

Competency Based Learning



Shaping the Landscape for Utah Public Schools

Overview by

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Competency based education means...

- “a system where a student advances to higher levels of learning when the student demonstrates competency of concepts and skills regardless of time, place, or pace”. S.B.143 (2016)
- S.B.143 also describes
 - Blended learning (learning takes place in part, through online learning with student control over time, place, path, and pace).
 - Extended learning (learning opportunities outside of a traditional school structure).
 - Personalized learning

Design elements for competency based system:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery.
- Competencies include explicit, measureable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
- Assessment is meaningful; providing feedback to students, teachers, and parents.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning emphasizes competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Why the shift to competency based learning?

Competency based education takes a holistic approach to the “whole child,” embracing the idea that to bring a student to true proficiency, it is important to have more than a simple record of previous demonstrated academic abilities. The social and emotional aspects of a student’s learning must be considered for an understanding of his or her motivation for, engagement with, and ownership of learning.

S. Bristow and S. Patrick, CompetencyWorks Issue Brief, 2014.

A personal alternative to traditional education

- Physical layout
- Instructional methods
- Bell schedules
- Credit hours
- Seat time
- Materials



What is happening in other countries?

Key competencies in European Systems:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Competence in math, science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competencies
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

What is happening in other states?

- [New Hampshire](#) – The state is initiating high school redesign that replaces the time-based credits (Carnegie unit) with competency-based credits.
- [Maine](#) – Principles of competency based learning are embedded in overarching education policy.
- [Ohio's Credit Flexibility Plan](#) – This plan, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2009, allows students to earn high school credit by demonstrating subject area competency, completing classroom instruction, or a combination of the two.
- [Iowa, Oregon, Colorado](#) have pilots or policies that enable competency based credits.
- [Idaho's Mastery Education Network](#) consists of 20 schools serving as competency (mastery) based education incubators.
- Over [39 states](#) allow schools to opt out of seat time requirements for graduation.

What is happening in Utah?

- Personalized learning through digital delivery
- Blended Learning models
- Extended Learning
- Competency Based exams for secondary students
- Compacting curriculum at elementary level
- High levels of LEA interest
- State team attending competency based boot-camp in NH summer 2016
- S.B.143 planning, implementation, and expansion grants available after July 1, 2016

S.B.143 Tasks Outlined for Board of Education

- Adopt rules to:
 - Outline administration of grant program and awarding of grants
 - Define outcome based measures for planning, implementation, and expansion grants
- Establish grant application process
- Establish a review committee
- Adopt metrics to analyze quality of applications
- Provide technical assistance to grant application participants
- Select grant recipients