



CompetencyWorks is an initiative of the Aurora Institute that provides information and knowledge about competency-based education in the K-12 education system. Drawing on lessons learned by innovators and early adopters, *CompetencyWorks* is an online resource for sharing knowledge, original research, policy advances, and a variety of field perspectives. *CompetencyWorks* provides an informative blog with practitioner knowledge on key topics and papers on emerging issues, with resources curated from across the field of K-12 competency-based education.

What Is Competency-Based Education?

The field of K-12 competency-based education is expanding, and knowledge is growing. From 2017 to 2019, *CompetencyWorks* engaged in a multi-stage, participatory process to update the 2011 working definition.

The revised 2019 definition of competency-based education is:

1. Students are empowered daily to make important decisions about their learning experiences, how they will create and apply knowledge, and how they will demonstrate their learning.
2. Assessment is a meaningful, positive, and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable evidence.
3. Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
4. Students progress based on evidence of mastery, not seat time.
5. Students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing.
6. Strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of schools and education systems.
7. Rigorous, common expectations for learning (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable.

A competency-based school or district should implement all seven elements of the definition. Strong implementation also requires policies, pedagogy, structures, and culture that support every student in developing essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

CompetencyWorks History

CompetencyWorks was founded in 2012 by Susan Patrick, President/CEO of the Aurora Institute (formerly iNACOL), and Chris Sturgis of LearningEdge (formerly of MetisNet). The initiative was initially focused on field-building and creating opportunities for the voices of innovators to shape the field. Early activities included creating a working definition of competency-based education, supporting networks of innovators and new organizations in the field, establishing a CBE strand at the Aurora Institute Symposium, and developing and disseminating knowledge through the *CompetencyWorks* webpage, wiki, papers, blog posts, and webinars.

As the field has developed, the role of *CompetencyWorks* has expanded to include describing the work of innovative districts in more depth, identifying and responding to questions and emerging issues from the field, providing light coordination across diverse organizations in the field, hosting briefings for stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, funders, district leaders, and organizations), providing policy development and advocacy, and intervening on issues that are creating vulnerability or confusion within the field.

CompetencyWorks Manager

Eliot Levine
elevine@aurora-institute.org



The mission of AURORA INSTITUTE is to drive the transformation of education systems and accelerate the advancement of breakthrough policies and practices to ensure high-quality learning for all.

1934 Old Gallows Road, Suite 350
Vienna, VA 22182 -4040

ph. 703.752.6216
fx. 703.752.6201



www.aurora-institute.org