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S3 E13: Progress Monitoring

Rebecca Hines

University of Central Florida, rebecca.hines@ucf.edu

Lisa Dieker

University of Central Florida, lisa.dieker@ucf.edu

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Transcript

Lisa Dieker

Welcome to Practical Access. I'm Lisa Dieker.

Rebecca Hines

And I'm Rebecca Hines. And in this episode, we have a guest that Lisa Dieker is going to absolutely love because our guest is Lisa Dieker!

Lisa Dieker

I really like myself, Becky, so thank you for reminding me.

Rebecca Hines

Doctor Dieker, we would be remiss if we did not tap into your vast expertise as we as we think about bringing in different voices into the field and into the discussion. So, this morning I know both of us have just been thinking, as have all of our colleagues across the country about, about the shutdowns and emergency situations and this move to a lot of online learning. And so, I think in this episode, you're going to share with us some specifics on progress monitoring.

Lisa Dieker

So I'm really excited to talk about this topic because it's something I have personally been trying to kind of think through because I keep getting asked this question by my friends and colleagues. And you know, it's funny, I go back to something that seems so silly but so important, and it's what I've always called my one minute co-planning model where you know, what's the bullseye? I think the mistake we keep making, whether it's brick and mortar or online, is we keep throwing the dirt all over the place and it's kind of hard to progress monitor the whole entire dartboard. It's pretty easy just to count the number of bullseyes you get on the dart board and usually I'm really bad at darts. I don't get any. So, you know the end is 0. But I think too many times in progress monitoring we don't start with that simple piece, and I think online it's even more important. I think it's important in my opinion to have two bullseyes online. One is what I call netiquette, or you know what's the behavior you expect today? So, I have a great teacher who said to me the other day, she said, what I expect is when I asked him to come back from the timer, I expect them all to turn on their cameras just long enough to smile at me. She said some of them don't want to leave their cameras on because they've got three siblings in the background and we had, but she said I just want them to check in if they really won't turn on their cameras, I wanted data check and progress monitor they at least have to type me some kind of kind word to me. So, she said I'm trying to keep their mood up and at the same time making sure they're on camera. I was like yeah, because you think a high schooler doesn't go online and then goes back to sleep and then shows up and then they go, oh, I didn't understand what you're talking about. And then the second thing that that very quickly there, I would just say is the academic bullseye. I think we often have the academic one, without the social one, and I think they're equally important both in brick and mortar and online, but that's where I think we start with progress monitor.

Rebecca Hines

And I think those are both great points, the behavior and the academic piece and even little subtle academic pieces that might not be grade related. But let's take that kind of broad concept because we know as educators, we're always looking to improve or increase the behavior in one of those two areas. So, tell me specifically Lisa, so let's go back to your example of the teacher who expects kids to turn that that camera on for that, you know, split second. How does she progress monitor that specifically?

Lisa Dieker

You must have known what I was wanting to talk about next and we, by the way, we didn't practice this in advance. Honestly, I'm a big believer in a very simple data chart. We could go complex with, you know, a column for academic, a column for social we could have data, but I am much simpler than that. If you know anything I'm like low maintenance and practical when it comes to classroom data, and that is check, plus, minus. So, I go look at the screen I give the whole class of minus today because nobody did well or only if you did or I can individually look and say check, check, check, check, check. Depending on what you're looking for, I can take a quick screen capture. Everybody's on the screen, ok great, I got everybody checked in attendance. One of my personal favorites is I have a teacher who actually does attendance by asking the kids a question. And they have to type the response to prove they're there. She said I do it in brick and mortar, I do it online. What's your least favorite green vegetable? What historical figure do you think should have never been considered a historical figure? You know anything she wants to know, but now she's got data and that's how she takes attendance. She said I don't look around the room and see if you're there. I don't go online and check to see if everybody's in my class of 32. If you didn't answer that question, I say hey, Jackson, why didn't you answer? Oh, I didn't get to that yet ok, well, when you answer the question, then you are present. And so, I think we need really simple things like that, some kind of simple data chart that looks at the bullseye academically, but also looks for that social, emotional piece.

Rebecca Hines

And so, once you have your checks and minuses or whatever I'm putting on my chart, what do you do with it from there? Do you share that with the students and say X percentage of us did this today? Do you have kids set personal goals with that data, or do you just use that yourself as the teacher for something?

Lisa Dieker

So, I'm a big believer that that at the end of the lesson, if my bullseye is that you can name the main conflict in the French Revolution. And I gave half the class a minus, probably I need to do a mini reteach. But if two kids are a minus, I think I should reach out to them in an online environment and have a little office hour chat with them, or try to pre teach them something coming. So, I like to always say everybody is a plus, go over here and here's your enhancement lesson. And those your checks or minuses at this point in time and I can send that through private chat. I can put that in a, you know, in a, in a Class Dojo. I mean, there's so many ways you can give kids data today, but I think the biggest thing is I want students to be empowered to get that to at least to check, and how that happens in a brick and mortar is one of my personal favorites that again could look similar online. You'd have to have a virtual marble, but kids dropped a marble and I got this or I'm still and I still not there yet. And they're still not there yet kids are the ones that I think we want to look at. If I'm co-teaching the two teachers can share that data really quick. What's our plan? You know, hey Becky I'm going to stay online for 30 minutes and

do an enrichment lesson. Would you offer a little remediation lesson? So, I think that our goal should be that everybody leaves with a check and if not, I should not stay up not all night, because teachers are already stressed, I should stay up and think about what it is that keeps that pattern of that minus for student A, B or C. How do I break that habit for them? And I think you and I both are big on paying off the slot machine. So, the best idea I've heard in a long time, I was talking to the teacher and I was like, I am stealing this. He said I start every week in my online environment that you get 3 assignments. And you if you do one of those you get a C, two of those you get a B, if you do three, you get an A. And he said but my C assignment is so stinking and easy that if you don't do it, you look really stupid, like list the two countries and the conflict of the French Revolution. And he's like, well, that would be one, and so, he said it's kind of a trick question, but he said then the kid gets a C then they're more motivated to work towards the B. So again, trying to make sure that the kid who is a minus isn't a minus forever, and I see too much of our progress monitoring being flat line data and never resuscitating a kid from that flat line.

Rebecca Hines

I think that's a great point and we do forget that that one principle is that success breeds success. And we have so many kids who are so accustomed to failing that they've given up trying. And I think that's a great specific strategy. I want to circle back a little bit to what you were saying about this idea of all of the students have mastered whatever my goal is for today, giving them an extension activity because in brick-and-mortar schools that I've worked with, we've talked about this before, extension activities are what I see as missing. You know, we know kids have mastered something and yet, you know, these four kids didn't get it so I'm reteaching the entire group. So, to your point about extension, let's think about that online. Are you suggesting then that the teacher has an extension breakout room for kids, and you know who's leading that if I don't have a co-teacher, how do you envision that working?

Lisa Dieker

Yeah, so, I think it could be synchronous or asynchronous. So, if I don't have a co-teacher and my class ends at 11, I say hey, join me from 11:00 to 11:10 for an enhancement enrichment activity for those of you who really watch. What she too does is, she said, the kid who is a minus always shows up in the enrichment, she said because I don't close it off to anybody and it's like hey, but if he thinks he's gifted, he's gifted. So, you know again sometimes self-esteem breeds a lot of positives. So that's one way, or I can simply have there's a great called Ditch the Textbooks website if you've never seen it, and he offers just lots of different ideas, like one of my favorites is this gap minder place where kids can go and explore families in other countries and think about and compare and contrast what that might look like during the French Revolution. So, I think it can be both ways, but I think it should be something that isn't like, mandated. Like you're gifted therefore, you must show up. That's the other mistake I think we say is well, if you got a plus today, maybe just got lucky Becky, you know. Today was your day you were on and tomorrow you might be a minus. So, on those plus days offering that option but not making it if you don't do this, your score is lower. I think that's the other mistake we make is that if a kid is gifted, you know, we think they're gifted in everything. Well, maybe I really like writing, but reading you know, that's just not my genre as much. And so, giving those options but not making it just for the plus only kid. I think that's the other mistake everybody's gifted in their own way.

Rebecca Hines

Yeah, I love that idea of having a scheduled extension time every day for any kid who wants to drop in. And I know from teaching online for 20 years now myself that when you, when you offer something extra like that, you know, often we judge ourselves by how many people show up. And I try to encourage all of our doctoral scholars and my colleagues, you know, when you add that something extra, even if only two people show up, it's ok because those two people are teaching classrooms full of kids. You know, and in the same way you know, those two kids who might show up to your extension activity might be people who are going to change the world, so giving you know, so judging ourselves always by the numbers of people who show up when we go the extra mile like a little extension opportunity. I love the idea of keeping it open for any kid who chooses to give it a try. So circling back to the progress monitoring piece one more time. You mentioned your paper pencil version. I know that as somebody who is very tech savvy, you must have some ideas on how we could accomplish this easily as teachers digitally. Thoughts?

Lisa Dieker

I mean, I think that that goes I start with paper pencil because sometimes digitally is complicated if there's more than one individual involved. And so you know, I love like a class Dojo for getting data points. But again, if I'm the Dojo person and you hate it, that's really not the best tool. So, I always say go with the path that works for you the best. I have another friend who has an in-depth Excel spreadsheet and offers color codes, but when I look at it, I lose my mind because I'm like, ok, so what's a blue code mean? She's like, well, that means they're semi in the warning stage I'm like ok that's too much for me, so I sometimes, even though I am a big tech person, I think data monitoring sometimes is simple as best. And so whether you use technology or paper pencil, again a 1,2,3,4,5, but here's the last thing I'm going to say in progress monitoring is it must communicate to kids. That's the data you gathered. I think the mistake we keep making is at the end of the semester cause like what I got a D, I thought I was getting an A in this class? You know, mom, I can't explain it because you know, and I think that's what we've done wrong. And my tip for doing better with that data is open up your options, and we've always talked about UDL. But I truly believe the best assessment for learning is here's the three things I taught you this week. Show me you know them. Show me in any way, shape, form that way. Then my progress monitoring, no matter how I do it whether it's a check plus minus ABC, 12345, to me the progress monitoring is about opening up the product. But I think the progress monitoring should be the simplest easiest way for you, and for communication to the students.

Rebecca Hines

Great point. So, to wrap up this episode, I will say for those of you who are using tools like Class Dojo, and I mentioned that tool in particular don't forget you can set academic goals in there. You could say something like identifies the noun, and the good thing about it products like that one you have your whole class there. You can open it on your phone and just click on the students who identified the noun, and so you could do some easy data tracking that way. I think Lisa's point about making sure that we use whatever is our most comfortable, and Lisa the other thing that I think is key that you mentioned today is that idea of making students a part of the progress monitoring process. You know, I've seen fantastic teachers who have kids literally chart their progress, and when we raise student awareness about it for our kids who are high functioning and can understand progress monitoring, and when we bring them into the conversation, I think increasing their awareness definitely changes and shapes their behavior and gets them excited when they start to see that they are in fact, getting off of that baseline 0 and

moving up the ladder, even if it is smaller increments and that's the goal of progress monitoring. So, I would like to thank our guests today, Doctor Lisa Dieker, and I would also like to kick it back to Doctor Lisa Dieker for a final goodbye.

Lisa Dieker

Well, thank you, Doctor Hines, for having me as our guest today. It was fun to have just a conversation with you today. And again, thank you for listening to our podcast and hopefully you found some practical tips. And if you have questions, please send us questions on Facebook, its Practical Access is our Facebook page. Or you can tweet us @AccessPractical. Thanks for joining us.