



Tuesday, August 30, 2011
12:30 PT / 3:30 ET



Competency-Based Learning Designing Competency-Based Pathways for Next Generation Learning

Presented by: SUSAN PATRICK

While you are waiting for us to begin, please type your answers in the “Chat Text Box”:

- **Name of your school/organization & location**
- **Your role at that site**
- **What brings you to this discussion today**

Competency-based Learning

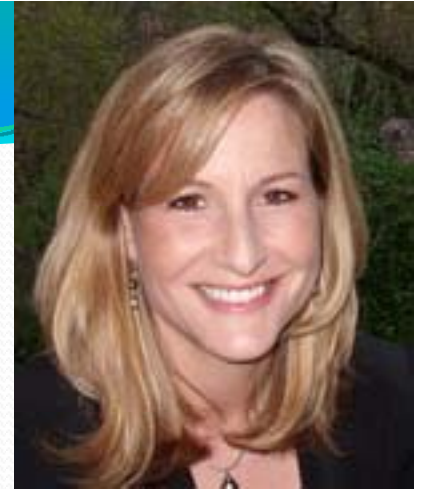
Designing Competency-Based Pathways for Next
Generation Learning

RAPSA WEBINAR

August 30, 2011



Susan Patrick



Susan Patrick is the President and CEO of the nonprofit International Association of K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL). iNACOL is the international K-12 Education nonprofit association pushing the field of K-12 education in partnership with pioneers who are the practitioners, providers and students involved in online and blended learning worldwide. Mission: every student has access to a world-class education.

She is the former Director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education and published the 2005 National Educational Technology Plan.

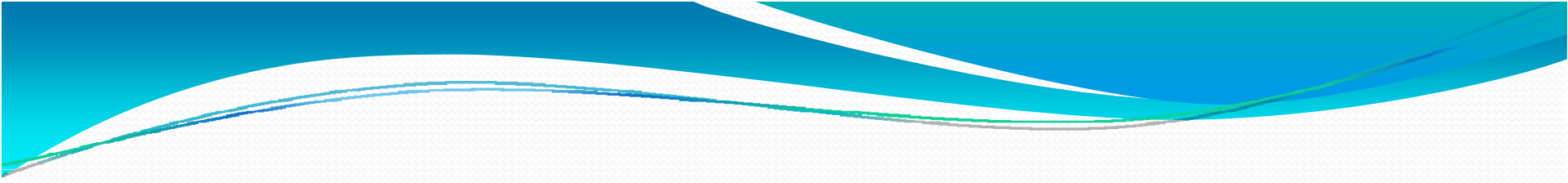
Agenda

- Introduction to Competency-Based Learning
- Definitions
 - Competency-Based Learning and Next Generation Learning
- State Policy Highlights and Exemplars
- State Policy Framework
- What It Looks Like
- Resources



Introduction: 2 New Competency-based Learning Reports *Just Released*

- *Cracking the Code: Synchronizing Policy and Practice for Performance-Based Learning* (Patrick & Sturgis, 2011)
 - State Policy Frameworks
- *It's Not A Matter of Time: Highlights from the 2011 Competency-Based Learning Summit* (Sturgis, Patrick & Pittenger, 2011)
 - Overview of key findings in the field
- Available for free download: www.inacol.org
 - Links to competency-based learning wiki, too.



In a proficiency system, failure or poor performance may be part of student's learning curve, but it is not an outcome.

----- *Proficiency Based Instruction and Assessment, Oregon Education Roundtable*



Competency-Based Pathways

- Many related phrases: Proficiency, Outcome-based, Standard-Based, Performance-based
- Competency is being integrated into federal policy
- Eliminating time and place as barriers to learning is a focus in many state reforms



A 5-Part Working Definition: Competency-based Learning

1. Students advance upon mastery.
2. Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
3. Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience for students.
4. Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
5. Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Council of Chief State School Officers Partnership on Next Generation Learning (KY, ME, NH, NY, OH, WI, WV)

Six Critical Attributes of Next Generation Learning

1. Planning for Personalized Learning
2. Comprehensive Systems of Supports
3. World-Class Knowledge and Skills
4. **Performance-based Learning**
5. Anytime, Everywhere Opportunities
6. Authentic Student Voice



State Policy Exemplars

- Level 1 – Seat-time waivers (AZ, MI)
- Level 2 – Credit flexibility (AL, OH)
- Level 3 – Advanced competency-based policy (NH, OR):
 - New Hampshire “eliminated seat-time” in 2009, redefined Carnegie Unit as sets of competencies.
 - Oregon Proficiency Project developed guidelines, tools and resources for districts; accelerated learning options/dual enrollment.



State Policy Highlights

- Performance-based funding:
 - Florida Virtual School – funded per pupil to course level (1/12 FTE) for successful completion
 - Utah – funds online courses, with incentive “kicker” funding for successful completion



Districts & Schools

- District Reforms
 - Adams 50, Colorado
 - Chugach, Alaska
 - Lindsay Unified, California
 - District 15, Maine
- School Models
 - *Diploma Plus * Highland Technical High, Anchorage, AK * Carpe Diem, Yuma, AZ * Florida Virtual School
 - * SIATech



Insights from Pockets of Innovation

- Why: Growing Demand
 - Online Learning
 - Multiple Pathways to Graduation
 - Extended Learning Opportunities
 - State and District Budget Deficits
 - Turnarounds for lowest-performing schools

Importance for Students?

- Time is a resource not a constraint
 - Over-age and under-credited students accelerate credits
 - Ability to build skills through expanded learning opportunities (work, online, volunteering)
 - Advanced students accelerate
- Environment and instructional model dedicated to students success
 - Explicit, transparent, and rapid interventions
 - High engagement and motivation through multiple ways to demonstrate proficiency
- Educational continuity for highly mobile students



Policy Framework

- Drive policy by student learning outcomes
- Guard high academic standards
- Expand student options
- Create shared vision
- Offer districts and schools flexibility
- Commit to continuous improvement

Synchronizing Policy and Practice

- Create innovation space
 - Convening innovators, creating innovation zones
- Provide catalytic support and knowledge transfer
 - Leadership development and technical assistance
- Engage communities
 - Outreach to understand reasons, goals and elements
- Protect high standards (consistency)
- Offer adaptive leadership
 - Flexibility in reporting



Requires New Models of Accountability

- Federal & State Accountability MUST be using an individual student growth model
- Performance-based: Moving away from seat-time to competency-based learning models of policy and funding
- Performance-based funding: Provide incentives for schools that do the most with the most challenged students to incentivize success



Federal Recommendations

- Wilhoit: “There is a major issue between state accountability and the federal requirements for AYP and end-of-year assessments”
- Integrate Competency-based learning into major policies as design element
 - Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization
- Eliminate time-based regulations in federal policy
- Changing roles of educators/Highly Qualified Teacher
- Assist in creating innovation zones and capacity
- Provide political cover

State Recommendations

- Redefine Carnegie unit into competencies
- Allow personalized learning (any time, any place, any pace)
 - Personalized learning plan
 - Informal, formal and online learning opportunities
- Student-centered accountability and assessment models
 - Individual student growth models
 - Rethink AYP and assessment to modularized testing throughout year measuring individual progress regularly
- Learning empowered by technology
 - SIS, integrated LMS, more online/blended, open architectures and resources (OER)

State Recommendations (cont'd)

- Supporting educators in the transition to a competency-based system
 - Redefine HQT
 - Upgrade teacher education
 - Increase flexibility in staffing
 - Partner with education associations
 - Upgrade PD
- “In a proficiency-based system, teachers flourish as much as students,” – *Proficiency-based Instruction and Assessment*, Oregon Education Roundtable report



State Recommendations (cont'd)

- Financing a Competency-Based System
 - Redefine Carnegie unit as competencies, thus removing funding based on seat-time
 - Incentivize high-quality, competency-based learning models by rewarding schools and districts that are most effectively serving traditionally underserved students
 - Streamline funding across K-20, so that students can advance to higher-level courses (and dual-enrollment, while remaining in their school)
 - Modularize courses so that schools serving highly mobile students can receive proportional credit for modules they master



State Leadership

- Transform what is possible
- Changes from tightly written rules that limit interpretation
- Remove and open up regulations so districts are free to innovate
- Unleash creativity in designing personalized, student-centered learning



What It Looks Like

- Every student with a learning “map”
 - Competencies for each level - academic+
- Rubrics to help teachers understand what proficiency looks like
- Adults shifting roles
 - Personalization, grouping, teacher specialization
- Students know their targets; collaborate w/each other
- Data systems to support teachers and students clearly indicating level of progress on each academic standard and efficacy standards (to monitor student progress)
- Classroom, online, expanded learning opportunities
 - After school, museum, NASA, formal & informal learning
- State growth models for accountability

How Students Learn: Blended Learning





Resources: www.inacol.org

- Reports

- *When Success is the Only Option: Designing Competency-based Pathways for Next Generation Learning (2010).*
- *Clearing the Path: Creating Innovation Space for Serving Over-Age, Under-Credited Students in Competency-Based Pathways (2011).*
- *It's Not a Matter of Time: Highlights from the Competency-based Learning Summit (2011).*
- *Cracking the Code: Synchronizing Policy and Practice for Performance-based Learning (2011).*



Emerging Trends and Issues

- Schools: Online and blending learning create more productive models for next generation learning
 - Online: 80% more of instruction provided online; choice helps level the playing field for all students
 - Blended: combination of online and face-to-face; allows personalization and individualization for every student
- Policy: Moving away from seat-time funding and policy to competency-based learning

Digital Learning Now

1 STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

All students are digital learners.

2 STUDENT ACCESS

All students have access to high quality digital content and online courses.

3 PERSONALIZED LEARNING

All students can customize their education using digital content through an approved provider.

4 ADVANCEMENT

Students progress based on demonstrated competency.

5 CONTENT

Digital content, instructional materials, and online and blended learning courses are high quality.

6 INSTRUCTION

Digital instruction and teachers are high quality.

7 PROVIDERS

All students have access to multiple high quality providers.

8 ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Student learning is the metric for evaluating the quality of content and instruction.


9 FUNDING

Funding creates incentives for performance, options and innovation.

10 DELIVERY

Infrastructure supports digital learning.

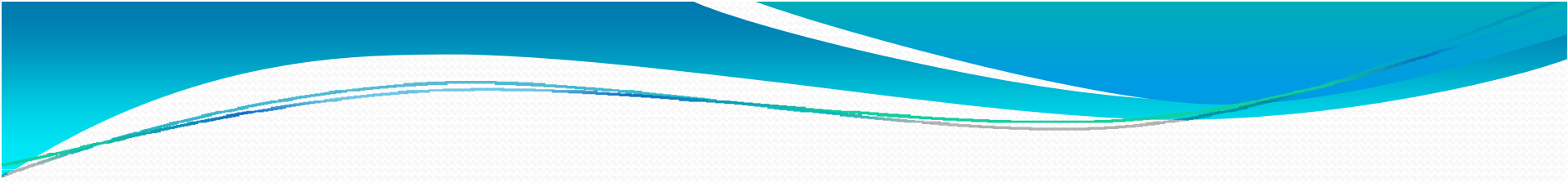
* Source: Digital Learning Now!, December, 2010, Foundation for Excellence in Education



Performance- or Competency-
based learning is fundamental to
personalizing learning at scale

And

it challenges almost all of our
assumptions about the present
system



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Let's continue to talk about this at the RAPSA blog

<http://rapsapd.ning.com>

For more RAPSA resources, visit www.rapsa.org



Questions about RAPSA?

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