

# What's Next for Student-Centered Learning: How States Can Leverage the Lessons of the Pandemic to Modernize K-12 Education

January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ 3:00pm ET



# Housekeeping

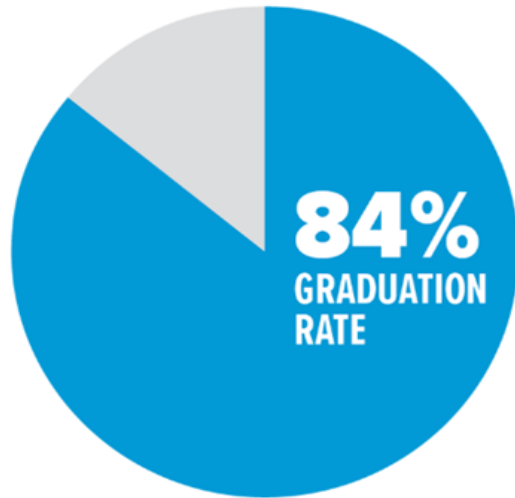
- You have been muted but if you'd like to ask a questions, please type them into the chat box
- We are recording this webinar and it along with resources will be shared with attendees

# Personalized & Student-Centered Learning Overview

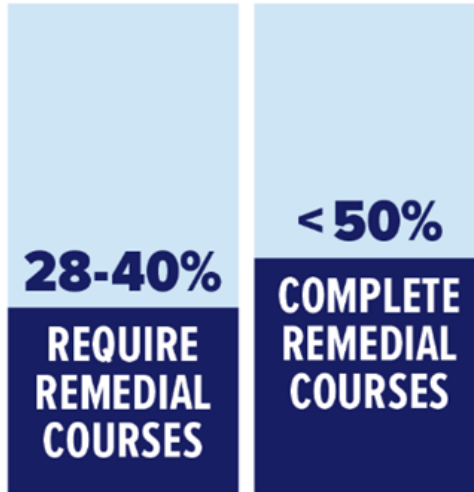


# Why Personalized & Student-Centered Learning?

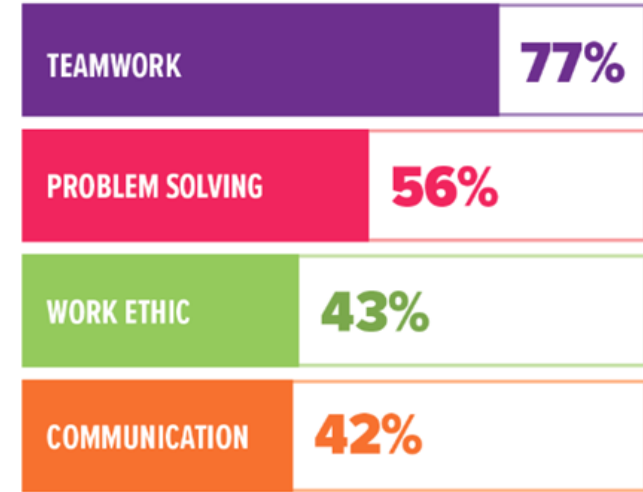
## GAPS IN THE CURRENT SYSTEM



At a record high, 84 percent of public high school students reach graduation, as measured by the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

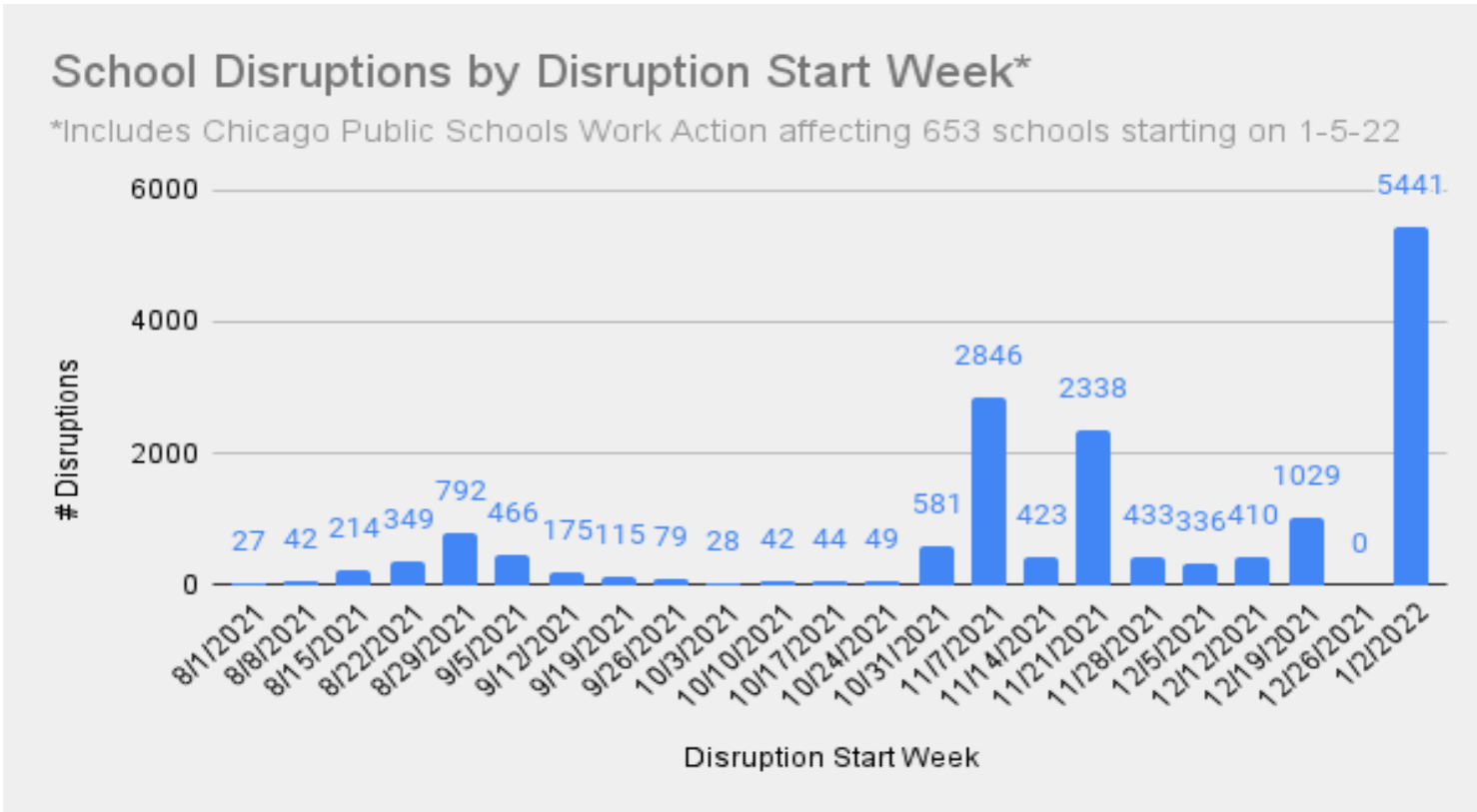


According to the National Conference on State Legislators, 28-40 percent of all first-time undergraduates enroll in at least one remedial course. Less than 50 percent of students complete their remedial courses.



Of the career readiness competencies employers deemed as essential in research from the National Association of Colleges and Employers, they did not rate new graduates as proficient in many.

# COVID Response & Recovery



Students nationally have had massively different educational experiences the previous two years. A one-size-fits all system won't meet their unique needs.

Personalization is essential in responding to the pandemic's impact on children.

\* A pandemic related school disruption is defined as a school moving away from regular in-person instruction caused in some way by the pandemic





# Terms and Definitions

# What It Is: Different Terms for Similar Ideas

- **Personalized Learning**
- **Student-Centered Learning**
- **Competency-based Learning & Education**
- **Proficiency-based Learning**
- **Mastery-based Learning**





# Personalized Learning

Engaging learning experiences  
customized to each student's  
strengths, needs and interests.

# Competency-Based Education

Students advance to higher levels of learning when they demonstrate competency of concepts and skills regardless of time, place, or pace.

# What is Personalized, Competency-Based Learning?

- Learner agency
- Timely, actionable assessments
- Customized learner supports
- Progression upon mastery
- Flexible learning paths
- Strategies and systems to ensure equity
- Rigorous academic and social-emotional learning targets

*Adapted from the Aurora Institute*





# Common State Policy Obstacles & Opportunities

- Seat Time/Hours of Instruction Policies
- Accountability & Assessment Systems
- Graduation Requirements
- Funding Systems
- Connection to College & Career Opportunities
- Educator Training



# Recent Momentum Towards Personalized & Student-Centered Learning

At least....

- **10 states** expanded flexibilities around evidence of learning
- **14 states** are rethinking accountability & assessment systems
- **16 states** expanded student support systems
- **12 states** developed educator & technology capacity

**Trending:** task forces, study groups, expanded flexibilities, and innovation zones



# Mapping State Trends Resources

## EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

### How States Are Rethinking Instructional Time and Attendance Policies in the COVID-19 Era

In April 2020, KnowledgeWorks published policy guidance in response to the school closures brought on by COVID-19, *Restoring Hope and Seizing Opportunity in the Face of Crisis*. The report highlighted both short- and long-term strategies for states to consider as they grappled with the challenges of the pandemic. A year later, we are revisiting the guidance to highlight areas where the US has begun building the momentum needed to both respond to the challenges of the past year and chart a path towards creating a more personalized K-12 education system.

#### RETHINKING

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## STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS

### How States Are Rethinking Human Capital Systems and Technology Infrastructure in the COVID-19 Era

In April 2020, KnowledgeWorks published policy guidance in response to the school closures brought on by COVID-19, *Restoring Hope and Seizing Opportunity in the Face of Crisis*. The report highlighted both short- and long-term strategies for states to consider as they grappled with the challenges of the pandemic. A year later, we are revisiting the guidance to highlight areas where the U.S. has begun building the momentum needed to both respond to the challenges of the pandemic and chart a path towards creating a more personalized K-12 education system.

#### STRENGTHENING HUMAN CAPITAL SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

At the start of 2020, states *continued* struggling with high teacher turnover rates and the need to *diversify* the educator workforce. Policymakers *proposed* investing in educator recruitment and retention strategies to address these challenges. And even though millions of students *still lacked access* to the internet at home, states had largely *closed* the connectivity gap within most school buildings.

Despite this progress, the abrupt shift to distance learning spurred by COVID-19 revealed many deficiencies lingering in these systems. The pandemic demonstrated that closing the broadband gap in schools wasn't enough – students needed access to the internet and devices outside of the school building to participate in near-universal distance learning. It also became clear that educators needed access to both training and technology to deliver high-quality virtual instruction. States worked rapidly to provide students and teachers with the resources they needed by leveraging state and federal dollars, as well as the development of public-private partnerships to create innovative policy solutions and supports.

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN LEARNING

### How States Are Rethinking Student Supports in the COVID-19 Era

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## ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING

### How States Are Rethinking Accountability and Assessment Policies in the COVID-19 Era

In April 2020, KnowledgeWorks published policy guidance in response to the school closures brought on by COVID-19, *Restoring Hope and Seizing Opportunity in the Face of Crisis*. The report highlighted both short- and long-term strategies for states to consider as they grappled with the challenges of the pandemic. A year later, we are revisiting the guidance to highlight areas where the U.S. has begun building the momentum needed to both respond to the challenges of the pandemic and chart a path towards creating a more personalized K-12 education system.

#### RETHINKING ASSESSMENTS

Prior to the pandemic, states had already begun rethinking traditional statewide assessment systems, but those required yearly under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA) reauthorization as well as in non-required subjects. While ESSA requires states to implement annual assessments to inform state accountability determinations, the law also *included* a number of provisions that states could use to *build innovative assessments systems* that better support student-centered, personalized learning. One notable example is the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA), which gives states the flexibility to pilot and scale the next generation of assessments. Five states have applied and been approved for IADA authority, and an additional state is leveraging federal funding from the Competitive State Assessment Grants program (CSAG) to plan for an application.



## MEASURING FORWARD

### EMERGING TRENDS IN K-12 ASSESSMENT INNOVATION

A significant movement is underway across the nation to design K-12 assessment systems that better equip stakeholders to provide an equitable and excellent education to each child. While some of these innovations emerged before the pandemic, the massive disruption to instruction fueled a new urgency to rethink the potential of assessments to drive better teaching and learning. States and communities are working together to create more balanced systems of assessment that better support instruction while still providing the information necessary to inform policy and resource decisions.

There is much to learn from the ideas emerging across the nation - particularly where states are trying to innovate despite limitations of federal policy. The insights and innovations emerging from this work have the potential to cast a new vision for K-12 assessment in this country.

#### KEY THEMES DRIVING ASSESSMENT INNOVATION

NEED FOR CHANGE <i>What are the most common concerns about today's assessment systems?</i>	VISION FOR CHANGE <i>What are the most common aspirations for future assessment systems?</i>
Curriculum has narrowed toward rigid test preparation	Ensure equitable teaching of foundational skills while also supporting deeper, more personalized learning
State testing data is not actionable for instruction and data from the classroom is not valued	Balance a small state assessment footprint with richer assessments that provide actionable data for students, teachers and caregivers
Instructional time lost to test preparation and testing time	Embedded into instruction to support teaching and learning
Students experience testing stress	Students engage with meaningful challenges to gauge where they are in their learning
Standardized test results are used without additional and broader indicators to evaluate schools, which can often stigmatize communities	Assessment systems are designed to be culturally responsive/sustaining to ensure that every student can see themselves in the assessment experience



# Chief Panel Conversation



**Kirsten Baesler**  
North Dakota



**Jason Glass**  
Kentucky



**Molly Spearman**  
South Carolina

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