MBLC School Leader Survey

Aurora Institute for the Washington State Board of Education

Cohort 1, Year 2 – March 2023

Thank you for taking this survey. Its purpose is to learn from administrators in schools that are participating in Washington's Mastery-Based Learning Collaborative (MBLC).

We are not evaluating you, your students, your staff, or your school, and there are no correct or incorrect answers to the survey questions. Implementing mastery-based learning and culturally responsive-sustaining education deeply takes years of effort, and different MBLC schools and staff are at different stages of this journey. This survey seeks to understand where everyone is on that journey now, which will help us understand changes in the years ahead. We have explained some key terms, but if there's anything unfamiliar, please respond to the best of your ability.

The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. It is voluntary and confidential. Your participation serves as your consent for your responses to be used in the study. We will not share your individual responses with anyone. If you do not want to answer a question, you may skip it, but your perspective is important, so we hope you will answer every question.

Thank you for contributing to the MBLC's efforts to improve learning for all students!

Key Terms Used in the Survey

Different MBLC schools use different terms for various education elements. The terms used in the rest of the survey for these elements are described next.

Learning Outcomes are knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate. (Also known as "standards," "competencies," "learning targets," and "learning objectives.")

Mastery and **Competency** are used interchangeably for when students have demonstrated that they have met learning outcomes at a satisfactory level.

Courses are opportunities for students to participate in a set of learning tasks and other activities designed to advance their knowledge and skills in a specific subject or skill area. (Also known as a "class," "seminar," "competency set," etc.)

Teachers are adults who facilitate student learning in school settings. This includes adults who may be called "educators" or "advisors."

Credits are units of measure that indicate whether a student has successfully satisfied course requirements and/or demonstrated mastery of a set of learning outcomes.

About You and Your School

Are you a school administrator or guidance counselor?
- Administrator
- Guidance counselor
- Leading my school's MBLC team but not an administrator or guidance counselor
- None of the above

[Skip Logic] If "None of the above," skip to thank you / end-of-survey message.

What is your school?
- Dropdown list of MBLC schools

How many years have you been an administrator at this school?
- One year or less
- Two to three years
- Four to five years
- Five or more years

How many years have you been an administrator at this school and any previous schools combined?
- One year or less
- Two to three years
- Four to five years
- Five or more years

Schools in the MBLC are working toward deeper implementation of **mastery-based learning** (MBL). In MBL, students are able to advance at different paces as they master knowledge, skills, and dispositions tied to state learning standards. They demonstrate mastery through meaningful, authentic assessments. Students take ownership of their learning and receive timely, differentiated support based on their needs and interests.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about mastery-based learning in your school?

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Most teachers and school leaders at our school are familiar with the main principles of MBL.					
I support my school's intention to implement MBL at progressively deeper levels over the next several years.					
The parents/guardians of our students support our school's intention to implement MBL deeply.					
Our school is already implementing MBL deeply.					

Schools in the MBLC are also working toward deeper implementation of **culturally responsive-sustaining education** (CRSE). The aim of CRSE is to elevate historically marginalized voices and affirm racial, cultural, and linguistic identities. CRSE prepares students for rigorous learning, connecting across differences, and becoming agents of positive social change.

There are <u>many</u> ways that CRSE can happen in schools, but a few brief examples are:
- A variety of instructional strategies are used to connect with different students' strengths, needs, and interests.
- Teachers help students develop a growth mindset and build on students' cultural identities and knowledge to help them engage with new concepts.
- High-quality instructional materials reflect diversity of race, ethnicity, language, gender, etc. and prominently display pictures of diverse students, their families, and their community.
- Teachers name and critically reflect on inequities in society and schooling in ways that make sense developmentally for students.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about culturally responsive-sustaining education (CRSE) in your school?

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Most teachers and school leaders at our school are familiar with the main principles of CRSE.					
I support my school's intention to implement CRSE at progressively deeper levels over the next several years.					
The parents/guardians of our students support our school's intention to implement CRSE deeply.					
Curriculum and materials provided to teachers support culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogy.					
Teachers are provided with sufficient resources and supports to deepen their cultural competence.					
Our school is already implementing CRSE deeply.					

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The teacher schedule includes sufficient time and resources to ensure the effective planning and delivery of culturally responsive, mastery-based learning.					
The school uses data to implement effective and well-considered plans to address inequitable student access to opportunities.					
The school uses data to implement effective and well-considered plans to address inequitable student outcomes.					

Please describe your level of preparedness to lead your school in implementing CRSE practices.

	Not Prepared	A Little Prepared	Moderately Prepared	Very Prepared
How well prepared are you to lead your school in implementing CRSE practices today?				
How well prepared were you to lead your school in implementing CRSE practices at the beginning of this school year?				

Learning and Assessment Policies and Practices

Some schools organize student learning around **"competencies"** that describe the skills and knowledge students are expected to master. The competencies draw higher-level connections across content areas, such as "Students will compose informative text to clearly convey focused ideas and information." Each competency also has subcomponents or learning outcomes that are typically based on state standards.

It often takes years to make the shift to organizing learning around competencies. Where is your school in the process of organizing learning around competencies?
   a. We do not plan to organize learning around competencies.
   b. We plan to shift to competencies but haven't started yet.
   c. Early phase of shifting to competencies.
   d. Intermediate phase of shifting to competencies.
   e. Fully organizing learning around competencies.
   f. I don't know where our school is in this process.

[skip logic: If selected options a, b, or f above, skip the two questions in the following table.]

To what extent is each of the following statements true about your school's competencies?

	Never True	Occasionally True	Often True	True Most of the Time	Always True
The competencies are expressed in language that students can readily understand.					
Competencies are organized into learning progressions that reflect students' deeper knowledge and skills over time.					

How do students in your school and their families know what knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to receive credit in their courses?

	Never True	Occasionally True	Often True	True Most of the Time	Always True
Students receive a list of learning outcomes they must meet to pass and get credit.					
All students have learning outcomes listed in an individual or personalized learning plan (not just students with IEPs).					
Students can track their level of progress on each learning outcome at any time, such as through an online platform.					
Families can track their student's level of progress on each learning outcome at any time, such as through an online platform.					
Teachers meet one-on-one with each of their students to discuss learning outcomes.					

We want to learn about your school's policies and preferences related to **summative assessments** – such as end-of-unit tests or performance-based assessments that assess a student's final level of learning on a given set of learning outcomes and become part of their final grade.

How would you describe your school's policies and preferences about the following summative assessment practices at the end of a unit, project, or course?

	Not Allowed	Allowed, But Not Encouraged	Encouraged	Strongly Encouraged	Required
Students can choose how they want to be assessed from multiple options (such as taking a written or verbal test, writing a paper, completing a project, making a presentation, etc.)					
Students are able to take summative assessments when they are ready to demonstrate their learning, even if that is earlier or later than other students do the same.					

How would you describe your school's policies and preferences about teachers taking the following actions when students do not pass (or meet minimum performance levels on) summative assessments in a class or course?

	Not Allowed	Allowed But Not Encouraged	Encouraged	Strongly Encouraged	Required
Allow the student to demonstrate understanding using a different type of assessment.					
Allow the student to retake or revise the assessment at a later date with no penalty for needing the reassessment.					
Allow the student to retake or revise the assessment at a later date, but with a penalty (i.e., reducing their grade) because they didn't pass the first time.					
Arrange for the student to receive additional instructional support (such as during school, after school, or during the summer).					

When determining whether a student will pass and receive credit for a course (or set of learning outcomes), what is your school's policy about the maximum amount that teachers are allowed to count each of the following toward the final grade?

	Not allowed to count toward course grade	Allowed to count up to 10% of course grade	Allowed to count up to 20% of course grade	Allowed to count more than 20% of course grade	School does not have a policy about this
Attendance					
Participation in class					
Meeting deadlines (i.e., the grade is lowered if work is not submitted by a date set by the teacher).					
Student performance on formative assessments (i.e., practices that monitor student progress and help students reflect on their progress).					
Student performance on summative assessments (i.e., demonstrating mastery of learning outcomes).					

How much do the following statements reflect current schoolwide policies and practices in your school?

	Never True	Occasionally True	Often True	True Most of the Time	Always True
Students can pass and get credit as soon as they meet all required learning outcomes in a class or course, even if it's not the end of a marking period or school year.					
Students are placed in classes based on the level of mastery they have demonstrated, not based on their age or grade level.					
Students can earn full course credit toward in-school promotion or graduation for courses they take outside of school, such as summer, online, or college courses.					
Students can earn school credit for demonstrating mastery of learning outcomes through activities they do outside of school, such as independent or group projects or activities, service learning, or work-based learning.					

How true are the following statements about your school's grading practices?

	Never True	Occasionally True	Often True	True Most of the Time	Always True
Student progress is reported to students and families with traditional letter grades (A-F).					
Student progress is reported to students and families on whether or not the student has demonstrated mastery of specific learning outcomes.					
Students at our school do not "fail" courses or have to "repeat" a grade level. Instead, they receive credit for learning outcomes they have already mastered, and they need to work toward mastery of the remaining learning outcomes.					
To pass and receive credit, students must demonstrate mastery of ALL learning outcomes in a course. For example, if they have an "F" or "Insufficient Evidence" grade on some learning outcomes, they have to improve their mastery of those learning outcomes, even if they have an "A" or "Meeting" grade on all of the other learning outcomes in the course.					

How often does your school offer scheduled intervention/enrichment blocks where students can receive personalized supports from their teachers or other school personnel?
- Never
- Less Than Once Per Month
- At Least Once Per Month
- Once Per Week
- Twice or More Per Week

In addition to academic content knowledge, some schools focus on **"habits of success"** such as communication, collaboration, self-direction, and others. (Some schools call these "personal success skills," "work habits," "habits of work and learning (HOWLs)," "social-emotional skills, and other names.)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Helping students build habits of success is a high priority for my school.					

Student progress on developing habits of success (such as communication, collaboration, self-direction, or others) is reported to students and/or families in the following ways: (check all that apply)

     a. Using numeric or letter grades.
     b. Using categories such as "developing," "applying," and "extending" or similar descriptive terms.
     c. Using written comments that are customized to each student.
     d. Progress on habits of success is not reported to students or families.

Please describe your level of preparedness to lead your school in implementing mastery-based learning practices.

	Not Prepared	A Little Prepared	Moderately Prepared	Very Prepared
How well prepared are you to lead your school in implementing MBL practices today?				
How well prepared were you to lead your school in implementing MBL practices at the beginning of this school year?				

Resources for Deepening Mastery-Based Learning

To deepen your school's implementation of mastery-based learning and culturally responsive-sustaining education, how would you rate the relative investment of time, resources, and/or supports needed in the following areas?

	Lower Need	Moderate Need	Highest Need
Building staff understanding of what MBL and CRSE are.			
Increasing staff's belief in the importance of MBL and CRSE.			
Increasing families' belief in the importance of MBL and CRSE.			
Building curriculum and assessments that support MBL and CRSE.			
Revising grading and reporting procedures to support MBL and CRSE.			
Revising school policies to support MBL and CRSE.			
Creating a school schedule that supports MBL and CRSE.			

To deepen your school's implementation of mastery-based learning and culturally responsive-sustaining education, how would you rate the relative investment of time, resources, and/or supports needed in the following areas?

	Lower Need	Moderate Need	Highest Need
Engaging in sufficient professional learning to deepen MBL and CRSE.			
Obtaining or integrating technology resources that support MBL and CRSE.			
Devoting sufficient time to deepening MBL and CRSE.			
Securing funding needed to implement MBL and CRSE.			
Securing staff needed to support MBL and CRSE implementation (such as coaches or instructional leaders).			
Obtaining support for MBL and CRSE from district administrators and/or the school board.			

In your school's professional learning activities this year, how useful were the following topics for deepening your school's work in mastery-based learning and/or culturally responsive-sustaining education?

	Not Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful	Not Addressed
Implementing strategies that give students more voice and choice in their learning.				
Implementing project-based learning.				
Implementing multidisciplinary learning with collaboration between teachers.				
Using a variety of formative assessments.				
Using a variety of summative assessments, including performance-based assessments.				

In your school's professional learning activities this year, how useful were the following topics for deepening your school's work in mastery-based learning and/or culturally responsive-sustaining education?

	Not Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful	Not Addressed
Implementing strategies for equitable, culturally responsive-sustaining education.				
Managing a learning environment where students are working at different paces and on different learning outcomes.				
Developing personalized learning goals with and for students.				
Organizing learning around higher-level competencies that describe the transferable knowledge and skills students are expected to master.				
Helping students develop "habits of success" such as communication, collaboration, self-direction, etc.				

What are three or more of the most important factors that are facilitating your school's transition to mastery-based learning?

What are three or more of the most important challenges you face or supports you need to facilitate your school's transition to mastery-based learning?

As a final question, we welcome any other comments you want to share related to your school's MBL/CRSE journey.

This is the end of the survey.

Thank you very much for sharing your opinions and experiences, which will support MBLC schools and inform mastery-based learning efforts in Washington and beyond. To learn more, visit the MBLC website.

End-of-Survey Message If Responded "None of the Above" to Question 1

Thank you for your willingness to participate, but this survey is intended for administrators, guidance counselors, and leaders of MBLC school teams. To learn more about mastery-based learning in Washington, visit the MBLC website.

Acknowledgments

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