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GREAT SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

CDHE | COLORADO Department of Higher Education

THE COLORADO EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Colorado Competency-Based Learning Self-Assessment

Instructions

1. Review the dimensions and descriptions of school practices below.

2. For each dimension, rate your school district on a scale of 1-5. 1 is equal to the "Initiating" description. 3 is equal to "Developing". 5 is equal to "Performing."

3. Hit the "Save" button, located at the bottom of each page, at any time in order to save your work and continue later

4. Optional: add narrative comments below each section of the self-assessment to capture your reasoning behind your ratings.

Results from your team will be shared at the November session.

If you wish, you may have colleagues who are NOT attending the series provide their input on the self-assessment too. This may make for a deeper conversation with your team at the series.

First Name	**Last Name**	**School**	**Please select your school district ***

If you would like to receive an email confirmation that your results have successfully been submitted, please provide your email address here:

Policy and Framework

These descriptions ask you to reflect on the overall framework and policies to support competency-based learning in your district.

Conceptual Framework and Core Principles

INITIATING	PERFORMING	DEVELOPING
There is little agreement about the essential knowledge and skills for success after k-12 schooling or principles to guide student learning. The school/district utilizes a competency verification process that is based entirely on course success and expectations vary widely within the school/district. Educators and school committee members are unfamiliar with the state frameworks for competency-based learning.	Competency-based learning is focused mostly on course-level descriptions of knowledge and skill. The school/district utilizes a verification process based on course success and there are common expectations for success. Learning goals for courses are clear and assessments for courses are aligned to common standards. There is clear alignment with state frameworks for competency-based learning. Students may be required to complete capstone projects, exhibitions of learning, or performance tasks to verify competency.	A clear set of graduation standards exist for transferable skills (cross-curricular) and content-area knowledge and skills. These standards represent the essential knowledge and skills for success in postsecondary education, a career, and citizenship and are aligned with state frameworks for competency-based learning. The school/district utilizes a competency verification process that flexibly supports students demonstrating learning in a variety of ways. Shared criteria for success are applied across a wide variety of demonstrations of learning, resulting in greater personalization for student learning.

When it comes to Conceptual Framework and Core Principles, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Conceptual Framework and Core Principles	○	○	○	○	○

District Alignment

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Students may experience very different		All schools within the district use a common language

expectations for meeting competency standards from classroom to classroom within a school. There appears to be little agreement within the district or schools about essential standards, assessment methods, or instructional practice. Many educators express little or no knowledge of, or professional learning about, competency-based learning.

There is alignment within schools about essential knowledge and skills and work is beginning to bridge common gaps between grades and grade spans. A district-wide team has been created to act as leaders on competency-based learning and to support shared understanding and alignment throughout the district. Professional learning opportunities are regularly available for teachers to work within grade spans on competency-based learning.

to describe competency-based learning. A competency-based learning team that includes teachers, students, and parents plans professional learning, community outreach, and educates the school committee as necessary to ensure sound district alignment. Professional learning opportunities are regularly available for teachers to work within and across grade spans on competency-based learning.

When it comes to District Alignment, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
District Alignment	○	○	○	○	○

School Board/Committee Support

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
The school board expresses little knowledge of competency-based learning. The board may reduce competency-based learning merely to changes in reporting or grading policies, and not fully understand the systemic approach to teaching and learning.	The school board has engaged in information sessions and workshops regarding competency-based learning. School board members can describe competency-based learning and articulate how it supports student achievement.	The school board expresses active and vocal support for competency-based learning. Competency-based learning is a clear and integral component of the district's strategic plan.

When it comes to School Board/Committee Support, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
School Board/Committee Support	○	○	○	○	○

Local Policies

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Graduation and promotion policies do not reflect a competency-based approach to education. Students are required to accrue a certain number of credits in each discipline, without reference to the knowledge and skills essential for success. Individual teachers are responsible for setting grading and attendance policies for their classrooms.	Graduation and promotion policies recognize attainment of learning standards, and not only seat-time requirements. While the district may utilize a credit-based system to support a broad base of learning, the credits are tied directly to learning standards. The school committee or schools develop common policies (i.e.: grading, attendance, eligibility) that support students attaining competency.	Policies exist to support attainment of graduation standards in a personalized manner. The school committee or schools have set policies supporting flexible pathways for student learning, in addition to common school-wide practices. Policies support innovative practice and allow students and teachers flexibility for attaining learning goals.

When it comes to Local Policies, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Local Policies	○	○	○	○	○

If you would like to add comments on your responses to any of the Policy and Framework descriptions above, you may do so here.

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SAVE PROGRESS   NEXT >>

Practice

These categories ask you to reflect on your district's work on school-based practice (ie: curriculum, instruction, and assessment)

Summative Assessments

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Summative assessments are not always clearly aligned to essential knowledge and skills and may not assess higher order thinking skills. Students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate success in some courses/learning experiences, but this practice varies widely in the school/district. In most learning experiences, students demonstrate their learning in the same way, with little flexibility or choice in assessment methods.	The school/district uses some common assessments in grade levels or courses. Assessments are aligned to learning standards and emphasize higher order thinking skills for students. All students, in all learning experiences, have multiple opportunities to demonstrate success and are given choices in how they demonstrate their learning.	Summative assessments follow common scoring criteria and are based on the transfer of knowledge and skills to novel performance tasks. Students have a role in designing performance tasks and have a clear understanding of scoring criteria, enabling student choice and direction in demonstrating learning. When students are unsuccessful on summative assessments, teachers and students treat the assessments as formative, providing re-teaching and reassessment where necessary.

When it comes to Summative Assessments, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Summative Assessments	○	○	○	○	○

Formative Assessments

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
All students generally complete the same practice work, regardless of their knowledge and skill. Formative assessments are included in academic reports of student learning due to a belief that students will only do work that is graded. Teachers sometimes adjust instruction based on formative results, but some express uncertainty about how to make these adjustments. In some cases, the connection between the summative assessment tasks and formative assessment opportunities is unclear.	Formative assessments are used for practice and feedback and do not impact a student's academic report. All teachers use formative assessment results to make adjustments to class instruction and offer students choices in formative assessments, tailoring practice work to different student needs. There is clear alignment between summative assessment tasks and scoring criteria and the formative work students complete.	Students select from a variety of formative assessment strategies to practice essential knowledge and skills, with support and guidance from educators. Students and teachers revise instructional and learning strategies based on formative assessment results. Students and teachers examine summative assessments, exemplars, and scoring guides and plan formative assessment practice based on where students are in relation to learning goals.

When it comes to Formative Assessments, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Formative Assessments	○	○	○	○	○

Grading and Feedback

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Feedback to students is mostly evaluative without descriptions of next steps or how to improve. Teachers or departments determine grading practices within a school or district. Academic grades include non-academic factors (ie: participation, punctuality) and individual teachers determine re-assessment opportunities for students.	Teachers utilize descriptive feedback to promote student growth and learning. School-wide grading practices support student learning by allowing students to revise and reassess as they learn without averaging early attempts with later ones. Academic grades are calculated and reported separately from behavior / habits of work grades.	Teachers and students utilize descriptive feedback practices to focus on learning and growth. Students are experienced in self- and peer-assessment and can describe expected learning goals, their current achievement, and steps they can take to move closer to expectations. School-wide grading practices are clearly communicated and embraced by educators, students, and community members.

When it comes to Grading and Feedback, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Grading and Feedback	○	○	○	○	○

Instruction

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING

There is a wide spectrum of instructional quality in the school/district, with little or no common language to describe effective instruction. Students experience widely different expectations from classroom to classroom and often work on lower order skills that are misaligned to summative assessments and to essential learning standards. Teachers rarely observe each other or share instructional practice (ie: student work, unit plans, or videos of teaching) with colleagues to improve student learning.

There is evidence of a sound array of instructional strategies for whole-group, small-group and individual instruction in heterogeneously-grouped classrooms, and these strategies represent a shared understanding of effective instruction. Students engage in complex work that encourages higher order thinking, preparing them for success on summative assessments. Teachers use clear learning targets that describe complex cognitive skills to frame units and lessons and continually check for student understanding and progress. Professional learning opportunities for teachers include peer observation or sharing instructional practice, with specific feedback to improve student learning.

Students and teachers actively discuss learning targets and make plans to address the content and process necessary to achieve competency. Teachers intentionally plan lessons and units to include opportunities for re-teaching and reassessment, especially for complex concepts that typically challenge students. Students and teachers reflect on learning progress as well as their learning processes, and display flexibility in adjusting learning experiences to meet student needs. Teachers regularly observe and reflect together on student learning and engage in on-going cycles of planning, instruction, assessment, and analysis to improve teaching and learning.

When it comes to Instruction, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Instruction	○	○	○	○	○

Flexible Pathways

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Most students experience similar, course-based learning experiences and there is little variation among students. While students are not prevented from accessing alternative learning pathways (internships, independent studies, etc.), they are not encouraged to do so. Pathways are generally viewed as enrichment activities for students that do not necessarily involve school personnel or as rigid programs that result in little flexibility or choice for students.	Some students have access to alternative learning pathways through school-based programs and efforts have been made to expand access. Through advisory or guidance counselors, students are supported in identifying and pursuing learning outside of school (ie: internships, apprenticeships, and on-line learning not accessible through the school curriculum). There is a clear connection between learning pathways and requirements for graduation and students can shift flexibly between learning environments to support their learning.	All students are encouraged or required to enroll in learning experiences beyond the school-based programs. There is a formal system for connecting students to alternative pathway opportunities and a concerted effort to cultivate partners in the community to support this work. Pathways are integrated with academic and social expectations for students and are viewed as an essential method for developing student ownership of their learning.

When it comes to Flexible Pathways, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Flexible Pathways	○	○	○	○	○

Intervention and Support

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Teachers generally support student learning before school, after school, or during breaks and lunch. Scheduled intervention opportunities sometimes conflict with instructional time for students. While data is used to identify students in need of intervention, student progress is not monitored to release students from intervention or to provide support to students after initial data analyses are complete. Interventions are sometimes misaligned to student needs.	There is time built into the school's schedule for students to access outside-of-class support from their classroom teacher or a qualified teacher in the field. Teachers use data to identify students who may need outside support and students are grouped flexibly in intervention blocks, resulting in targeted, just-in-time support. Interventions are matched to students' academic needs. There are some opportunities within the classroom for acceleration, but may be constrained to additional work for students, as opposed to deeper application of learning.	There is a shared understanding in the school that for the majority of students, interventions are most successful when integrated in core classroom learning. Teachers plan for re-teaching and relearning opportunities in their instruction. For smaller percentages of students, small group and individual intervention support is scheduled into the school day, and students are flexibly included and released from intervention, based on learning progress. Data is used to match students' academic and social/emotional/behavior needs to interventions and support. The school schedules acceleration/enrichment opportunities into the school day, and all students have access to deeper learning options.

When it comes to Intervention and Support, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Intervention and Support	○	○	○	○	○

Use of Time and Space

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
Professional learning is constrained to occasional workshop days with few opportunities for teachers to engage with each other on curriculum or instruction. Small numbers of students access alternative learning pathways such as dual	Time for professional learning is embedded in the school schedule for teachers to collaborate on curriculum and instructional practice. Students have some flexibility for pursuing alternative learning pathways within the existing school schedule. Teachers work flexibly within the schedule and structure of the school based on shared goals for student learning (ie: interdisciplinary projects, co-	Time for professional learning is embedded in the school schedule, and the work is led by teachers with experience and training in facilitating adult learning. Most students access alternative learning pathways and flexibly accessing school supports and resources to design learning experiences. Teachers and school leaders work to refine structures and schedules to

enrollment or independent studies. Teachers generally feel restricted by the schedule and see it as a barrier to interdisciplinary learning or other opportunities for increasing student learning.	teaching or team-teaching, and modifying the schedule for speakers, field trips or other extended learning experiences).	support a wide range of learning options (ie: staggered schedules to expand learning time; modules or learning intensives for student enrichment and support).

When it comes to Use of Time and Space, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Use of Time and Space	○	○	○	○	○

If you would like to add comments on your responses to any of the Practice descriptions above, you may do so here.

<< PREVIOUS   SAVE PROGRESS   NEXT >>

Community Engagement

These categories ask you to reflect on efforts to engage families and community members in your work.

Family and Community Engagement

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
The school/district regularly surveys families and community members. Survey results are published and reported upon to the school committee. It is common for families or educators to describe communication as limited.	Family and community members provide regular feedback and input on district-wide and school-wide efforts for competency-based learning. School leaders have an open door policy, encouraging families and community members to discuss concerns or ideas for school improvement.	Formal roles for family and community members. Informal opportunities for connection, dialogue and feedback. The school / district regularly hosts opportunities for face-to-face communication with community members. Students take an active role in facilitating and leading community conversations.

When it comes to Family and Community Engagement, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Family and Community Engagement	○	○	○	○	○

Communication Structures

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
The school/district has a website with basic contact information, but it is not used to keep students, families, and teachers updated on school progress. Website pages for teachers are often unpopulated or out of date. Local media reporting is primarily concerned with extracurricular activities and information about the school district is obtained primarily through school board meetings, and not through direct contact with school leaders.	The school / district keeps updated materials on its website. Some teachers utilize blogs, social media, or websites to keep students and families engaged outside of school hours. Parent/family groups and their social media outlets are seen as the most effective way to gain up-to-date information about the school. The school / district leadership submits articles to local media outlets to describe and inform the community about its work.	The school/district website is seen as a valuable place to gain information about the school and has interactive features for student and community input. Teachers utilize modes of communication tailored to their specific families and students to engage in interactive communication about teaching and learning. School/district leadership actively supports local media by providing resources to inform accurate reporting on school activities, such as summaries of research, access to classrooms and teachers, and ongoing conversations about school improvement work.

When it comes to Communication Structures, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Communication Structures	○	○	○	○	○

Reporting on Student Progress

INITIATING	DEVELOPING	PERFORMING
While the school district may be moving to, or implementing, competency-based learning, its reporting process is traditional. Student achievement is reported as a singular symbol (letter or number) for each course / learning experience and there is little information about what that symbol represents, in terms of learning outcomes. Students, teachers, and families meet to discuss progress on an "as needed" basis.	The report card and transcript provide a clear representation of student learning. While a traditional system may remain in place, families and students can easily access information about what standards have been met. Teachers and parents meet 2-3 annually for discussions of student progress; students may or may not attend and participate in these conversations.	The reporting system is entirely standards-based, providing up-to-date information about student learning. Teachers, students, and parents are all familiar with the reporting system and the school/district has developed a clear profile for external audiences, such as postsecondary institutions and employers. Students lead conferences between themselves, educators, and families multiple times per year, going beyond the report card to deeper demonstrations of their learning, through examinations of work and reflection on their PLP.

When it comes to Reporting on Student Progress, I believe my school or district is: *

	INITIATING	2	DEVELOPING	4	PERFORMING
Reporting on Student Progress	○	○	○	○	○

If you would like to add comments on your responses to any of the Community Engagement descriptions above, you may do so here.