“Students of all abilities will have the option to learn in rigorous and relevant real-world settings and gain high school credit for that learning, based on demonstrated mastery of predetermined course-level competencies.”

-- Supporting Student Success through Extended Learning Opportunities Initiative

INTRODUCTION

In developing structures to encourage the recognition of the diverse types of student extended learning opportunities (ELOs), it is necessary to have common methods for assessing this “uncommon” learning. To that end, a group of teachers and ELO coordinators from the NH Supporting Student Success through Extended Learning Opportunities initiative pilot sites have been working with initiative partners and Dr. Brandon Doubek from the Leadership and Learning Center to design a set of foundational rubrics for these assessments. These common assessments tools, which are intended for use in NH ELOs, will ensure that rigor and relevance are reliably applied throughout the state. This does not preclude the possibility that a district might supplement these rubrics to better meet local district needs, but these rubrics are fundamental to the common assessment of uncommon learning.

Those elements needed to maintain rigor in student work include:

- **Reflection** on their work during the process with a Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) and a mentor,
- **Research**, to increase student understanding and knowledge, a
- **Product** that demonstrates application of their targeted competencies, a
- **Presentation of Learning** where they will demonstrate their understanding of their learning.  

These rubrics are intended to be an integral part of the entire ELO process, from planning to serving as tools for both formative assessments and summative assessments. In an ELO, the student is working in an environment that is by definition personalized to their interests. The student will work with an ELO team, which will typically include the student, their parents/guardian, a highly qualified teacher (HQT) and a community mentor.

This team will use these rubrics to support the student’s goal of exploring an Essential Question and achieving targeted competencies. They will be used to guide the development of these goals and targets, act as formative descriptors and benchmarks during the ELO process, and provide the structure for assessing student success in achieving these goals at the end of the process.
EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITES, COMPETENCIES, AND STUDENT LEARNING

At the beginning of the planning process for an ELO, the learning goal(s) must be clearly stated. The development of the learning goal(s) for the student is a result of the team’s deliberation in identifying and/or creating competencies based on curriculum expectations and/or a student’s Individual Education Plan. This process is centered on student interest and desire to pursue an interest.

If competencies are specifically designed for an ELO, the competency statements should be validated using the Competency Validation Rubric.

With defined learning goals and competencies, the essential question (EQ), designed by the ELO team, is used to guide student learning throughout the experience. The important part in this plan is the relationship of the student learning to the competencies that are defined by the ELO.

The ELO Coordinator, HQT, student, parent and community partner/mentor agree on methods of formative feedback and summative assessment on the learning goals using the four rubrics.

Rubrics need to be introduced into the process early on, and are used as guides for formative assessment and feedback, providing benchmarks for student progress toward proficiency. At the end of the ELO experience, the same rubrics are used for summative assessment.

Ideally, the ELO experience is completed once students meet their learning goals.
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES in ELO ASSESSMENT

An ELO is a collaborative process. Key to the success of an ELO is student involvement in all aspects of the experience—including development of a plan and learning goals and the assessment of learning. The following describes the role of various individuals in the ELO assessment process:

ELO Coordinator
- Clarify the role of each person in the assessment process
- Provide coaching to individuals involved in the assessment process
- Ensure that the ELO assessment rubrics are utilized in all ELOs
- Ensure the student is involved in the development of the assessment process

Teacher
- Identify competencies (what the student needs to learn) with the student
- Define how the student will be assessed on those competencies with the student and with input from community partner
- Assess student’s mastery of pre-determined content (competencies), including input from community partners and students
- Oversee the ongoing and final assessment of student progress using all 4 ELO rubrics and provide frequent feedback to the student regarding progress

Community Partner/Mentor - The specific role of the community member in ELO assessment is determined at the outset with the student, teacher and ELO coordinator
- Support and coach students in their ELO experience
- Provide the student with timely, detailed feedback to develop skills, knowledge, problem solving ability, creativity, and complex thinking, while reflecting on their learning

Student
- Work with ELO coordinator, community partner, and teacher to become familiar with the 4 ELO rubrics and their use
- Work with teacher to determine assessment of competency mastery
- Complete regular reflections, assessing progress on ELO, identifying next steps in learning, and periodically discussing reflections with mentor and/or teacher
- Communicate regularly with the ELO coordinator, community mentor, and teacher
- Follow through on timeline set for assignments, self-assessment/reflections, and final assessment of learning

Parent/Guardian - Student success is linked to parent/guardian involvement and encouraged throughout the ELO process.
- Become familiar with the ELO process including assessment
- Provide support and coaching to the student throughout the ELO
- Attend the final presentation of learning

Special Educator/504 Coord
THREE STAGES OF USE OF THE FOUNDATIONAL ELO RUBRICS

**Planning stage “What’s expected?”**

*Use your rubric traits* to create the plan with the student, ELO coordinator and HQT, referencing an IEP if applicable.

*Identify other subject-specific rubrics* that will apply to the competencies targeted in the plan.

*Identify which ELO partners* will use which rubrics, and when.

*For Example,* an ELO coordinator, HQT and student meet to fill in the ELO planning tool. They identify competencies related to the plan and find subject-specific rubrics that will be used to assess their learning. They also look at all 4 foundational ELO rubrics and talk about how they will guide the student’s progress through the ELO, and how each member of the team will provide feedback.

**Along the way (Formative stage) “Where am I?”**

*Use these rubrics regularly* to capture snapshots of student achievement and learning, and provide feedback to the student, designed to adjust the learning process to meet the planned goals.

*For Example,* an ELO coordinator or HQT, after looking at the student’s submitted reflection and research notes, could verbally check-in with a student weekly, working with the student to record their present levels on the applicable rubrics.

**Finally (Summative stage) “Met? Not Yet?”**

*Use these rubrics to assess (proficiency in each component of the ELO) or (each component of the ELO for proficiency).* At this stage, plans may be made to address “missing proficiency” traits, referencing school/district policy or IEPs, if applicable.

*For Example,* when the student completes their research, the identified assessors will use the Research Rubric to give a final assessment of their work. If anything is missing or lacking, the student could have the opportunity to use that feedback to improve their work to complete their plan.
GLOSSARY

**Community Partner:** individuals and organizations within the community who are the “experts” and work directly with students as mentors.

**Competencies:** the expected content, concepts, and skills to be mastered in a course

**Extended Learning Opportunity:** the primary acquisition of knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside of the traditional classroom methodology, including, but not limited to:
- Apprenticeships
- Community service
- Independent study
- Online courses
- Internships
- Performing groups
- Private instruction

**Essential Question:** provokes “Inquiry into the Big Ideas of the ELO”. Essential questions lead to questions that probe for deeper meaning and set the stage for further questioning. The essential question should capture what the student is interested in exploring and learning about, and should be in alignment with the chosen course-level competencies for the learning experience.

**Formative Assessment:** determines what students know, provides guidance to students for improvement, and indicates adjustments to learning and teaching activities. Assessment for learning.

**HQT – Highly Qualified Teacher:** teacher who is certified in the subject area and responsible for assessing competencies for ELO credit.

**Learning Goals:** The specific concepts, content knowledge, and skills that the student is expected to learn.

**Product:** something a student produces as a result of a process or procedure; represents the student’s application of learning.

**Project:** student work that is complex, usually requiring more than one type of activity, process, or product for completion. Projects are a type of performance assessment, designed to demonstrate student mastery of competencies.

**Relevance:** Curriculum of or pertaining to the student or the world around them.

**Rigor:** “Thorough, in-depth mastery of challenging tasks to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis, problem solving, evaluation or creativity.” (International Center for Leadership in Education, 2007)

**Rubric:** guidelines for assessing and evaluating student growth and achievement.

**Synthesis:** applying prior knowledge and skills to combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before.

**Summative Assessment:** An evaluation of students’ learning that comes at the completion of the ELO. Assessment of learning.