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Competency-Based Education Study Update

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Competency-Based Education

What Is Competency-Based Education?

- No single nationally agreed upon definition
- In Nevada, **NRS 389.200 defines competency-based education (CBE)** as “a system of instruction by which a pupil advances to a higher level of learning when the pupil demonstrates mastery of a concept or skill, regardless of the time, place or pace at which the pupil progresses”

Nevada CBE Efforts

- 2017: Assembly Bill 110 created the Competency-Based Education Network and Pilot Program
- Nevada Portrait of Learner Project
- Nevada Future of Learning Network
- NV Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education's 2025 report laid out a shared vision of personalized learning for all NV students

Overview of CBE Study

Purpose of the Study: To understand how other states fund CBE and do some modeling of potential CBE Pupil Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) funding impacts

Four main study tasks:

- Policy and literature review
- Meetings/panels with state and district leaders
- Cost modeling
 - Potential funding and/or PCFP impacts of CBE implementation
- Final report

State CBE Policy Scan Highlights

Key Takeaway: Every state has policy flexibility that could allow for some level of competency-based education, but wide variation exists

- Thirty-four states allow districts to award competency-based credit in accordance with district policy, without additional state action
- Seven states have specific state-level competency requirements or determine acceptable measures of proficiency
- Two states and the District of Columbia require districts to submit a waiver request or a plan to award competency-based credit
- Three states allow CBE for designated Innovation or Empowerment Schools/Sites
- Students in another three states may request to demonstrate mastery or proficiency for credit

State CBE Funding Approaches

Key Takeaway: No state explicitly funds competency-based education within its funding formula for traditional schools

In recent years, 14 states have provided some grant or capacity-building funding to support the development of CBE

- **Missouri:** \$2.2M CBE grant program awarded in 2024 to 6 districts and one LEA collective to support CBE programming. Students who complete competency-based courses are fully funded
- **Utah:** Grant program provides up to five years of funding for district planning and implementation. FY25-26: approximately \$3 million to support CBE
- **Washington:** State Mastery-based Learning Collaborative, with 4-year funding periods for pilot sites beginning in 2022; designed to inform future policy

CBE Literature Review

- Most of the literature on CBE focuses on the implementation of CBE
- Highlights the intersection of multiple state policies when implementing CBE, which include:
 - Flexible learning pathways
 - Accountability systems
 - Assessment systems
 - Educator training and support
 - Holistic student support
 - Responsive funding systems

CBE Study Next Steps

- Wrapping up **interviews and focus groups** with state-level and district leaders by mid-June
 - Emerging themes include:
 - Differences in implementation along the CBE spectrum, between and within districts
 - Successes in providing additional opportunities for students, such as internships, dual credit and work-based learning
 - Challenges in capacity, training, and state requirements such as seat time
- **Modeling of funding implications**, informed by state policy scan and interviews/focus groups
- Submission of report by the end of June

Discussion

- What remaining questions do you have about competency-based education, its funding or implementation?
- What wonderings do you have about if/how competency-based education could integrate with the PCFP?