



What's Happening

February 2017

Overview of selected state policies and supports related to K–12 competency-based education

R. Marc Brodersen
David Yanoski
Katie Mason
Helen Apthorp
Marzano Research

Jennifer Piscatelli
Augenblick, Palaich and Associates



ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATION EVALUATION
AND REGIONAL ASSISTANCE

Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education

REL
CENTRAL
Regional Educational Laboratory
At Marzano Research

U.S. Department of Education

Betsy DeVos, *Secretary*

Institute of Education Sciences

Thomas W. Brock, *Commissioner for Education Research*
Delegated the Duties of Director

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Audrey Pendleton, *Acting Commissioner*
Elizabeth Eisner, *Acting Associate Commissioner*
Amy Johnson, *Action Editor*
Sandra Garcia, *Project Officer*

REL 2017–249

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) conducts unbiased large-scale evaluations of education programs and practices supported by federal funds; provides research-based technical assistance to educators and policymakers; and supports the synthesis and the widespread dissemination of the results of research and evaluation throughout the United States.

February 2017

This report was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-IES-12-C-0007 by Regional Educational Laboratory Central administered by Marzano Research. The content of the publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

This REL report is in the public domain. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, it should be cited as:

Brodersen, R. M., Yanoski, D., Mason, K., Apthorp, H., and Piscatelli, J. (2016). *Overview of selected state policies and supports related to K–12 competency-based education* (REL 2017–249). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Central. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

This report is available on the Regional Educational Laboratory website at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

Summary

Competency-based education—also known as proficiency-based, mastery-based, and performance-based education—has received increased attention in recent years as an education approach that may help ensure that students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills necessary for college and their careers. In competency-based education, students must demonstrate mastery of course content to be promoted to the next class or grade, rather than spending a required number of hours in a class and meeting minimum course requirements to earn course credit. The approach helps guarantee that students attain competency in course content, with students allowed to take as much or as little time as they need to achieve such competency.

Many states, including those in the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Central Region, have revised or are considering revising their policies to align more with competency-based education and other innovative education practices (National Governors Association, 2012). Education leaders in the REL Central Region are interested in learning about policies that affect implementation of competency-based education by understanding policies already in place in their state and learning about the policies of states further ahead in implementation.

To help meet this need, this report summarizes the laws and regulations of the seven states in the REL Central Region (Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming), as well as the policies of five states outside the region identified as being advanced in aligning their policies to support competency-based education (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon).¹ This scan of state policies also categorizes the different types of supports these 12 states have provided to intentionally support competency-based education. State and district policymakers can use the information in this report to increase their understanding of the current laws and regulations in their state that may facilitate or hinder competency-based education and to learn about the policies and resources that other states have to support this education approach.

State laws and regulations were classified into three broad policy categories, each with several subcategories and associated policy types:

- Credit flexibility: credit requirements, assessment of student competency, and graduation requirements.
- Progression flexibility: additional education time, accelerated curriculum, early high school credit, and early graduation.
- Individual learning options: online or blended learning; early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment; and experiential learning.

Policies on credit flexibility can influence the flexibility by which educational experiences are applied toward graduation and whether it is necessary for students to have mastered course content before progressing. Progression flexibility policies can support or hinder the ability of students to progress through their coursework and classes at their own rate, while policies associated with individual learning options can influence the education opportunities available to students, particularly options that allow education to occur outside the traditional classroom. The study found that:

- States vary in the extent to which and manner in which they allow flexibility in how students earn academic credits and qualify for high school graduation.

- Advanced competency-based-education states have more progression flexibility policies in place than do Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states.
- All states have policies that provide students individual learning options.

Through examination of publicly available documents, the policy scan also categorized the different types of supports states provide to facilitate competency-based education. These included informational and technical assistance, support for competency-based-education collaboratives, and pilot and special program funding. Results indicated:

- One Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and all five advanced competency-based-education states provide support specifically intended to facilitate competency-based education.

Contents

Summary	i
Why this policy scan?	1
What the policy scan examined	2
What the policy scan found	3
States vary in the extent to which and manner in which they allow flexibility in how students earn academic credits and qualify for high school graduation	3
Advanced competency-based-education states provide more flexibility for students to progress at their own pace than do Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states	6
All states examined in the policy scan have options for students to be educated outside the traditional classroom	8
One Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and all five advanced competency-based-education states provide support specifically intended to facilitate competency-based education	12
Implications of the policy scan	15
Limitations of the policy scan	15
Appendix A. Data and methodology	A-1
Appendix B. Summaries of policies and supports associated with competency-based education in advanced competency-based-education states	B-1
Appendix C. Policies in each competency-based education category, by state	C-1
Notes	Notes-1
References	Ref-1
Boxes	
1 Examples of each type of state policy on credit requirements	5
2 Examples of each type of state policy on assessment of student competency	6
3 Examples of each type of state policy on graduation requirements	6
4 Examples of state policies on additional education time	8
5 Examples of state policies on accelerated curriculum	8
6 Examples of state policies on early high school credit	9
7 Examples of state policies on early graduation	9
8 Examples of state policies on online or blended learning	10
9 Examples of state policies on early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment	11
10 Examples of state policies on experiential learning	11
11 Examples of information and technical assistance provided by state education agencies	13
12 Examples of support for competency-based-education collaboratives provided by state education agencies	14
13 Examples of selected state education agency pilot and special program funding	14

A1 State laws and regulations search terms	A-2
A2 State education agency website search terms	A-2

Tables

1 Types of policies on credit requirements, assessment of student competency, and graduation requirements, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015	4
2 Policies on progression flexibility, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015	7
3 Policies on individual learning options, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015	10
4 State-provided supports for competency-based education, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of May 2015	12
B1 Iowa competency-based education summary	B-1
B2 Kentucky competency-based education summary	B-2
B3 Maine competency-based education summary	B-3
B4 New Hampshire competency-based education summary	B-4
B5 Oregon competency-based education summary	B-5
C1 Source of policies on credit flexibility, by state, as of March 2015	C-1
C2 Source of policies on progression flexibility, by state, as of March 2015	C-2
C3 Source of policies on individual learning options, by state, as of March 2015	C-3

Why this policy scan?

Competency-based education—also known as proficiency-based, mastery-based, and performance-based education—has received increased attention in recent years as an education approach that may help ensure that students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills necessary for college and their careers. In competency-based education the primary measure of student learning is not time-based. To be promoted to the next class or grade, students must demonstrate mastery of identified learning targets aligned to standards, rather than earn course credit according to the amount of time they spend in a class (Wolfe, 2012). The approach helps guarantee that students attain competency in course content, with students allowed to take as much or as little time as they need to achieve such competency.

Many states, including those in the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Central Region, have revised or are considering revising their policies to be more aligned with competency-based education. Education leaders in the REL Central Region are interested in learning about policies that affect implementation of competency-based education by understanding policies already in place in their state and examining the policies of states further ahead in implementing competency-based education. Members of REL Central's College and Career Readiness Research Alliance, as they consider adopting or facilitating the adoption of competency-based education in their schools and districts, have also asked for examples of how other states are supporting competency-based education.

In competency-based education, students are allowed to progress through course content at their own pace, with efforts made to provide students with personalized education opportunities aligned to their individual learning needs. These individual education options can occur both within and outside the traditional classroom. In fact, “competency[-based] education explicitly recognizes that students are different—with different sets of skills, different levels of maturity and identity, and different aptitudes, interests, and family support. . . . For all students to be college and career ready, one of the fundamental changes in competency[-based] education is the way students progress through the education system” (Patrick & Sturgis, 2013, p. 22). However, many states have policies that emphasize Carnegie Units,² seat time, and chronological age to determine grade-to-grade promotion and graduation, rather than promotion based on content mastery. In these states the primary measure of student learning is the amount of time a student has spent in a class rather than what a student has actually learned. Students may receive credit for completing a class, without mastering the content necessary to be college or career ready.

Competency-based education requires that state policies allow for three critical components to be implemented in schools and classrooms (KnowledgeWorks, 2013; Sturgis, Patrick, & Pittenger, 2011):

- Students advance and graduate on demonstration of competency.
- Instruction is differentiated and personalized.
- Individual learning options are available to students, such that learning can occur both within and outside the traditional classroom and school day.

State policies on how students earn academic credits and requirements for high school graduation determine the conditions under which students' educational experiences “count.” State policies can also dictate how much flexibility schools have in allowing

Competency-based education has received increased attention in recent years as an education approach that may help ensure that students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills necessary for college and their careers

students to take as little or as much time as needed to master course content. Both policy areas can influence the degree to which students are allowed to progress through courses at their own pace and how they demonstrate mastery of course content. Similarly, policies on when and where learning can occur can influence the learning options available to students. Flexibility in pacing and in when and where learning can occur can also determine how instruction is differentiated for students of varying ability levels.

Education leaders, by learning about the policy landscape in their own and other states, may identify potential policy barriers to competency-based education that must be overcome. They may also learn about options that they have not yet considered. For example, education leaders can use this report to identify areas where there is more flexibility to implement competency-based education practices than anticipated. School and district leaders in the REL Central Region can also learn about the supports for competency-based education available in their state and examples of supports provided in states that are more advanced in their policies, programs, and supports for competency-based education (advanced competency-based-education states).

Education leaders, by learning about the policy landscape in their own and other states, may identify potential policy barriers to competency-based education that must be overcome

What the policy scan examined

This report examines the state policies and state education agency programs and supports associated with competency-based education in the seven REL Central Region states (Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and five advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon). The advanced competency-based-education states were identified through previous research, by recommendation of experts on competency-based education, and by their participation in national programs that support the implementation of competency-based education (Patrick & Sturgis, 2013). For example, the Kentucky Department of Education was awarded a technical assistance grant titled “Awarding Credit to Support Student Learning” from the National Governors Association in 2012 (Kentucky Department of Education, 2013). The grant’s purpose was for the department to explore policies and practices related to competency-based education. Kentucky (along with Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon) is also participating in the Council of Chief State School Officers Innovation Lab Network, which seeks to develop supportive environments for innovative education practices, including the implementation of competency-based education (Worthen & Pace, 2014).

To support state leaders in implementing competency-based education, the policy scan sought to answer two questions:

- What policies do the seven REL Central Region states and five advanced competency-based-education states have on how students earn academic credits and qualify for high school graduation (credit flexibility), how and when students can progress from one academic course or grade to another (progression flexibility), and when and where K–12 education can occur (individual learning options)?
- What types of supports do the seven REL Central Region states and five advanced competency-based-education states provide to facilitate the implementation of competency-based education?

The sources for the policy scan included state laws and regulations, as well as documents publicly available through state education agency and local education agency websites.

The policy scan summarizes and categorizes state laws and regulations that relate to credit flexibility, progression flexibility, and individual learning options, as well as programs and supports that states have provided to support the implementation of competency-based education. For each state, keyword searches were conducted in the Westlaw database and the specific state education agency website. Initial searches identified 1,433 sections of state statutes and regulations and 542 state education agency and local education agency documents and webpages. These documents were then coded to identify the most common areas in which states have policies and supports relevant to competency-based education. See appendix A for detailed information about the search process and the development of the coding system.

What the policy scan found

The 12 states included in this policy scan vary in how much education policy is developed through legislation, as well as in the policy areas of focus. In addition, the states vary in how much they explicitly support or are implementing competency-based education.

The report describes in detail three broad policy categories—credit flexibility, progression flexibility, and individual learning options—and provides examples of laws and regulations that make up the categories. The report then summarizes the three types of supports provided by state education agencies to facilitate competency-based education—information and technical assistance, support for competency-based-education collaboratives, and pilot and special program funding. See appendix B for detailed examples of the policies, programs, and supports of advanced competency-based-education states.

States vary in the extent to which and manner in which they allow flexibility in how students earn academic credits and qualify for high school graduation

State policies on credit flexibility were classified into three subcategories:

- Credit requirements: policies on how students earn academic credits to satisfy graduation requirements. These policies influence whether students are allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the content and to advance at their own pace.
- Assessment of student competency: policies on if, how, and when students must be assessed to demonstrate mastery of course content or state academic standards. These policies influence how students can meet these graduation requirements.
- Graduation requirements: policies on the requirements for how a student graduates. These policies determine what a student must accomplish and whether multiple pathways to graduation are available.

Within each subcategory, different types of state policies were identified (table 1). Policies on credit requirements were classified as time-based, time-based (waiver), competency-based, or district choice. Policies on assessment of student competency were classified as completion of course requirements, end-of-course exams, district choice, or use of multiple measures. Policies on graduation requirements were classified as credits, credits plus, or standards proficiency. The policy types in each subcategory are described below, along with state examples.

The 12 states included in this policy scan vary in how much education policy is developed through legislation, as well as in the policy areas of focus. In addition, the states vary in how much they explicitly support or are implementing competency-based education

Table 1. Types of policies on credit requirements, assessment of student competency, and graduation requirements, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015

State	Credit requirements ^a	Assessment of student competency ^b	Graduation requirements ^c
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states			
Colorado	District choice	District choice	Credits plus
Kansas	Time-based (waiver)	Completion of course requirements	Credits
Missouri	District choice	Completion of course requirements	Credits
Nebraska	District choice	Completion of course requirements	Credits
North Dakota	Time-based (waiver)	Completion of course requirements	Credits
South Dakota	District choice	Completion of course requirements or end-of-course exam	Credits plus
Wyoming	Time-based	Completion of course requirements	Credits plus
Advanced competency-based-education states			
Iowa	District choice	District choice	Credits
Kentucky	District choice	End-of-course exam	Credits
Maine	Competency-based	Multiple measures	Standards proficiency
New Hampshire	Competency-based	End-of-course exam	Credits
Oregon	District choice	Completion of course requirements	Credits plus

a. Policies on how students earn academic credits to satisfy graduation requirements.

b. Policies on if, how, and when students must be assessed to demonstrate mastery of course content or state academic standards.

c. Policies on the requirements for how a student graduates.

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January–March 2015; see appendixes A and C.

Credit requirements. State policies on credit requirements were classified into four types (see box 1 for examples of each type):

- *Time-based.* Students must be in a course for a specified period of time to earn course credit. Three REL Central Region states (Kansas, North Dakota, and Wyoming) require the Carnegie Unit or similar time-based credit for graduation requirements.
- *Time-based (waiver).* Some states allow districts that have time-based policies to request a waiver from these time-based credit requirements. Two REL Central Region states (Kansas and North Dakota) that require time-based credit have waivers available.
- *Competency-based.* State law requires credits to be based on demonstration of mastery of course content or state standards. Two advanced competency-based-education states (Maine and New Hampshire) require all districts to use competency-based credits.
- *District choice.* School districts have the option under state law to award seat-time or competency-based credits. Four REL Central Region states (Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota) and three advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, and Oregon) have this policy.

In four REL Central Region states (Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota) and three advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, and Oregon) school districts have the option under state law to award seat-time or competency-based credits

Box 1. Examples of each type of state policy on credit requirements

Time-based. Wyoming: Credit earned is synonymous with a Carnegie Unit of study that reflects the instructional time provided in a class (WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 31 s 4g).

Time-based (waiver). North Dakota: A school or school district may apply to the superintendent of public instruction for a waiver of any rule governing the accreditation of schools (ND Cent. Code § 15.1-06-08).

Competency-based. New Hampshire: New Hampshire’s Minimum Standards for Public School Approval state, “Credits shall be based on the demonstration of district and or graduation competencies not on time spent achieving these competencies. The credit shall equate to the level of rigor and achievement necessary to master competencies that have been designed to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to progress toward college level and career work” (NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.27).

District choice. Colorado: Each district is required to review and modify curriculum to ensure college and career readiness for all students. In modifying this curriculum, the district is not required to base courses or credits on Carnegie Units. The district may choose to base course credits on attainments of standards (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-7-1015).

Assessment of student competency. State policies on assessment of student competency were classified into four types (see box 2 for examples of each type):

- **Completion of course requirements.** State policy requires successful completion of course requirements to earn academic credit. Six REL Central Region states (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and one advanced competency-based-education state (Oregon) have this type of policy.
- **End-of-course exams.** State policy requires students to pass an end-of-course exam to earn academic credit. One REL Central Region state (South Dakota) allows end-of-course exams as an option in lieu of meeting seat-time requirements. Two advanced competency-based-education states (Kentucky and New Hampshire) require end-of-course exams to determine student mastery and to earn credit.
- **District choice.** The decision about assessing student competency and the earning of credit is left up to the district. One REL Central Region state (Colorado) and one advanced competency-based-education state (Iowa) have this type of policy.
- **Multiple measures.** State policy requires multiple measures of demonstrating competency to be available to students. These measures may include state assessments, local assessments, portfolios, service learning, and career and technical education certification. One advanced competency-based-education state (Maine) requires options be available among multiple measures of assessment to determine student attainment of standards.

Graduation requirements. State policies on graduation requirements were classified into three types (see box 3 for examples of each type):

- **Credits.** State policy requires students earn a specified number of academic credits in targeted courses or content areas to graduate. Four REL Central Region states (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and North Dakota) and three advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, and New Hampshire) require the earning of credits for graduation.

Six REL Central Region states (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and one advanced competency-based-education state (Oregon) require successful completion of course requirements to earn academic credit

Box 2. Examples of each type of state policy on assessment of student competency

Completion of course requirements. Missouri: Twenty-four units of credit are required to graduate. Each credit is earned by meeting all course requirements and earning a passing grade (MO Ann. Stat. § 167.720).

End-of-course exam. Kentucky: Students must take a state end-of-course assessment (703 KY Admin. Regs. 5:240).

District choice. Colorado: All credit and graduation requirements are left to the determination of the local school board as long as they meet or exceed state requirements (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22–1-104). Innovation schools are allowed to adopt end-of-course assessments if they choose (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22–32.5–105).

Multiple measures. Maine: Students must be allowed to demonstrate academic proficiency in the context of multiple pathways (such as career and technical education) and through multiple measures (such as teacher-designed or student-designed assessments, portfolios, performance, exhibitions, projects, and community service) (ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit 20-A, § 4722-A).

Box 3. Examples of each type of state policy on graduation requirements

Credits. Nebraska: Two hundred credit hours are required for graduation (NE Rev. Stat. Ann. § 79–729).

Credits plus. Colorado: In addition to requiring a specified number of credits, the district may choose to require demonstration of college and career readiness to graduate (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22–07–1016).

Standards proficiency. Maine: Diplomas are issued on the basis of student demonstration of proficiency in meeting state standards. (ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. § 4722).

- *Credits plus.* In addition to credit requirements, state policy has other graduation requirements. These can include passing required exams or completion of a personal learning plan. Three REL Central Region states (Colorado, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and one advanced competency-based-education state (Oregon) have additional requirements beyond the earning of a specified number of credits.
- *Standards proficiency.* State policy requires that students demonstrate proficiency in state standards rather than earning credits to graduate. Only one advanced competency-based-education state (Maine) has this type of policy.

Advanced competency-based-education states provide more flexibility for students to progress at their own pace than do Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states

In competency-based education, students are allowed to progress at their own pace. To support this, states may allow students to take advanced courses if they have demonstrated readiness or to have access to specialized assistance when they fall behind. Students falling behind must continue working on topics and skills until they can demonstrate understanding. In addition, if students earn credits upon demonstration of mastery, they may acquire

Three REL Central Region states (Colorado, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and one advanced competency-based-education state (Oregon) have additional graduation requirements beyond the earning of a specified number of credits

the required number of credits for graduation in less or more than the traditional four years. State policies on progression flexibility were classified into four types (table 2):

- Additional education time: policies that provide students additional time beyond the traditional school day or year to meet course requirements.
- Accelerated curriculum: policies that allow students to complete courses in less time than a traditional semester or year-long course.
- Early high school credit: policies that provide students opportunities to earn high school credit prior to grade 9.
- Early graduation: policies that allow students to graduate high school before completing grade 12.

Additional education time. States vary in the extent to which they have policies that provide students additional time to master all course competencies without having to retake the entire course. No REL Central Region states have such policies. Four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon) have policies providing students with additional time to master course content (see box 4 for examples from three states).

Accelerated curriculum. Some states’ policies allow students to complete courses at a more accelerated pace. While these states may have policies allowing students to graduate from high school early, students may take additional elective courses or take courses for college credit. Three REL Central Region states (Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska) and all five advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon) offer the opportunity for students to take courses at an accelerated rate (see box 5 for examples from three states).

Three REL Central Region states (Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska) and all five advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon) offer the opportunity for students to take courses at an accelerated rate

Table 2. Policies on progression flexibility, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015

State	Additional education time	Accelerated curriculum	Early high school credit	Early graduation
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states				
Colorado		✓	✓	
Kansas		✓		
Missouri				✓
Nebraska		✓		✓
North Dakota				
South Dakota			✓	
Wyoming				
Advanced competency-based-education states				
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓		✓
New Hampshire		✓	✓	
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: Authors’ analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations conducted in January–March 2015; see appendixes A and C.

Box 4. Examples of state policies on additional education time

Iowa. Students may be allowed more than a traditional school year to earn an academic credit (such as during the summer), without having to retake an entire course. Students earn credit at the point in time when they demonstrate proficiency in all course competencies (IA Admin. Code r. 281–122).

Kentucky. All schools are required to provide continuing education for students who are determined to need additional time to master required skills and content. A school is not limited to the minimum school term (KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.070).

Maine. Districts must provide all students the opportunity to meet course standards, including offering extended school days and years. For example, students are provided additional instructional days, as needed, beyond the traditional 175-day school year to complete course competencies (05–071 ME Code R. 127, § 7; 05–071 ME Code R. 125, § 6).

Box 5. Examples of state policies on accelerated curriculum

Colorado. The state is encouraging districts to modify curriculum to allow for academic acceleration. Academic acceleration allows a student to progress at a faster rate or at ages younger than peers (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22–7-1013).

Kansas. State policy allows students who are currently performing above grade level to participate in accelerated courses. An accelerated course may be completed in 40 or 80 clock hours, rather than the traditional 120 clock hours, cutting the completion time by up to two-thirds (KS Admin. Regs. § 88–29–1).

Nebraska. Local education agencies are required to provide accelerated or differentiated curriculum for high ability learners. Accelerated curriculums can include grade level skipping, content level accelerations, cluster grouping by content, early entrance to school, compacting the curriculum, or course waivers (NE Rev. Stat. § 79–1107; 92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 3 § 005).

Early high school credit. In some states, advanced middle school students may take courses that count toward high school credit. Two REL Central Region states (Colorado and South Dakota) and four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, New Hampshire, and Oregon) have policies that allow students to earn high school credit in earlier grades (see box 6 for examples from three states).

Early graduation. Some states policies allow students to graduate early upon completion of graduation requirements. Two REL Central Region states (Missouri and Nebraska) and four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon) have policies that allow early graduation by demonstrating competency in all required subjects (see box 7 for examples from two states).

All states examined in the policy scan have options for students to be educated outside the traditional classroom

Two REL Central Region states (Colorado and South Dakota) and four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, New Hampshire, and Oregon) have policies that allow students to earn high school credit in earlier grades

To support varied student progression in competency-based education and to account for individual differences in student learning styles and aptitudes, students need access to a

Box 6. Examples of state policies on early high school credit

Iowa. Students may take a high school course for credit before grade 9 if they meet certain criteria. If offered, the course must count toward high school graduation requirements. This is not mandatory for all school districts (IA Admin. Code r. 281–12.5).

Kentucky. Students may pursue early high school graduation by completing selected courses as early as middle school by taking courses for high school credit. A student may also take an Advanced Placement, a high school equivalent, or a Kentucky virtual high school course in grades 5–8 if the student meets performance expectations. The student will receive high school credit for completing such courses (KY Rev. Stat. § 158.142; KY Rev. Stat. § 158.622).

Oregon. Students may receive high school credit for courses taken before grade 9 if the performance criteria are equivalent to those of the same high school course (OR Admin. R. 581–022–1130).

Box 7. Examples of state policies on early graduation

Iowa. The state requires that local education agencies make a provision for early graduation that is consistent with graduation requirements (IA Admin. Code r. 281–12.3[5]).

Oregon. If a student completes all requirements before grade 12, a school district or public charter school must award the student a diploma (OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.451).

variety of education opportunities. To support this, all 12 states examined in the policy scan provide options for education outside the traditional classroom, such as online courses, community learning opportunities, or workplace learning opportunities. The variety of location-based options may allow students to progress beyond the coursework provided in their own school or to augment face-to-face instruction. State policies that provide students individual learning options were classified into three types (table 3):

- Online or blended learning: an education approach where instruction is provided completely or in part online.
- Early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment: courses that provide opportunities for students to complete high school graduation requirements while also earning college credit.
- Experiential learning: an education approach that recognizes that education can occur in the community or the workplace and includes opportunities for students to earn course credit through career and technical education courses.

Online or blended learning. Online or blended learning can personalize education by providing students with options for when and where they interact with course content; by providing digital tools, ongoing assessment integrated with delivery of course content, and adaptive content to each student; and by allowing students to progress through course content at their own pace. All seven REL Central Region states and all five advanced competency-based-education states have policies that provide for online or blended learning, including supplemental courses and fully online schools (see box 8 for examples from two states).

All 12 states examined in the policy scan provide options for education outside the traditional classroom, such as online courses, community learning opportunities, or workplace learning opportunities

Table 3. Policies on individual learning options, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of March 2015

State	Online or blended learning	Early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment	Experiential learning
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states			
Colorado	✓	✓	✓
Kansas	✓	✓	✓
Missouri	✓	✓	✓
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓
South Dakota	✓	✓	✓
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓
Advanced competency-based-education states			
Iowa	✓	✓	✓
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓	✓
New Hampshire	✓		✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations conducted in January–March 2015; see appendixes A and C.

Box 8. Examples of state policies on online or blended learning

Colorado. The state has implemented a policy to fund a series of pilot programs to explore online and blended learning program policies that have implications for competency-based education. These pilot programs may include exploring the use of multiple measures of student achievement as indicators of program quality and student count processes that are based on course completion and student competency rather than enrollment (CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22–30.7–113).

Kansas. Districts are authorized to provide Advanced Placement courses virtually. Students can take online courses from their own or other districts (KS Stat. Ann. § 72–3716).

Early college, dual, and concurrent enrollment. Early college, dual, and concurrent enrollment programs allow students to earn college credit while in high school. These courses may be provided at the high school, at a college, through a virtual program, or by a combination of these locations and methods. Some programs may be vocational in nature. All seven REL Central Region states and four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon) have statewide early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment policies. States vary in how much they have formally defined such programs (see box 9 for examples from four states).

Experiential learning. Experiential learning opportunities, including service learning, can occur in a workplace or in the community, and allow students to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills and earn academic credits through real-world experience. States with policies allowing academic credit for experiential learning may provide students with expanded education options, give students the ability to personalize their program of

All seven REL Central Region states and four advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon) have statewide early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment policies

Box 9. Examples of state policies on early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment

Iowa. The state education agency administers the Senior Year Plus Program. This program allows high school students to participate in Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses, regional and career academies, and Internet-based college courses (IA Code Ann. § 261E.1; IA Admin. Code r. 281–22.1[261E]).

Kansas. The Kansas Challenge to Secondary School Pupils Act allows high school students to enroll in college coursework provided at the high school. Districts that have a Concurrent Enrollment Partnership agreement with an eligible college can have a high school instructor teach college-level courses at the high school (KS Stat. Ann. § 72–11a03).

Kentucky. All students have the right to participate in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment courses if they have completed prerequisites or demonstrated mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills (KY Rev. Stat. § 160.348).

Oregon. The Expanded Options Program provides continuation and completion options for students in grades 11 and 12. These options include earning concurrent high school and college credits and gaining early entry into college (OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.030, 340.040, 340.083, 340.10; OR Admin. R. 581–022–1363).

study, and allow students to receive academic credit on an hour-for-hour basis equivalent to a credit for work experience that is associated with their graduation plan. All seven REL Central Region states and all five advanced competency-based-education states have policies allowing academic credit for experiential learning (see box 10 for examples from three states).

Box 10. Examples of state policies on experiential learning

Kentucky. Standards-based, competency-based credits can be earned through internships, cooperative learning, workplace learning, or other supervised school or community-based learning (704 KY Admin. Reg. 3:305).

New Hampshire. Each district is required to develop local policies to provide extended learning opportunities to students that occur outside the physical school building and outside the usual school day, and to support students in developing new extended learning opportunities (NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.27).

Oregon. Students may access extended learning experiences provided through public and private community agencies. The school district board may authorize such programs, which may include work experience programs. Additionally, the state education agency and the State Apprenticeship and Training Council must establish youth apprenticeship and training, and work-based learning programs. Students at least 16 years of age who are enrolled in a high school career and technical education program may participate in a youth apprenticeship and training, or work-based learning program aligned to their course of study. Students may only be employed for 20 hours per week while enrolled in classes. On-the-job training must be used to meet graduation requirements (OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 344.745, 344.750).

One Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and all five advanced competency-based-education states provide support specifically intended to facilitate competency-based education

The 12 states examined in this policy scan vary in how much they provide supports explicitly to facilitate the implementation of competency-based education. The supports state education agencies provide were grouped into three categories (table 4):

- Information and technical assistance: providing information and training regarding competency-based education.
- Support for competency-based-education collaboratives: state education agency support for collaboration among nonstate organizations (for example, districts or technical assistance providers).
- Pilot and special program funding: funding provided by the state to support the implementation of competency-based education in schools and districts.

Informational and technical assistance. One REL Central Region state (Colorado) and all five advanced competency-based-education states provide information and technical assistance. This includes disseminating information defining the various aspects of competency-based education and standards-based education, providing a rationale for why competency-based education has been adopted or supported by the state, and posting white papers or guidance related to competency-based education on the state education agency website. Information also includes guidelines, case study reports, information pamphlets for parents, and testimonial videos. Colorado and all five advanced competency-based-education states also provided technical assistance, either directly or by deferring the assistance to organizations outside the state education agency. This support includes instructional materials, webinars, and professional development opportunities (see box 11 for examples from four states).

One REL Central Region state (Colorado) and all five advanced competency-based-education states provide information and technical assistance

Support for competency-based-education collaboratives. Collaboratives among educators are networks “of public and private organizations, agencies, and departments that have been

Table 4. State-provided supports for competency-based education, by Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region state and advanced competency-based-education state, as of May 2015

State	Informational and technical assistance	Support for competency based education collaboratives	Pilot and special program funding
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states			
Colorado	✓	✓	✓
Kansas			
Missouri			
Nebraska			
North Dakota			
South Dakota			
Wyoming			
Advanced competency-based-education states			
Iowa	✓	✓	✓
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓	✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓

Source: Authors’ analysis based on searches of state education agency websites conducted in March–May 2015; see appendixes A and C.

Box 11. Examples of information and technical assistance provided by state education agencies

Colorado. The Colorado Department of Education’s Innovation Learning office, in partnership with the nonprofit organization the Colorado Education Initiative, offers a website, videos, and factsheets about innovative school models, including competency-based education. More information can be found at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/innovationlearning>.

Iowa. The *Iowa Department of Education Guidelines for PK–12 Competency-based Education* (Iowa Department of Education, 2015) provides introductory guidance to Iowa districts and schools on developing competency-based education. The guidance includes a description of the principles behind competency-based education (such as “students advance upon demonstrated proficiency” and “assessment is meaningful”) and a listing of 10 characteristics and their associated indicators of what competency-based education looks like in operation (for example, “The district has developed or adopted competencies that guide student learning toward proficiency of the standards and Universal Constructs”) (Iowa Department of Education, 2015, p. 3). The document also provides suggestions for district policies.

Maine. The Center for Best Practice website (<http://www.maine.gov/doe/cbp/>) serves as a clearinghouse of materials and opportunities for sharing best practices. Structured around six case studies, this website provides examples of how educators and communities in different contexts changed instructional systems into proficiency-based systems (the term used in Maine to refer to competency-based systems) and learner-centered systems. The case studies, videos, and resources provide examples of getting practical guidance from outside consultants and engaging in continuous improvement strategies. Maine also offers districts a self-assessment process they can use to support strategic planning and identification of technical assistance needs.

Oregon. The Teaching and Learning to Proficiency website (<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=4003>) is a clearinghouse of locally developed materials and best practices (Oregon Department of Education, 2015). The website offers sample district documents that describe the tools and their purposes in proficiency-based teaching and learning (the term used in Oregon to refer to competency-based teaching and learning), draft parent letters, sample grading systems, video exemplars, and contact information for educators in proficiency-based demonstration sites.

explicitly constituted to facilitate collective action” (Russell, Meredith, Childs, Stein, & Prine, 2015, p. 93). These networks allow actors outside a particular district to contribute to that district’s reform efforts through contractual agreements or voluntary participation. Of the 12 states examined, only Colorado and all five advanced competency-based-education states support collaboration focused on competency-based education among districts within states and collaboration with other state education agencies and organizations outside their own state both regionally and nationally (see box 12 for examples from three states).

Collaboratives vary in their formality and structure. Some collaboratives are well organized groups working toward defined goals, while others are informal networks that provide a venue for participants to share ideas.

Pilot and special program funding. Several states examined in the policy scan provide funds to support programs related to competency-based education. Many are pilot programs for states to test various aspects of competency-based education, often with a small group of districts, to better understand implementation issues, and to inform future policy development. Funding may also be provided for educator training or supporting districts’

Colorado and all five advanced competency-based-education states support collaboration focused on competency-based education among districts within states and collaboration with other state education agencies and organizations outside their own state both regionally and nationally

Box 12. Examples of support for competency-based-education collaboratives provided by state education agencies

Colorado. The Colorado Coalition, a partnership between three school districts, the Colorado Department of Education, and an independent nonprofit organization (the Colorado Education Initiative), is using funds from Next Generation Learning Challenges to support six breakthrough model schools that will focus on personalized, blended, and competency-based learning (Next Generation Learning Challenges, 2015).

Iowa. Iowa has created the Iowa Competency-based Education Collaborative, which is designed to engage in collaborative inquiry to “investigate, develop, and implement competency-based educational pathways for their students and create a framework to guide the statewide implementation of CBE [competency-based education]” (Iowa Department of Education, 2013, p. 1).

Maine. The Maine Cohort for Customized Learning, founded in 2011, is one model of district, state education agency, and corporate collaboration. Members are committed to supporting proficiency-based education (the term used in Maine to refer to competency-based education) in Maine schools by sharing resources, building capacity, and advocating for personalized learning (Maine Cohort for Customized Learning, 2012).

transition to competency-based education. One REL Central Region state (Colorado) and all five advanced competency-based-education states have policies that provide funding for such programs (see box 13 for examples from five states).

Box 13. Examples of selected state education agency pilot and special program funding

Colorado. Colorado has implemented several pilot programs, especially online programs, that affect competency-based education. These include pilots of a student count process that is based on course completion and measures of student competency rather than attendance and multiple measures of student achievement as indicators of school quality (CO Rev. Stat. § 22–30.7–113).

Iowa. The Competency-based Education Grant Program was established to award \$100,000 to school districts to develop, implement, and evaluate competency-based education demonstration and pilot programs (IA Code Ann. § 256.24).

Maine. Depending on availability of funds, Maine provides transition grants to local education agencies to help defray the cost of the transition to competency-based graduation requirements (ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit 20-A § 4722-A).

New Hampshire. In 2015 the U.S. Department of Education approved the New Hampshire Department of Education’s request for four districts to pilot the Performance Assessment for Competency Education. By decreasing the frequency with which the state summative assessment is administered, these districts will administer common and local “performance assessments” developed by the districts over the course of the school year and embedded as part of the regular classroom instruction. Teachers can use the results of these assessments to gauge student competency over the school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Oregon. The Oregon Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning Grant funds competency-based education demonstration sites to help inform competency-based education teaching and learning practices in other schools and to develop new competency-based education schools in underserved regions in the state (OR Admin. R. 581–018–0434).

Implications of the policy scan

Based on a review of laws and regulations of the seven states in the REL Central Region and five states outside the region identified as being advanced in having policies that support competency-based education, this report provides an overview of state policies that can have implications for the implementation of competency-based education. State laws and regulations were classified into three categories: credit flexibility, progression flexibility, and individual learning options.

For credit flexibility, the policy scan found that how student learning is measured and counted is determined in part by state policies on credit requirements, assessment of student competency, and graduation requirements. In competency-based education, students are able to progress academically at their own pace. For this progress flexibility, additional education time, accelerated curriculum, early high school credit, and early graduation policies can provide support. Finally, for individual learning options, policies on online or blended learning; early college, dual, or concurrent enrollment; and experiential learning opportunities can expand the possibilities available to students. States with policies supporting these options provide more opportunities to align education to a student's individual learning needs and preferences. This policy scan also categorized the different types of supports states provide to facilitate the implementation of competency-based education. These included information and technical assistance, support for competency-based-education collaboratives, and funding for pilot and special programs.

Educators can use the information presented in this report to better understand the policies in their states and in others that are critical to the implementation of competency-based education. In some situations there may be more flexibility than anticipated in state policies to support competency-based education, while in others educators can use the information presented in this report to begin conversations with state policymakers on potential changes needed to support competency-based education. State and district leaders can also learn about the nature and manner of supports that other states have provided to intentionally facilitate the implementation of competency-based education. Future research might examine variation in how the policies described in this report are implemented across districts and in how these policies may have led to implementation at the district or school level. Future research could also examine the impact of implementing specific policies on student and teacher outcomes.

Limitations of the policy scan

Given the current interest in competency-based education, state policies may have changed since the policy scan was conducted. The policies presented in this report were those most frequently identified across the REL Central Region and advanced competency-based-education states. Each state likely has policies relevant to competency-based education but not discussed in this report. States not reviewed in the policy scan may have other policies relevant to competency-based education that are not categorized in this report. In addition, state policies were reviewed only if they were identified during the database keyword search. The policy scan may have missed specific policies in a given state that nevertheless exist. Similarly, the review of state-provided competency-based education supports was limited to publicly available documents. It is likely that additional supports to facilitate the implementation of competency-based education exist.

In some situations there may be more flexibility than anticipated in state policies to support competency-based education, while in others educators can use the information presented in this report to begin conversations with state policymakers on potential changes needed to support competency-based education

Appendix A. Data and methodology

This appendix describes the data sources and details the methods of the policy scan.

To identify each state's laws and regulations that pertain to credit flexibility, progression flexibility, individual learning options, and supports for competency-based education, Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Central conducted a systematic search of state laws and regulations and a search of state education agency websites. These states included the seven states in the REL Central Region (Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) and five states outside the region identified as advanced in their policies and supports for competency-based education, referred to as advanced competency-based-education states (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon). These states were identified through previous research, by recommendation of experts on competency-based education, and by their participation in national programs that support the implementation of competency-based education such as the Innovation Lab Network (2015). The procedures used to search and summarize information about state laws and regulations are described in this appendix.

State laws and regulations search

The search of state laws and regulations proceeded in five steps. First, between January and March 2015, researchers searched the Westlaw database of laws and regulations for the seven REL Central Region states and five advanced competency-based-education states using 46 keyword combinations (see box A1 for the list of search terms). Second, researchers scanned the section titles of each state's statutes and regulations to ensure that all relevant sections were included. Third, researchers read the laws and regulations and noted any other legislation that was referenced. If not already located through the previous search steps, these laws and regulations were located and reviewed. This search retrieved 62,900 sections of state laws and regulations. Fourth, to remove policies that were not relevant to the scan, researchers deleted legislation that fell under section titles not directly associated with education law (such as legislation associated with employment law or public safety). In addition, only education legislation related to grades K–12 was included; higher education policies were not within the scope of the policy scan. This process resulted in 5,824 sections of laws and regulations. Finally, prior to coding, researchers conducted an initial scan of the obtained laws and omitted those not relevant to the policy scan questions. This lowered the number of laws and regulations to 1,433.

State education agency website and online search

To gather documents describing states' policies, programs, and assistance that support the various aspects of competency-based education, researchers conducted keyword searches of state education agency websites between March and May 2015 (see box A2 for the list of website search terms). Google searches were also conducted that combined each of the 18 keywords and each relevant state name. In addition to collecting documents posted online, researchers also saved screenshots of relevant state education agency webpages. A total of 542 documents and webpages were collected for analysis.

Box A1. State laws and regulations search terms

- Admission & (standard requirement) & education
- Blended & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Carnegie
- “Career and technical education” cte
- (College career) & read!
- “Community based” & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Competency & (learning instruct! educat! school assessment exam test grade grading)
- Compulsory attendance” “compulsory school attendance” “attendance requirement!”
- (Credit dropout competency) & recovery & school
- “Course credit!”
- Curricul!
- Cyber & (learning instruct! Educate! school)
- “Demonstrated mastery”
- Diploma transcript
- Distance & (education learning)
- (District education! school) & (accreditation)
- (Dual concurrent) & enroll!
- Educate! & performance & (learning instruct! school assessment exam test grade grading)
- Educate! & time & (learning instruct! school)
- Education! & (assessment exam test grad!)
- Extend! & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- “Extended graduate!”
- Flex! /p & (credit pacing schedule assessment)
- “Full time equival!” & (student credit)
- Fund! /p (education school) % “capital construction” retirement
- “Grade band!”
- “Grade point average” gpa
- Graduate! & requirement!
- hybrid & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Instructional & (hour! day! time)
- Master! & (learning instruct! educat! school assessment exam test grade grading)
- Online & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Personal! /p (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Proficiency & (learning instruct! educat! school assessment exam test grade grading)
- “Required instruction”
- “Seat time”
- “Self guide!” & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- “Self pace!” & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Scholarship & education
- School & (“minimum age” “maximum age”)
- school /p (calendar year) % bond tax retirement
- Standards /p (assessment exam test grad!)
- Student /p (assessment exam test grad!)
- “Summer school”
- Virtual & (learning instruct! educat! school)
- Waiver & education

Note: When two words are separated by a space, Westlaw’s search engine retrieves documents with either of the words. For example, (dual concurrent) will return documents that include the word dual or concurrent. An exclamation point is a wild card, which allows one to search for words with different endings. For example, educat! would return documents that include the word educate or education. When words are enclosed in quotation marks, the search engine looks for the phrase. Words separated by /p require both words to be in the same paragraph. Finally, Westlaw search results exclude documents that contain words that come after a percentage sign.

Box A2. State education agency website search terms

- Accelerated learning
 - Blended learning
 - Competency-based education
 - Credit flexibility
 - Credit recovery
 - Differentiated or individualized learning
 - Dual enrollment or credits
 - Early college high schools
 - Expanded learning options
 - Mastery-based education
 - Outcomes-based education
 - Performance-based education
 - Personalization
 - Personalized learning
 - Proficiency-based education
 - Project-based and community-based learning
 - Standards-based education
 - Standards-based grading
-

Coding

All laws, regulations, and state education agency documents were imported into MAXQDA qualitative analysis software. An initial coding scheme was developed on the basis of the policy categories identified as most relevant to competency-based education and informed by content area experts. The research team independently coded a common sample of laws across the target states. Researchers noted when a law did not fit within an existing code. The researchers then reviewed how they had coded each law or regulation and discussed any discrepancies until they reached consensus, including determining whether additional codes should be added to address those that did not fall within the existing coding scheme. This review occurred three times as part of the coder training. During the coding process the research team met weekly to discuss progress and the possible addition of new codes. When new codes were added to the system, each coder went back and re-read laws, regulations, and documents from states that had already been coded to determine whether any text should be coded with the new code. The final coding system included each of the policy categories and state supports that are described in this report.

Summarizing

The researchers examined coded legislation and state education agency documents and prepared a summary of policies for each state, as well as the supports provided by each. The summaries included detailed information from these sources for each of the three policy areas and three categories of state supports discussed in this report. In cases where information from these primary sources was unclear, researchers consulted state websites for additional documents (such as state-sponsored reports describing competency-based education implementation trends across the state) that could provide clarification. The state summaries were then examined to identify cross-state trends in the policy and state education agency support categories.

Appendix B. Summaries of policies and supports associated with competency-based education in advanced competency-based-education states

This appendix provides a summary of the policies and supports in each advanced competency-based-education state (Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Oregon) that relate to credit flexibility, progression flexibility, individual learning options, and state-provided competency-based education supports (tables B1–B5). The summaries also include timelines showing state competency-based education milestones. These summaries are not intended to be comprehensive, but to highlight the policies and supports most relevant to competency-based education.

Table B1. Iowa competency-based education summary

Competency based education timeline		
2012. Competency-based Education Taskforce is formed.		
2012. Senate File 2284 eliminates the Carnegie Unit as a requirement for academic credit.		
2013. The Iowa Competency-based Education Collaborative, a collaborative group of 10 competency-based education demonstration districts, is founded.		
2013. Competency-based Education Taskforce releases first report containing strategic plans and recommendations.		
2014. Law allows students the opportunity to earn high school credit before grade 9 in all subjects.		
Category	Description	Source
Credit flexibility	Local education agencies can choose whether to offer time-based credits or competency-based credits. The credits required for graduation are specified statewide, but credits are earned by meeting district requirements. A school district board may seek a waiver from the Department of Education to initiate an innovative school calendar pilot program, and school districts offering Iowa's Learning Online Initiative are able to request a one-year waiver from the requirement that professional staff teach specified subjects.	IA Code Ann. § 256.7 IA Admin. Code r. 281–125(256) IA Admin. Code r. 281–22.27(261E) IA Code Ann. § 256.42
Progression flexibility	Districts may allow students to take a high school course prior to grade 9. If offered, the course must count toward graduation requirements. Students may advance through course content in more or less time than a school year. Credit will be earned depending on the completion of content.	IA Code Ann. § 256.7 IA Admin. Code r. 281–122(256)
Individual learning options	Students have access to online and Advanced Placement options through Iowa's Learning Online Initiative, the Online Learning Program Model, and the Online Advanced Placement Academy. Iowa's Senior Year Plus Program, which may be offered year-round, allows high school students to participate in Advanced Placement, community college credit, college and university credit, regional and career academies, and online courses.	IA Code Ann. § 256.42 IA Admin. Code r. 281–15.10(256) IA Admin. Code r. 281–15.13(256) IA Admin. Code r. 281–15.14(256) IA Code Ann. § 256.43 IA Code Ann. § 263.8A IA Admin. Code r. 281–22.7(261E) IA Code Ann. § 261E.1 IA Admin. Code r. 281–22.1(261E)
State-provided competency-based education supports	The Iowa Forum on Competency-based Education is a collaborative "community of practice," whose website provides a variety of resources on competency-based education. Legislation established the Competency-based Education Task Force and the Iowa Competency-based Education Collaborative to develop guidance and resources on competency-based education. The Competency-based Education Grant Program awards up to 10 grants to school districts to develop, implement, and evaluate competency-based education demonstration and pilot programs.	IA Code Ann. § 256.24 Senate File 2284 House File 215

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January–May 2015.

Table B2. Kentucky competency-based education summary**Competency based education timeline**

2012. Kentucky received the National Governors Association grant “Awarding Credit to Support Student Learning” to explore competency-based learning options.

2012. Kentucky held a statewide summit on performance-based education (the term used in Kentucky to refer to competency-based education) with more than 150 participants.

2012. Kentucky adopts House Bill 31, implementing districts of innovation.

2013. Kentucky commissions a report, Competency-based Education: Helping All Kentucky Children Succeed.

2014. Kentucky becomes a member of Achieve Competency-based Pathways State Partnership Network.

Category	Description	Source
Credit flexibility	Kentucky allows academic credits to be earned on the basis of seat time or as performance-based credits requiring demonstration of learning of relevant content standards. All students must score proficient on end-of-course exams to receive academic credit for courses that fulfill graduation requirements. Districts may choose to use performance on state criterion-referenced assessments to award performance-based credits.	704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:305 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.860 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453
Progression flexibility	Elementary schools are required to allow students to progress through the curriculum at their own pace and to use multiage classrooms. Elementary students are not assigned or described as belonging to a specific grade. Middle school students can earn performance-based credits that fulfill high school graduation requirements. Students can earn an Early Graduation Certificate for meeting high school graduation requirements in three years or less and become eligible to receive a Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarship.	704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:440 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.030 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 164.7879
Individual learning options	All students can earn performance-based credits through online courses, dual enrollment courses, internships, cooperative learning, workplace learning, and other supervised school or community-based learning. Students must pass a standards-aligned, performance-based assessment to receive credit.	704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:305
State-provided competency-based education supports	Kentucky allows waivers to support their district of innovation plan option, which specifies performance-based learning as an innovation strategy. Districts can apply for flexibility in the school calendar, use of virtual schools, funding based on average daily membership, and funding to support transition of existing schools to schools of innovation. The University of Kentucky houses the National Center of Innovation in Education, which has supporting competency-based education as one of its goals.	KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 156.108 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.107 701 KY Admin. Regs. 5:140

Source: Authors’ analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January–May 2015.

Table B3. Maine competency-based education summary**Competency based education timeline**

2012. Education evolving: Maine's plan for putting learners first is published.

2012. LD1422 is passed, requiring the implementation of proficiency-based high school diplomas by 2017 (later moved to 2018; the term proficiency-based education is used to refer to competency-based education in Maine).

2012. Maine Cohort for Customized Learning launches website.

2013. State funds are made available to support districts' transition to proficiency-based education.

2014. Local education agencies are offered six options to extend the diploma implementation deadline. The options vary depending on the competency-based practices currently in place.

Category	Description	Source
Credit flexibility	High school diplomas are issued based on student mastery of state standards. Students are allowed to demonstrate competency through a variety of means, including state and local assessments, portfolios, performance exhibitions, projects, and community service among others, and through multiple pathways, including career and technical education courses, career academies, and apprenticeships.	ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4722 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4722-A ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4703
Progression flexibility	Elementary schools may choose to develop a learning environment that encourages each student to learn and progress at their own functional level. Gifted and talented students must be taught in a manner that allows them to learn at their own appropriate instructional level and progress at their own pace. Students are allowed to graduate early upon meeting the requirements.	ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4252 05-071 CMR Ch. 104, § 104.04 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4722
Individual learning options	Schools are required to provide multiple pathways toward graduation. These may include online courses, dual enrollment programs, Advanced Placement programs, career academies, apprenticeships, and career and technical education programs.	ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4703
State-proved competency-based education supports	Dependent on funding, transition grants are available to all local education agencies to help defray the cost of transition to proficiency-based graduation requirements. The Fund for Efficient Delivery of Educational Services issues grants to fund innovative school programs, including competency-based education. The state education agency provides targeted funds to be used to facilitate K-12 student-centered education, which can support competency-based education. The Maine Department of Education hosts two websites providing information and resources to support implementation of competency-based education. Getting to Proficiency provides administrative and system-level resources. Center for Best Practice provides six case studies and includes instructional webinars, videos, and teacher-developed resources. Maine also offers districts a self-assessment process they can use to support strategic planning and identification of technical assistance needs. The Maine Cohort for Customized Learning is a collaboration of the state education agency, local education agencies, and businesses supporting competency-based education in Maine.	ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 4722-A ME Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 20-A, § 2651 05-071 CMR Ch. 7, § 2 Maine Department of Education

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January-May 2015.

Table B4. New Hampshire competency-based education summary**Competency based education timeline**

1998–2004. New Hampshire piloted proficiency-based education (the term used in New Hampshire to refer to competency-based education) in 27 high schools.

2005. The Carnegie Unit is eliminated as the basis for academic credit. Proficiency-based credits must be implemented by 2008.

2012. Performance Assessment of Competency Education program starts.

2015. New Hampshire receives a No Child Left Behind waiver to support the development and implementation of Performance Assessment of Competency Education in four pilot districts.

2015. The New Hampshire Convening on Competency Education is held to disseminate the work on proficiency-based education that has occurred throughout the state.

Category	Description	Source
Credit flexibility	New Hampshire requires credits to be earned through demonstration of mastery on end-of-course assessments. The district decides how to define course competencies and their assessment. All local education agencies are required to use proficiency-based credits for graduation, and the Carnegie Unit has been eliminated by state law.	NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.27 306.27, f 306.27, d and 306.27, i
Progression flexibility	High school students can progress to the next course if they pass a district-developed pretest for their current class.	NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.27, d
Individual learning options	New Hampshire requires career and technical education and distance education programs to be proficiency-based and count toward graduation requirements. New Hampshire districts are required to develop policies that support extended learning opportunities that occur outside the traditional classroom and school day. High school opportunities must align with district competencies required for graduation. Middle school opportunities must supplement regular academic courses or result in high school credit.	NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.22 306.26 (f) 1 306.27 306.27 (4) 306.27 (b) 5 306.34, a-f and 1407.02(3);
State-provided competency-based education supports	The New Hampshire High School Transformation webpage supports district redesign efforts by providing resources (such as model course competencies) and promotes the development of school redesign learning communities. New Hampshire provides waivers and grants to local education agencies to support programs related to proficiency-based education. New Hampshire Department of Education is working with four districts to pilot the Performance Assessment for Competency Education project. New Hampshire is a member of the New England Secondary Schools Consortium, which operates the League of Innovative Schools. This regional professional learning community supports student-centered learning, including competency-based education. Three New Hampshire schools have been selected (with 17 other New England schools) to be part of a school remodel initiative focused on developing personalized learning experiences.	New Hampshire Department of Education (2013)

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January–May 2015.

Table B5. Oregon competency-based education summary

Competency based education timeline		
2002. State Board of Education adopts administrative rules allowing districts to award proficiency-based credits (proficiency-based education is the term used to refer to competency-based education in Oregon).		
2004–06. Oregon Department of Education funds seven pilot districts to explore proficiency-based credits.		
2004–08. The Oregon Education Roundtable publishes a series of white papers, including <i>Proficiency-based Instruction and Assessment: A Promising Path to High Achievement in Oregon Education</i> .		
2009. The Oregon Proficiency Project is launched.		
2011. Districts are required to report student proficiencies in all content standards at least annually beginning in 2013.		
2012. Demonstration of proficiency in Oregon Essential Skills is required for graduation.		
Category	Description	Source
Credit flexibility	<p>The district has the option of offering a time-based or proficiency-based credit to students. Students must successfully complete classroom work that demonstrates defined levels of proficiency or mastery of standards if the district offers proficiency-based credit. In addition to the earning of required credits, students must also demonstrate proficiency in Oregon Essential Skills, which is assessed through multiple means.</p> <p>Local education agencies in Oregon may request a waiver from a specific standard or a waiver allowed under certain federal laws. District school boards may waive the minimum number of instructional hours in a school year.</p>	<p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1131</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–0615</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1920</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1620</p>
Progression flexibility	<p>Students may receive high school credit, from a school district or public charter school, for courses taken before grade 9 if the performance criteria are equivalent to those of the same high school course.</p> <p>If a student completes all requirements for a diploma before grade 12, the district must award the student a diploma. Students may advance to the next grade upon completing the requirements for the current grade level.</p>	<p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1130</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1133</p> <p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.451</p>
Individual learning options	<p>Students may participate in accelerated college credit programs. These programs include dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs. School districts must provide high school students with these programs in English, math, and science and ensure that students are able to access such programs online, such as through the Oregon Virtual School District. School district boards may authorize extended learning experiences, including work experience programs.</p> <p>The Oregon Department of Education and the State Apprenticeship and Training Council must establish youth apprenticeship and training, and work-based learning programs.</p>	<p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.300</p> <p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.030, 340.040, 340.083, 340.10, and</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–022–1363</p> <p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 336.175 (West)</p> <p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 344.745, 344.750</p>
State-provided competency-based education supports	<p>The Oregon Department of Education maintains the Teaching and Learning to Proficiency website and the Credit for Proficiency website, both of which are clearinghouses of guidance, instructional resources, and educational material. The Oregon Proficiency Project maintains a website where all resources that the organization has developed are available.</p> <p>The Proficiency-Based Teaching and Learning Grant supports proficiency-based instruction demonstration sites to inform practices in other school sites and to develop sites in underserved regions of the state. The STEAM & CTE Program and Activities Grant funds a variety of activities, including the expansion of learning environments in and out of schools. The Eastern Promise Replication Grant Program encourages consortiums of school districts, education service districts, and colleges to develop “innovative and flexible pathways for students in grades 6–12 and in community colleges.”</p>	<p>Oregon Department of Education (2014–15)</p> <p>OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.451</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–018–0434</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–017–0321</p> <p>OR Admin. R. 581–017–0353</p>

Source: Authors’ analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations and of state education agency websites conducted in January–May 2015.

Appendix C. Policies in each competency-based education category, by state

The tables in this appendix provide references to state policies on the three identified competency-based education categories:

- Credit flexibility (table C1).
- Progression flexibility (table C2).
- Individual learning options (table C3).

Table C1. Source of policies on credit flexibility, by state, as of March 2015

State	Source	State	Source
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states		Advanced competency-based-education states	
Colorado	CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-7-1015 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-07-1016 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-2-106 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-32.5-105 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-32-1095 CO Rev. Stat. § 22-1-104	Iowa	IA Admin. Code r. 281-125(256) IA Admin. Code r. 281-22.2(261E) IA Code Ann. § 256.7
Kansas	KS Admin. Regs. § 91-31-31 KS Admin. Regs. § 91-31-35 KS Stat. Ann. § 38-2388 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-643 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-1103	Kentucky	701 KY Admin. Regs. 5:140 702 KY Admin. Regs. 7:125 703 KY Admin. Regs. 4:040 703 KY Admin. Regs. 5:240 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:305 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:307 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:340 705 KY Admin. Regs. 4:041 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.140 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453
Missouri	5 CSR 20-100.190. MO Ann. Stat. § 160.257 MO Ann. Stat. § 160.570 MO Ann. Stat. § 161.094 MO Ann. Stat. § 161.210 MO Ann. Stat. § 167.720 MO Ann. Stat. § 170.011	Maine	05 071 ME Code R. 127 § 4 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4705 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4722 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4722-A ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 6202-B ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 6209
Nebraska	92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 10, § 002 92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 10, § 003 92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 10, § 004 92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 10, § 005 NE Rev. Stat. § 79-729 NE Rev. Stat. § 79-760.02 NE Rev. Stat. § 79-760.03	New Hampshire	NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.141 NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.24 NH Code Admin. R. Ed 306.27 NH Code Admin. R. Ed 1302.07 NH Rev. Stat. § 193-H:1-a
North Dakota	ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-02.2 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-02.1 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-03 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-08 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-17 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-06-08	Oregon	OR Admin. R. 581-022-0102 OR Admin. R. 581-022-0615 OR Admin. R. 581-022-1131 OR Admin. R. 581-022-1134 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.485
South Dakota	SD Admin. R. 24:43:01:01 SD Admin. R. 24:43:11:01 SD Admin. R. 24:43:11:02		
Wyoming	WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 22 s 5 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 26 s 10 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 31 s 4g WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 31 s 8 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 31 s 9 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 6 s 18		

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations conducted in January–March 2015.

Table C2. Source of policies on progression flexibility, by state, as of March 2015

State	Source	State	Source
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states		Advanced competency-based-education states	
Colorado	CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-7-1013	Iowa	IA Admin. Code r. 281-12.3(5) IA Admin. Code r. 281-12.5 IA Admin. Code r. 281-122 IA Code Ann. § 256.7
Kansas	KS Admin. Regs. § 88-29-1,	Kentucky	701 KY Admin. Regs. 5:140 702 KY Admin. Regs. 7:125 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:285 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:305 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.031 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.070 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.142 KY Rev. Stat. § 158.622 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.6453
Missouri	MO Ann. Stat. 161.094		
Nebraska	92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 3, § 005 NE Rev. Stat. § 79-1107		
North Dakota	No policies located		
South Dakota	SD Admin. R. 24:43:11:14		
Wyoming	No policies located		
		Maine	05 071 ME Code R. 104 § 4 05-071 ME Code R. 125, § 6 05-071 ME Code R. 127, § 7 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4722
		New Hampshire	NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.26 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.27
		Oregon	OR Admin. R. 581-022-1130 OR Admin. R. 581-022-1131 OR Admin. R. 581-022-1133 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.451

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations conducted in January–March 2015.

Table C3. Source of policies on individual learning options, by state, as of March 2015

State	Source	State	Source
Regional Educational Laboratory Central Region states		Advanced competency-based-education states	
Colorado	CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-2-106 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-2-130 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-30.7-113 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-32-137 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-35-102 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-35-104 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-35-1095 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-5-119 CO Rev. Stat. Ann. § 23-8-102	Iowa	IA Admin. Code r. 281-22.1(261E) IA Admin. Code r. 281-47.2(260C) IA Code Ann. § 256.40 IA Code Ann. § 256.43 IA Code Ann. § 258.10 IA Code Ann. § 260C.18A IA Code Ann. § 261E.1 IA Code Ann. § 282.26
Kansas	KS Stat. Ann. § 72-11a03 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-11a04 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-11a05 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-3712 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-3713 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-3714 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-3716 KS Stat. Ann. § 72-4413	Kentucky	702 KY Admin. Regs. 7:125 704 KY Admin. Regs. 3:305 705 KY Admin. Regs. 4:231 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 157.072 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.007 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.622 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 158.810 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.107 KY Rev. Stat. Ann. § 160.348
Missouri	5 CSR 20-100.230. 5 CSR 20-200.250. MO Ann. Stat. § 162.895 MO Ann. Stat. § 167.223 MO Ann. Stat. § 173.675 MO Ann. Stat. § 178.370	Maine	05 071 ME Code R. 127 § 3 05 071 ME Code R. 225 § 2 05 071 ME Code R. 232, § App. B ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4703 ME Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 20-A, § 4774
Nebraska	92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 10 § 004 92 NE Admin. Code, Ch. 47 § 003 Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1302 NE Rev. Stat. § 79-775 NE Rev. Stat. § 85-2104	New Hampshire	NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 1407.02(3) NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.04 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.22 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.26 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.261 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.27 NH Code Admin. R. Ed. 306.34
North Dakota	ND Cent. Code § 15-19-01 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-25-01 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-02 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-25-06 ND Cent. Code § 15.1-21-15 ND Cent. Code § 15-20.1	Oregon	OR Admin. R. 581-022-0102 OR Admin. R. 581-022-1363 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 329.840 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 336.175 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.005 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.030 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.040 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.083 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.10 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 340.300 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 344.130 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 344.745 OR Rev. Stat. Ann. § 344.750
South Dakota	SD Admin. R. 24:43:11:02 SD Admin. R. 24:43:12:09 SD Codified Laws § 13-28-37 SD Codified Laws § 13-33-20 SD Codified Laws § 13-33-21 SD Codified Laws § 13-39-41		
Wyoming	WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 41 s 15 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 41 s 6 WY Rules and Regulations EDU GEN Ch. 41 s 8 WY Stat. § 21-12-105 WY Stat. § 21-13-330 WY Stat. § 21-20-201		

Source: Authors' analysis based on searches of state laws and regulations conducted in January-March 2015.

Notes

1. These states were identified through previous research, by recommendation of experts, and by their participation in national programs that support the implementation of competency-based education.
2. Most high schools award academic credit based on the traditional Carnegie Unit of 120 contact hours with an instructor. High schools and colleges may also refer to this unit as a credit hour. This unit translates roughly into one hour of instruction on a topic per school day. Most states require a specified number of units or credits be completed for graduation (Silva, White, & Toch, 2015).

References

- Innovation Lab Network. (2015). *What we do/Innovation Lab Network*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved November 11, 2015, from http://www.ccsso.org/What_We_Do/Innovation_Lab_Network.html.
- Iowa Department of Education. (2013). *The Iowa CBE Collaborative: Goals, objectives, and responsibilities*. Des Moines, IA: Author. Retrieved February 11, 2016, from https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/Goal%20Objectives%20and%20Responsibilities_0.pdf.
- Iowa Department of Education. (2015). *Iowa Department of Education guidelines for PK–12 competency-based education*. Des Moines, IA: Author. Retrieved November 11, 2015, from <https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/competency-based-pathways/2015/08/guidelines-pk-12-competency-based-education>.
- Kentucky Department of Education. (2013). *Competency-based education: Helping all students succeed (Final report)*. Lexington, KY: Author. Retrieved April 23, 2015, from <http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Pages/Competency-based-Education-.aspx>.
- KnowledgeWorks. (2013). *Competency education series: Policy brief one—an emerging federal role for competency education*. Cincinnati, OH: Author. Retrieved June 13, 2014, from <http://knowledgeworks.org/competency-education-series-policy-brief-one>.
- Maine Cohort for Customized Learning. (2012). Orientation presentation (Presentation slides). Augusta, ME: Author. Retrieved September 10, 2015, from <http://mainecustomizedlearning.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/MCCL-Orientation-Aug-20121.pdf>.
- National Governors Association. (2012). *State strategies for awarding credit to support student learning (Issue Brief)*. Washington, DC: Author. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED532526>
- New Hampshire Department of Education. (2013). *Executive summary: Enriching New Hampshire's assessment and accountability systems through quality performance assessment*. Concord, NH: Author. Retrieved September 30, 2015, from <http://education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/documents/executive-summary.pdf>.
- Next Generation Learning Challenges. (2015). *The Colorado coalition*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved February 11, 2016, from <http://nextgenlearning.org/colorado-coalition>.
- Oregon Department of Education. (2015). *Teaching and learning to proficiency*. Salem, OR: Author. Retrieved September 9, 2015, from <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=4003>.
- Patrick, S., & Sturgis, C. (2013). *Necessary for success: Building mastery of world-class skills (CompetencyWorks Issue Brief)*. Vienna, VA: International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved April 21, 2014, from http://www.competencyworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/inacol_cw_issuebrief_building_mastery_final.pdf.

- Russell, J. L., Meredith, J., Childs, J., Stein, M. K., & Prine, D. W. (2015). Designing inter-organizational networks to implement education reform: An analysis of state Race to the Top applications. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 37(1), 92–112. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1050966>
- Silva, E., White, T., & Toch, T. (2015). *The Carnegie Unit: A century-old standard in a changing education landscape*. Stanford, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Retrieved January 29, 2015, from <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/resources/publications/carnegie-unit/>.
- Sturgis, C., Patrick, S., & Pittenger, L. (2011). *It's not a matter of time: Highlights from the 2011 Competency-Based Learning Summit*. Vienna, VA: International Association for K-12 Online Learning.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015, March 5). Letter to the New Hampshire Department of Education. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved October 1, 2015, from <http://education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/documents/used-ltr.pdf>.
- Wolfe, R. E. (2012). *Aligning competencies to rigorous standards for off-track youth: A case study of Boston Day and Evening Academy*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED539877>
- Worthen, M., & Pace, L. (2014). *A K–12 federal policy framework for competency education: Building capacity for systems change (CompetencyWorks Issue Brief)*. Vienna, VA: International Association for K–12 Online Learning. Retrieved April 21, 2014, from http://www.competencyworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CompetencyWorks_A_K-12_Federal_Policy_Framework_for_Competency_Education_February_2014.pdf.

The Regional Educational Laboratory Program produces 7 types of reports



Making Connections

Studies of correlational relationships



Making an Impact

Studies of cause and effect



What's Happening

Descriptions of policies, programs, implementation status, or data trends



What's Known

Summaries of previous research



Stated Briefly

Summaries of research findings for specific audiences



Applied Research Methods

Research methods for educational settings



Tools

Help for planning, gathering, analyzing, or reporting data or research