



Update on Mastery-Based Learning Guidelines

February 20, 2015

Mastery-Based Learning is a graduation option which local or regional boards of education may choose to adopt as stated in Public Act 13-108, “... a credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned...or **(3) through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.**”

Mastery-Based Learning (MBL) offers schools the ability to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population with a wide range of academic and language needs. Mastery-Based Learning is student-centered. This approach allows students both voice and choice in owning their own learning and holds promise for increasing student engagement. Students are offered multiple pathways ways in which to gain and demonstrate their knowledge of critical content and skills.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is developing Mastery-Based Learning Guidelines as well as guidance documents to assist local education agencies if interested in MBL. It is important to note that the guidelines are not rigid requirements, but are instead recommendations or advice to district and school leaders implementing MBL models. The documents are undergoing a rigorous review process begun last August. To date, the draft Guidelines and guidance documents have been shared with superintendents, principals, members of the League of Innovative Schools, classroom teachers, CSDE consultants and state associations such as CAPSS, CAS, and CABE. Feedback continues to shape the draft Guidelines and guidance documents. A web site is currently under development that will offer stakeholders resources and tools to guide planning and implementation of Mastery-Based Learning. We plan to bring the Mastery-Based Learning Guidelines to the State Board of Education in the spring of 2015.

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