



# Measuring What Matters

Competencies in the classroom

Phase 3: 2015–2016

November 2016





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*Measuring What Matters* envisions a public education system that:

- supports all students to develop the competencies and

The goal of the *Measuring What Matters* initiative is to collectively develop, test and propose a new model for education that:

- includes a concrete set of competencies and learning conditions in the ar

# Progress to date

## Research

Phase one of *Measuring What Matters* (2013–14) laid the foundations for the project. People for Education conducted a review of the research on broad areas of learning,<sup>5</sup> and held public consultations through surveys and focus groups.<sup>6</sup>

In Phase 2 (2014–15), education experts were recruited to articulate each of the key domain areas, their importance in terms of student success, and some potential ways that they could be assessed. They conducted reviews of Ontario’s curriculum and policy to identify where and how each domain is currently recognized, and developed a preliminary set of core competencies, skills, and learning conditions for their domain. The competencies and conditions were viewed as foundational to all curriculum, including literacy and numeracy.

## Key activities in 2015–16

### Field testing

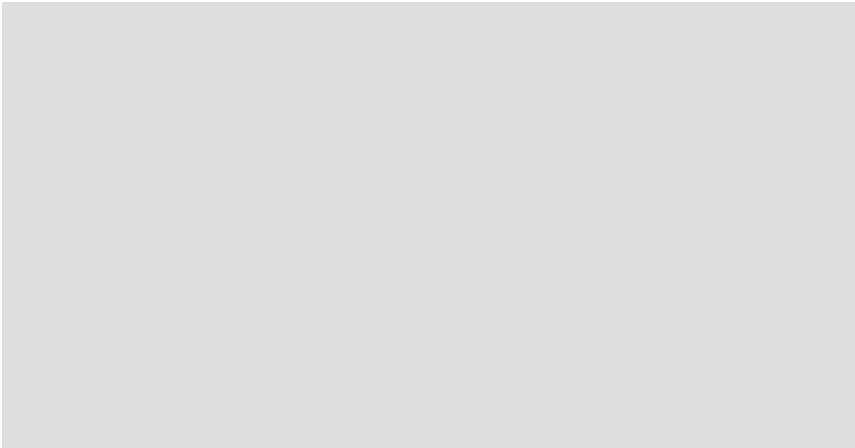
Field testing in classrooms and schools is a key element of the “proof of concept” approach of the MWM initiative. Through this research, the competencies and conditions are directly grounded in teacher, student, and school experience. In early 2016, People for Education engaged Ontario teachers and principals, as well as researchers, curriculum and program consultants, and senior school board leadership in the collaborative development of the field trials. The study included 80 educators in 26 publicly funded schools and seven school boards.

Educators took a range of approaches in their use of the MWM competency framework. Some took a more narrow focus, addressing one or two competencies in a single domain; others explored combinations of competencies from several domain areas. The individuality in what educators focused on, and how they investigated it, demonstrates how personalized this work is, and how important it is to protect non-standardized learning contexts. There are a number of early findings from the field trials:

- € The work aligned with participants’ professional values as educators. It resonated with what they felt were central in learning experiences, but that often did not get the same attention as academic achievement.
- € There appears to be an inextricable and dynamic link between learning conditions and specific competencies that students express: learning conditions frame and support the expression of speci

€ The specific lexicon or “language of learning” in the competencies helped define sometimes broad but ambiguous areas of learning, for

Consultation on measurement





## Leveraging research networks and partnerships

There are important initiatives underway, both in Canada and internationally, that are exploring broad areas of learning and the potential for broadening the goals and measures of public education. To support *Measuring What Matters*, People for Education:

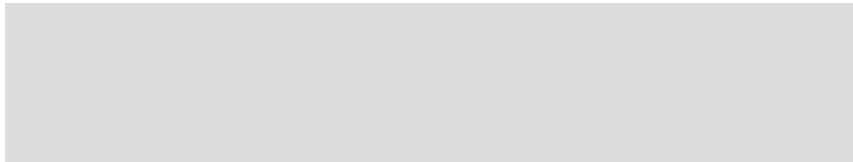
- € co-convened an ongoing information and data-sharing round table of organizations and ministries doing research from a range of perspectives and using a range of metrics for youth success and wellbeing, in order to share knowledge and data, and seek opportunities for alignment. The roundtable partners include Ontario's Ministries of Education and Children and Youth Services, UNICEF Canada, the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, YouthRti      ters

# The domains and competencies

The school conditions and student competencies articulated in MWM represent the broad, foundational skills and practices that are critical for students to be successful in today’s society.

The skills and competencies in each domain are intricately connected to the quality of learning experiences, and to the supports available in classrooms, within the school, and in school–community partnerships. These are captured through a set of conditions for quality learning environments.

## Creativity



## Citizenship

Citizenship education includes the acquisition of knowledge of historical and political concepts and processes. It supports the development of students' understanding of social issues and of the impact of their behaviour and decisions on others. It develops their capacity to recognize and value different perspectives and their sense of agency to influence change in society.<sup>9</sup>

### Why it matters

A democratic and cohesive society relies on people understanding the impact of their behaviour and decisions on others, and having the capacity to play an informed role in the affairs of their society. Citizenship education supports students' capacity to be responsible, active citizens in their schools and communities. It allows them to become contributing members of a democratic society.

Citizenship competencies are grouped into the following categories:

- Appreciation of diversity
- Awareness of power

## Health

Health education supports students in adopting healthy lifestyles from an early age, and provides them with the self-regulatory skills and competencies they need to make healthy decisions and engage in health promoting behaviours.<sup>10</sup>

### Why it matters

Teaching students the habits and skills that provide a foundation for health improves their chances for academic success. It leads to increased productivity, improved life expectancy, greater capacity to cope with life's challenges, and can reduce the risk of both chronic disease and mental illness.

Health competencies are grouped into the following categories:

- Capacity for making healthy choices
- Physical activity
- Healthy sexuality
- Understanding and management of mental illness
- Mental health

## Social-emotional learning

Social-emotional learning supports students in understanding and managing their emotions, developing positive relationships with others, and engaging with their community. Students can learn social-emotional competencies just as they learn formal academic skills—through regular interactions with peers, teachers, and school staff inside and outside of the classroom.<sup>11</sup>

### Why it matters

Strong social-emotional skills are critical for students' educational attainment, long-term well-being and prosperity, and their ability to contribute to society.

Social-emotional competencies are grouped into the following categories:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Interpersonal relationships
- Decision-making

## Quality learning environments

In a quality learning environment classrooms support a dynamic inter-relationship between students, teachers and content; the whole school mirrors ideals of citizenship in democratic societies, and supports social relationships, characterized by trust, interdependence and empathy amongst all members; and school - community relationships focus on students' well-being, promote cross-cultural perspectives, and provide broader learning opportunities for students.<sup>12</sup>

### Why it matters

The organization of the school, the relationships within it, and the learning “environments” within classrooms influence students' academic, social, and behavioural learning. The quality of practices and the opportunities to learn, both inside the classroom and throughout the school, play a critical role in developing environments where students can flourish.

Conditions of quality learning environments are grouped into the following categories:

- Conditions in classrooms
- Conditions within the school
- Conditions beyond the school

# MWM competencies and conditions

Note: The competencies are undergoing iterative revisions based on ongoing research. For the most up-to-date version of the competencies, see [www.peopleforeducation.ca](http://www.peopleforeducation.ca)

## Creativity

### Imagination

- € Students make connections across disciplines and between objects and ideas.
- € Students use intuition.
- € Students work with objects and ideas without an end goal in mind.
- € Students generate a range of novel ideas in relation to personal knowledge and learning context.
- € Students apply metaphorical thinking.

### Inquisitiveness

- € Students articulate potential problems to solve in relation to ambiguous or complex phenomena.
- € Students seek new resources to answer emerging questions.
- € Students explore initial ideas more deeply.
- € Students challenge assumptions.





## Quality learning environments

### Conditions in Classrooms

#### Classroom environment

- € The classroom is welcoming, inclusive, and psychologically safe.
- € Student voice and experiences are integrated within learning and curriculum in classrooms.
- € Students characterize their work in class as both interesting and engaging; students are intrinsically motivated.
- € Expectations for students are high, but realistic.
- € Diversity in the classroom is respected and individual differences are celebrated.
- € All students are provided with opportunities to participate.
- € Risk-taking is rewarded and failures are embraced as learning opportunities.
- € The teacher takes risks—mistakes are made visible to students.
- € The teacher's classroom management style focuses on



### School leadership

- € Authority is shared across the school's staff; it is not limited to formal leadership roles.
- € School leadership values student voice and consults student government in school decision-making.
- € Principals provide, and support the development of,

# MWM Advisors

## Advisory Committee

Domain leads	
Quality Learning Environments Nina Bascia	Professor and Director, Collaborative Educational Policy Program, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto
Creativity Rena Uptis	Professor of Education, Queen's University
Health Bruce Ferguson	Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto; Community Health Systems Research Group, SickKids
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Social-emotional Learning Stuart Shanker	Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy and Psychology, York University; CEO of the MEHRIT Centre, Ltd; Science Director of the Self-Regulation Institute
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