

Digital Badges and CPASS Answers to Common Questions Assessment Work Group March 2017

Brenda Perea (Brenda.Perea@cccs.edu) and Sarah Heath (Sarah.Heath@cccs.edu) provided answers to the work group's common questions about each assessment after the meeting.

What do Digital Badges/CPSASS assessments measure?

A badge can represent any kind of outcome, from very rigorous to not at all. It's not the badge that determines whether a credential has meaning; it's the assessment and experience that went into earning the badge. Any badge considered as an evidence of mastery should provide evidence supporting the underlying learning/assessment meeting the standards for high school graduation guidelines. Validation of the badge remains under the control of the issuer and can expire, be revoked or renewed.

How do they measure career and college readiness?

The focus of badges should be shifted from viewing them as qualifying credentials in the K-12 space, to the specific types of knowledge, assessment and outcomes that should be qualifying career and college readiness. A badge is not earned until the criteria for that badge has been met. Any badge used to assert career and college readiness should show evidence meeting an established standard or guideline. Badges offer additional benefits to learners, including:

- Portability: useful credentials of skills and abilities are not locked up in an opaque diploma or transcript, which have limited use and utility; learner also able to tell fuller picture of who they are by combining outcomes/credentials from in-school and out-of-school experience
- Self-advocacy: ability to teach students to better communicate and articulate their skills and abilities to others (such as college admissions, employers or peers)
- Empowerment: helps learners understand in real-time what skills they have and how they can stack up to and open up new opportunities
- Transparency and granularity: badges show much richer and more useful detail than high school transcripts and diplomas
- Data and Insights: Because badges are comprised of data about each achievement and skill, including alignment to standards, learners and institutions alike can better understand the personalized pathways and trends that emerge as students put their skills to work in the world
- Evidence: authentic work product can be tied to a badge
- Machine-readability: Digital badges and credentials can be consumed by applicant and admissions tracking systems, allowing students greater likelihood of being discovered and surfaced because of the discrete competencies they possess, giving more learners a chance at new opportunities

Privacy and Security: Badges ensure that claims about individuals' skills and competencies are accurate and consistent, and put the choice of what to share and with whom in the hands of learners.

How would these measures fit into a students' pathway in high school in beyond?

Badges can connect learners to learning experiences which also lead them to career opportunities. It is not the badge in itself which creates a learning to career pathway but a visual representation of access to and experience learning which guides the path. A series of badges can be mapped out to inspire and guide a learner for additional life experiences, educational opportunities or even career advancement.

Do they measure in-demand skills?

Badges can be as structured or agile as needed for a changing employment environment. A benefit of Badges can be developed many ways, and one way is to generate the competencies, evidence and assessment through collaboration with area educators, employers, industry representatives and labor market data.

Are these measures aligned with Colorado Academic Standards

It's not the badge that determines the standard for Colorado Academic Standards but it's the assessment and experience that went into earning the badge which provides evidence of mastery in meeting the Colorado Academic Standards. Any badge presented as a credential for meeting Colorado Academic Standards should provide evidence supporting the underlying learning/assessment required to meet a standard. Validation of the badge remains under the control of the issuer and can expire, be revoked or renewed.

What is the validity, inter-rater reliability?

No matter how or where a badge is displayed by the earner, the micro-credential image carries metadata inside of it that, when clicked, securely validates for what it was issued, by whom and when it expires and might require recertification. Validation of the badge remains under the control of the issuer and can expire, be revoked or renewed.

What is the cost?

Costs associated in digital badges depends upon the issuer, there is no one figure. Badge cost can be built into traditional tuition costs, or as a fee for evaluation, or in some cases free.

Are there equity issues?

Actually badges are great at addressing equity issues by transforming how young people access and experience learning and the paths they can choose in documenting their learning. Badges unify learning opportunities often at a granular level showing a progression of learning experiences both formal and informal. Badges can give learners credit for skills learned outside of school which are valued in the workplace such as video production, animation, or music composition. See the types of badges youth can earn in the UK outside of traditional education at [Digitalme](#).