District Readiness Framework

This resource offers K12 district leaders the opportunity to assess their district's capacity to implement Learning and Employment Record technologies (LERs)—or digital learning wallets—and student competency-based micro-credentials while centering the perspectives of historically and systematically excluded (HSE) learners. Based on research (e.g., Winters, 2023; Goger et al., 2022; Luckin et al., 2016; Bergson-Shilcock, 2020) and 12 interviews with leaders in competency-based micro-credential and LER implementation and feedback from K12 leaders, the following criteria have emerged. The seven categories below signal to districts what is needed to successfully implement digital credentialing and LERs for learners to pursue learning and career advancement opportunities.

Readiness for Change: The district has the resources and community buy-in for program implementation
Equity and Inclusion: HSE youth and their communities participate in program design and continuous improvement
Competency-based education: Competency—and skills—based learning and assessment is prioritized over seat time
Institutional or community partnerships: Partnerships provide learning experiences and extensions beyond K12 (e.g., dual enrollment opportunities, local workforce internships and apprenticeships, etc.)
Student advising and career support: Personalized career counseling for postsecondary pathways and internship opportunities is provided to all learners
Technology access and adoption: Unrestricted access to the internet and devices allows learners to access LERs and micro-credentials
Data security, privacy, & infrastructure: A robust data infrastructure is set up to support interoperability, learner agency, and data sharing

*HSE = (learners experiencing poverty, neurodiverse learners, English language learners, learners who are Black, Indigenous, Latina/o, etc.)

Indicators	Starting	Practicing	Sustaining
Readiness for Change	Aware of challenges learners furthest from opportunity face	Allocates and identifies resources and support to mitigate challenges that learners furthest from opportunity face	Culture of continuous improvement exists to address data and feedback from learners furthest from opportunity
	Aware of the potential benefits of implementing micro-credentials and LER technologies	Creates implementation plan for supporting the adoption of micro-credentials and LER technologies with educators and community members	Achieves collective buy-in and implements a plan to adopt and scale micro-credentials and LER technologies district-wide
	Audits existing policies and procedures to ensure student choice and ownership of their learning	Develops policies and procedures that ensure student choice and ownership of their learning data and journey	Coach student agency and ownership of learning data and journey and continually refine policies, procedures, and product use to support
Equity and Inclusion	Resources available to devote to programs supporting learners furthest from opportunity	Programming in place to support learners furthest from opportunity in transitioning to postsecondary education and career opportunities	Learners, caregivers, educators, and community partners are included in learning pathway development, and programs are widely accessible to learners
	Able to gather feedback from learners, caregivers, and educators	Actively gathering feedback and input from learners, caregivers, and educators	Feedback regularly gathered from learners, caregivers, and educators for continuous improvement
Competency-based Education	Resources available to embed competency-based learning or assessment in the classroom	Competency-based learning or assessment in one-course offering	Competency-based learning and assessment in place across multiple course offerings
	Actively facilitating conversations about using micro-credentials, competency-based digital badging, and/or learning employment record technologies	Developing micro-credentials and competency-based digital badging	Educator professional development on personalized instruction and assessment available
	Can identify professional development opportunities for educators on personalized instruction and assessment	Developing professional development and resources on personalized instruction and assessment for educators	Actively using micro-credentials or competency-based digital badging and/or has experience with learning and employment record technologies

Institutional or Community Partnerships	Identifies community-based organizations, postsecondary institutions, government agencies, or employers to partner with	Formalized partnerships with memorandum of understandings in place	District has a variety of multi-year partnerships
	Facilitates conversations with community members	Developing systems-level support to manage relationships with partners and student needs	System for supporting student needs (that are identified by the students) in place
	Identifies local partners that can provide internship opportunities and dual enrollment programs	Feedback collected from community members regularly	Designated liaisons to manage institutional and community partnerships available
		Actively creating local workforce internships or dual enrollment programs	Local workforce internship opportunities and dual enrollment programs available
Student Advising and Career Support	Resources available to train guidance counselors on personalized career counseling	Offers personalized career counseling for 1 to 2 postsecondary pathways	Offers personalized career counseling for various postsecondary pathways
	Identifies skills-based learning opportunities in their region	Offers a select number of skills-based learning opportunities	Offers skills-based learning opportunities to all students
	Shares external resources with students that can support them with job placement assistance, resume workshops, and interview preparation	Provides support to all students with job placement assistance, resume workshops, and interview preparation once or twice a year	Programming in place to support students with job placement assistance, resume workshops, and interview preparation
Technology Access and Adoption	Identifies funding resources to support students with having high-quality broadband and device access	Guarantees high-quality broadband and device access to their students in school	High-quality broadband and device access available to all students in school and out of school
	Shares external resources that can provide digital skills training	Provides in-person digital skills training and webinar-style opportunities to students and families/caregivers on an at-need basis	In-person digital skills training and webinar-style opportunities available
	Identifies staff to assist students and their families during school hours	Employs technology support staff to assist students and their families during school hours	Employs digital navigators and/or technology support staff to assist students and their families/caregivers during and after school hours
Data Security, Privacy, & Infrastructure	Resources available for in-person training on data privacy and security to students and families/caregivers	Provides in-person and webinar-style training on data privacy and security to students and families/caregivers on an at-need basis	Programming in place for regular in-person and webinar-style training on data privacy and security to students and families/caregivers
	Provides information on what data is collected when asked by students or community members	Gathers clear information on what data is collected on their website or in schools, but students and families/caregivers may have to have consistent access to the internet or transportation to go to the school to acquire the information	Clear information on what data is collected, readily available, and accessible to the public
	Identifies what platforms are interoperable with their existing systems	Develops a plan for an interoperable data infrastructure	Infrastructure in place for interoperability between platforms

References

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