

Competency-based Education

Kettle Moraine School District - Rethinking Professional Learning

How does your organization define competency-based education?

Competency-based education (CBE) is a framework of learning and assessment that clearly articulates learning targets and competencies which recognizes students' voice, choice, path, pace, and place in the demonstration of learning. While aligned to district standards, competencies must be demonstrated before advancement, but competencies are not necessarily linear. CBE requires a balanced assessment framework, with students receiving formative feedback and supports as necessary to ensure mastery.



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http://digitalpromise.org/cbe_resource/kettle-moraine-rethinking-professional-learning/

Overview

Kettle Moraine has implemented a compensation system that utilizes micro-credentials to increase the salary of an educator, allowing them to increase their annual wage in response to demonstrating mastery of a new skill or strategy. Educators submit their request for preapproval, identifying the learning that they will accomplish, the research base and resources that they will utilize in their learning. The micro-credential may be one developed and hosted by Digital Promise, one offered by leaders in our district, or one created by the individual, to address an area of growth that aligns with their responsibility. Once the learning has occurred it is documented through artifacts that include how the learning was implemented in the classroom, how it was assessed, teacher reflection, student work samples, and student reflection. This is

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moving CBE forward because as teachers experience personalized CBE learning, they are more comfortable envisioning it for their students.

Beliefs

Our work is shaped in part by what we know about adult learners and learning. We recognize that to influence new learning models at the student level, we needed to address the learning opportunities and experiences of teachers. Core beliefs include:

1. The most influential form of learning is through modeling.
2. Teachers are most often the best informed individual to identify and direct their next steps of professional growth.
3. When voice, choice, path, pace, and place are determined by the learner there is increased relevance and rigor to the learning.
4. Teacher agency is an essential element for increased student achievement.

Rationale

We are committed to scaling personalized CBE across our district. To accomplish our objectives we needed to develop the understanding and competencies of our educators who are ultimately responsible for accomplishing this work. Without widespread working knowledge of this approach, we would not be successful in reaching our objective.

Outcomes

There is an ever-increasing number of individuals who have earned or are in the process of earning a micro-credential (over 80%). We are two-thirds of the way through our third year of implementation and we have awarded 1,553 micro-credentials, increasing overall base compensation by approximately \$212,000.

More importantly, micro-credentials have helped our educators see themselves as collaborators and experts in the work that they are doing. Teacher agency and efficacy have surfaced in a very palpable and positive manner.

Surprises

We did not anticipate the alignment of resources that this would bring to our district/school goals. There is ownership and collaboration around our goals that is unprecedented, in part because we are asking teachers to be partners when developing the solutions. This is because the pre-approval process criteria gives weight to the alignment of the micro-credential to the district/school goals. There is extrinsic motivation to examine that work because teachers are immersed in data teams that analyze progress toward the goals, they reflect on strategies that may benefit the accomplishment of the goals. There is a heightened awareness and common language around our improvement initiatives. Teacher leaders have emerged as they work together to learn and

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Trade-offs

Pursuing micro-credentials has exposed an illusion that canned professional development will meet the needs of all educators. We are also giving up the simplicity of a traditional step and lane system, where all professional development is treated as equally worthy and everyone progresses along a salary continuum, regardless of their skills or expertise.

Considerations

1. Bring a team of diverse teachers into the planning of the process and communication of implementing a micro-credential opportunity.
2. Pilot and evaluate to learn and grow from your implementation.
3. Communicate, communicate, communicate. We have resources, exemplars and an FAQ on our intranet site to support educators when building their understanding of CBE.
4. Find a technology tool that supports your professional learning system efficiently. We started with Google forms and still do not have a viable and working technology solution.
5. After starting our core work around micro credentialing teachers and plugging resources towards this framework for the past three years, we are now looking at what implications this can have on other employee groups (paras, secretarial, admin, etc.)

Artifacts

- [Digital Promise micro-credentials](#)
- [Kettle Moraine Form and definitions](#)
- [Kettle Moraine Micro-credential Guidelines](#)