

# Aligning Standards for Competency-Based Education

The following is an excerpt from our ebook, *Transforming Learning: A Personalized Approach to Competency-Based Education*. We invite you to download the entire book by [clicking here](#).

When transitioning to competency-based education, many educators worry about the transition from traditional to skills-based standards.

There's no need to stress: Setting CBE standards will feel familiar to any educator who's recently designed their curriculum to reflect state or national standards. Start by unpacking the expectations that have already been set for student success, and then clearly identify learning objectives, expectations, and evidence of mastery.

If you work in K-12, you may have the advantage of broad, sweeping standards and common institutional goals.

But if you're in higher ed, you may find that there are few common goals or institutional objectives that provide "guardrails" that would aid in a smooth transition. Without those, competency development can be slow, with significant gaps in adoption.

In this case, rely on your subject matter experts within departments. Many majors and programs rely on predetermined standards set by professional certification requirements, which can frame the writing of competencies.

For example, future Principals must meet licensure requirements set out by the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL). Many schools of education use these standards as a basis for student-driven, competency-based programs, because they're stringent and consistent.

Regardless of any guardrails or SMEs at your disposal, you'll want to remember that the best competency statements:

- Transcend the time students spends in class.
- Ask students to demonstrate the skills, abilities and knowledge they can use throughout their lives.
- Create performance indicators based on state and/or National Standards (CCSS, C3, NGSS, industry standards).
- Include performance tasks or criteria that reflect performance indicators, and provide multiple opportunities for mastery demonstration.

## Why K-12 Educators Have an Advantage

“ There are many common school and state goals that work across disciplines to help identify the right competencies for schools, grades, or courses. For example, Common Core, Smarter Balanced Achievement Testing, and school-wide literacy all identify major overarching goals and help schools formulate their competencies. ”

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## Measuring Student Success in CBE



COMPETENCY STATEMENTS



PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



CRITERIA