9. Student rating of assessment opportunities and academic disposition and mindset (4 sub-items x 3 subjects)
10. Student rating of teacher expectations and support (3 sub-items x 3 subjects).

These items and their sub-items address the following constructs:

- Personalization
- 21st century knowledge and skills
- Demonstration of proficiency
- Student voice and choice
- Academic tenacity
- Growth mindset
- Traditional models of instruction and student activity



## Section 3

### School Environment and Adult Support, 1 item:

11. Student's rating of teacher, administrator, and counselor support (7 sub-items)

This item's sub-items address constructs of personalization and SCL scaffolding.



## Section 4

### Anytime/Anywhere Learning, 3 items regarding student involvement in extended learning opportunities:

12. Online courses
13. Dual enrollment
14. Flipped learning

These items address the construct of Anytime/Anywhere Learning.



## Section 5

### Technology, 3 items:

15. Availability of computers or tablets to support SCL
16. Frequency of use of computers or other technology tools in support of SCL (5 sub-items)
17. Student rating of classroom uses of technology (7 sub-items)

These items and their sub-items address the construct of technology in the service of SCL.



## Section 6

### Engagement in Learning and School Life, 1 Item:

18. Student's rating of own involvement in learning and school life (15 sub-items)

This item's sub-items address the following constructs:

- Academic engagement
- Social/Emotional engagement
- Student leadership
- Academic persistence

# Using the Questionnaire

The survey is designed to be administered electronically to high school students in schools (or school districts) that have embraced some or all of the four core components of SCL identified by NMEF:

1. Anytime/Anywhere learning
2. Acquisition of 21st century knowledge and skills
3. Proficiency-based instruction and learning
4. Student voice and leadership

In the DLSC evaluation, EDC sought a sample size of 25 percent or more of the student body in each participating high school for each administration of the questionnaire. EDC provided guidance on constructing a representative sample of the student population (grade level, race, gender, and academic performance). In addition to demographic information collected on the questionnaire itself, EDC also requested and received school or district data on each respondent's status for free and reduced lunch, English language learners, special education, and AP/honors enrollment. These additional data about individual respondents allowed for disaggregation of questionnaire results by subgroups. Questionnaire results were not used to track individuals' responses across years.

The DLSC questionnaire was designed to be administered electronically. Access to an online version of the questionnaire is available at a cost negotiable with Education Development Center.

**Contact:**

[SCLquestionnaires@edc.org](mailto:SCLquestionnaires@edc.org)

617-618-2978

The survey is designed to be administered electronically to high school students in schools (or school districts) that have embraced some or all of the four core components of SCL

# The EDC/NMEF Student-Centered Learning (SCL) Questionnaire for Students 2016



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## Welcome to the EDC/NMEF Student-Centered Learning (SCL) Questionnaire for Students.

This questionnaire is intended to provide students' perspective on the implementation of student-centered learning in your school. Student-Centered learning includes learning that is more personalized (taking account of student interests and needs) and student-owned (inviting greater student voice), that can take place anytime/anywhere (inside or outside of school; before, during or after the school day), and that measures progress based on students' demonstration of proficiency, not just the hours they sit in class.

Your responses will help your school or school district gather information about the types of instruction and student learning that you experience at your high school. The questions will ask you about your classroom experiences, your use of learning technology, and what it's like to be a student at your school.

Participation in the questionnaire is voluntary, all responses are confidential, and all answers from the questionnaire will be reported collectively with answers from other students who participate in the study.

The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete. We greatly appreciate your taking the time to do this!

This questionnaire is the property of EDC and NMEF and cannot be reproduced, distributed, or used without the express written permission of the authors.

## Individual Background Information

1. Please enter your official school identification number.

2. What school do you attend?

(School #1)

(School #2)

3. Are you male or female?

Male

Female

4. Please indicate your race/ethnicity

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian or Asian American

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latino/Latina

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White or European American

Two or more races

5. What grade are you in?

9th

10th

11th

12th

6. This is my:

first year at this school.

second year at this school.

third year at this school.

fourth year at this school.

fifth year or more at this school.

## Classroom Experiences—Math, English, and Science

### 7. *How often* do the following things happen in your classes?

For each item below, think about the classes you took this year in math, English, and science. In the box for each subject, use the arrow to pull down the answer menu and select the option that best answers the question. The choices in the drop down menus are Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Every Day. If you did not take a class in one of these subjects this year, leave your responses in that column blank.

	Mathematics	English	Science
I work with other students on group assignments.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I have to revise my work based on feedback from my teacher.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I learn about things that connect to life outside the classroom.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I take quizzes and tests.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I prepare or give an individual presentation to the class.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I work independently on textbook or worksheet questions.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I work on writing assignments.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I work on problems based on real-world examples.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I give and receive feedback to/from students in this class.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### 8. *How often* does the teacher do the following things in your classes?

For each item below, think about the classes you took this year in math, English, and science. In the box for each subject, use the arrow to pull down the answer menu and select the option that best answers the question. The choices in the drop down menus are Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Every Day. If you did not take a class in one of these subjects this year, leave the responses in that column blank.

	Mathematics	English	Science
The teacher spends half the class time or more giving lectures or presentations.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The teacher gives written feedback on student work.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The teacher asks students to explain their answers.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The teacher involves students in making decisions about their classwork (what and how they learn).	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

9. *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your classes?*

For each item below, think about the classes you took this year in math, English, and science. In the box for each subject, use the arrow to pull down the answer menu and select the option that best answers the question. The choices in the drop down menus are Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral/Mixed, Agree, or Strongly Agree. If you did not take a class in one of these subjects this year, leave the responses in that column blank.

	Mathematics	English	Science
I get to choose how I show the teacher what I have learned (for example, through projects, presentations, performances, or models as well as traditional tests or papers).	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I move on to new work when I can show what I have learned.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
When the work gets difficult, I don't give up.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I believe I can succeed in achieving the learning goals in this class.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

10. *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your classes?*

For each item below, think about the classes you took this year in math, English, and science. In the box for each subject, use the arrow to pull down the answer menu and select the option that best answers the question. The choices in the drop down menus are Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral/Mixed, Agree, or Strongly Agree. If you did not take a class in one of these subjects this year, leave the responses in that column blank.

	Mathematics	English	Science
The teacher expects us to work through challenging tasks without giving up.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The teacher gives me the help I need when I'm stuck.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The teacher assigns work that is appropriately challenging (not too hard but not too easy).	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## School Environment and Adult Support

11. Thinking about your school, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teachers work hard to make sure that all students are learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers notice if students have trouble learning something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers have high expectations for all students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School administrators and counselors have high expectations for all students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers and counselors provide support in helping students prepare for life after graduation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school offers extracurricular activities, clubs, and programs that meet my interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school offers courses and electives that meet my interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Anytime / Anywhere Learning

12. During this school year, have you completed school-approved work or projects *in your community* (for example, an Extended Learning Opportunity or ELO, including internships, job shadowing or community service learning)?
- Yes, and at least one of these was for high school credit
  - Yes, but none of these was for high school credit
  - No, I did not participate in school-approved work or projects in the community
13. During this school year, have you enrolled in any online courses?
- Yes, and at least one of these was for high school credit
  - Yes, but none of these was for high school credit
  - No, I did not enroll in any online courses
14. During this school year, have you taken any college courses? (Click all that apply)
- Yes, and at least one of these was for high school credit
  - Yes, and at least one of these was for college credit
  - No, I did not take any college courses
15. During this school year, have you participated in a course that uses “**flipped learning**”? In flipped learning the classroom lecture or presentation and the homework elements of a course are reversed. For example, short video lectures might be viewed by students at home before class, while in-class time is spent on exercises, projects, or discussions.
- Yes, 1-3 Courses
  - Yes, 4 or More Courses
  - No

## Technology

16. Do you have any of the following (click all that apply):

- a school-issues tablet or laptop to use this year in school and at home
- a school-issued tablet or laptop to use only at school
- my own laptop computer or tablet that I use in school and at home
- a desktop, laptop or tablet computer that I can use only at home
- none of the above

17. How often do you do the following things using computers or technology in your classes?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Every day
I use a computer to make something new and creative (like a movie, website, podcast, blog, or game design).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use computer programs (like Google Docs, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, or Prezi) to write stories and reports, create models, or complete assignments, projects, or labs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use the internet to do research or find information for school assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use school or class websites to get assignments or access resources for class work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use other technology tools in class (graphing calculators, SmartBoards, smartphones, clickers, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. I use technology in my classes to ....

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Move at my own pace on class assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access challenging course content.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pursue topics I'm interested in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support my learning anytime, anywhere.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with other students on class assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicate on social media or do things other than my school work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Submit assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Engagement in Learning and School Life

19. How much do you agree with the following?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I'm learning a lot in most of my classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most of what I learn in my classes is necessary for success in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in the work I get to do in most of my classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I work very hard on my schoolwork.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I participate in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I complete my homework on time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that most of my teachers care about how I'm doing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school is a fun place to be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like a real part of my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I can go to at least one teacher with things that I need to talk about.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that my ideas and opinions can influence decisions made in my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students are seen and treated as leaders by adults in my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that each student has a certain amount of intelligence and that no amount of effort in school can do much to change that.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a clear idea of what I will do after I graduate from high school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When course work is hard, I keep trying.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Thank you for taking this survey!**



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