

Seamless, In-Formative Assessment in the Music Classroom

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New Hampshire

A Department Of Education Point of View

Why competency-based assessment practices are important?

What policies exist to support competency-based assessment?

**New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NEASC
Teaching and Learning Standards
Public Secondary Schools
Standards for Accreditation**



- 1. MISSION AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING**
- 2. CURRICULUM**
- 3. INSTRUCTION**
- 4. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

A teacher who embeds assessment practices in their teaching practices... such as rubrics and clearly articulated learning goals...

Is well on their way to meeting NEASC Assessment standards.

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Add opportunities for teachers to look at assessment results, a competency-based assessment system and SmartMusic technology five out of the eight “Assessment of Student Learning” standards can be achieved.

NEASC

Teaching and Learning Standards

Assessment of Student Learning

The 1st three of five:

- For each learning activity teachers shall clarify to students the relevant school-wide academic expectations and course-specific learning goals that will be assessed.
- Teachers shall base classroom assessment of student learning on school-wide and course-specific rubrics.

- Teachers shall use varied assessment strategies to determine student knowledge, skills, and competencies and to assess student growth over time.

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Administrators who provide opportunities for teachers to discuss student work and assessment results are supporting NEASC standards...

The last two of five standards:

- Teachers shall meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of student assessments for the purposes of revising the curriculum and improving instructional strategies.
- The school's professional development program shall provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies.

New Hampshire School Approval Standards ED 306

Competency-based High School
Graduation Requirement

Extended Learning

NH Ed 306.27 High School Curriculum, Credits, Graduation Requirements, and Cocurricular Program

- By the 2008-2009 school year, the local school board shall require that a high school have in place competency assessments for all courses offered through the high school.
- By the 2008-2009 school year, the local school board shall require that a high school credit can be earned by demonstrating mastery of required competencies for the course, as approved by certified school personnel.

How are NH high schools meeting this standard?

- A very few represent a cohesive and balanced assessment system that links student's demonstration of competency to the reporting of student performance
- Many are creating course competencies and summative tasks for every course.
- Sometimes these course competencies look remarkably like learning expectations or standards.
- Others are making minor changes in language, but in actuality are not changing their habitual practice of drill, test, and grade with little on-going feedback to students or multiple opportunities to show improvement over time.

Observation: Schools and districts have much to learn about creating a balanced and cohesive competency-based assessment system and assessment literacy in general.



However, policy has forced schools to take a look at what they are doing and *work* at creating change...

For Arts programs in New Hampshire, the schools and teachers that are doing a good job (such as Campbell High School) set the standard.

Through collegial connections, professional service organizations (NHMEA, NHAEA) and opportunities provided by the Department of Education, these successful leaders are able to show others how to accomplish a coherent and balanced competency-based assessment system... despite the absence of a state-wide assessment in the arts.

The New Hampshire Definition of Extended Learning (Ed 306 rule)

- “Extended learning” means the primary acquisition of knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside of the traditional classroom methodology, including, but not limited, to:
 - (1) Independent study;
 - (2) Private instruction;
 - (3) Performing groups;
 - (4) Internships;
 - (5) Community service;
 - (6) Apprenticeships; and
 - (7) Online courses.

- Provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skill development comparable to knowledge and skill development in courses offered at the high school;
- Be available to all students.

Competency-Based Assessment: A Means to an End

An implied goal of the competency-based requirement is to change the way teachers teach and students learn.

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Competency-based assessment is a transparent process designed to operationalize covert variables into overt, observable and measurable student evidence through non-traditional assessment tasks.

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The idea is to encourage teaching that promotes skill-mastery that is transferable (generalizable).

Considerations for success:

- Provide more training in assessment literacy.
- Assure that schools using summative tasks understand that the identification of and building knowledge/skill in particular sub-skill areas is a requirement for student success when using summative assessment measures.
- Multiple measures over time provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate competency of particular skills.