



Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Project



Illinois State Board of Education

November 30, 2016



Webinar Agenda

- Welcome
 - Jason Helfer, ISBE
- Competency-Based Education: Understanding the Why, What, Where and How
 - Wendy Surr, Midwest Comprehensive Center
 - Janet Twyman, Center on Innovations in Learning
- Overview of Illinois Pilot Project Request for Application
 - Mary Reynolds, ISBE
- Questions & Answers



Additional Information

- Webinar is recorded and will be kept on Pilot Project website
- All questions from today's webinar will be added to a Frequently Asked Questions section on the ISBE Pilot Project website:

<http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/competency-based-pilot.htm?col1=open#CollapsiblePanel1>



Competency-Based Education: Understanding the Why, What, Where, and How

MIDWEST Comprehensive Center
at American Institutes for Research ■



Wendy Surr, Midwest Comprehensive Center

Janet Twyman, Center on Innovations in Learning

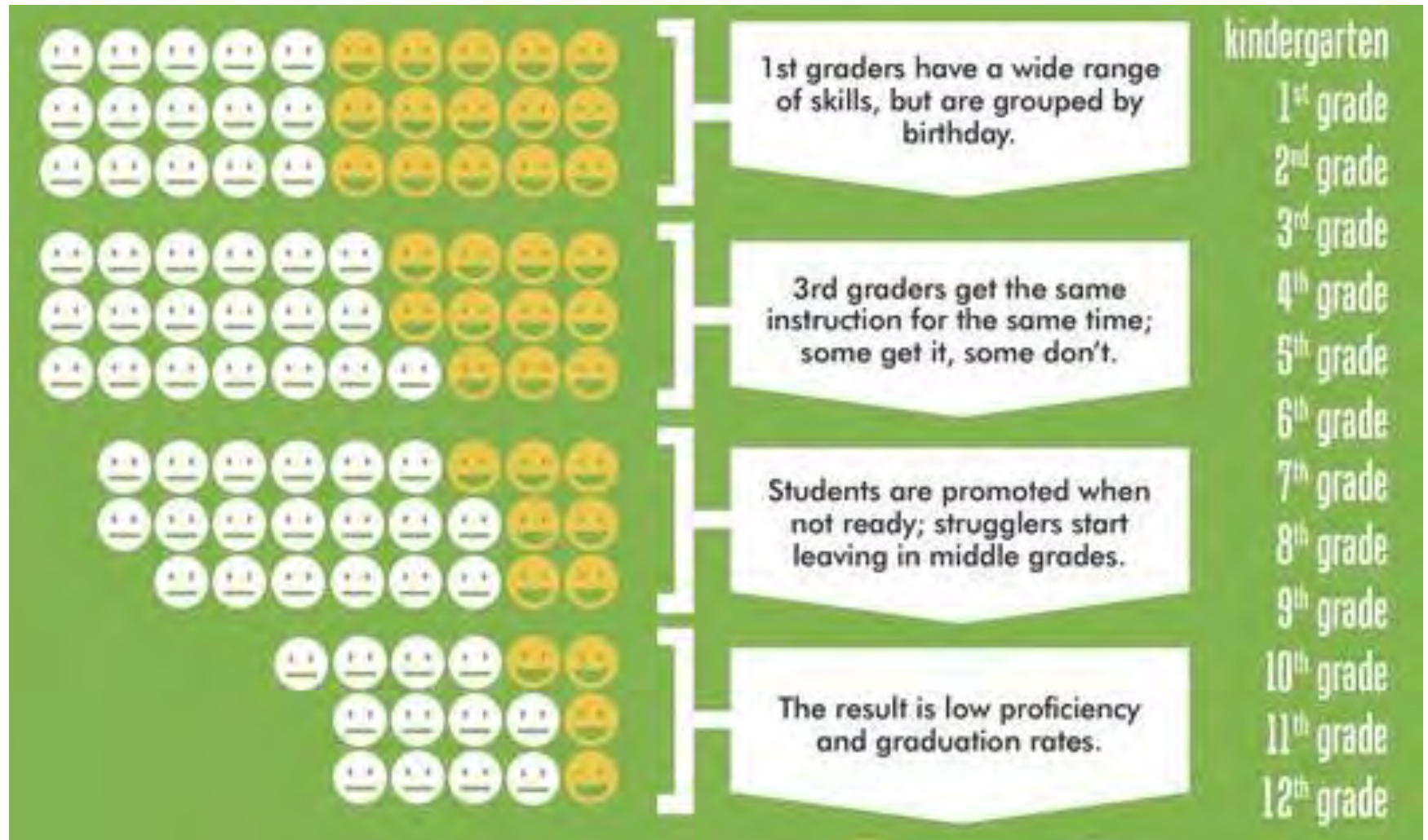
November 30, 2016

Competency-Based Education

1. Why embrace competency-based education?
2. What is competency-based education?
3. What is the prevalence of competency-based education?
4. How are states and districts implementing competency-based education?

Why embrace competency-based education?

One size does not fit all.



States Are Moving Away From Time-Based Systems for Teaching and Learning

How Students Learn and Teachers Teach	Traditional	Competency-Based Education Model
Students earn credit and advance based on:	course completion seat time	demonstrated mastery
Instruction is:	primarily whole class	personalized to the learner
Student work results in:	a letter grade	a new competency
The relationship between learning and time:	Time is held constant, while learning varies.	Learning is held constant, while time varies.

What is competency-based education?

Defining Competency-Based Education



Competencies are:

- Explicit, measurable, and transferable
- Emphasize application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions

Educators and schools ensure that:

- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual needs
- Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience
- Students advance upon mastery

Adapted from Sturgis, Patrick, & Pittenger, 2011

What Is a Competency?

A competency is more than just academic knowledge and skill.

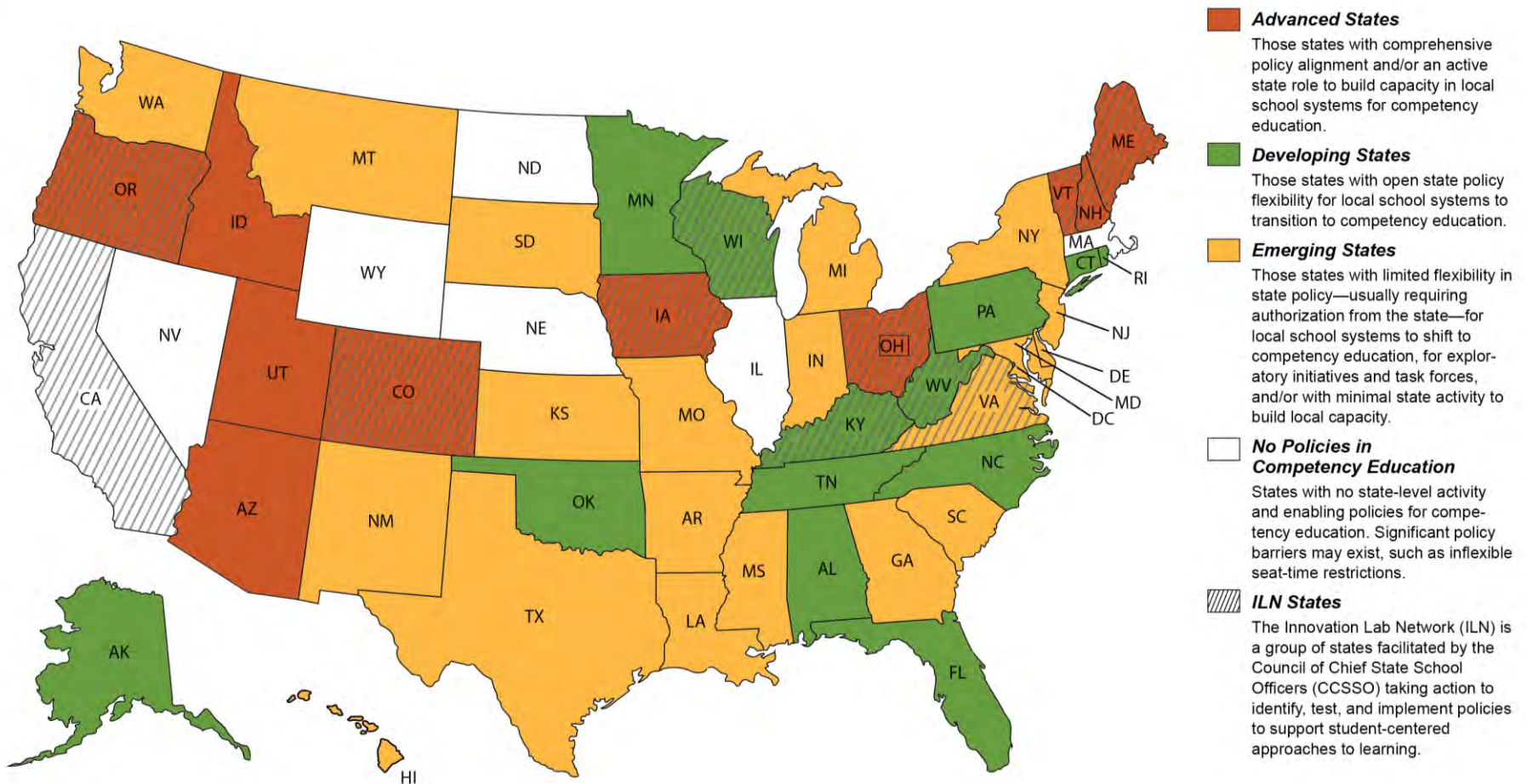
A competency:

- Includes nonacademic areas
- Requires integration
- Enables a student to apply and expand his or her learning over time



***What is the prevalence of
competency-based education?***

A Snapshot of K-12 Competency Education State Policy Across the United States



New Hampshire



- First state to implement college and career readiness competency standards
- Credit and graduation based on mastery
- In 2012, created the Performance Assessment Pilot (PACE); selected districts are able to develop performance-based assessments in combination with statewide assessments

Ohio



- 2009: Statewide credit flexibility plan
- 2014–15: Statewide competency-based education pilot program (with funding)
- 2015–16: Five sites selected for Competency-Based Education Pilot
- 2015–16: Creation of draft *learner competencies*

How are districts and schools implementing competency-based education?

Sanborn High School, New Hampshire

- Small learning communities
- Courses organized by competencies
- No penalties for “late work”
- Students have option for re-takes and re-dos
- Parallel grading and transcripts

Source: Frost, 2016; Sturgis, 2014; Sturgis, 2016a.



Cumberland High School, Rhode Island

- Credit granted upon mastery of standards
- Students rated on their “learner qualities”
- Advisory period four days per week
- Flexible program of studies, opportunities to earn certificates
- Credit-bearing opportunities for applied projects, internships, and apprenticeships
- Advisory board of business and professional leaders
- Student empowerment strategies

Source: Sturgis, 2016b.



Think Big!

*Start imagining
what is possible
in your district
and schools...*



References

- Bailey, J., Schneider, C., Sturgis, C., & Vander Ark, T. (2013). *The shift from cohorts to competency*. Digital Learning Now and Getting Smart. Retrieved from getttingsmart.com/publication/shift-cohorts-competency/
- Callahan, M. K., Meehan, K., Kim, D. Y., & Westmaas, L. (2016). *Results from a two-year study of the effects of extended learning opportunities on student outcomes in New Hampshire*. Prepared by Research for Action. Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation.
- Frost, D. (2016). *How New Hampshire transformed to a competency-based system*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved from <http://www.inacol.org/news/how-new-hampshire-transformed-to-a-competency-based-system/>
- International Association for K–12 Online Learning. (2016). *A snapshot of K–12 competency education state policy across the United States*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved from <http://www.competencyworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/2016-Snapshot-of-CBE-State-Policytimestamp.png>
- Ohio Department of Education. (2016). *Competency-based education pilot*. Retrieved from http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Competency_Based-Education-Pilot

References

- Sturgis, C. (2014). *Raising the bar at Sanborn Regional High School*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved from <http://www.competencyworks.org/?s=Sanborn&x=0&y=0>
- Sturgis, C. (2016a). *Reaching the tipping point. Insights on advancing competency-based education in New England*. CompetencyWorks. International Association for K–12 Online Learning.
- Sturgis, C. (2016b). *Cumberland High School: Starting with proficiency-based grading*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved from <http://www.competencyworks.org/?s=Cumberland&x=0&y=0>
- Sturgis, C., Patrick, S., & Pittenger, L. (2011). *It's not a matter of time: Highlights from the 2011 Competency-Based Education Summit*. International Association for K–12 Online Learning and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved from http://www.competencyworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/iNACOL_Its_Not_A_Matter_of_Time_full_report.pdf
- Surr, W., & Rasmussen, J. (2015). *Partners in crafting competency-based education pathways to college and career readiness*. Great Lakes and Midwest Regional Deeper Learning Initiative at American Institutes for Research.

***Illinois Competency-Based High
School Graduation
Requirements Pilot Project
Request for Applications***



Illinois Eligibility Requirements

- Up to **12 public school districts serving grades 9-12** will be selected for the first cohort of the pilot program.
- Districts with a student population of fewer than 500,000 may participate in the pilot program for some or all of their schools serving grades 9-12. Districts with more than 500,000 students may select six schools to participate in the project.



Illinois Process

Phase I

Initial application due January 27, 2017 to ISBE



Districts will...

Establish a standing Planning & Implementation Committee, including an equal number of administrators and teachers

Demonstrate that the proposal is a core strategy and that all students within the participating schools will have access to the pilot program

Develop plans for administrator & educator professional development, community engagement & communications, assigning course grades, collecting & assessing student progress, data collection & reporting, and engaging feeder elementary schools

Actively partner with a community college and a higher education institution other than a community college



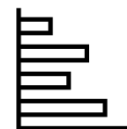
Phase II

Full development and implementation of a detailed plan (for districts selected for first cohort)



In Illinois' competency-based learning system, students must...

- Demonstrate mastery of all required competencies to earn credit.
- Demonstrate mastery of adaptive competencies defined by the school district in addition to academic competencies.
- Advance once they have demonstrated mastery. Students shall receive more time and personalized instruction, if needed, to demonstrate mastery.
- Have the ability to attain advanced postsecondary education and career-related competencies beyond those needed for graduation.
- Be assessed using multiple measures to determine mastery, usually requiring application of knowledge.
- Be able to earn credit toward graduation requirements in ways other than traditional coursework, including learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom setting (such as Supervised Career Development Experiences).





Think Big - Explore Your Options!

What's Possible...

Awarding Credit for:

- Demonstrated mastery of competencies in lieu of course attendance & participation (seat time)
- Online secondary & dual enrollment post-secondary courses
- Community service, internships & paid employment
- Independent study

Student Attendance & Participation:

- Alternative methods for counting course attendance & daily attendance
- Alternative school year/school day requirements

What's Not Possible...

Waivers or modifications to:

- State assessments
- Accountability requirements





Think Big - Explore Your Options!

What's Possible...

Grading and Progression:

- Proficiency-based grading in lieu of letter grades
- Grade and course progression upon demonstrated mastery rather than school schedule, quarters, semesters
- Competency status in lieu of school grade level designation

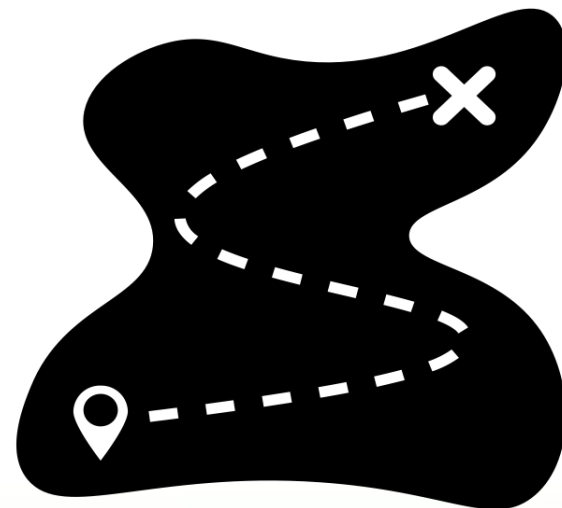
Assessment:

- Alternative assessment options for final course exams (e.g. presentations, portfolios, performance assessments)
- Exams administered at flexible time points
- Opportunities for re-assessment without penalty

What's Not Possible...

Waivers or modifications to:

- Teacher tenure or seniority
- Teacher or principal evaluations





Think Big - Explore Your Options!

What's Possible...

Graduation Requirements:

- Establishing additional requirements for earning a diploma (e.g. mastery of Adaptive Competencies, work-based experiences)
- Substituting specific course requirements and credit hours required for graduation with demonstrated mastery of competencies, or fulfillment of alternative options such as work-based learning experiences
- Enabling students to meet graduation requirements through multiple and flexible pathways & be recognized for additional credentials & badges earned

What's Not Possible...

Waivers or modifications to:

- Learning standards
- Legal protections or supports intended for the protection of children or a particular category of students, such as students with disabilities or English Learners





References

- Application, attachment, Ohio's Self-Assessment, research, and background can be found on ISBE's website:
<http://www.isbe.net/ed-technology/html/competency-based-pilot.htm?col1=open#CollapsiblePanel1>
- Frequently Asked Questions will be added to website and updated based on feedback.
- [Illinois Law](#)
- Email questions to competencypilot@isbe.net.



Applications due to ISBE Office
by January 27, 2017.

Questions?