Exploring Implications for State Policy in Competency-Based Education

June 24, 2013
What is Competency-Based Education?

• Students advance upon mastery.
• Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
• Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience for students.
• Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
• Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

- Competency Works Definition
Today’s Agenda

• Betsy Brand, Executive Director, American Youth Policy Forum
• Joe Harris, Director, College and Career Readiness Center
• Kate Nielson, Policy Analyst, Education Division, National Governors Association
• Diane Smith, Director Teaching & Learning Initiative, Oregon’s Business Education Compact
• Sandra Dop, Consultant for 21st Century Skills, Iowa Department of Education
• Carissa Miller, Deputy Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers
An Overview of the College & Career Readiness & Success Center

Joseph R. Harris, Ph.D.
Director
June 24, 2013
CCRS Center Technical Assistance Hub

Task Areas

- Coordination and Collaboration
  - Regional Comprehensive and Content Centers
  - Federal CCRS Technical Assistance Providers
  - External CCRS Stakeholders and Resources

- Knowledge Development
  - New CCRS Center Products and Tools
  - CCRS Knowledge Database
  - Webinars and Symposia
  - CCRS Center Website and Social Media
  - Responsive and Proactive Technical Assistance
  - Networked Communities
CCRS Center Year One Priorities

- Mapping the CCRS Landscape
- Postsecondary Pathways and Transitions
- PK-20W Alignment
Visit our new website: ccrscenter.org
Competency-Based Education for K-12 and Implications for State Policy

June 24, 2013

Kate Nielson
Policy Analyst, National Governors Association
State Trends

• Abolish Carnegie Unit, provide waivers to districts
• School- and district-level innovation
• Limited changes to funding systems
• Growing interest and overlap with other policy areas
  – Common Core State Standards and assessments
  – Dual-enrollment
  – College and career readiness
A Snapshot of Competency Education State Policy Across the United States

- **Advanced States**: States with clear policies that are moving towards proficiency-based, more than just an option.
- **Developing States**: States with pilots of competency education, credit flexibility policies, or advanced next gen policies for equivalents to seat-time.
- **Emerging States**: States with waivers, task forces.
- **ILN States**: Since its inception, the Innovation Lab Network (ILN) engaged schools, districts, and state education agencies working to identify through local efforts new designs for public education that empower each student to thrive as a productive learner, worker, and citizen. The state's responsibility is to establish conditions in which innovation can flourish and to develop capacity to sustain and scale what works through policy. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) facilitates this network of states to support programmatic policy, and structure design work within each participating states and across the network.
- **No Policies in Competency Education**: States with seat-time and no competency education policies.
Current CBE Work and Resources

• Technical Assistance Grants
  – New Hampshire
  – Kentucky
  – Pennsylvania

• Resources
  – Issue Brief, State Strategies for Awarding Credit to Support Student Learning:
    http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1202EDUCREDITBRIEF.PDF
  – Policy Audit:

• Competency-Based Education Expert Roundtable
Major Questions and Issues

• Major policy pillars to unlocking CBE
  – Human capital/providers
  – Assessment and accountability
  – Funding

• Other considerations
  – Bridge K-12 and postsecondary
  – Ensure access, equity, and excellence for all
  – Effectively use data
Questions?

Kate Nielson
Policy Analyst, National Governors Association
knielson@nga.org
Clarifying Questions

- Kate Nielson, Policy Analyst, Education Division, National Governors Association, knielson@nga.org
Oregon’s Proficiency-based Education: A Teacher-driven Journey

Diane Smith, Director of Teaching & Learning & Lead Trainer
Oregon’s Business Education Compact
Oregon owns our data:

* 68% of entering high school students actually graduate
* 48% of those who graduate enter college the following year
* 50% of those entering college actually earn a college degree within 6 years
* Over 40% of entering community college freshmen and 20% of 4-year college freshmen enroll in remedial coursework that does not count towards graduation
How did Oregon get where we are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early 1990’s</td>
<td>Alternative high school flexible credit model: Credit for learning in the classroom, outside of the classroom and through prior learning experiences</td>
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<td>1993-2000</td>
<td>Oregon’s Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS) for higher ed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993-95</td>
<td>7 Oregon districts pilot proficiency-based credit options</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>State Proficiency Task Force: What is the future of proficiency-based practices and how can we focus on policy that supports teachers and students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>State policy adopted giving all comprehensive public high schools the same credit options as alternative high schools</td>
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*BEC is lead professional development provider in strategic and systemic implementation of proficiency-based practices, providing services both in Oregon and out of state. Our mission is to train every teacher in every school.*
What Does Roll-out Look Like?

- $37,000 provided 18 months of professional development to 4 pilot sites (150+ teachers); outside evaluators collected and compared district data
- Collaborate with state agencies
- District-specific customized professional development
- 3rd Annual state-wide annual proficiency conference – Feb. 28, 2014
What do state-level training numbers say?

* 5,000 teachers trained—18% of total

* 120,000 students served—22% of total
What should policy do?  
What does policy say?

**Policy should:**

* Challenge the status-quo through visionary ideas  
* Support successful practitioners  
* Use a K-16 lens

**Policy says:**

* Report student progress in proficiency in grade level standards  
* Separate behavior factors from academic achievement; only academic counts for GPA  
* Offer multiple credit options
What are we learning from teachers?
They want...

Descriptions of the most critical elements of proficiency-based practices. We wrote a self-evaluation book for them to use.

Collaboration time with teacher coaches who speak their language. BEC screens teachers, reviews their practices and trains them as coaches.
What are we learning about training?
It should reflect...

* Regular and job-embedded delivery
  Without it, we will end up with as much variance in implementation as we currently have with existing practices and policies.

* Models, resources and time for collaboration and development

* Opportunities to feel success and know that their administrators support them
Students speak out!

* I get that you want me to show you what I learned; I thought that’s what school was for!  
  HS student

* Proficiency Trumps Cheating
  Headline in HS school newspaper article, Portland, OR
Resources

**BEC Proficiency-based Teaching & Learning site:**
http://www.becpdx.org/proficiency/default.aspx

**Oregon Department of Education support sites:**
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=35
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3870
Contact Information

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Business Education Compact

www.becpdx.org
Sandra Dop

Consultant for 21st Century Skills, Iowa Department of Education
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

- 2010 State Board Priority
- 2011 State Guidelines on CBE
- 2011 Governor’s Blueprint on Education
- 2011 CBE Forum
- 2012 Legislation eliminated the Carnegie unit as the basis for credit in Iowa high schools and required a task force to investigate:
  - Credit Based on Competency Rather than on the Carnegie Unit
  - Assessment and Accountability
  - Learning Plans and Templates
  - Professional Development
  - Using Technology to Enhance This Work
• **State Guidelines**
  o Principles
  o Definitions
  o Examples

The Iowa Journey toward CBE

- **Legislative Task Force**
  - Preliminary Report, January 2013 included:
    - A justification for the work
    - 22 recommendations toward developing CBE in the state
    - Proposed timeline

http://tinyurl.com/CBEprelimreport
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• Policy Issues
  o Legislative: Code changes require legislative action
    ▪ Eliminate the Carnegie unit as the only way to earn credit toward graduation (SF 2284 in 2012)
  o State Department: Chapter 12 (administrative rule)
    ▪ Rules Committee and State Board can change this (Mostly centered around the definition of unit)
  o Local District: Local School Board
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• 2013 Legislature (HF 215)
  o Strategic Plan
  o Provided Funding for
    ➢ Writing Competencies
    ➢ Developing Assessments
    ➢ Investigation Recording/Reporting Systems
    ➢ Professional Development
    ➢ Grants for Up to 10 Pilot Schools
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• Next Steps
  o Task Force
    ▪ Recommendations for future work
    ▪ Transition to the Innovation Lab
    ▪ Network work group
      ➢ Finalize Application for Lab Schools
  o Innovation Lab Network, CCSSO
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• Motivation
  o New Hampshire—significantly increased graduation rate
  o Alaska—sending kids to college from a district where 90% were below grade in reading
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

And . . . Spirit Lake started with a January term 3 weeks to engage in standards-based and project-based learning environments. Student and teacher response was overwhelming.  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec ’11</th>
<th>Jan ’12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absences</td>
<td>229.5</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Referrals</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Tasks</td>
<td>77% analyze/evaluate/create</td>
<td>53% evaluate/create</td>
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The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• Teachers:
  This was the most exciting month of my career.
  mid-career teacher

• Students:
  No, I don’t want a snow day tomorrow. I want to finish my project and this is over on Tuesday.
  ninth grade student

• Community:
  Began calling to ask for interns for this year when school started—just because they heard about it from other businesses and organizations.
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• Ninth Grade Core Academy
  o English/Geography/Geology
  o Principal interviews with students

  Principal: “Tell me what you liked about this type of learning.”
  Student: “We didn’t have any homework.”
  Principal: “So you did everything in class?”
  Student: “No, I had to be ready. I looked things up and prepared for the group work the next day. I was responsible to them; I couldn’t just not do it.”
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• **Muscatine**
  - Attended December 2011 Forum
  - Returned to begin a semester long study
  - Launched 17 teachers in CBE classroom that fall
  - Cohort II began with their year of study 2012-13
    - 14 teachers launch this fall
  - Cohort III just started last week.
    - Another year of background study and planning
    - Launch fall 2015
The Iowa Journey toward CBE

• **Strategic Plan**
  o Lots to learn from each other

• **Pilot Schools**
  o Home grown examples
  o College and career ready

• **Future Needs**
  o Technology
  o National partners
Clarifying Questions

- Diane Smith, Director Teaching & Learning Initiative, Business Education Compact, dsmith@becpdx.org
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Competency-Based Education: Exploring Implications for State Policy

Carissa Miller
Deputy Executive Director
The Council of Chief State School Officers

June 24, 2013
The Innovation Lab Network

**The Need:** The public education system needs to be transformed in order to prepare next-generation learners to be college and career ready.

**The ILN:** CCSSO created the Innovation Lab Network (ILN), a network of ten states taking collective action to identify, test and implement student-centered approaches to learning.

**The Goal:** To spur system-level change by scaling locally-led innovation to widespread implementation, both within and across states, and by creating enabling conditions through policy and implementation.

**Our Role:** CCSSO facilitates cross-network action, collaboration and shared learning on states’ options and progress in creating an aligned system of policy and local practice.
The ILN Six Critical Attributes

1. World-class knowledge and skills
2. Performance-based learning
3. Personalized learning
4. Comprehensive systems of learning supports
5. Anytime, everywhere opportunities
6. Student agency
State considerations for competency-based education

1. **Define**: Create an institutional commitment to a definition of college and career readiness that includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions from which key competencies can be derived.

2. **Enable**: Set conditions where student co-design learning, set goals, and map their progress; create competency-based graduation policies; prepare educators to thrive in competency-based environments; etc.

3. **Measure**: Develop and deliver comprehensive, multi-dimensional assessment systems to inform instruction.

4. **Hold Accountable**: Align accountability system rewards and sanctions with the different metrics and timing of competency-based learning.

5. **Make Meaningful**: Work with higher education and workforce stakeholders to endorse competency-based learning.
States leading the way

- Define
- Enable
- Measure
- Hold Accountable
- Make Meaningful
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