



NORTH CAROLINA



North Carolina has addressed six of the 10 Blueprint policies to improve college readiness in the state. The state has implemented programs for three of the four high school policies with the adoption of rigorous Common Core standards and an assessment system. It has in place systems to address two of the four college anchor policies, including a robust higher education accountability system that sets goals for college attainment and ties public funding for higher education to performance and not just enrollment. The state also has in place systemwide uniform standards for both minimum admission requirements for four-year colleges and separate remedial education policies for the two- and four-year postsecondary systems. North Carolina also has developed a P-20 data pipeline with information that uses the data to provides the state leaders and high schools with feedback reports on how well their graduates are succeeding in college.

POLICY REVIEW	NORTH CAROLINA	NATIONAL
1. CCR STANDARDS AP, IB and/or dual credit required	YES Yes - AP or IB course offerings mandatory	48 states + D.C. 25 states
2. ASSESSMENTS	YES, ACT; End-of-course; Other	14 - SBAC 11 - PARCC 18 - ACT 4 - SAT 10 - state developed 14 - end-of-course
3. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS H.S. course requirements match statewide college admissions	NO , policies exist but not aligned	18 states match courses Including 6 states that align all courses and 12 states that align all courses but foreign language
4. K-12 ACCOUNTABILITY CCR is indicator in system	YES	24 states use CCR to determine performance
5. ADMISSION STANDARDS Statewide or systemwide	YES Systemwide (single system) GPA; Assessments; High school coursework	28 - common admission standards 15 - systemwide 13 - statewide
6. REMEDIAL AND PLACEMENT POLICIES Statewide or systemwide remedial policies Statewide or systemwide placement policies	PARTIAL* Yes Partial	27 - both remedial and placement policies 39 - remedial policies 27 - placement policies
7. TRANSFER (3 OUT OF 4 POLICIES) Transferable core of lower-division courses Common course numbering Guaranteed transfer of associate degree Credit by assessment	NO Yes Partial Yes No	23 have at least 3 of the following policies: 36 - transferable core 16 - Common course numbering 36 - guaranteed transfer of associate degrees 16 - credit by assessment
8. HIGHER-ED ACCOUNTABILITY (ALL 3) Statewide attainment goals Completion or attainment goals in master plan Performance-funding model and metrics	YES Yes Yes Yes, Remedial course completion; Persistence	19 have all 3 of the following policies: 26 states have a statewide attainment goal 36 states have completion or attainment goal in master plan 32 states have performance-funding
9. STATEWIDE CCR DEFINITION	NO	32 states + D.C. have CCR definition
10. P-20 DATA High school feedback report annually	YES Yes	50 states + D.C. have data system 42 states + D.C. have feedback report
TOTAL	6 out of 10	

*Partial indicates that both state postsecondary systems have separate but uniform remedial policies, and only one of the systems also has a common course placement policy.

STRENGTHS

North Carolina is one of the leaders in incorporating measures of college and career readiness into its K-12 school accountability metrics. The indicators, ranging from ACT/SAT scores to college remediation rates, tend to increase the transparency of how well public schools are educating their children during a time of increased need for college attainment to succeed in the workforce. The state has put in place a P-20 data pipeline that is able to provide student-level data to the people who need to make decisions about students' education, such as principals, teachers and parents.

Robust P-20 data systems can support both state and local leaders in analyzing the performance and effectiveness of a number of policies and programs. To leverage this strength, North Carolina should ensure that data can be used at the state and local level. The state is able to link student data between state agencies, helping to bridge the information gap and evaluate the effectiveness of its high school and college policies. The data system also allows the state to identify high school students who are not college ready through early warning systems. That means educators have the ability to use the 11th and 12th grade to ensure that all students are ready for success after graduation.

CONSIDERATIONS

North Carolina should consider developing policies and plans to address the three benchmarks the state does not meet. It is one of eight states that has policies for high school graduation and college admission, but they are not aligned. Six states have complete alignment in core subjects, while 12 others align in all subjects except foreign language. Coordinating these requirements may lead to higher postsecondary enrollment, persistence and completion rates. This means alignment in both subject and units is required, such as successfully completing four credits or semesters of math to complete high school graduation requirements and to fulfill college admission standards.

The state also should look at developing a clear definition of what it means for a student to be college and career ready. So far, 32 states have a definition either explicitly or by proxy. The most common elements found in the definitions include academic knowledge, skills and assessment scores. Some of the definitions were as short as one sentence, while others were pages long.

RESOURCES AND STATE EXAMPLES

South Dakota – Using multiple measures

South Dakota's high school graduation requirements and statewide higher education admission policies are good examples of setting competency-based proficiency for courses. A provision in the high school graduation requirements policy, S.D. Admin. R. 24:43:11:09, provides course-equivalency exam exceptions for students to take the place of course requirements.

Similarly, the statewide higher education admission policy provides alternate opportunities to meet the minimum course requirements beyond seat time. Students can receive credit by achieving set scores on standardized assessments such as ACT or SAT or on end-of-course exams such as AP tests.

Tennessee – Statewide CCR definition

Tennessee defines college and career readiness as “the knowledge and skills needed for entry-level work and college freshmen coursework [and] success whether pursuing a career or a college education.” The state quantitatively puts this definition to use through cut scores for both the ACT and future assessments as standards for college acceptance and course placement. Statewide, the Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee leverage the CCR definition to align the K-12 Common Core State Standards to credit-bearing, entry-level courses in English and math.