



Mastery-based Learning

in Washington State

Update on the Mastery-Based Learning Work Group

November 21, 2019



Who are the workgroup members?

- Democratic Representative: Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos
- Republican Representative: Representative Chris Corry
- Democratic Senator: Senator Lisa Wellman
- Republic Senator: TBD
- Student: Ashley Lin (Association of Washington Student Leaders)
- Student: Lafayette Jones (Association of Washington Student Leaders)
- EOGOAC member: Frieda Takamura (Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee)
- High School Principal: Kory Kalahar (Association of Washington State Principals)
- High School Certificated Teacher: Miguel A. Saldaña (Washington Education Association)
- High School Counselor: Jenny Morgan (Washington Education Association)
- District Board Member: Aurora Flores (Washington State School Directors Association)
- District Superintendent: Krestin Behr (Washington Association of School Administrators)
- OSPI Representative: Kathe Taylor (Superintendent of Public Instruction)
- SBE Representative: Paul Pitre (State Board of Education Chair)



Workgroup Purpose & Scope

The work group shall examine opportunities to increase student access to relevant and robust mastery-based academic pathways aligned to personal career goals and postsecondary education. The work group shall also review the role of the high school and beyond plan in supporting mastery-based learning. The work group shall consider:

- (a) Improvements in the high school and beyond plan as an essential tool for mastery-based learning;
- (b) Development of mastery-based pathways to the earning of a high school diploma;
- (c) The results of the competency-based pathways previously approved by the state board of education under RCW 28A.230.090 as a learning resource; and
- (d) Expansion of mastery-based credits to meet graduation requirements.



Why do we need Mastery-Based Learning?

- A focus on meeting the needs of each individual student
- Students enjoy relevancy, engagement, and choice in their learning
- Actively embrace inclusivity—compassion and belonging for students
- A culture of celebrating the learning and innovation that comes from failure and values knowledge and skills that students already have
- Each student's learning progresses at their own pace
- It's a way to get rid of labels and create a system that recognizes that each student's learning happens differently for each subject



Potential for Confusing Communication





Workgroup Statutory Charge

The State Board of Education shall convene a work group to inform the governor, the legislature, and the public about barriers to mastery-based learning in Washington state whereby:

- (a) Students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content;
- (b) Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students;
- (c) Assessments are meaningful and a positive learning experience for students;
- (d) Students receive rapid, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs; and
- (e) Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.



Terminology

Learning Standards:

“Identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do” (RCW [28A.655.070](#))

Mastery-Based Learning and Competency-Based Learning

Mastery-based learning implies that a certain level of knowledge and skills must be attained, and the level should be “mastery.”

Personalized Learning:

A wide variety of programs, learning experiences, educational approaches and strategies that are intended to address individual student interests, needs, cultural background, learning styles. Not one-size-fits-all. “It’s a philosophy, not a set of instructional practices.” (Ed Week)

Some strategies that support mastery-based learning:

- Project-based learning
- Online learning
- Blended learning
- Community-based learning
- Work-based learning
- Flexibility in “seat-time”



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Mastery-Based Learning Work Group Interim Report Highlights



Activities of the Work Group This Year

- Preliminary Definitions
- Preliminary Vision of the Work Group
- Presentations:
 - Webinar on Mastery-Based Learning
 - High School and Beyond Plan
 - Mastery-Based Learning: Perspectives from Three Washington Schools



Preliminary Vision of the Work Group

Our vision of a mastery-based learning system is one that:

- Empowers students to advance upon demonstrated mastery of content, rather than seat time or age
- Diversity is celebrated and every student feels a sense of belonging in their school community
- Enables students to direct their own learning and serves each student based on their personalized needs
- Honors the assets students bring and engages students through their diverse cultures and communities
- Students' innate creativity shines through in their learning
- Values learning experiences that take place in environments outside the classroom
- Facilitates students' voices and transition to higher education and careers
- Supports both students and educators as lifelong learners; provides the freedom to fail and celebrates the resulting learning
- Demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness in our changing world



What We Heard from Students

- Actively embrace inclusivity.
- Celebrate different identities.
- Comprehensive high schools are built for one type of student. Almost all of the students left out of the comprehensive high school can be served by a project-based learning, MBL model.
- We can't wait for the perfect program. With the world changing, we have to change how we do education too—but students have to be given the freedom to do so.
- You don't have to change your entire curriculum to make students feel like they're doing well. Students need to feel like they can explore and enjoy learning.
- Give us the freedom to fail so we can have the ground work for success.



Future Work Plan and Topics for Further Exploration

- Higher education models of mastery-based learning (MBL)
- High school transcript and post-secondary admissions
- Course level mastery models (e.g. World Language, or WL)
- Mastery-based diploma
- System level MBL models
- Implications for educator preparation
- High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP)



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What is currently happening in Washington?



Compared to Other States—

Washington already has state policies on which to build:

- Definition of a credit unrelated to seat-time—other states don't have, or only allow through a waiver program
- District waivers of credit graduation requirements
- Work-based Learning and Equivalency Course of Study
- Middle school students earning high school credit
- Relatively well developed dual enrollment and early college programs

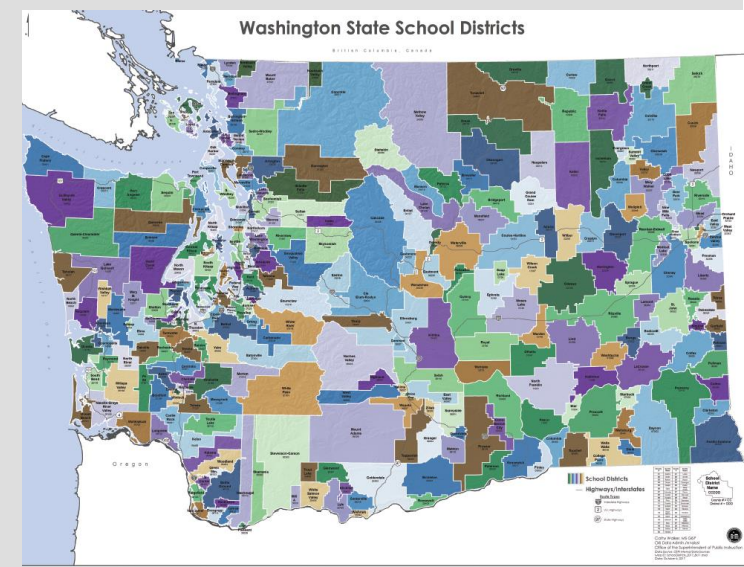
Other states are working on or have developed:

- Multiple-flexible pathways to graduation
- Proficiency-based diplomas
- Programs that build district-level capacity for competency-based learning
- Alternative assessments—non-standardized, competency-based assessments
- Buy-in from institutions of higher-education for high school competency-based credit



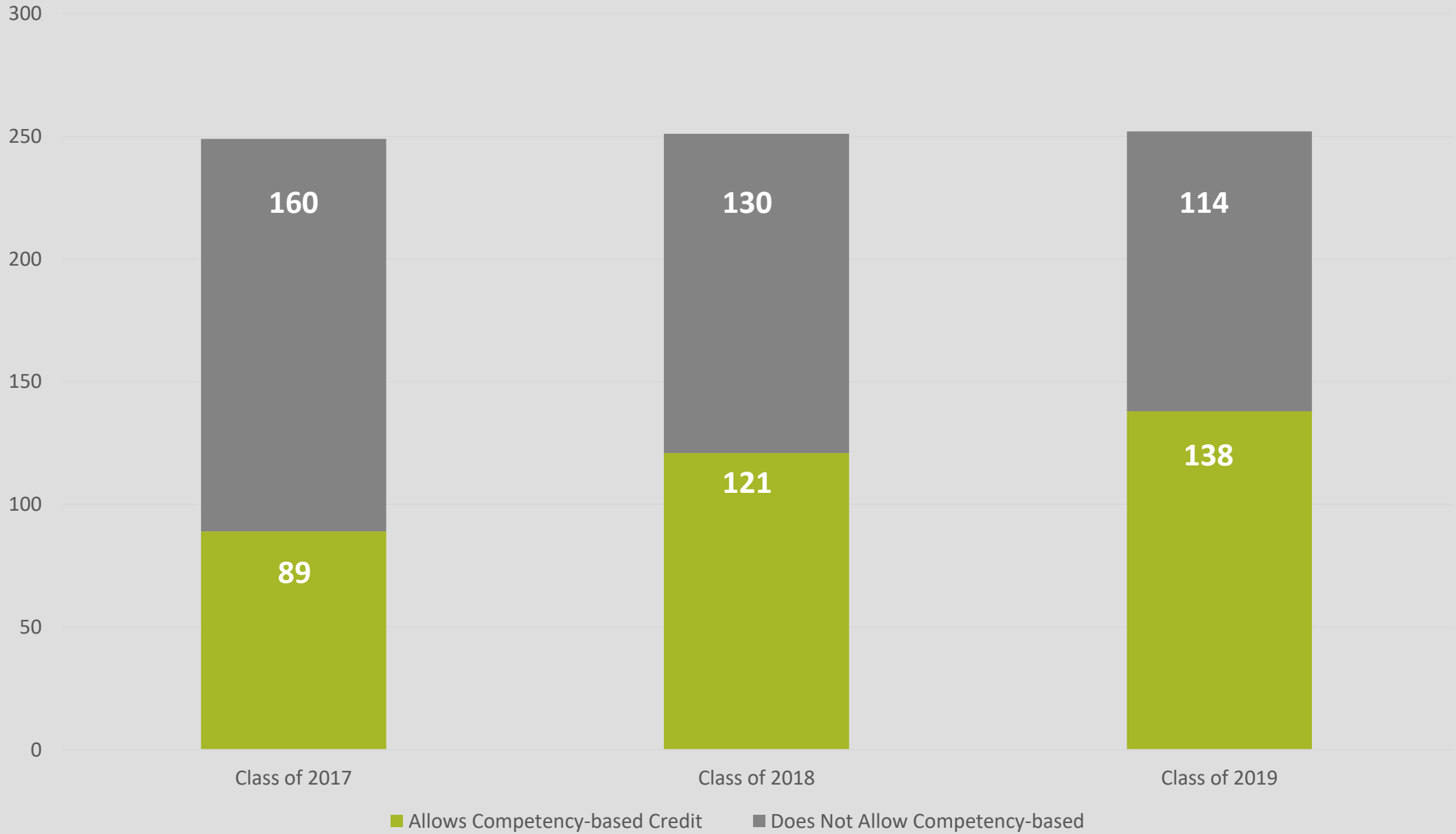
Basic Education Compliance Survey Results

- The survey asked if the district offered competency-based credit (yes or no) and if yes, in what subjects (short answer response).
- Survey results show the number of districts offering competency-based credit is increasing; also, the number of subjects is expanding.
- Responses indicate great variability in how competency-based credit is being offered.





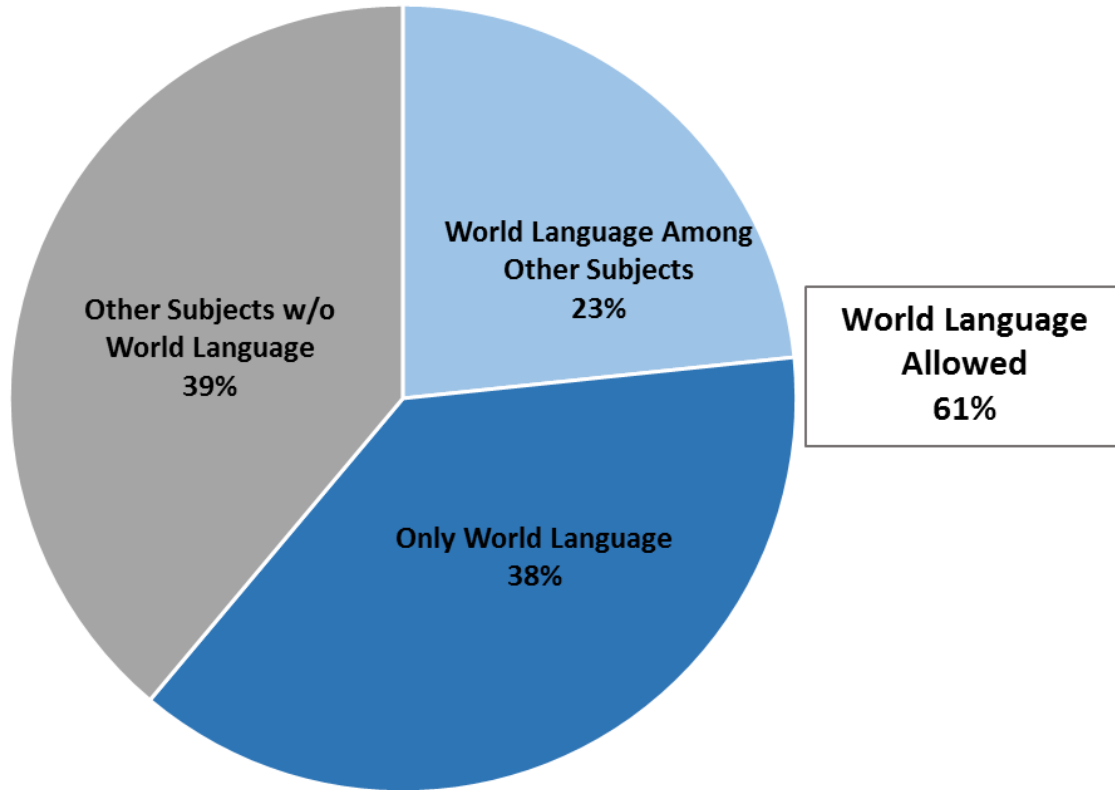
Number of High School Districts that Allow Competency-based Crediting



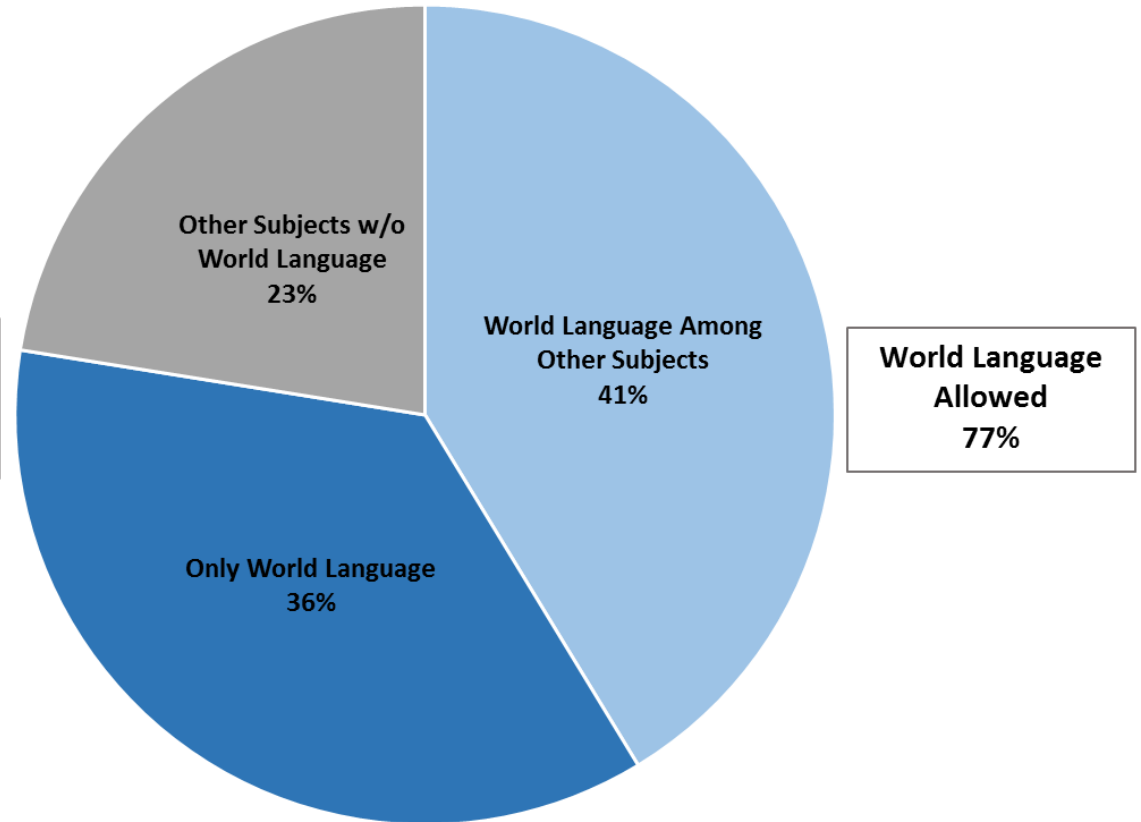
Of the Districts Offering Competency-Based Crediting, How Many Include World Language?



Class of 2016



Class of 2019





Questions?



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