

OVERVIEW: Senate File 485 explicitly permits competency-based education in statute and allows a school district or charter school to adopt a locally-developed competency-based education plan. The bill does not mandate districts or public schools to implement competency-based education, but rather legitimizes it and creates the opportunity for those who are ready. Further, it does not waive MCA requirements or allow districts to collect revenue for students in excess of 1.0 ADM.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SF 485? The purpose of the bill is to improve educational outcomes for students by advancing their mastery of knowledge and skills. The bill does this by creating flexibility for districts and schools to orient their programs around competencies—which are aligned to standards—rather than simply moving students along and awarding credits based primarily on seat time.

WHY THIS BILL IS NEEDED? After speaking with teachers and administrators in numerous districts around the state, we heard that it was important for statute to be amended to make it explicit that public schools can certify standards and award credit to students who demonstrate mastery of competencies that are aligned to state standards, regardless of their time in classroom instruction.

WHAT HAS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CBE PLAN? Each locally adopted plan must include a description of the following in its World's Best Workforce long-term strategic plan and/or annual public report:

- How learning outcomes emphasize mastery of competencies, including required state standards, and align with the goals in its World's Best Workforce plan.
- How competencies include explicit and measurable student learning objectives that provide transparency.
- How students master competencies along a personalized and flexible pathway. A student may demonstrate their mastery of competencies through their performance of the competencies, application of the competencies, or both.
- How local assessments are used to personalize learning experiences for a student.
- How students receive timely and personalized support based on their individual learning needs.

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