

Exeter High School Competency-Based Education Summary--January 2017

Where We Are Now:

The movement towards competency-based education at Exeter High School has been an ongoing journey for the last four to five years. It will continue to be on the forefront of our professional vision as a school and fundamental to our academic, social, and civic expectations for students. The foundation has been set to move forward with this worthwhile endeavor.

Course competencies and learning targets, also known as ‘I Can’ statements, are developed. Faculty is now focused on writing performance tasks that align to the competencies. These assessments measure students’ ability to demonstrate understanding by applying rigorous content-based skills to real world problems. Faculty teams have reworked common summative assessments to ensure students acquire the same essential knowledge and skills and have their work measured according to the same criteria. Now more than ever, we feel secure that if a student is successful on all course assessments, then he or she demonstrates proficiency and has met course competencies.

Parallel to course competencies, EHS faculty also assess students on *New Hampshire Work Study Practices*, which are college and career readiness traits important for future success. Communication, creativity, collaboration, and self-direction skills are measured and reported. These habits of mind are essential to the core values of our school and what is expected of a graduate of Exeter High School. Common rubrics have been developed and implemented by faculty.

What We Are Working On:

We are currently reflecting on and progressing on the following questions as a school:

- How do we best allow students to relearn and retake assessments, while reinforcing the importance of timely preparation? How do we support struggling learners who cannot sufficiently demonstrate understanding of a course competency?
- What determines a “sufficient” level of understanding for a student? When do we declare a student is proficient? Is it a certain grade that must be consistently attained or an average of all their grades? Can a student pass a class (D=60 or above) but still have competencies to demonstrate in order to receive the credit?
- How do we effectively report out to stakeholders student progress towards meeting course competencies and work study practices, while staying true to the traditional grading system we have valued at Exeter High School?
- How do we individualize our instructional practices and continue to find innovative ways to encourage student ownership of learning?

Where We Are Going:

Our intention is to answer the above questions and continue to work with the school community to effectively provide a high quality education to all our students. It is critical this education continues to open doors and provide opportunities, no matter where a student’s individual path takes them.

While course competencies are important for day-to-day success at EHS, they are part of a much bigger structure, namely *Exeter High School Graduation Competencies*. Currently under development by our K-12 Curriculum Committees, graduation competencies are culminating content-based knowledge and skills that all graduates of EHS are expected to exhibit. Along with the rest of the K-12 community, EHS will continue to examine the contribution each course makes to prepare our students to receive an Exeter High School diploma.