



Educator Competencies

for Personalized, Learner-Centered Environments

2020 EDITION

Project History

In 2015, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Students at the Center initiative at Jobs for the Future released the first-ever set of comprehensive competencies for teaching in personalized, learner-centered settings. The co-leaders were joined by a group of core partners, all focused on the future of education and ensuring access and success in educational achievement for every student: National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky, Institute for Personalized Learning at CESA#1 in Wisconsin and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

Together, the partners scanned research on teaching and learning, cross-walked over a dozen teaching standards and professional development frameworks and vetted the text through numerous iterations with over 100 state, district, school and other education leaders. For the current revision, the Students at the Center team, now at KnowledgeWorks, and CCSSO ran new field scans and conducted focus groups and interviews, adding more than 60 new, diverse voices to the process. In addition, this “refresh” effort documented evidence of the Educator Competencies in use at state, district, network and school levels.



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The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, Bureau of Indian Education and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress and the public.

[Learn more at CCSSO.org](https://www.ccsso.org)



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INTRODUCTION

When the *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching* first came out in 2015, the idea of placing students squarely at the center of the enterprise of teaching and learning was just a few years into gaining attention in a handful of schools, districts and a scattering of fledgling innovation networks. At the time, personalized, learner-centered education—which has captured the imagination and loyalty of a group of progressive educators since the early 20th century writings of John Dewey—was enjoying a renaissance as the best way to make good on the promise of college and career readiness for each student.

The interest in personalized, learner-centered education builds from a powerful combination of economic, scientific, technological and egalitarian forces: Educators have a better understanding of what truly constitutes college and career readiness and why it should be the goal for all students entering an increasingly complex and global marketplace. Cognitive neuroscience and learning theory research reveal close connections among motivation, agency and learning. The rapid expansion and availability of technological advances makes a level of personalization possible at-scale as never before. And there is a rising movement exposing the ways in which our current educational systems are designed to produce inequitable outcomes; along with the growing commitment to dismantle or change those systems in ways that will celebrate and develop each student.

The implementation of personalized, learner-centered schools has expanded exponentially since the project team began researching, writing and vetting the first Educator Competencies. The Canopy, a crowd-sourced effort to uncover and document models of innovative education, recently updated its research to include hundreds of schools from 41 states. These schools identified their use of over 91 possible learner-centered practices (including 16 practices that are specific to COVID/remote learning).¹ Another measure of the spread of these ideas is the growth of policy enabling competency-based education, which has become the instruction and assessment centerpiece of many frameworks for personalized, learner-centered education. Barely two dozen states allowed *any* kind of seat-time flexibility in 2012; but by 2019, all but one state had some facilitative policy in place.² In 2018, after the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Success Act, 39 states submitted implementation plans mentioning personalized learning, 17 states listed it as central to their implementation vision and 19 state plans ensured all students will have personal learning plans.³

Drawing on decades of research, cognitive neuroscience and learning theory and vetted by close to 100 educators, the 2015 Educator Competencies represented a first attempt to define what K-12 educators need to know and be able to do in order to realize personalized, learner-centered education in their day-to-day practice. The Educator Competencies remain the most comprehensive effort to specifically identify a set of behaviors for educators who are striving towards more equitable, personalized learning environments.

In 2017, Students at the Center published *Leadership Competencies for Learner-Centered, Personalized Education* as another means for supporting this shift in instruction.⁴

This framework does not discard or dismiss previously-gained knowledge and evidence-based models of good teaching and learning, such as those found in a number of existing standards and frameworks for educator development.⁵ Rather, it deliberately builds a bridge from those foundations toward a vision of how teaching can evolve to meet the changing needs of learners and the society

What's with “Personalized, Learner-Centered?”

The language used to name the educational approaches at the heart of these competencies has evolved rapidly over the past few years. Due to ongoing shifts in the field and subtleties of meaning, many organizations, schools, policymakers and research institutions increasingly use the terms **student-centered**, **learner-centered** and **personalized learning** more or less interchangeably. For the purposes of this framework, the Educator Competencies employs the consistent phrase – “personalized, learner-centered.” This phrase best captures the intent to build competencies that:

- » Focus on the individual learner’s needs and interests, regardless of age
- » Are mindful of the social aspects of learning
- » Encourage learner agency
- » Seek to establish equitable outcomes in education.

By contrast, student-centered may be used in some contexts to indicate only the younger learners in a K-12 system, rather than learners at any educational stage or educational setting. Personalized, when used by itself, can place an over-emphasis on the use of technology, rather than on the multiple instructional strategies and delivery mechanisms used by our organizations and contributors.

in which they live. Specifically, this framework highlights the teacher competencies that are most applicable to and essential for preparing students to succeed and thrive in an increasingly complex world. The framework also closely examines the skills and dispositions educators need to foster antiracist learning environments and close longstanding opportunity gaps.

The original Educator Competencies have been taken up by education leaders in a number of different educational settings, from schools and professional-development workshops to universities and state departments of education. In part, the decision to refresh and reissue this framework was based on findings about how and where it was being used, which competencies were proving to be most relevant, what supports were most useful and which of those supports could be enhanced with ancillary materials and tools for front-line educators.

The Educator Competencies needed to expressly and concretely enable educators to come to terms with and remedy the ways in which America's schools have negatively impacted Black students, as well as children from other marginalized groups.

Most importantly, the “refresh” process afforded an opportunity to put educational equity at the forefront of the framework, not just woven throughout, as it had been in 2015. This version of the Educator Competencies was designed to make promoting antiracism and decentering Whiteness a more explicit driving force. These goals were already highlighted as a priority by 2017, when the *Leadership Competencies for Learner-Centered, Personalized Education* was issued.

Then, just as the 2019-2020 refresh research was coming to a close, the ground shifted dramatically in America's educational landscape. In early 2020, COVID-19 descended, precipitating the closure of school buildings across the country and the rushed implementation of various, stop-gap strategies for remote and online education. Teachers from Pre-K through high school could no longer rely on the modes of instruction that had long predominated in public education. Suddenly confronted with the need to do things differently, teachers had to find new ways to connect with students and engage not just their minds but their hearts.

In the meantime, the pandemic's disproportionate impact on the health and economic well-being of low-income communities, immigrants and people of color threw into high profile our society's endemic inequities. These injustices were further highlighted to an explosive degree in the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, triggering a greater sense of urgency around dismantling systemic racism. It was clear that this new version of the Educator Competencies needed to expressly and concretely enable educators to come to terms with and remedy the ways in which America's schools have negatively impacted Black students, as well as children from other marginalized groups.

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For the Educator Competencies to be fully realized, state, district and school leaders will need to remove barriers and consciously create the conditions to allow such practices to flourish.

Thus, in this revised 2020 version, when the Educator Competencies refer to equity and justice considerations or point to cultural assets and celebrations, the intent is to embrace the complexity of social constructs such as identity and ethnicity. Educators today must consider the impact of their work on historically marginalized and often intersecting groups—including Black and LatinX students, Indigenous students, other students of color, dual language learners, students with disabilities or learning differences, students from lower-income families, recent immigrants and LGBTQIA youth. The 2020 competencies are designed to help educators build the knowledge, skills and abilities to tackle this urgent work.

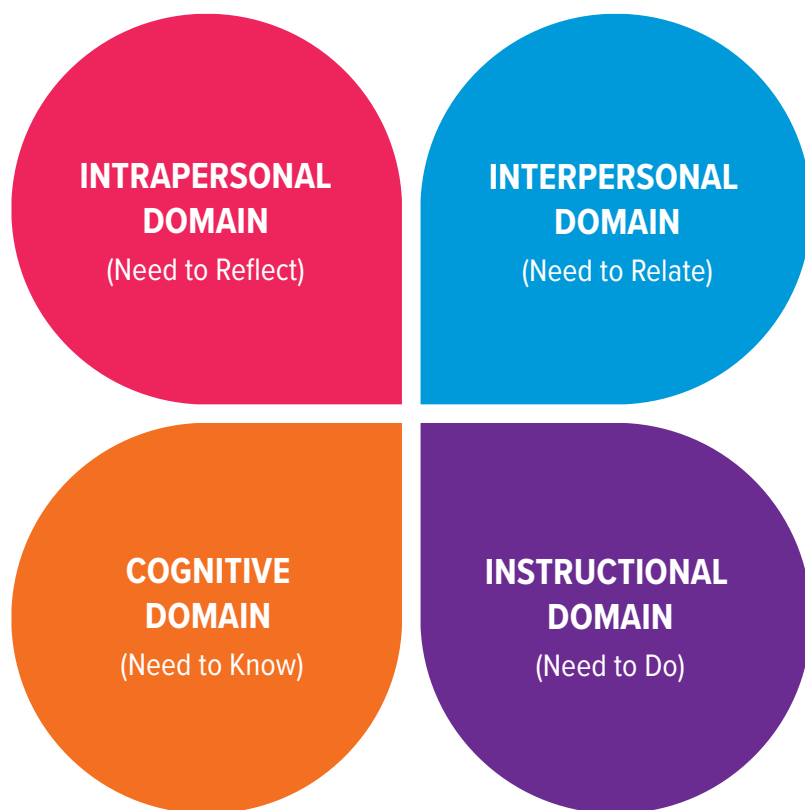
That said, it is important to keep in mind that viewed as a whole, this set of competencies is aspirational. While individual teachers can use these competencies to guide them in their development towards more personalized and learner-centered teaching, they will likely find structural, practical and policy obstacles in their way. This is where educational leadership becomes pivotal: For the Educator Competencies to be fully realized, state, district and school leaders will need to remove barriers and consciously create the conditions to allow such practices to flourish.



When state leaders in **Arkansas** built their Designing for Innovation Framework to guide schools seeking designation as a School of Innovation, they needed a way to bring together different sets of research to help school leaders understand the kinds of artifacts and evidence to collect. The Educator Competencies served as a primary reference for that research tool. By including alignment to the Educator Competencies in their framework, Arkansas signaled to its schools: “We know there is a strong research base undergirding the work we’re moving toward...it gives us confidence that when we move into work in this area, it is research-backed.”

OVERVIEW

The competencies are organized into four domains: **Intrapersonal**, **Interpersonal**, **Cognitive** and **Instructional**. Included under each domain are both high-level competencies and detailed indicators citing specific ways educators can meet each competency in a personalized, learner-centered manner.



INTRAPERSONAL DOMAIN (Need to Reflect)

This domain encompasses the generalized “capacity to manage one’s behavior and emotions to achieve one’s goals.”⁶ It includes the habits of mind, expectations for oneself and for students and assumptions about the teaching profession that educators will need in moving towards personalized, learner-centered education.

COGNITIVE DOMAIN (Need to Know)

This domain covers knowledge of not only key subject matter content, but also child development and human brain development. It includes competencies needed to foster students’ content learning and metacognitive development (i.e., critical thinking, information literacy, reasoning, argumentation, innovation, self-regulation and learning habits).⁸

INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN (Need to Relate)

This domain contains the generalized ability to “express ideas and interpret and respond to messages from others.”⁷ It includes the social, personal and leadership skills to foster beneficial relationships with students, peers and the greater community—particularly in multicultural, inclusive and linguistically diverse classrooms.

INSTRUCTIONAL DOMAIN (Need to Do)

This domain contains the competencies educators need to bring learner-centered pedagogical techniques into the classroom. These include creating engaging and relevant curriculum, managing classroom dynamics and using instructional approaches and methods that build toward and assess students’ mastery.

Cross-Cutting Themes

This second edition of the Educator Competencies also highlights several cross-cutting themes that are instrumental to creating high-quality, personalized, learner-centered environments. These themes are woven throughout all of the domains and provide an alternate way to sort and approach the competencies.

Centering Equity and Inclusion

The most important of the cross-cutting themes is **Equity and Inclusion EI**. Explicit attention to equity and inclusion is woven through every domain, in both competencies and indicators.

The Educator Competencies embrace the spirit of the National Equity Project's definition of educational equity—which, by its very nature, is personalized and learner-centered: Educational equity means that each child receives what he or she needs to develop to his or her unlimited academic and social potential. Working toward equity in schools involves:

- » Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social, economic or cultural factor
- » Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases and creating inclusive, multicultural school environments for children and adults
- » Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every member of the learning community possesses⁹

The competencies noted with the equity and inclusion theme are designed to help learning communities not just improve existing structures and behaviors, but more deeply consider where and how to dismantle systemic racism.

Additional Cross-Cutting Themes

In addition to Equity and Inclusion, the *Educator Competencies* highlights three more cross-cutting themes:

Foundational Competencies FC – serve as “prerequisites” to other competencies. Without mastering these, it will be very difficult for educators to achieve the desired outcomes of a personalized, learner-centered setting.

Social and Emotional Learning SE – features competencies related to the ways in which educators and students manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.¹⁰

Remote Learning RL – highlights the areas that are especially important for or relevant to personalized, learner-centered approaches in remote (synchronous and asynchronous teaching from a distance, some coursework may be digitally enhanced, some may not) or online teaching (instruction and coursework takes place entirely online).

Putting the Competencies into Practice

This framework is designed to serve as a customizable tool to guide educator development. The intent is to enable a growing number of teachers to implement and scale up a transformation of their classrooms into places of personalized, student-centered learning. As noted earlier, however, the Educator Competencies are aspirational; no single superhuman teacher can perform all the practices and exhibit all the behaviors continually. While individual educators may find the document useful, any significant implementation will need to take place within a professional learning community or academic department, at the least—and ideally, across the whole school and beyond.

Within individual schools, educators and administrators might utilize the competencies to guide self-assessment, quality improvement, professional development, hiring decisions and the reinforcement of an antiracist culture. At a broader scale, district and state leaders and institutions of higher education might use this framework to inform their efforts to develop teachers—e.g., through redesigning educator standards, licensure requirements, preparation program curricula, induction processes or educator effectiveness systems. To support these efforts, the Educator Competencies website (<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/ed-comps>) includes a customizable toolkit and suggestions for how to break down the work into manageable portions.

*This is deep change work, and it will take
an effort that goes beyond any one teacher,
learning community or school.*

Embracing the four domains, implementing each domain's competencies with a rigorous adherence to equity, and remaining focused on a modern "portrait of a graduate" by keeping the learner and learning front and center adds up to an ambitious North Star. This is deep change work, and it will take an effort that goes beyond any one teacher, learning community or school. CCSSO and KnowledgeWorks understand this, as do the many other organizations and field partners who reviewed drafts of this framework.

Fully operationalizing the Educator Competencies also will necessitate a deep rethinking of how we recruit, prepare and support U.S. educators. Without changing or dismantling many of the various teacher-pipeline structures, the United States public school system is unlikely to have a diverse workforce peopled with the kinds of autonomous, thoughtful, lifelong learners envisioned by the Educator Competencies.

All parties involved in creating these competencies are committed to the vision of this work and will continue to advocate for aligned policies, funding and accountability measures to enable educators and leaders to implement these deep changes.

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Educator Competencies

INTRAPERSONAL DOMAIN



The Intrapersonal Domain encompasses the generalized “capacity to manage one’s behavior and emotions to achieve one’s goals”¹¹ or the internal capacities personalized, learner-centered educators *need to reflect*. It includes the habits of mind, expectations for oneself and for students and assumptions about the teaching profession that educators need to process in order to fully actualize personalized, learner-centered education.

Intrapersonal Competencies

Effective educators in a personalized, learner-centered setting will:

- 1** Demonstrate a dedication to all learners – especially those historically marginalized and/or least served by public higher education – reaching college, career and civic readiness. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Recognize, make transparent, discuss and strive to ameliorate the biases and inequitable distribution of resources that may challenge learners from attaining postsecondary credentials and career advancement. **EI**
- Demonstrate awareness of and remedies for unintentional biases, such as lowered expectations of productivity. **EI RL**
- Be aware of and adept at referring students to an array of services—both inside and out of school—that reduce barriers to learning, social capital and access. **EI SE RL**
- Use [restorative practices](#) to drive student learning of social responsibilities, foster respected learning communities and promote inclusion. **EI**

- 2** Maintain an orientation toward and commitment to a personalized, learner-centered vision for teaching and learning. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Be able to explain how personalized, learner-centered education differs from traditional approaches.
- Place a primacy on building relationships with students that foster their learning success. **SE RL**
- Understand that [student agency](#) means not just providing choice in learning paths, but also knowing when to cede power and step back so that students can lead.
- Be able to articulate the ways personalized, learner-centered education is especially effective for student groups that have been historically marginalized and/or least served by public higher education. **EI**

THEMES: **FC** Foundational Competency **EI** Equity and Inclusion **SE** Social and Emotional Learning **RL** Remote Learning

3 Engage in deliberate practices of persistence and a [growth mindset](#). **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Demonstrate how competence and confidence are gained through effort, assistance and time. **SE** **RL**
- b. Demonstrate the ability to strive toward ambitious, long-term educational and professional goals.
- c. Use mistakes, failures and struggles as opportunities for growth. **SE**
- d. Model an ability to delay gratification or sustain effort amid challenges and setbacks, to help students understand how to do so. **SE**

4 Demonstrate commitment to lifelong professional learning and growth. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Model willingness to share reflections on and transparency around successes, failures and challenges. **SE**
- b. Seek opportunities to learn new skills, deepen practices and collaborate with others. **RL**
- c. Respond to problems and multiple demands as challenges rather than obstacles. **SE** **RL**
- d. Use data, research, [design thinking](#) or other [continuous improvement](#) practices for short-cycle reflection or evaluation to examine personal practice, identify student needs, set goals, develop improvement plans, track next steps, share learning with peers and communicate choices to learners, families, other professionals and the community. **RL**
- e. Involve students in reflecting on teaching practices and the learning environment. **RL**

5 Practice and model self-care.

INDICATORS:

- a. Prioritize taking care of one's own personal, physical, emotional/mental, nutritional and social health and well-being. **SE** **RL**
- b. Recognize challenges stemming from personal trauma, trauma-adjacency and/or stress—and adjust appropriately. **SE** **RL**
- c. Create personally safe spaces as needed in order to be mentally and emotionally available for students. **SE**
- d. Have a regular, [reflective practice](#) that includes assessing and improving self-care. **SE** **RL**



Vermont recently incorporated the Educator Competencies into its Standards for Teacher and Leadership Preparation Programs. Higher education faculty, registrars, superintendents and other stakeholders then met to discuss ways to incorporate the competencies within their own entities, as well integrating the framework into the state's Standards.

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INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN



The Interpersonal Domain contains the generalized ability to “express ideas and interpret and respond to messages from others.”¹² It includes the social, personal and leadership skills educators *need to relate* to others, in order to form beneficial relationships with students and their identified family, colleagues and members of the greater community—particularly in culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse classrooms.

Interpersonal Competencies

Effective educators in a personalized, learner-centered setting will:

- 1** Design, strengthen and participate in positive learning environments (i.e., school and classroom culture) that support individual and collaborative learning. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Contribute to professional learning environments that embrace a culture of question-asking and innovation, cross- or interdisciplinary-teaching and shared accountability for student learning, reflection and self-assessment. **RL**
- Contribute to student learning environments that are physically and emotionally safe, welcoming and affirming. **EI SE RL**
- Deliberately build students’ ability to engage in self-directed learning as well as to learn from peers, especially those of different backgrounds or academic/career trajectories. **EI SE RL**
- Be equipped and willing to engage colleagues and students when they display micro-aggressions or demonstrate harmful biases. **EI RL**
- Be prepared to embody the fundamental features of trauma-informed schools:
 - Able to recognize and respond to those who have been impacted by traumatic stress; and **EI SE RL**
 - Provide students with clear expectations and communication strategies to guide them through stressful situations. **SE RL**



A group of organizations led by the education design lab **2Revolutions** created a set of personalized learning progressions and building blocks for the [LearnNext effort](#). Compiled in a digital toolbox of free resources, the set includes 30 courses, eight learning progressions and seven playlists—all of which lean heavily, in structure and content, on the Educator Competencies and are designed to complement the Educator Competencies’ efforts.

2 Build strong relationships with students, peers, identified families and learning community members that contribute to individual and collective success. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Develop individual relationships with students that support their social and emotional growth, while setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries. **SE RL**
- b. Create collaborative in-school partnerships with peer educators, administrators, content experts and others within the school building that support communities of practice to enhance individual and group student learning. **SE**
- c. Build relationships with families, community members, businesspeople and others outside the school to support communities of practice that enhance individual and group student learning, including:
 - i. Open communication channels both online and in person. **SE RL**
 - ii. Collaborative partnerships in which each member has a clear role, purpose and value.

3 Contribute to college and career access and success for all learners, particularly those who have been historically marginalized and/or least served by public higher education due to background, demographics, neurodiversity or culture. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Work to ensure that each student has the access and supports needed to gain the knowledge, master the skills and acquire the credits to succeed in postsecondary education and employment. **EI**
- b. Provide age-appropriate and individualized career exploration, planning and connections counseling to help each student explore, plan and take the necessary steps toward graduating from high school ready for college, career and life.
- c. With peers, build and contribute to structures and strategies that foster cultural competency, enact a commitment to equity and are equally supportive of all learners. **EI**
- d. Be explicit with students about the value of positive networks and supportive communities; help students learn how to build networks and engage with communities in order to achieve their academic and career goals. **EI**

4 Seek appropriate individual or shared leadership roles to increase responsibility for student learning and advancement.

INDICATORS:

- a. Share successes and struggles with other educators and actively participate in professional renewal opportunities. **SE RL**
- b. Seek or create opportunities to serve as a teacher-leader, mentor, coach or content expert within the school, district or state.
- c. Contribute to building and sustaining support across peers for learner-centered approaches. **SE**
- d. Build relationships for the purpose of motivating other team members' performance. **SE**

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Educator Competencies

COGNITIVE DOMAIN



The Cognitive Domain consists of what teachers *need to know* in order to create personalized, learner-centered environments. It covers both knowledge of key subject matter content and an understanding of human and brain development. It includes the competencies to foster students' content learning and [metacognitive](#) development (i.e., critical thinking, information literacy, reasoning, argumentation, innovation, [self-regulation](#) and learning habits).¹³

Cognitive Competencies

Effective educators in a personalized, learner-centered setting will:

- 1** Utilize in-depth understanding of content and [learning progressions](#) to engage learners and lead individual learners toward [mastery](#). **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Communicate the central concepts, tools of investigation and structures of the content area(s) (e.g., algebra teachers need to know the math—which algebraic concepts are most important, which are foundational and which are more complex; and how to explain the math in multiple ways). **RL**
- Build students' solid understanding of the subject area; identify misconceptions as they arise; and intervene to overcome those misconceptions with individualized scaffolds, richer analysis, varied explanations and/or more targeted forms of practice.
- Create, use or adapt rubrics that clearly define what “mastery” looks like for key, content-based concepts. **RL**
- Create learning experiences that make the content-based concepts accessible and meaningful (e.g., enabling students to understand the “why,” as well as the “how”). **RL**
- Present content-based concepts (both within and across disciplines) through a variety of perspectives in order to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, knowledge transfer and collaborative problem-solving related to authentic local and global issues. **RL**



When **Arkansas** built their Designing for Innovation Framework, they created a three-part framework consisting of Professional Competencies, Learner-Driven and Transformational Leadership. The Educator Competencies were particularly helpful in informing what to include in the self-assessments for the Professional Competencies and Learner-Driven sections as the state leaders determined how to customize a model that was right for their state.

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2 Impart knowledge of the different types of skills involved in effective communication (e.g., written, oral, listening and digital skills and presentation) to develop learners into effective 21st-century communicators.

INDICATORS:

- a. Break down the different skills of communication so that students can practice both through content and skill area(s):
 - i. Offer opportunities to demonstrate skills in oral and public communication (with peers and adults), as well as written, listening, online and other skills required for effective communication in the 21st century. **RL**
 - ii. Ensure that students understand the standards of discourse and can engage in public/civil discourse, use academic language and conduct argumentation in specific content area(s).
 - iii. Whenever possible, ensure that standards and assessments connect to real-world experiences and that communication methods span a variety of media (e.g., not simply reading a book report out loud). **RL**
- b. Apply meaningful feedback techniques for learning:
 - i. Provide constructive feedback on communication skills. **RL**
 - ii. Teach students how to give and receive feedback on their own, their peers' and their educators' performance—e.g., draft work products, use of learning strategies, etc.
- c. Stay up to date on digital literacy and age-appropriate engagement, in order to teach students to be savvy and safe consumers of factual and enriching content online. **RL**

3 Demonstrate awareness of and employ **culturally responsive teaching (CRT)** to center students' cultural diversity as a strength and asset in their learning journey.

INDICATORS:

- a. Understand how centering students' cultures and history as "launching pads" for learning improves instruction, particularly for students of color. **EI RL**
- b. Seek structured opportunities for professional development and learning to reflect on equity, civic engagement, education structures and institutions and their intersections. **EI**
- c. Demonstrate ability to:
 - i. Reflect on one's own race, background, social location and degree of conferred privilege; and **EI**
 - ii. Exhibit an awareness of systemic racism, the various forms of interpersonal oppression and antiracist behaviors. **EI**
- d. Be able to integrate aspects of CRT: cultural awareness, information processing, learning partnerships with students and supportive learning environments. **EI**
- e. Be able to:
 - i. Identify where one's own lived experience has shaped one's own implicit biases; **EI** and
 - ii. Minimize the negative impact of one's own implicit biases on students. **EI RL**

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4 Employ techniques for developing students' skills of metacognition, self-regulation and perseverance. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Use modeling, rehearsal and feedback techniques to highlight the processes of thinking, rather than focusing exclusively on the products of thinking. **RL**
- b. Differentiate between behavior and learning outcomes related to self-regulation (ability to control and take responsibility for one's own focus and effort), rather than perceived ability (belief in one's capabilities and limits)—and adjust interventions accordingly. **SE RL**
- c. Demonstrate familiarity with the concepts of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation to learn, using a variety of tools that support students' ability to maintain high expectations for goals over extended periods of time. **SE RL**
- d. Know how to help students determine priorities and develop skills for most effectively choosing between/among competing interests. **SE RL**

5 Be able to apply the history of schooling in America and its role in the perpetuation of racism to de-centering Whiteness in the learning community.

INDICATORS:

- a. Identify major stages and historical trends in education and who they were designed to serve – and who not to serve. **EI**
- b. Identify – and if needed, speak out against – the ways structural inequities in schools reinforce White dominance (e.g., grading policies, tracking, seat time, discipline). **EI**
- c. Articulate the connections between personalized approaches to learning and an antiracist stance (e.g., asset-based, recognizing individual strengths, growth mindset, continuous improvement, student agency, authentic assessment). **EI**

6 Stay up to date on evidence-based practices that inform teaching and learning.

INDICATORS:

- a. Apply the fundamentals of the learning sciences, trauma-informed schools and child and adolescent development to the classroom. **EI SE RL**
- b. Participate in opportunities to experiment with and assess efficacy of new approaches to foundational elements of learning environments (e.g., flexibility of physical spaces, time, scheduling and extended learning opportunities). **RL**
- c. Seek out and participate in opportunities to learn new developments in curriculum design, instruction and assessment techniques. **RL**



During 2017, **Hartford, Connecticut** district leaders (in partnership with JFF and supported by Nellie Mae Education Foundation) facilitated a series of professional development workshops for principals, coaches and educators as the district moved to adopt the Educator Competencies as part of their teaching standards and integrate with and support other district-wide initiatives.

THEMES: **FC** Foundational Competency **EI** Equity and Inclusion **SE** Social and Emotional Learning **RL** Remote Learning

INSTRUCTIONAL DOMAIN



Competencies in the Instructional Domain include the what educators *need to do* to bring distinctly learner-centered pedagogical techniques into the classroom. These skills include creating relevant and engaging curriculum, managing classroom dynamics and using instructional approaches and methods that build toward and facilitate the assessment of mastery.

Instructional Competencies

Effective educators in a personalized, learner-centered setting will:

1 Use a mastery approach to learning. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Build curriculum units from essential questions, recognized standards, school-wide and/or subject-specific competencies and/or real-world problems to be solved. **RL**
- Determine students' progress, advancement and pace via various methods of demonstrated understanding of the content, skills and application of learning goals. **RL**
- Customize and scaffold instruction, supports and pacing so that all learners can master the content and fill gaps in understanding. **RL**
- Maintain a focus on high expectations for achievement while providing feedback and opportunities for practice, revision and improvement. **RL**
- Integrate many of the other instructional competencies to create a high-quality mastery approach. **RL**

2 Use assessment and data as tools for learning and to ensure that students are progressing at rates which result in equity of outcomes. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- Systematically apply the use of data (quantitative and qualitative) to understand individual skills, gaps, strengths, weaknesses, interests and aspirations of each student, and use that information to design and modify personalized learning paths toward meeting school, district and state standards. **RL**
- Use multiple, frequent and **formative assessments** — such as self-assessment, **exit tickets** and student surveys—in a timely manner to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, to guide educators' and learners' decision making and to communicate with families. **RL**
- Facilitate students' creation of a portfolio, exhibition or other public showcase tool to serve as a culminating event at appropriate educational junctures. **RL**

- d. Develop and use assessment tools that are flexible, involve students in their creation and which clearly articulate standards and criteria for meeting those standards.
- e. Collect data that can help expose racial inequities and use that data to ameliorate inequities and close gaps among students, keeping all students to a high standard. **EI**

3 Customize the learning experience through assessments, supports, progressions, relationships and technology.

INDICATORS:

- a. Recognize and integrate knowledge of individual learners, diverse cultures and the community context in developing materials and pedagogy to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet rigorous standards. **EI RL**
- b. Co-construct and offer choice among multiple means of assessment for students to demonstrate mastery. **RL**
- c. Scaffold, customize whenever possible and provide adequate supports and interventions to appropriately stretch each learner, informed by teacher expertise. **RL**
- d. Document and track learning trajectories that meet each learner's readiness, strengths, needs and interests.
 - i. Update and refine pre-existing individual learning plans or co-design an individual learning plan with each student and identified family as necessary. **RL**
 - ii. Use the plan to build effective individual and collective learning experiences.
- e. Use technology to find materials, lessen the burden of tracking student progress, engage learners in different ways and offer academic supports. **RL**

4 Promote student agency and ownership with regard to learning. **FC**

INDICATORS:

- a. Encourage student “voice and choice” via strategies such as:
 - i. Providing access for students to monitor their progress and set goals.
 - ii. Enabling students to choose and co-design curricula.
 - iii. Providing students with multiple options for demonstrating mastery of a standard or **competency** in an enduring skill or area.
 - iv. Providing opportunities for students to contribute to classroom or school-based decision-making processes, including participatory action research, place-based education, restorative practices and class meetings.



When **Virginia** leaders were preparing to fully operationalize their “Profile of a Virginia Graduate,” they used the Educator Competencies as an anchor document, along with the state’s guidance, and research on youth development and what young people need, [Ready By Design](#).¹⁴ This led to the creation of what ultimately became the Profile of a Virginia Educator, Virginia Education Leader and Virginia Classroom.

- b. Develop students' abilities to self-reflect and self-regulate via strategies such as goal setting, self-assessment and self-pacing. **SE RL**
- c. Develop students' abilities to collaborate with peers via strategies such as **peer assessment** and **project-based learning**. **RL**
- d. Cultivate students' growth mindsets. **SE**
- e. Help students manage their own behavior to optimize the learning environment for all. **SE RL**
- f. Support the development of, and positively influence students' perceptions of, students' own efficacy, interest and purpose. **EI SE**
- g. Shift the dynamic from adult control to student agency in decision-making.

5 Provide opportunities for **anytime/anywhere** and **real-world** learning that is tied to learning objectives and standards.

INDICATORS:

- a. As described in the interpersonal competencies, build relationships with families, community members, businesspeople and others outside the school to support communities of practice that enhance individual and group student learning.
- b. Align out-of-school experiences to the relevant academic competencies or standards so that students have opportunities to demonstrate mastery and receive in-school credit based on out-of-school experiences. **RL**
- c. Demonstrate fluency with the curricular and personal aspects of providing a successful **blended learning** experience. **RL**
- d. Develop diverse physical and digital environments that maximize learning within, across and beyond the classroom(s). **RL**

6 Develop and facilitate project-based learning experiences.

INDICATORS:

- a. Engage learners and other faculty in co-designing projects that stretch and deepen the learning experience.
- b. Use collaborative, cross-curricular projects to develop learners' deep understanding of content areas, skills and connections to applications beyond school to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- c. Emphasize regular student reflection about specific questions which draw out the learning within the project.



Altitude Learning (formerly AltSchools), a school and district support organization, has incorporated the Educator Competencies text in many ways: to help create a common language among their schools and partners; to demonstrate to aspiring learner-centered educators what they are already doing, thereby lessening any sense of overwhelm; and to define “learning” and “thinking” for professional development purposes.

THEMES: **FC** Foundational Competency **EI** Equity and Inclusion **SE** Social and Emotional Learning **RL** Remote Learning

7

Use [collaborative group work](#).

INDICATORS:

- a. Develop, scaffold, facilitate and where appropriate, co-design collaborative group work.
- b. Analyze collaborative group work to ensure that it engages and stretches each learner and builds toward mastery of specific skills, standards or student competencies.
- c. Foster students' ability to identify specific teamwork skills necessary for collaborative group work that are similar to the skills and dispositions necessary for college, career and civic success.
- d. Ensure that students have developed the knowledge and skills needed to engage in successful, collaborative group work:
 - i. Clearly define roles, clarifying the purpose of collaborative group work and understanding any assessments.
 - ii. Establish and practice techniques for how to share one's own ideas and how to benefit from the ideas and skills of others.
 - iii. Gain practice in tools and techniques such as Socratic questioning and constructive feedback.
- e. Plan ways to recognize and address issues of different cultural norms and implicit biases among students when they arise in the context of collaborative group work. **EI**

8

Use technology in service of learning.

INDICATORS:

- a. Adopt, adapt and create high-quality digital resources for curriculum. **RL**
- b. Enhance ability to provide real-time assessment and learning-tracking with new digital tools. **RL**
- c. Employ the principles of [universal design for learning](#). **EI RL**
- d. Provide opportunities for all students to learn in a digital setting (synchronous and asynchronous). **RL**
- e. Promote the development of students' digital fluency and their ability to be both safe and discerning when they interact online. **RL**
- f. Assess when technology use in instruction improves engagement, collaboration and learning, and when it does not, and be able to adjust accordingly. **RL**
- g. Promote collaborative and real-world, project-based learning opportunities enhanced with digital tools and content. **RL**



In **Jefferson County, Kentucky**, coaches and district leaders used the Educator Competencies to create a checklist to use when observing classrooms. These checklists capture what visitors can expect to see if they walk into classes where teachers are practicing a more personalized approach.

THEMES: **FC** Foundational Competency **EI** Equity and Inclusion **SE** Social and Emotional Learning **RL** Remote Learning

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IS YOUR TEAM READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT? Download supplemental resources and tools to help break down this process into more manageable portions. Learn more at studentsatthecenterhub.org/ed-comps.

Endnotes

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APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anytime/Anywhere Learning

Students have equitable opportunities to learn outside of the typical school day and year, and outside of the classroom or school, often by using digital technologies that allow them to study and complete assignments at any location and at any time. Some systems and states award credit based on these experiences. *(Closely related terms: blended learning, project-based learning, real-world learning, extended learning opportunities)*

Source: “The Students at the Center Framework.” JFF (2013).
<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/interactive-framework/>

Agency

The initiative and capacity to act in a way that produces meaningful change in oneself or the environment. *(Closely related terms: ownership, student-ownership)*

Sources:

“Anytime, Anywhere.” Wolfe, Steinberg and Hoffman, eds. (2013). Chpt. 7
<https://www.hepg.org/hep-home/books/anytime,-anywhere>

“Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice.” Toshalis and Nakkula. (2012)
<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/motivation-engagement-and-student-voice/>

Blended Learning

Any formal education program in which a student learns in part through online learning and in part in a supervised, brick-and-mortar location away from home. High-quality blended learning combines the best of face-to-face instruction with the best of learning online and some elements of student control over time, place, path and/or pace.

Source: “Maximizing Competency Education and Blended Learning.” Patrick and Sturgis (2015). p. 17
<https://www.inacol.org/resource/maximizing-competency-education-and-blended-learning-insights-from-experts/>

Collaborative Group Work

Students work together with peers around academic work, which supports their healthy academic and social development in ways that a teacher-directed model of working alone cannot. Effective group work is well planned and strategic. Students are grouped intentionally, with each held accountable for contributing to the group work. Activities are designed so that students with diverse skill levels are supported as well as challenged by their peers. Teachers design collaborative group work around meaningful tasks in the subject area which are conceptually rich, engaging, with multiple entry points.

Sources:

“Collaborative Culture: Group Work”
<https://ededucation.org/resources/collaborative-culture-group-work>

“Common Instructional Framework.”
<http://www.jff.org/services/early-college-design-services/common-instructional-framework>

Competency, Competent

A competency is what a learner needs to know or know how to do: a relevant academic or social-emotional concept that is aligned to standards and spans multiple contexts and disciplines.

Competency-Based Education

An educational system in which each student gets what they need to reach their fullest potential and master high standards through flexible pathways, differentiated support, individual and collective tasks and multiple means and opportunities to demonstrate skill development. Students have individual agency as well as collaborate in co-constructing pathways and measures of learning. Standards, competencies and measures of mastery incorporate community input and voice to ensure pathways reflect universal design for learning and are culturally responsive, nonbiased and anti-racist. (*Closely related terms: proficiency-based learning/education, mastery-based learning/education.*)

Continuous Improvement

The act of integrating quality improvement into the daily work of individuals in the system. The concept rests on the belief that improvement requires an organizational or professional commitment to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection, adaptation and growth. 'Continuous' connotes three organizational characteristics:

- a. the frequency of quality improvement work;
- b. the depth and extent of its integration at different levels of the organization; and
- c. the extent of contextualization within a system of work processes.

Source: "Continuous Improvement in Education." Park, Hironaka, Carver and Nordstrum. (2013).
https://www.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/carnegie-foundation_continuous-improvement_2013.05.pdf

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Practices and dispositions that seek to perpetuate and foster linguistic, literate and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is about improving instruction and helping students of color and others – who've historically been marginalized due to structural inequities in our education system – become better learners. CRT follows a multi-pronged methodology comprised of cultural awareness, information processing and learning partnerships. CRT should not be confused with multicultural or culturally relevant education, in which multiple cultures are celebrated; but core barriers to learning for historically marginalized learners are neither examined nor improved.

Source: "Zaretta Hammond on Coaching and Culturally Responsive Teaching." Reborja (2019).
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov19/vol77/num03/Zaretta-Hammond-on-Coaching-and-Culturally-Responsive-Teaching.aspx>

Deeper Learning

A set of competencies students must possess to succeed in 21st-century jobs and civic life, including:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| » Master core academic content | » Communicate effectively |
| » Think critically and solve complex problems | » Learn how to learn |
| » Work collaboratively | » Develop academic mindsets |

Source: "Deeper Learning Defined." Hewlett Foundation (2013).
<http://www.hewlett.org/library/hewlett-foundation-publication/deeper-learning-defined>

Design Thinking

An orientation to learning that focuses on identifying need, challenging assumptions, generating a range of possibilities and learning through targeted stages of iterative prototyping. This is a key component of the process not just to solve but to define problems. This seemingly subtle shift can energize one towards empathetic action.

Source: “What is Design Thinking?” Stanford University REDLab
<http://web.stanford.edu/group/redlab/cgi-bin/faq.php>

Exit Tickets

Short formative assessment exercise given at the end of a class or unit that helps the teacher obtain formative data about students’ current levels of understanding. Exit tickets generally ask students to: Rate their current understanding of new learning; Analyze and reflect on their efforts around the learning; Provide feedback to teachers on an instructional strategy; Provide feedback about the materials and teaching. (*Closely related terms: exit slips*)

Source: “The Many Uses of Exit Slips.” Marzano (2012).
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct12/vol70/num02/The-Many-Uses-of-Exit-Slips.aspx>

Formative Assessment

Ongoing, non-punitive classroom assessments that are administered in the course of a unit of instruction in order to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses; foster increased autonomy and responsibility for learning on the part of the student; assist educators in planning subsequent instruction; and aid students in guiding their own learning, revising their work and gaining self-evaluation skills.

Source: “Handbook of Formative Assessment.” Andrade and Cizek, eds. (2010).
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780203874851>

Growth Mindset

The belief that intelligence can be developed and one’s abilities grown through hard work and persistence, rather than innate talent. Students with a growth mindset understand that they can grow smarter through hard work, the use of effective strategies and accessing help from others when needed. It is contrasted with a fixed mindset: the belief that intelligence is a fixed trait that is set in stone at birth.

Source: “What We Know About Growth Mindset from Scientific Research.” Romero (2015).
https://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/research_library/what-we-know-about-growth-mindset-from-scientific-research/

Individual Learning Plan

A student-directed planning and monitoring tool that customizes learning opportunities throughout students’ secondary school experience, broadens their perspectives and supports attainment of goals. The plan documents students’ interests, needs, supports, course selections (including access to college level programming), transition placements and other learning experiences both in and out of school.

Source: “What is an ILP?” Rhode Island Department of Education (2019).
<https://www.prepare-ri.org/ilp>

Learner-Centered

Integrating personalized approaches, real-world learning, competency-based education and student agency, choice and voice to foster postsecondary, career and civic success. This term sometimes is used instead of “student-centered” to indicate that a learner is an older student or a professional. *(Closely related terms: student-centered)*

Source: *Students at the Center FAQs and Definitions*

<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/SATC-FAQ-Definitions-010815.pdf>

Learning Progressions

The purposeful sequencing of teaching and learning expectations across multiple developmental stages, ages or grade levels. Learning progressions also include careful attention to the individual’s prior understanding necessary for building future, more complex understanding, as well as the need for students to encounter content matter in different ways and over time to deepen understanding.

Sources:

Ed Reform Glossary. <http://edglossary.org/learning-progression/>

“The Lowdown on Learning Progressions.” Popham (2007).

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr07/vol64/num07/The-Lowdown-on-Learning-Progressions.aspx>

Mastery

The targeted level of achievement relative to a standard or learning goal. “Demonstrating mastery” is synonymous with “demonstrating proficiency” or “meeting the standard” and involves the demonstration of skills and content knowledge as outlined in clear, measurable learning objectives.

Source: “The Past and the Promise: Today’s Competency Education Movement.” Le, Wolfe, Steinberg (2014).

<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/The-Past-The-Promise-091514.pdf>

Metacognitive Skills

Learning processes and behaviors involving self-reflection and critical thinking, information literacy, reasoning and argumentation, innovation, self-regulation, selection of learning strategies and learning habits.

Source: *Rethinking the Notion of ‘Noncognitive’*, David Conley (2013). EdWeek

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/01/23/18conley.h32.html>

Neurodiversity

Establishes that every human has differences in how their brain is “wired” and how the brain functions to support thinking and learning, supporting the viewpoint that brain differences are normal, rather than deficits.

Source: “Neurodiversity: What You Need to Know.” Rosen (2014).

<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/building-on-strengths/neurodiversity-what-you-need-to-know>

Peer Assessment

Students give informed feedback to one another. Effective peer assessment connects to clear standards and involves constructive critique. Feedback from peers can carry more immediacy and achieve greater volume than that from teachers. It ideally relates to works in progress, so that peers may use the feedback to revise their work. Being able to provide peers with positive, usable feedback is also a critical life skill.

Source: “Student-centered Assessment Guide: Peer Assessment.” Brooke and Andrade (2013).
<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/student-centered-assessment-guide-peer-assessment/>

Personalized Learning

Tailoring learning for each student’s strengths, needs and interests—including enabling student agency and ownership of what, how, when and where they learn—to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible. (*Closely related terms: student-centered learning; learner-centered education. Not synonymous with: individualized learning, computer-adaptive testing and digital platforms*).

Project-Based Learning

A teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects. Students gain knowledge and skills over an extended period in which they investigate and respond to a complex question, problem or challenge. High quality project-based learning includes: Key Knowledge, Understanding and Success Skills; Challenging Problem or Question; Sustained Inquiry; Authenticity; Student Voice and Choice; Reflection; Critique and Revision; Public Product.

Source: “What is Project Based Learning?” http://bie.org/about/what_pbl

Real-World Learning

An approach to learning that involves schools working with community partners and industry experts to engage students in authentic, relevant problems, projects and experiences that develop career awareness and readiness. When students participate in learning experiences where they can engage with authentic audiences and purposes, they see that their academic work has meaning beyond the walls of the classroom. Examples include early colleges, work-based learning, internships and service-learning.

Source: “Real-world learning: Getting started.” Digital Promise.
<https://realworld.digitalpromise.org/getting-started/>

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices focus on resolving conflict and healing harm. Restorative justice seeks the root cause behind individual and group behaviors instead of treating the behavior as an isolated symptom or judging students as good or bad based on isolated incidents. These practices assume that all students are worthy and deserving (a fundamental equity assumption), that behavior is learned and that a specific incident is an extension of some other issue needing resolution. The practices focus on how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities. (*Closely related terms: restorative circles, restorative justice*)

Sources:

“The Tools for Restorative Justice Practice.” NGLC.

<https://www.nextgenlearning.org/equity-toolkit/school-culture>

International Institute of Restorative Practices.

<https://www.iirp.edu/restorative-practices/what-is-restorative-practices>

Reflective Practice

Systematic approach of assembling and tracking thoughts and observations in order to improve teaching practice.

Source: “Three Reflective Practices for Effectiveness.” Knight (2018).

<https://inservice.ascd.org/three-reflective-practices-for-effectiveness/>

Self-Assessment

Students identify strengths and weaknesses in their own work and revise accordingly. Effective self-assessment involves students comparing their work to clear standards and generating feedback for themselves about where they need to make improvements, then having time to make those improvements before submitting for a grade.

Source: Frey, N., Hattie, J., & Fisher, D. (2018). *Developing Assessment-Capable Visible Learners, grades K-12: Maximizing skill, will, and thrill*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Literacy.

<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/student-centered-assessment-guide-self-assessment/>

Self-Regulation

The ability to be goal-directed; the ability to demonstrate control over and responsibility for one’s focus and effort when engaged in learning activities. It is also the ability to strategically modulate one’s emotional reactions or states in order to be more effective at coping and engaging with the environment in which one finds oneself.

Sources:

“Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice.” Toshalis and Nakkula. (2012) p. 18

<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/motivation-engagement-and-student-voice/>

UDL Guidelines - Version 2.0: Guideline 9.

<http://udlguidelines.cast.org/engagement/self-regulation>

Student Agency

The initiative and capacity to act in a way that produces meaningful change in oneself or the environment. (*Closely related terms: ownership, student-ownership*)

Source: “Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice.” Toshalis and Nakkula. (2012)

<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/motivation-engagement-and-student-voice/>

Student-Centered

Teaching and learning approach that integrates personalized learning, real-world connections, competency-based education and student agency and voice to foster postsecondary, career and civic success. Sometimes used to delineate younger learners in K-12 systems. (*Closely related terms: learner-centered*)

Source: “The Students at the Center Framework.” JFF (2013)
<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/framework/>

Student-Ownership

Students have frequent opportunities to direct, reflect on, and improve on their own learning progression toward college- and career-ready standards, with the help of formative assessments that help them understand their own strengths and learning challenges. Students take increasing responsibility for their own learning, using strategies for self-regulation. (*Closely related terms: student voice and choice, student agency.*)

Source: “The Students at the Center Framework.” JFF (2013).
<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/interactive-framework/>

Student Voice (and Choice)

Learners have significant and meaningful input into decisions that will shape their learning experiences and those of their peers, either in or outside of school settings. Student voice is about agency. At its core, student voice is the antithesis of de-personalized, standardized and homogenized educational experiences: it begins and ends with the thoughts, feelings, visions and actions of students themselves.

Source: “Motivation, Engagement, and Student Voice.” Toshalis and Nakkula. (2012) p. 23
<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/motivation-engagement-and-student-voice/>

Transfer

The process through which an individual becomes capable of taking what was learned in one situation and applying it to new situations. Considered one of the “gold standards” to documenting that deeper learning has occurred.

Source: “Education for Life and Work.” Pellegrino and Hilton (2012).
<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/13398/education-for-life-and-work-developing-transferable-knowledge-and-skills>

Trauma-Informed Schools

A learning community in which the adults are prepared to recognize and respond to those who have been impacted by traumatic stress. The goal is to not only provide tools to cope with extreme situations but also to create an underlying culture of respect and support.

Source: “What Is a Trauma-Informed School?” Treatment and Services Adaptation Center
<https://traumaawareschools.org/traumaInSchools>

Universal Design For Learning

Providing content via multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression.

Source: CAST <http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html>

APPENDIX B

APPROACH TO COMPETENCIES DEVELOPMENT

A small group of leaders from several learner-focused organizations came together in 2014 to develop an initial set of Educator Competencies. Co-led by [CCSSO](#) and the [Students at the Center](#) initiative at JFF, core partners also included the [National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky](#), the [Personalized Learning Institute@CESA#1](#) in Wisconsin and the [Nellie Mae Education Foundation](#) (NMEF).

The team began by defining the student competencies necessary for graduate success in today's economy. Over the past decade, much has been written and researched to expand the definitions of secondary and postsecondary success to include greater weight across knowledge, skills and dispositions. In addition to these research frameworks, the team reviewed graduation requirements and standards for students in schools with explicit, student-centered approaches and/or deeper learning goals (e.g., sampling from schools in networks such as Big Picture Learning, Expeditionary Learning and High Tech High).

With these compiled lists in mind, the team began back-mapping to what educators would need to know and do to enable their students to reach those identified outcomes. If we expect learners to achieve certain cognitive, metacognitive and employability skills to be successful, then we need to define, support and train the kinds of educators capable of teaching such things. The initial criteria for the educator framework were developed by “cross-walking” 12 educator frameworks and standards. The team selected frameworks to represent a range from highly tested, multi-state and school site-adopted lists developed for the current mode of education (e.g., the Danielson Framework), to newer frameworks designed for personalized, innovative settings (e.g., iNACOL's Blended Learning Educator Competencies). For a complete list of original educator source material, see Appendix C.

The team then grouped the frameworks/standards, revised text as needed to eliminate duplication and removed skills that did not lead to achieving a personalized, learner-centered approach. The emerging list of competencies was shared in two feedback rounds with approximately 20 state and district practitioners per round. The team asked reviewers to read for: what was missing, what wasn't necessary and where the competency list needed revision to distinguish better between personalized, learner-centered approaches and basic, good teaching.

Following these two rounds of revision, the team converted the third version into an HTML document for an open comment period during which the authors solicited line-item edits and feedback from a broad spectrum of education practitioners, policymakers, researchers and thought leaders. Review of this digital document generated more than 250 comments by 35 additional people. Thus, the original Educator Competencies released in 2015 reflected an incredible wealth of information and thoughtful input gathered from multiple rounds of vetting.

For the 2020 version, CCSSO and the Students at the Center team, now at KnowledgeWorks, again partnered to lead the effort. The partners used surveys, interviews and focus groups, beginning in 2019. In an effort to “map” usage, the team distributed a field survey to 568 reviewers, who were selected for their likely familiarity with the Educator Competencies. Unfortunately, with only 26 responses, the team could not gather enough data for thorough and reliable mapping. However, the survey's open-ended questions provided a rich amount of information on how a small

subset of educators viewed the value of the competencies. Since this feedback indicated that the competencies remained applicable and useful, the team determined that a full overhaul was not in order. Instead, the team turned its attention to conducting deeper interviews and facilitating small-group conversations in order to:

- » Better foreground and highlight issues of equity
- » Understand how and where the Educator Competencies were in use
- » Determine what needed to be changed or added in order to refresh text and increase uptake and use

For these interviews, CCSSO and KnowledgeWorks established communication protocols and invited conversations with respondents from the following groups:

- » State-level educators and policymakers familiar with the Educator Competencies
- » District or school-level educators familiar with the Educator Competencies
- » District or school-level educators not familiar with the Educator Competencies
- » Civil rights and equity leaders
- » Students

For the revision process, the team interviewed another 62 respondents. Including the survey responses, the breakdown of sources is as follows:

RESPONDENTS	2014	2019
State education leaders	27	11
District and school educators	24	48
Students	—	7
Education thought leaders and nonprofit staff and leaders	16	9
Researchers	9	3
Civil rights and education equity organizations staff and leaders	1	6
TOTAL	77	84

APPENDIX C

FRAMEWORK SOURCES

Big Picture/The Met (2014). Advisor Competencies.

<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/BP-Advisor-Competencies-and-Skills-2014.pdf>

CAST (2011). Universal Design for Learning Framework.

<http://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl>

Council of Chief State School Officers (2013). InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0.

https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/2013_INTASC_Learning_Progressions_for_Teachers.pdf

The Danielson Group (2013). The 2013 Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument.

<https://danielsongroup.org/downloads/2013-framework-teaching-evaluation-instrument>

Digital Promise (2015). Developing a System of Micro-credentials: Supporting Deeper Learning in the Classroom.

https://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/mc_deeperlearning.pdf

EL Education (2015). Framework for Professional Development in EL Education Schools.

<https://eleducation.org/resources/framework-for-professional-development-in-el-education-schools>

The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) (2014). iNACOL Blended Learning Teacher Competencies Framework.

<http://www.inacol.org/resource/inacol-blended-learning-teacher-competency-framework/>

The Institute @ CESA #1 (2014). Personalized Learning Skill Sets for Educators.

http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/CESA1_Personalized_Learning_Skill_Sets_Brief_2014_15.pdf

Jobs for the Future. Barbara Cervone and Kathleen Cushman (2013, October). Teachers at Work: Six Exemplars of Everyday Practice.

<https://www.jff.org/resources/teachers-worksix-exemplars-everyday-practice-student-center-series/>

Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Kirk Walters, Toni M. Smith, Steven Leinwand, Wendy Surr, Abigail Stein and Paul Bailey (2014). An Up-Close Look at Student-Centered Math Teaching: A Study of Highly Regarded High School Teachers and Their Students.

<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/resource/an-up-close-look-at-student-centered-math-teaching/>

New York Department of Education (2015). Digital Ready School Benchmarks.

<http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DigitalReadyBenchmarks.pdf>

Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE) (2014). Enriching Student-Centered Practices in Your School: Questions and Strategies for Reflection.

<https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/scope-enriching-student-centered-practices.pdf>