



# EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES

## FOR PERSONALIZED, LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The development of *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching* (“the Competencies”) serves as a first step in identifying the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that educators need in order to create and thrive in effective personalized, learner-centered environments. The Competencies are organized into four domains—Cognitive, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Instructional. For each domain, we identified both high-level competencies and detailed “indicators,” which describe specific ways that educators can meet each competency in a personalized, learner-centered manner.

The lead contributors to this effort consisted of a group of national and state partners focused on increasing educational achievement for all: [Jobs for the Future’s Students at the Center initiative](#), the [Council of Chief State School Officers’ Innovation Lab Network](#), the [National Center for Innovation in Education at the University of Kentucky](#), the [Institute@CESA#1](#) in Wisconsin, and the [Nellie Mae Education Foundation](#). The partners solicited and received feedback from nearly 100 school, district, and state innovators, researchers, and thought leaders from across the country.

### Guiding principles

Throughout the research and writing process, we faced many difficult decisions about what the Competencies should include and how best to organize them. Together with our partners and advisors, we arrived at a number of key principles to guide and inform our work and perspective.

We determined that the Competencies should:

- **Be embedded within a holistic educational vision and supported by a school culture—including professional development, curricular freedom, and other structures—to ensure their success.** We recognize that many obstacles beyond teachers’ control must be cleared in order to realize success in most or all of the Competencies. The Competencies are designed first and foremost to inform practitioners who work in school systems that are already making innovative, learner-centered reforms.
- **Be applied to groups of educators or whole school teams.** We recognize that, taken as a whole, the full set of Competencies is aspirational. In our vision, no individual educator would be expected to have mastered all these skills and be able to demonstrate each one flawlessly at any single moment in time. Our intent, in no way, is to ask teachers to “do more with less.” Rather, we are calling for schools, districts, and states to “do differently.”

- > **Align with similar efforts to describe student competencies, system leader competencies, and system characteristics for deeper learning.** Our description of the innovative, learner-centered educator is aligned with complementary efforts to describe the competencies that students need for deeper learning, the competencies that administrators need to lead personalized, learner-centered schools and districts, and the regulations and policies needed to support these efforts at scale and over time.
- > **Convey a firm and explicit commitment to equity.** These competencies describe the kinds of capabilities educators need to succeed with all learners, of any socioeconomic background, race, ethnicity, skill level, learning disability, or culture. They are compiled from research, practice, and evidence that cross these categories. Wherever applicable, we make this commitment transparent.
- > **Focus on knowledge, mind-sets, and skills that go beyond general “good teaching” practices to emphasize areas that comprise successful approaches in personalized, learner-centered settings.** Many existing standards and frameworks for educator development include “good teaching” practices that are applicable in all settings. Rather than reiterate these fundamentals, this framework highlights the specific competencies that are most applicable—and essential—to the distinct context of personalized, learner-centered environments.
- > **Not be read as progressions or prioritized until further research can be conducted.** We do not currently have enough information about implementation of personalized, learner-centered approaches to prioritize the domains, or outline a progression for training in the competencies. Our organizations, state partners, and others will be pursuing the development of such tools as the work continues and further field testing is conducted.

## The Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching

### Cognitive Domain / NEED TO KNOW

The COGNITIVE DOMAIN consists of what teachers **need to know** in order to create personalized, learner-centered environments. These include both the knowledge of key subject matter content, and human and brain development that is needed in order to foster students' content learning and metacognitive development (e.g., critical thinking, information literacy, reasoning, argumentation, innovation, self-regulation, and learning habits).<sup>1</sup>

#### COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES

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

- 1 **Utilize in-depth understanding of content and learning progressions to engage learners and lead individual learners toward mastery.**
- 2 **Have knowledge of the sub-skills involved in effective communication and apply it to instructional strategies that develop learners into effective communicators.**
- 3 **Understand and employ techniques for developing students' skills of metacognition, self-regulation, and perseverance.**

<sup>1</sup> Definitions of the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains for students adapted from Pellegrino, James & Margaret L. Hilton, eds. 2012. Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

## Intrapersonal Domain / NEED TO PROCESS

The INTRAPERSONAL DOMAIN contains the generalized “capacity to manage one’s behavior and emotions to achieve one’s goals”<sup>2</sup> or what internal capacity personalized, learner-centered educators **need to process**. It comprises the habits of mind, expectations for students, and assumptions about the teaching profession that educators should have.

### INTRAPERSONAL COMPETENCIES

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

- 1 **Convey a dedication to all learners—especially those historically marginalized and/or least served by public higher education—reaching college, career, and civic readiness.**
- 2 **Demonstrate an orientation toward and commitment to a personalized, learner-centered vision for teaching and learning.**
- 3 **Engage in deliberate practices of adapting and modeling persistence and a growth mind-set.**
- 4 **Facilitate and prioritize shifting to and maintaining a learner-centered culture.**
- 5 **Demonstrate an orientation toward and commitment to lifelong professional learning.**
- 6 **Analyze evidence to improve personal practices.**

## Interpersonal Domain / NEED TO RELATE

The INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN comprises the generalized ability to “express ideas and interpret and respond to messages from others.”<sup>3</sup> Encapsulating personalized, learner-centered educators’ **need to relate**, this domain includes the social, personal, and leadership skills to foster beneficial relationships with students, peers, and the greater community.

### INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCIES

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

- 1 **Design, strengthen, and participate in positive learning environments (e.g., school and classroom culture) that support individual and collaborative learning.**
- 2 **Build strong relationships that contribute to individual and collective success.**
- 3 **Contribute to college and career access and success for all learners, particularly those historically marginalized and/or least served by public higher education due to differences in background, demographics, learning style, or culture.**
- 4 **Seek appropriate individual or shared leadership roles to continue professional growth, advancement, and increasing responsibility for student learning and advancement.**

<sup>2,3</sup> Definitions of the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains for students adapted from Pellegrino, James & Margaret L. Hilton, eds. 2012. Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

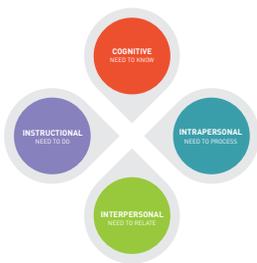
## Instructional Domain / NEED TO DO

Skills in the INSTRUCTIONAL DOMAIN describe what personalized, learner-centered educators **need to do** to bring distinctly learner-centered pedagogical techniques into the classroom. These include creating engaging and relevant curricula, managing classroom dynamics, and using instructional approaches and methods that build toward and assess mastery.

### INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCIES

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

- 1 Use a mastery approach to learning.
- 2 Use assessment and data as tools for learning.
- 3 Customize the learning experience.
- 4 Promote student agency and ownership with regard to learning.
- 5 Provide opportunities for anytime, anywhere and real-world learning tied to learning objectives and standards.
- 6 Develop and facilitate project-based learning experiences.
- 7 Use collaborative group work.
- 8 Use technology in service of learning.



The complete *Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-Centered Teaching* includes competency indicators, a glossary of terms, and a crosswalk with the InTASC standards. Access the online version at <http://studentsatthecenterhub.org/educatorcompetencies/>

#### Suggested citation

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