



# Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE)

An analysis of the value of continuing with an application for the  
Raymond School District

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the members of the Competency Based Education Committee for their work and diligence in relation to our consideration of a PACE application for the Raymond School District:

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*Special Thanks to those individuals who offered to help develop this presentation:  
Emily Pattison, Marlene Jones, Dana Zulager, Mike Whaland, Bob Bickford, Laura Yacek*





# Background

## Competency Education Movement

## History of NH Competency Education

- NH Business & Industry Association Recommends HS Competency Transcript 1997
- HS Graduation by Competency 2005; 2008
- NH K-12 Nationally Aligned Competencies
  - ELA (2012)
  - Math (2012)
  - Science (2014)
  - Work Study Practices ( 2014)
  - The Arts (2015)
- 2014: New Minimum Standards establishing K-12 Competency Education by 2017



# Competency Based Education

## What is it?

- Shift from culture of teaching to culture of learning, including academics, skills, and dispositions.
- Range of learning experiences; school, online, community.
- Progression of learning focuses on mastery and transferable learning objectives.
- Flexible groupings and multiple pathways support; customized and differentiated learning.
- Formative assessments guide daily instruction, summative assessments and performance assessments indicate mastery. Taken when ready and offer multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery.
- Grading reflects degree of mastery, if course credit is not earned specific competencies are re-learned instead of entire course.



# Raymond School District

## Steps we have taken toward competency based education

Since 2009, as guided by the Raymond School District Strategic Plan, the District has been laying the groundwork for the successful implementation of Competency Based Education. Most notably, teachers at all levels and subject areas were required to write course level competencies K-12.

- District Grading Committee 2010-2013
- Standards Based Grading 2013-2014
- Competency Based Education Committee 2015-Present
  - CBE Design Studio
  - CBE Research
  - Adoption of NGSS & C3
  - K-12 Competency Development
  - PACE Design Studio



# Current competency based education work

## Steps we are taking now

This year our movement toward competency based grading continues as educators work to create rubrics, curriculum guides and performance assessments based on competencies.

Educators are working to improve and refine the K-12 competencies.

A test server has been established so that all competencies can be uploaded into PowerSchool in a way that is translatable to updated, competency based report card formats.

Educators will test the new system to work out any glitches, and changes to grading practices will be communicated systematically to stakeholders prior to implementation.



## **Our longer-term vision of competency based education**

**Where are we headed in the next five years?** The Raymond School District will fully implement, at all levels, a well developed competency based education model that provides a guaranteed and viable curriculum and promotes high levels of student and engagement and rigor. Relevant attributes of our school system will be common performance assessments, a collaborative professional environment that encourages growth in students and teachers alike, and competency based grading that separately assesses work habits that students need to be successful in school and life.

**PACE is being considered as a potential option to help us realize our vision.**



**What is PACE?**







# The basics...

## New Hampshire Performance Assessment of Competency Education

- Builds on the state's competency based work
- Accountability Strategy that focuses on locally developed common performance assessments.
- PACE is centered around performance assessments
- Deeper learning through competency education.
- Integrated into students' day to day work.
- NH PACE Districts Report On:
  - ELA
  - Math
  - Science
  - Work Study Practices
- Further development:
  - Social Studies
  - The Arts
  - CTE

# Other information...



- Beginning in 2012 All NH Districts invited to participate
  - Intensive training and local commitment
  - Partial funding
  - Large scale commitment by administrators and teachers
- National Context
  - 10 Advanced States Implementing Competency Based Education
    - NH (PACE), VT, ME, OH, IA, CO, UT, AZ, ID, OR
    - NH is the most advanced state to move fully down this path
- State Context
  - PACE School Districts in 2016-2017
    - Epping
    - Rochester
    - Sanborn
    - Souhegan
    - Concord
    - Monroe
    - Pittsfield
    - SAU 35

# How 'ready' is Raymond?

(See readiness rubric)



# The work of our committee

During 2016-17 school year, the competency Based Education Committee was tasked to develop answers to the questions on the PACE Application.

The committee broke into subgroups to gather the information needed to appropriately answer each question.

Using the information provided by the committee, the draft application was later refined and put into paragraph format by the committee Chair..

Discussed and analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of PACE; outlined the challenges of engaging in PACE as well as the challenges that we will face if we don't become a PACE District.

The group talked with key professionals in PACE districts to learn the pros and cons of participation; they also, gathered information about PACE and researched alternatives.

Members engaged in many valuable and productive professional deliberative discussions.



## Recommendation of the Committee

Based on our work and analysis, the recommendation of the committee is that the **Raymond School District should submit an application to become a PACE district after we have accomplished some essential tasks that will ensure that we are at an acceptable level of readiness to successfully implement a PACE model.** The suggested timeline for submitting an application is early 2019. Our goal is to enter PACE as a Tier 2 District.

*The remainder of this presentation will describe how we arrived at our recommendation, what we must do in order to position ourselves appropriately to submit a PACE application, and general timelines for accomplishment.*



# Advantages of PACE

- Emphasizes work study practices.
- Focus on real world application of skills & knowledge.
- Increased opportunities for student choice and engagement.
- Teaching become less isolated and increases cross-content concepts.
- Aligned with strategic plan goals:
  - Competency Based Grading
  - Flexible Student Schedules
  - Parent Awareness of Importance of Education
- State Funded.
- Increased opportunity for relearning and reteaching.



# Additional Advantages of PACE

- Reduces Standardized Testing
- College and Career Readiness Performance Assessments emphasize rigor and depth of knowledge.
- Emphasizes knowledge and skill progression based on proficiency.
- Support from state.
  - Professional Development
  - Funding
  - Collaboration
  - Dedicated time for reflective practice..
- Provides structure and timeline to move forward with initiative.



# Challenges of PACE

- Requires a long-term commitment (many years).
- PACE is a huge initiative at all levels (especially at tier one); too many initiatives at once may adversely impact quality of work.
- Current foundational priorities in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Grass roots support from school system and community is needed.
- Significant teacher time out of the classroom.
  - Vetting and calibrating assessments.
- Public Relations related to PACE and communication with community.
- Our schools are at varying stages of development in terms of CBE Number of current initiatives.





# What if we don't do PACE?

- Continue to build systems and supports in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
  - RTI
  - Vertically and Horizontally Aligned Curriculum
  - Curriculum Templates
  - Curriculum Documents
  - Test Server
  - Public Relations and Communicate to Parents and Community
- The District will need to develop and implement its own action plan to transition fully to competency based education.



## **Are there alternatives to PACE?**

PACE NH is leading the way nationally; there are no other models available at this time that are truly comparable to PACE.

Other school improvement models do exist, but they are more global/comprehensive in nature (Ex. Future Ready Schools), and do not focus solely on competency based education.

One alternative to PACE is to continue to move toward increasingly refined competency based education practices and quality performance assessments *on our own*, without the structure and supports inherent in PACE.



# Challenges of Becoming a PACE District Now

A need for all teachers to have consistent common planning time at all levels.

Very limited time for professional development for teachers; inconsistent access to substitutes for required teacher release-time.

A need for more curriculum alignment (vertically and horizontally) and more common curriculum based assessments.

Competency based education here is in a very formative stage; we need to expand and strengthen our practices in relation to competency based grading.



# More Challenges Associated with Becoming a PACE District **Now**

A need to build excitement and understanding among stakeholders about how PACE could help move our District forward.

Competencies are now inconsistently implemented across the District.

Teachers across the District need training in developing rubrics and Quality Performance Assessments.

Time for the PACE District team to meet this spring is very limited.

Work-study practices are not identified across the District or reported on consistently.



# Value of PACE for Raymond

PACE provides a structure for sustainable school improvement that emphasizes relevance and rigor through high quality performance assessment that require students to problem-solve and actively apply skills that they have acquired in creative ways.

PACE is a mechanism for our District to receive systematic professional learning opportunities that encourage collaboration and teacher growth to continually improve the educational opportunities provided to students.

PACE is a long term commitment that will serve to sustain and support our focus on Competency Based Education over a period of many years.

PACE can serve as a unifying factor across all of our schools; philosophy and overarching practices will promote consistency and flow K-12.

**How can we set ourselves  
up for success with  
PACE?**





# Steps to Prepare for Success with PACE

Begin competency based grading at the *district* level.

Provide informational sessions and employ other communication strategies to build understanding of PACE in the greater educational community.

Consistent common planning time for teachers.

Work study practices identified and integrated into the curriculum and reported.

**Adjusting school calendar** to allow for meaningful professional development without impacting time with students.

Strengthen guaranteed and viable curriculum at all levels through collaboration by:

- Refining curriculum documents to include scope and sequence.

- Develop common assessments for units of study; leverage PLCs to examine results.

- Provide system-wide training regarding quality performance assessments.

# Timelines for Preparatory Work

Late January 2019 - Submit PACE Application to DOE & continue to work on vertical alignment of competencies, powers standards, supporting standards, and work study habits

Early Spring 2019 - Coordinate and begin work with State PACE Representatives and begin implementation of test server for teachers to pilot competency based grading. Develop district wide curriculum template that supports PACE and district philosophy. Strengthen RTI systems and supports across the district.

Spring 2019 - Evaluate our current standards-based work and continue with ongoing vertical alignment and increase professional development in quality performance assessments and creating rubrics. In collaboration with PACE representatives, create a structured action plan for district-wide transition to PACE. Formalize train the trainer model and how it will be implemented in our district. Increase and formalize informational sessions to parents and community about competency based education.

Summer/Fall 2019 - Provide professional development for all staff in the areas of PACE, creating common language around competency based systems, reporting, and instructional practices. Create a 3-5 year curriculum, instruction, and assessment plan.

Winter 2019 - Continue to develop quality performance assessments, develop rubrics, and begin calibration process.





# The PACE Application *Form*

Provided as a separate document

Application includes basic district information and seven narrative questions that center on issues such as:

WHY do we want to become a PACE district?

What are our current practices and recent efforts?

How do we hope to benefit from PACE?

What is our expected timeline to transition to PACE?

# Questions

PACE and the Raymond School District