



## CASE STUDY

### Glen Taylor ES Design Team

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### What is your Design Challenge?

Poor student attendance and poor student engagement during learning activities.

How might we get students to engage in authentic learning?

[Student survey results](#)

### What did you do?

Our design team focused on creating opportunities for students to be actively engaged and recognized by both their teachers and peers. This was achieved through the implementation of Authentic Learning activities supported by Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) practices. Our goal was to ensure that every student felt noticed and valued within the classroom community.

What draft competencies may have emerged?

Collaboration: working with peers for a shared purpose

Critical thinking: applying creative thinking skills within an academic and social context.

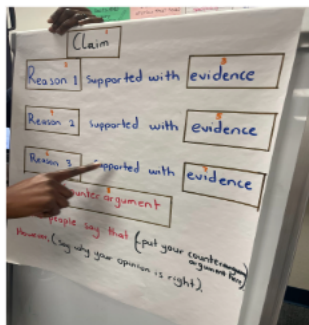
Solution-oriented: Demonstrating problem solving strategies to solve problems.

Application of Knowledge: Explaining ways their knowledge and skills can impact their communities.

Self Advocacy: Evaluating resources and seeking guidance to overcome challenges.

Resilience: Showing persistence in overcoming identified challenges.

[STEAM Night Parent Letter About Invention Project](#), [Invention Project Student Planning Guide](#), [Intermediate Invention Rubric \(3-5\)](#)



**Engaged in a debate during SEL**

## What was the biggest surprise/barrier in implementation?

### What was the impact?

We discovered during the implementation of authentic learning through the science curriculum that many students did not possess the speaking, listening, or self-management skills needed to complete larger tasks. As a result, we provided additional support in these areas in the forms of daily SEL focused lessons outside the science classroom as well as direct instruction within the classroom as well. Creating a culture where students have the fundamental skills to tackle authentic tasks in a safe and supported environment is key.

The most tangible impact of the design process was our ability to recreate a safe environment that unlocked student agency.

Ms. Ward (Math Teacher)  
**AUTHENTIC LEARNING RUBRIC**

Taken from Employability Skills for Career Readiness Standards

Standard	Examples	Meets	Approaches
16 Demonstrate teamwork skills by contributing to the success of the team, assisting others, and requesting help when needed	<b>Student capacity and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes to the success of the team by demonstrating initiative, understanding, collaboration, cooperation, using individual contributions, and performing assigned role</li> <li>requests to learn decisions and follow directions</li> <li>knows when and how to seek help from other group members or the teacher</li> </ul>	<b>Student capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes to the success of the team by demonstrating initiative, understanding, collaboration, cooperation, using individual contributions, and performing assigned role</li> <li>requests to learn decisions and follow directions</li> <li>knows when and how to seek help from other group members or the teacher</li> </ul>	<b>Student approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes to the success of the team by demonstrating initiative, understanding, collaboration, cooperation, using individual contributions, and performing assigned role</li> <li>requests to learn decisions and follow directions</li> <li>knows when and how to seek help from other group members or the teacher</li> </ul>
17 Demonstrate creativity and resourcefulness by contributing new ideas and working with initiative	<b>Student capacity and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes new and creative ideas</li> <li>always initiates readily, independently, and responsibly</li> <li>shows ability and priority with new situations and decisions</li> <li>develops a plan of action based on personal learning style and preferences</li> </ul>	<b>Student capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes new and creative ideas</li> <li>always initiates readily, independently, and responsibly</li> <li>shows ability and priority with new situations and decisions</li> <li>develops a plan of action based on personal learning style and preferences</li> </ul>	<b>Student approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributes new and creative ideas</li> <li>always initiates readily, independently, and responsibly</li> <li>shows ability and priority with new situations and decisions</li> <li>develops a plan of action based on personal learning style and preferences</li> </ul>
18 Demonstrate effective speaking and listening skills by communicating effectively with customers and employees and following directions	<b>Student capacity and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicates effectively with others by choosing appropriate methods to share information and ideas with clarity and respect</li> <li>initiates public and group speaking skills</li> <li>interprets verbal and follow directions</li> <li>requests directions or requests to ensure understanding by practicing active listening</li> </ul>	<b>Student capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicates effectively with others by choosing appropriate methods to share information and ideas with clarity and respect</li> <li>initiates public and group speaking skills</li> <li>interprets verbal and follow directions</li> <li>requests directions or requests to ensure understanding by practicing active listening</li> </ul>	<b>Student approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicates effectively with others by choosing appropriate methods to share information and ideas with clarity and respect</li> <li>initiates public and group speaking skills</li> <li>interprets verbal and follow directions</li> <li>requests directions or requests to ensure understanding by practicing active listening</li> </ul>
19 Demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills by analyzing and resolving problems that arise in completing assigned tasks	<b>Student capacity and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognizes, analyzes, and solves problems that arise in completing assigned tasks</li> <li>applies resources that may help solve a specific problem</li> <li>uses a logical approach to make decisions and solve problems</li> </ul>	<b>Student capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognizes, analyzes, and solves problems that arise in completing assigned tasks</li> <li>applies resources that may help solve a specific problem</li> <li>uses a logical approach to make decisions and solve problems</li> </ul>	<b>Student approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognizes, analyzes, and solves problems that arise in completing assigned tasks</li> <li>applies resources that may help solve a specific problem</li> <li>uses a logical approach to make decisions and solve problems</li> </ul>
20 Demonstrate time, task, and resource management skills by organizing and implementing a production plan of work	<b>Student capacity and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organizes and implements a plan of action by writing and meeting short and long-term goals</li> <li>works effectively to make the best use of all time</li> <li>works with others to identify and utilize each member's individual strengths</li> <li>uses materials correctly and safely</li> </ul>	<b>Student capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organizes and implements a plan of action by writing and meeting short and long-term goals</li> <li>works effectively to make the best use of all time</li> <li>works with others to identify and utilize each member's individual strengths</li> <li>uses materials correctly and safely</li> </ul>	<b>Student approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organizes and implements a plan of action by writing and meeting short and long-term goals</li> <li>works effectively to make the best use of all time</li> <li>works with others to identify and utilize each member's individual strengths</li> <li>uses materials correctly and safely</li> </ul>

1, 9:42 AM Student Survey (Pre)

What are the things you dislike about the learning in your classroom?

29 responses

- kids screaming like first graders
- being bored
- my seating
- nothing
- The point system Mrs.lencinfelters class and no fun activities and the only thing after we finish being reading
- What I dislike is it's kinda boring
- Loudness
- people

## What was the greatest success? How did this success impact young people or how might it impact young people on your campus? What are their perceptions?

Our greatest success is increased student engagement, which has positively impacted our overall school attendance. Furthermore, in the classroom that piloted the use of the morning meeting book, students unanimously agreed that the best part of their day is when they get to “share” and participate in a “group activity” during the SEL meeting. Consequently, the school administration is seeking a schoolwide adoption of the morning meeting book as the key driver of our social emotional learning next school year.

Academically, the successes we recorded were evident in our 5th graders' growth in abilities to make positive learner-centered choices when given the opportunities. For instance, students were able to self-manage and self-regulate when actually put into an authentic situation: making their inventions for STEAM Night. Students were able: to use the tools and equipment properly, think about and answer questions about all of the different buttons and components they were adding, make corrections to their display explanations or explain the purpose and reasoning for their choices.



Improved attendance/engagement



School wide adoption of SEL Resource



Steam Night Invention

## What's next? How does your team plan to evolve this work? What are the most significant pieces of learning you see impacting adult work and young people's experiences? What school level, district level, state level policy may need to be addressed?

As we move forward, our team plans to focus on ensuring strong teacher buy-in as a critical component of sustaining and expanding authentic learning practices. Our staff presentation will not only explain what authentic learning is and why it is important but will also showcase the amazing ways it is currently being used at Glen Taylor. This approach will highlight the successes and provide inspiration for other teachers. Additionally, we will share simple but effective first steps for integrating authentic learning into their own instruction, such as modifying the prompts in their writing assignments. Our first step is to plan a professional development training for the staff in the fall that shares current practices and simple ways to get started. This will help teachers feel supported and empowered to incorporate authentic learning practices into their classrooms.

This strategy ensures that our educators are equipped and motivated to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences for our students, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

### [Authentic Learning Professional Development Slides](#)

We are shifting from compliance to agency. We have spent a greater part of our career as educators ensuring we teach lessons that have opportunities for high student engagement. However, we now realize that in order to become more effective as educators, we need to empower students to own their learning via goal setting, encourage student voice and encourage collective efficacy. Thus, authentic learning is not only an amazing engagement strategy, it is also an excellent tool/opportunity for students to learn/demonstrate resilience and competencies.

For the academic content:

- Provide Clear Criteria and Rubrics: Use detailed rubrics to clarify expectations and provide consistent, objective grading.
- Incorporate Multiple Assessment Methods: Use a variety of assessment types to capture different aspects of student learning and skills.
- Ensure Fairness and Equity: Design assessments that are accessible and fair to all students, taking into account diverse backgrounds and learning styles.

Furthermore, to assess learners on their ability to demonstrate the competencies while participating in authentic tasks, teachers can use the “Authentic Assessment Rubric” (see below). This rubric uses the Employability Skills for Career Readiness Standards to assess students ability to work within a team, use their creativity and problem-solving skills, communicate effectively, and manage their time and resources appropriately. All of these critical 21st century skills are critical for students to master as they engage in more, complex real-world activities.

### [Authentic Assessment Rubric](#)

It is our hope that the following types of learner assessment below are evident in all classrooms:

- Peer Assessment:
  - Purpose: Involves students assessing each other's work.
  - Benefits: Enhances critical thinking and evaluative skills. Provides diverse perspectives and promotes a collaborative learning environment.
- Performance-Based Assessment:
  - Purpose: Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills through real-world tasks and projects.
  - Benefits: Encourages deeper learning and application of skills in practical contexts. Assesses higher-order thinking skills and creativity.

What implications may exist around accountability?

- Validity and Reliability: Ensuring assessments are valid (measuring what they intend to measure) and reliable (providing consistent results) is critical. Poorly designed assessments can lead to inaccurate conclusions about student learning and progress.
- Bias and Fairness: Assessments must be free from bias and accessible to all students. This includes accommodating diverse learning needs and ensuring cultural and linguistic inclusivity.
- Balancing Formative and Summative Assessments: While both types are important, an overemphasis on summative assessments can lead to "teaching to the test" and undermine personalized learning. A balanced approach is necessary to support ongoing learning and growth.

[Steam Night Photographs](#)

## Research + Resources that inspired and informed our thinking

Participating in the network has been pivotal in helping the Glen Taylor Team examine our current practices within our human-centered learning system and reimagine our approach to educating 21st-century students.

We look forward to seeing how the Nevada Competencies/ Portrait of a Nevada Learner are demonstrated in our day-to-day learning activities at Glen Taylor. In addition, we are excited to continue our adventure into authentic learning leading our first authentic learning professional development for our teachers in Fall 2024. Subsequently, our team will hold another training session with teachers on the important link between SEL and authentic learning and the need for students to have the self-regulation and self-management skills to participate in real-world learning experiences.

[KnowledgeWorks: Exploring Personalized Competency Based Learning Canvas Course Case Studies and Articles](#)