

# Mastery-Based Learning: A National Perspective and Communication Strategies

#### Foundation for Excellence in Education



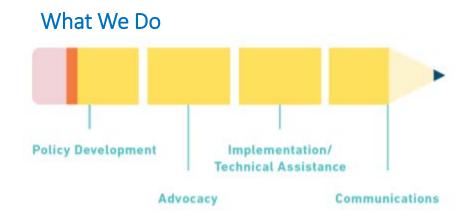
501(c)(3) organization whose vision is to build an education system that maximizes every student's potential for learning and prepares all students for success in the 21st century.

#### Our Guiding Principles

All children can learn

All children should learn at least a year's worth of knowledge in a year's time.

All children will achieve when education is organized around the singular goal of student success.



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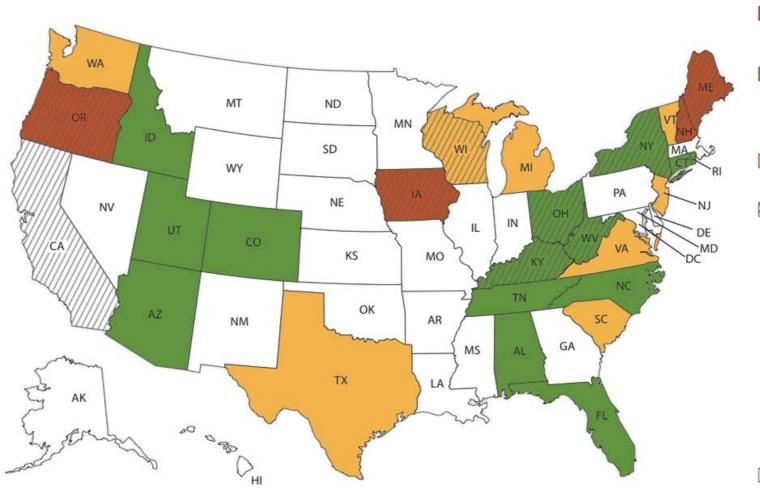


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#### A Snapshot of K-12 Competency Education Policy - 2012



#### Advanced States

Those states with clear policies that are moving towards proficiencybased; more than just an option.

#### Developing States

Those states with pilots of competency education, credit flexibility policies, or advanced next gen policies for equivalents to seat-time.

#### Emerging States

Those states with waivers, task forces.

#### //// ILN States

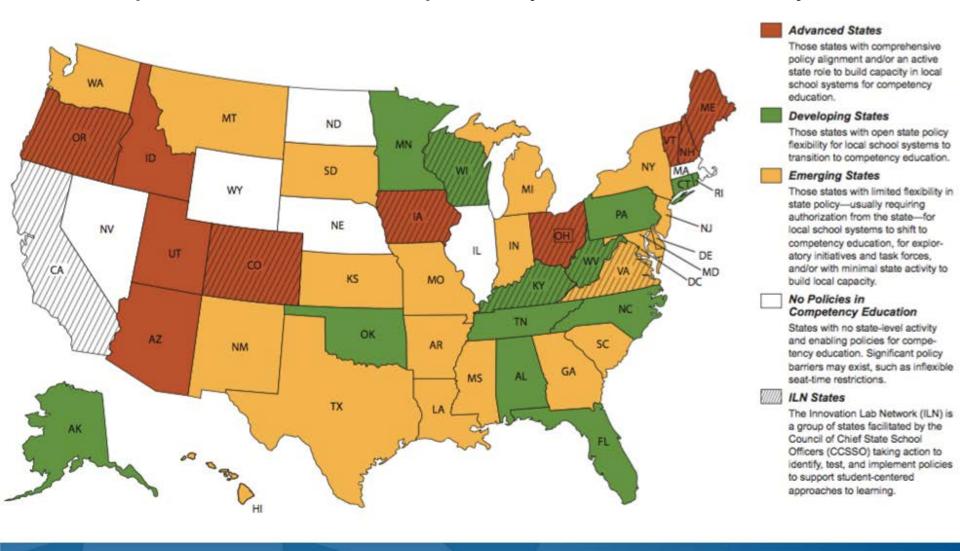
Since its inception, the Innovation Lab Network (ILN) engaged schools, districts, and state education agencies working to identify through local efforts new designs for public education that empower each student to thrive as a productive learner, worker, and citizen. The state's responsibility is to establish conditions in which innovation can flourish and to develop capacity to sustain and scale what works through policy. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) facilitates this network of states to support programmatic, policy, and structure design work within each participating states and across the network.

#### No Policies in Competency Education

States with seat-time and no competency education policies.



#### A Snapshot of K-12 Competency Education Policy - 2016





## Common Policy Challenges







Assessment

Accountability

Interaction with Higher Education UT

Anytime, Anywhere Learning

Communication



#### Where Can States Begin?



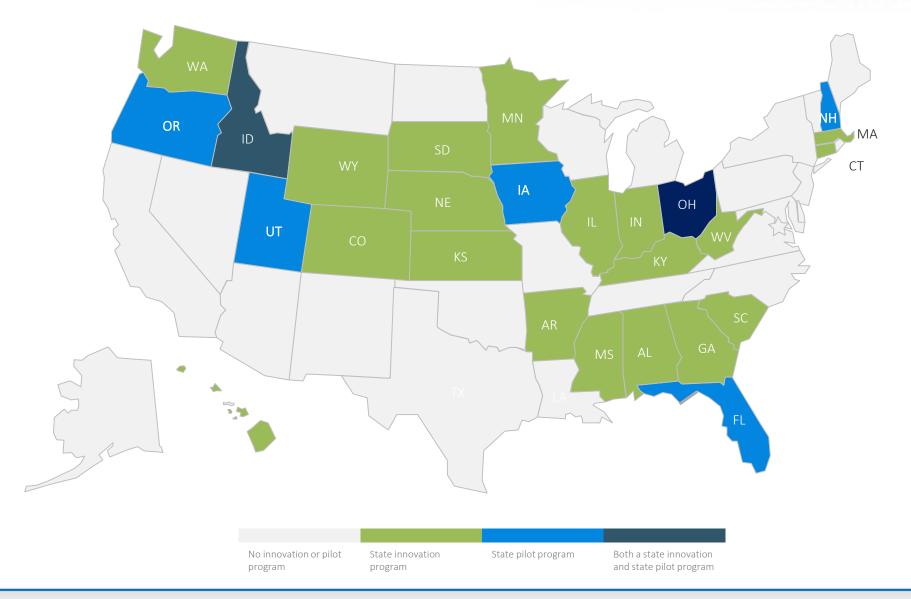
### Pilot programs offer a promising strategy to work through challenging issues at both the state and local level.

- Pilots provide a reasonable and actionable first step for policymakers.
- Pilots empower and embolden innovative school and district educators and leaders.
- Pilots offer an entry point and launching pad that can later inform a statewide shift, while the experience gained can reveal the longer-term policy solutions.



# Innovation Programs and CBE Pilots









#### Non-Legislative Options









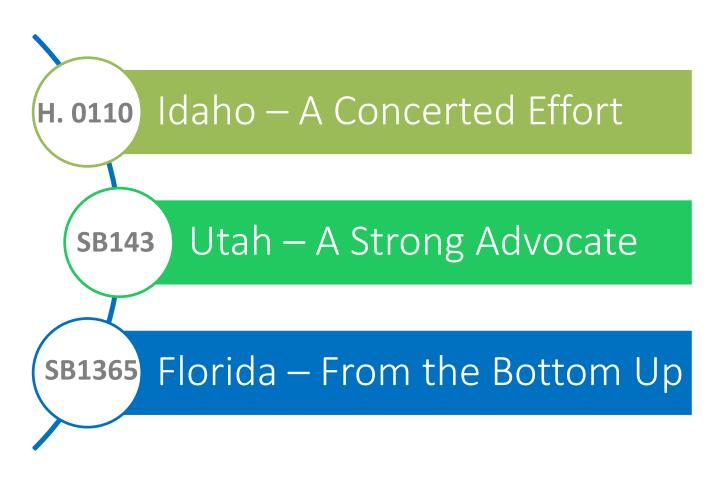




#### A Tale of Three States



Same
Goal –
Different
Paths





#### **Common Application Components**



Applications submitted to the State Department of Education shall contain:

Plan for schoolwide implementation

Annual goals and performance measures

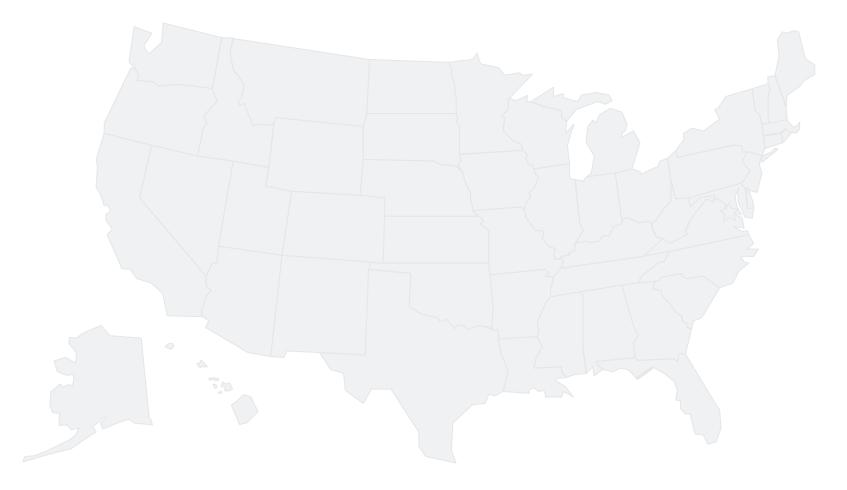


Applicants may request flexibility from policies that may impede implementation

Communications plan



# What Is Your State's Story? Next Steps?









### Communication and Outreach





# What Is Mastery-Based Learning?

What Does It Look Like?

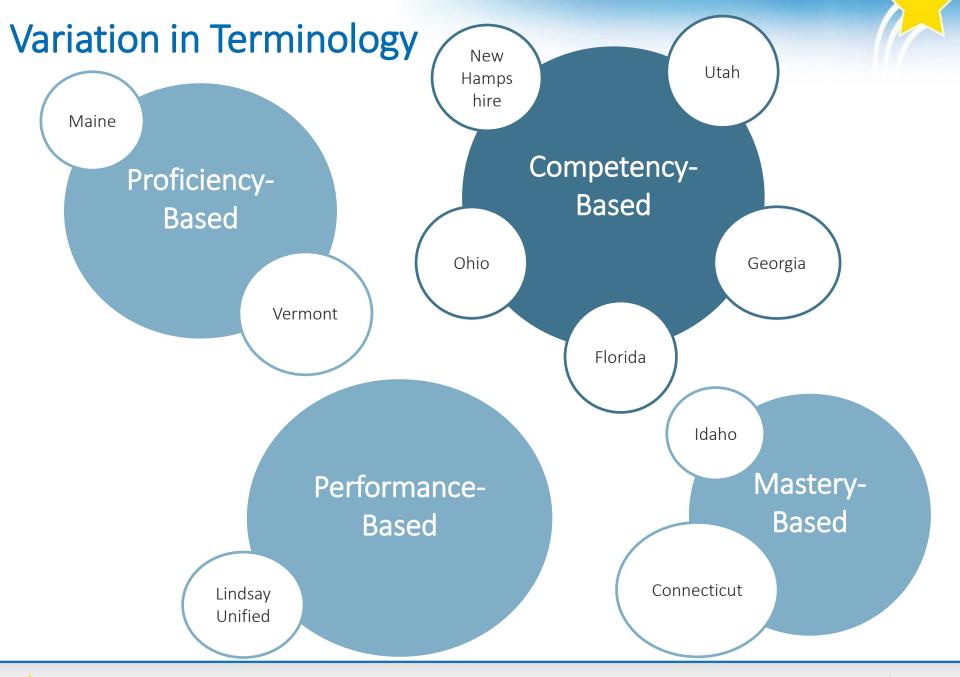


## A New Strategy



Mastery-based education is a system where students advance to higher levels of learning when they demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills regardless of time, place or pace.

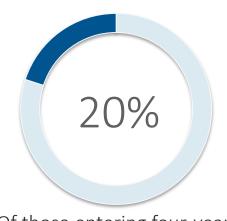






# Parents Trust Schools to Tell Them if Their Child is Succeeding, but Post-Graduation Numbers Tell a Different Story





Of those entering four-year universities are placed in remedial classes.



Of students entering twoyear colleges are placed in remedial classes.

Nearly 4 in 10 remedial students in community colleges never complete their remedial courses

















Annually, \$7 billion spent on remedial coursework.

## 1.7 million

beginning students start in

remediation each year.

Sources: Complete College America and National Bureau of Economic Research



### **Identifying The Problem**



# Diplomas and credits based on seat time and passing grades have been sending mixed messages.

of surveyed community

college students believe they are academically prepared for college



68% take developmental education.

of parents **believe** their children is at or above reading in grade level



34% of students are proficient in reading.

of community college 83% students who were "A" students in high school believe they are on-track



39%

earn a degree or certificate within six years.



## Successful Messages



Empowers local innovative leaders

Inherently a local initiative – respects local control

Not the latest and greatest fad

A natural extension of previous initiatives

Role of technology not the emphasis and a local deciision







### **MESSAGE TESTING**

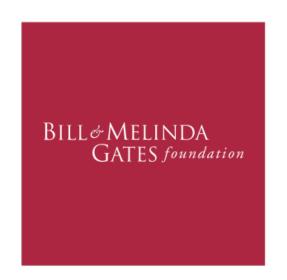


## Personalized Learning - Message Testing



While there were differences with the survey audiences, both focused on parents and teachers and there were common trends and findings.





## Definitions



**Personalization**: . . . . consider not only what students know but also *how* they learn—and then accordingly adjust the role of the teacher, the use of technology, and the allocation of time and money to best serve those students.

A new concept of mastery: . . . . the emphasis must shift to cultivating a deeper understanding and personal ownership of the core competencies, skills, and character traits essential to long-term success. In this new world, the emphasis might not be on a routine quiz, but instead on a portfolio demonstrating a student's exploration of a topic, overall comprehension, and ability to present ideas.

Carnegie Foundation of New York



#### Similarities Between Studies



Overall support and favorability toward individual personalized learning concepts for both teachers and parents

Relatively low levels of disapproval or confusion of individual terms

 Interestingly, the word "rigorous" emerged as a confusing or disliked word in both studies

Both studies noted concerns about students not being mature enough to handle personalized learning and the time commitment of teachers.

Questions such as "how effective is this," "how personalized is it," and "how do you meet all needs," were raised in open-ended feedback questions.



#### **Highlight Top Benefits**

The following elements of the approach consistently garner the most support from teachers and parents

Rank	Benefit
1	Lessons are customized to the needs, skills, and interests of each student
2	Students can move through material at their own pace
3	There is greater flexibility over where, when, what, and how students learn
4	Students are enabled to take greater ownership of their learning
5	Students get more one-on-one time with teachers
6	It focuses on content mastery, which leads to deeper learning



### Key Findings – Successful Language



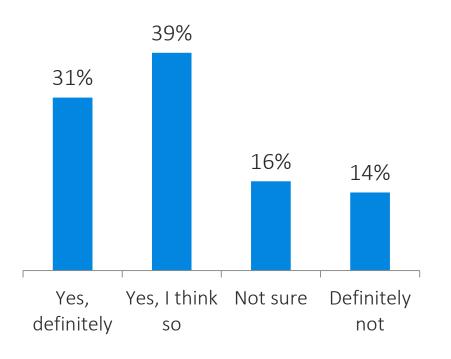
The most supported phrases usually involved the concept of helping students in some way. Those phrases include:

- Understand well each student's personal and academic background, strengths, and needs
- Help each student develop a commitment to their own learning
- Help each student develop ownership of their learning
- Provide students targeted instruction, practice and support in areas where they're struggling
- Helps all students develop knowledge, skills and abilities that will prepare them for college, career and life
- Helps teachers connect students' learning to real-world applications
- Provides supports for students who struggle with intellectually challenging work
- Helps students communicate effectively
- Helps students learn how to learn

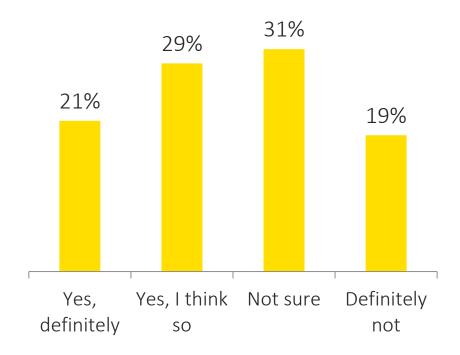


# About 70% of teachers are either definitely (31%) or think they are (39%) using personalized learning, and about half of parents think this is practiced in their children's classrooms.

**Teachers:** To the best of your knowledge, are you using personalized learning in the classes you teach?



**Parents:** To the best of your knowledge, do teachers practice personalized learning in any of your children's classrooms?



#### Key Findings – Less Successful Language



Phrases that tended to receive relatively lower levels of support or be more often cited as confusing included:

- Helps teachers leverage their relationships to elicit the high academic performance they expect of students
- Reorganizes time
- Is being embraced by schools and school districts, often in different ways and to different degrees
- Requires those working in schools to dramatically rethink and redesign the learning environment and support systems for students
- Engage students around rigorous standards-based academic content and skills
- Ensures teachers in the community know their students well



#### **Big Questions**



After hearing the definition, about three-fifths of teachers and three-quarters of parents said they had no further questions about it. However, those who did ask questions posed the following:

- How do you meet <u>all</u> needs in a large classroom?
- How personalized is personalized learning?
- How beneficial or effective is personalized learning?
- How do you determine which students need help?
- How does it work or compare to other approaches?
- How is personalized learning implemented?
- Can teachers accomplish this realistically?



### **Key Takeaways**



Make clear to both groups how personalized learning is a radically different approach from traditional instructional methods and school designs and that it goes **beyond** "individualized" learning techniques to which they may be accustomed.

Use clear language and gather real-world examples, case studies, videos and testimonials from teachers and parents, etc.

Find opportunities for educators and parents to see how successful personalized learning models can look in practice and to talk with their peers about the benefits for students and how they have overcome teacher and parent concerns.



#### **Top Concerns**



- UNREALISTIC: It is unrealistic to tailor lessons to all students individually.
- TOO RELIANT ON TECH: Personalized learning is too reliant on technology.
- TOO EXPERIMENTAL: We don't know if this type of educational model works, and it is unfair to test it on today's students.
- STUDENT MATURITY: Not all students are mature enough to develop their own academic path to success.
- ONLY FOR GIFTED KIDS: Personalized learning sounds like an approach that only works for the most gifted kids.
- FOCUS ON FUNDAMENTALS: Students' education is better spent in the classroom focusing on fundamentals.
- TOO MUCH DATA: Personalized learning adds to the already large amount of personal data collected about students.







## LET'S PRACTICE



#### Frequently Asked Questions



#### What are the benefits of a mastery- education model?

- *Flexibility*. The flexibility provided in a mastery-based system liberates educators to design classes, schedules, and staffing configurations that best meet their students' individual needs. Educators are empowered to be innovative and nimble. Free from existing, outdated policies, they can maximize more of the day and even utilize extended learning opportunities. This can free up needed resources for the students who are struggling the most.
- *Transparency*. A foundation built on learning progressions, individual learning plans, student profiles and real-time progression decisions replaces a traditional system based on course grades that may include homework, participation and even extra credit. This new foundation provides a fully transparent system that can adapt and serve the needs of individual students..







## **RESOURCES**

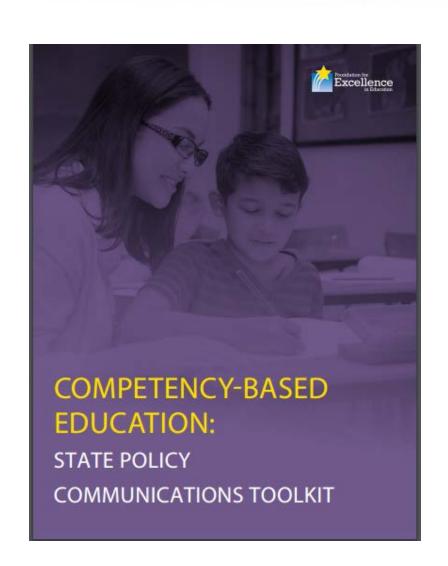


#### **ExcelinEd Communications Toolkit**



# What you can find in this toolkit and how to use it?

- Target Audiences
- Key Messages and Talking Points
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Myths vs. Facts
- Press Release/ Email/Newsletter Template
- Reporter Pitch and Column Guidelines
- Webpage Content, Social Media and Graphics

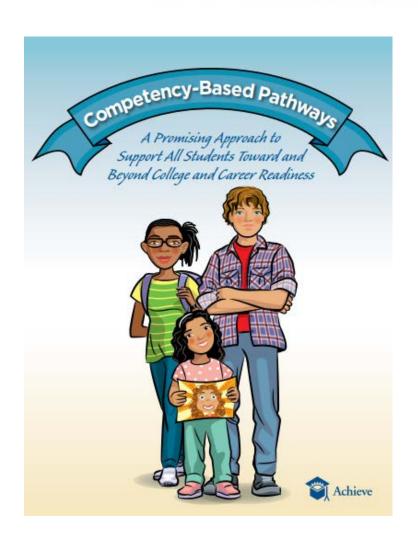




#### **Achieve Communications Toolkit**

Or

- Communications Planning
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Communicating Success
   Stories
- Core Messages
- Student Scenarios Infographic
- Media Excerpts
- Stakeholder Engagement
   Worksheet



# Thank You!

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