**SELF-ASSESSMENT**

# Ohio's Competency-Based Education Pilot
# Self-assessment Tool

The definition of Competency-Based Education for the purposes of this pilot is outlined as:
*Any system of academic instruction, assessment, grading and reporting where students show mastery based on demonstrations and assessments of their learning rather than the amount of time they spend studying a subject. A competency-based educational program shall encourage accelerated learning among students who master academic materials quickly while providing additional instructional support time for students who need it.*

This tool is designed for self-reflection to assess readiness/capacity to design and implement competency-based education as a pilot site. The items were developed based on
- Enabling legislation Ohio House Bill 64;
- Literature review on competency-based learning, including studies on how the reform is defined, research findings on this education model, and challenges and facilitators for successful implementation;
- Systematic review of exemplars and lessons learned from advanced states, districts and schools implementing competency-based learning models.

The self-assessment can be used to support the decision to submit an application and, if the decision is to move forward, to assist with the planning phase activities and fidelity of implementation.

In weighing a decision to apply, an eligible applicant must consider the overarching goals of the Competency-Based Education Pilot. This Competency-Based Education Pilot is designed to:
- Promote innovative learning that is meaningful to students, cuts across multiple curriculum areas, and extends outside of the classroom, such as jobs and postsecondary study;
- Advance students to higher-level work once they demonstrate mastery of competencies, rather than advancing based upon seat time in the classroom;
- Give supports to struggling students before they advance and prevent further failure down the road;
- Keep all students on pace to graduate and ensure those below level make rapid progress;
- Graduate students with deeper college and career ready skills;
- **Identify how teachers can help students move in different ways;**
- **Engage teachers deeply with researchers in practice**; and,

- Inform future development of statewide competency-based policies and programs.

**Readiness Rubric**
Each component of the self-assessment is scored based on the eligible applicant's capacity to implement a paradigm shift in systemic educational practice. The applicant will gauge how close its current system is to competency-based (step 1); and its capacity to successfully transition to a competency-based system (step 2). Applicants should apply a three-point scale for building a culture that supports competency-based education when completing each component of the rubric, with a score of one being the lowest potential and a score of three being the highest.

If a consortium applies for the pilot, each district and/or school in that consortium should independently complete steps 1 and 2 of this readiness rubric. Consortium leads should review all readiness when determining which districts or schools to include in the pilot.

# Step 1: What level along the competency-based continuum is your district or school currently operating?

| | Traditional | Emerging | Competency-Based | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| **Personalized Learning** | Student learning happens inside a traditional classroom with little to no accommodation for student interests and learning styles. | Student interests and learning styles are sometimes considered when educators incorporate real-world experiences and partners into the classroom. | Students choose from a wide range of learning experiences at school, online and in their community. Educators work with diverse partners and students to piece together individual learning pathways that accommodate student interests and learning styles. | |
| **Learning Progression** | Students are expected to master grade level college and career ready standards. | Students are expected to master grade level college and career ready standards and transferable skills. | Students are expected to master competencies aligned to college and career ready standards. Each competency has clear, transferable learning objectives. | |
| **Learning Pace** | Students advance based upon seat time, at the instructor's pace, regardless of whether they mastered the learning objectives or need additional time. | Even though courses are based upon seat time, students may take accelerated courses if they demonstrate readiness. Students receive specialized support when they fall behind peers. Educators continually group students to encourage peer learning and maximize learning gains for all. | Students receive customized supports and accelerated opportunity both in-school and out-of-school to ensure they stay on pace to graduate college and career ready. Students advance based upon mastery, not based upon seat time. | |
| **Instruction** | Every classroom has one teacher who designs and delivers an instructional program with very little differentiation for individual students. | Educators engage in some collaboration across teams and content areas to align and differentiate instruction based on real-time feedback on student performance. | Educators work collaboratively with students, each other, parents, and industry and community partners to develop a unique learning plan for every student based on student interests, learning styles and real-time data. | |

| | Traditional | Emerging | Competency-Based | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Assessment System | Assessment instruments are used at set times to evaluate and classify students, not to guide instruction. Students have one opportunity to take the summative assessment at the end of the course or at the end of the year. | Educators use formative assessment instruments when they believe students are ready to demonstrate mastery. These assessments help educators tailor instruction so that more students are ready to master the summative assessment at the end of the year. | A comprehensive assessment system is an essential part of the learning system. Formative assessments guide daily instruction and student selection of customized learning opportunities. Students demonstrate mastery of competencies through performance-based assessments. Students take these assessments when they are ready and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery. | |
| | | | Total Points | |

Based upon the total number of points earned in step 1, an applicant should consider the following:

**Total Points in Step 1**

**13-15** The applicant's current system of education aligns well with a competency-based system expected in this pilot. The applicant should complete step 2 of this rubric to determine its capacity to successfully transition to a full-scale competency-based system.

**10-12** The applicant's current system of education is partially aligned with a competency-based system expected in this pilot. The applicant should complete step 2 of this rubric to determine its capacity to successfully transition to a full-scale competency-based system.

**Less than 10** The applicant's current system of education is very traditional and shows little alignment with a competency-based system. If the applicant seeks to promote innovative learning in which students advance to higher-level work once they have demonstrated mastery of competencies, it should consider modifying one of the components in the table above. In addition, the applicant should complete step 2 of this rubric to determine how to build its capacity in moving toward a competency-based system.

# Step 2: What is your district's or school's capacity to transition to a competency-based system?

| | Low capacity to transition to competency-based education | Developing the capacity to transition to competency-based education | High capacity to transition to competency-based education | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1** | **2** | **3** | |
| **Decision Making** | Decisions are made slowly, with little input from staff and building administrators. Conflict results when it is unclear how a decision was reached. | Decisions are made slowly, with input from various staff and administrators. Administrators explain the rationale and process for decision making. | Decisions are made quickly, and staff and administrators at all levels are afforded input opportunities and everyone understands how decisions are made. | |
| **Leadership for Change** | The district's/school's leadership team is hands-off and excludes building input. Decisions and actions are not connected throughout the district. | The district's/school's leadership team includes input from building administrators and staff and is responsible for making decisions related to improving student performance. School administrators and staff are responsible for carrying out the change. | The district's/school's leadership team is hands on and owns most decisions. All staff take responsibility for changing adult behaviors to improve student performance. | |

| | Low capacity to transition to competency-based education | Developing the capacity to transition to competency-based education | High capacity to transition to competency-based education | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1** | **2** | **3** | |
| **Organizational Structure** | The district's/school's rigid organizational structure and high rate of administrative turnover have prevented successful changes over the past five years and have built an organizational culture cynical to change. | The district's/school's organizational structure has resulted in a mix of successful and unsuccessful changes over the past five years. | The district's/school's flexible organizational structure has resulted in successful, systemic changes being implemented over the past five years. | |
| **Motivation and Culture of Innovation** | The district/school is characterized by red tape and defined channels that discourage staff from working across content and departments. Continuous improvement is limited and discourages risk taking. | The district/school is open to innovation, but only through a slow change process with cautious leadership or has some collaboration opportunities for staff to work across content and departments. While the district/school promotes continuous improvement, it does not reward risk taking. | The district/school promotes continuous improvement, rewards risk taking and its structure allows staff to work across content and departments. | |

| | Low capacity to transition to competency-based education | Developing the capacity to transition to competency-based education | High capacity to transition to competency-based education | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1** | **2** | **3** | |
| **Data Collection and Use** | Data are not readily available to educators and are rarely used in the decision-making process. | Data systems provide limited "real-time" information on each student's learning but are readily available to educators and used in the decision-making process. | "Real-time" data are readily available to administrators, teachers and students and are used to drive decisions that seek better outcomes for student learning. | |
| **Continuous Improvement** | The district/school examines change when mandated to improve performance and looks only within its boundaries for best practices. | The district/school examines change primarily when performance is low and seeks research in the field. | The district/school constantly examines change (regardless of performance levels) and seeks research in the field and best practices beyond its boundaries. | |
| **Benchmarks** | The district's/school's benchmarks are set according to the state standards. | The district/school continuously sets benchmarks that go beyond state standards and reflect incremental change. | The district/school continuously sets benchmarks that go beyond state standards and are competitive with the high performance of others. | |

|  | Low capacity to transition to competency-based education | Developing the capacity to transition to competency-based education | High capacity to transition to competency-based education | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** |  |
| **Communications** | Communication protocols are typically top-down and/or one-way. Communication outside of the district is limited. | Communication protocols are in place that allow for two-way communication within the district. | Effective communication protocols are in place that allow for two-way communication reaching all levels in the district and reaching outside to the community. |  |
| **Partnership with Industry and Jobs** | The district/school has limited partnerships with local industries; such partnerships are for the purpose of completing and ensuring basic requirements are met. | The district/school is expanding its partnerships with local industries for the purpose of giving students more opportunities to complete core requirements or supplementary classes (e.g. credit flex, College Credit Plus, etc.). | The district/school partners with industry to facilitate pathways to competencies through credentialing, mentorships, apprenticeships, job shadowing and other non-traditional methods for course completion. |  |

| | Low capacity to transition to competency-based education | Developing the capacity to transition to competency-based education | High capacity to transition to competency-based education | Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1** | **2** | **3** | |
| **Connections with Post-Secondary Partner** | The district provides limited opportunities to students seeking postsecondary options. The burden of understanding and exploring options is placed on individual students, rather than on the district. | The district is expanding the postsecondary options available to students through programs such as credit flexibility and College Credit Plus. Programs are available to individual students but are not an institutionalized part of the district/school's structure. | The district/school has made postsecondary or related partnerships a priority and actively seeks out and communicates these opportunities to better the experience for all students. | |
| **Student Advancement** | The district/school operates under the traditional K-12 model; student grade levels are defined and discrete. There is no flexibility that allows students to move beyond grade level when ready. | The district/school allows for some grade level flexibility by combining grade levels within whole classrooms, through acceleration policies or through additional supports provided to students. | The district's/school's grade level configurations are flexible and allow students to move to the next level of learning when they master academic content. Student advancement is not based on grade levels. | |
| Total Points | | | | |

Taking into account the applicant's current alignment with a competency-based system of education (identified in step 1), an applicant should consider its capacity to successfully transition based upon the following range in scores:

  **Total Points in Step 2**

**29-33**  The applicant has a strong capacity for successfully transitioning to a competency-based system and should consider applying to participate in the state's pilot.

**22-28**  The applicant has a strong opportunity for successfully transitioning to a competency-based system, so long as it continues to build its capacity for innovation. If the applicant's current system of education aligns with competency-based (step 1), then the applicant should consider applying to participate in the state's competency-based pilot while it works to strengthening its lower-rated components of innovation (step 2).

**Less than 22**  Innovation is possible, but it might be very difficult to transition to a competency-based system given the applicant's current low-capacity for change. The applicant should consider strengthening two or three of the components listed in step 2 as it prepares itself to move in the direction of competency-based education.