Defining College Readiness: Where Are We Now? Where Do We Go from Here?

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Temperature Check

- Has your state defined college readiness?
- Is your state working to define college-readiness?
- Any questions that brought you to today’s session?
Session Overview

- Benefits/challenges of several approaches
- Key elements
- Other approaches?
- What (many) states *aren’t* talking about
- Discussion
Courses: Benefits

- Alignment with college admissions reqt’s

- Research: Correlation b/w HS coursetaking, college entry, completion

- Rigorous ELA, math in 12th grade – reduce likelihood of need for remediation
Courses: Challenges

- Course titles can be deceptive
- Grade inflation
- Varying grading practices
Standards: Benefits

- Potential for ongoing instructional focus
- Backmap to P–8 grades
- Bring key P–16 stakeholders to table
Standards: Challenges

- Must be clearly worded so all stakeholders know what is expected

- Meaningless if not measured by statewide measure (asst., for example)
David Conley’s
- Key Cognitive Strategies
- Key Learning Skills and Techniques
- Key Transition Knowledge and Skills

- Critical to college success

- Help with high school, work, life success!
Skills: Challenges

- (Many) teachers unaccustomed to teaching these skills
- Transition Knowledge/Skills: “That’s the counselor’s/parent’s/[____] job!”
- May be challenging to adequately assess
State Assessments: Benefits

- (Presumably) testing course content
- Encouraging students to take tests seriously
- One test, multiple purposes = efficiency
State Assessments: Challenges

- If benchmark too low – no one is well-served
- Shouldn’t be make-or-break, one-shot deal
ACT/SAT/Placement Tests: Benefits

- ACT, SAT: Known quantity
- EXPLORE, PSAT: Opportunity for early identification, remediation
- ACT, SAT: One test, multiple purposes = efficiency
ACT/SAT/Placement Tests: Challenges

- Placement tests: Research on predictive power
- Senior year w/o rigorous ELA, math coursework may negate scores
- Some ACT subtests, SAT: Not universally predictive of college success
Given benefits/drawbacks of various approaches...

States may consider incorporating multiple approaches
Moving Forward: Courses

- Critical: Adhering to common course expectations (Chicago research)

- Ensure availability of highest-level courses (esp. math, science) in ALL high schools (virtual alone doesn’t cut it!)

- Require math each year of high school

- Combine with end-of-course assts.
  - AR, TN: Identify disparities b/w teacher assigned-grades and EOC scores
Moving Forward: ACT/SAT/Placement Tests

- Use subtest, not composite scores
- Include writing section
- Set expiration date on using test results
- Consider differential cut scores
Moving Forward: Standards

- Ensure students have common means to demonstrate attainment
- Include skill subsets (VA example)
- Incorporate David Conley’s strategies and skills
Moving Forward: Teachers, Leaders

- Integrate into teacher, leader prep. programs

- Provide ongoing supports for teachers
  - Web tools to help in aligning classroom instruction
  - Diagnostic, formative student assessments
Moving Forward: Remediation

- Early (before HS, in early HS grades)
- Prompt (upon ID’ing deficiency, not next year)
- High-quality (evaluate effectiveness)
- Mandatory student participation?
All Approaches

Experience from the states?
Other Approaches

- Career/Technical Education (CTE)
- Advanced Placement (AP)
- Dual Enrollment
- Early College High Schools (ECHS)
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
Industry certification or vocational credential (+score to place into credit–bearing CC coursework?)

WorkKeys?
CTE and College Readiness: What Might It Entail?

- Inventory of current CTE programs
  - Ensure syllabi, materials align with current workforce tools, expectations

- Incorporate academic stds., where appropriate

- CTE teachers
  - Hold current industry certification?
  - Capacity to teach embedded academic standards (or team-teach with teacher in content area?)
Advanced Placement: What Might It Look Like?

3 or higher on English, math exams
Advanced Placement: What Might It Entail?

- Access, quality supports (see author’s 2006 ECS policy brief, database)

- State inventory by HS of:
  - AP classes offered (how many, which)
  - # of exams taken in each course
  - Pass rates in each course
  - Participation, outcomes by student subgroup
Dual Enrollment: What Might It Look Like?

Completion of entry-level, credit-bearing college ELA, math course
Dual Enrollment: What Might It Entail?

13 indicators (author’s ECS 2011 PowerPoint, 2012 AYPF webinar, forthcoming policy brief)

- Access
- Funding
- Instructional/Course Quality
- Transferability of Credit
Early College High School: What Might It Look Like?

Five-year HS graduation, completion of N college credits (or technical certification)
Early College High School: What Might It Entail?

- Access, quality supports (from author’s 2008 policy brief, database)

- North Carolina: Testimony to power of appropriate funding, state policy supports
Completion of IB diploma program (i.e., courses, assessments, capstone project)
International Baccalaureate: What Might It Entail?

- Similar access, quality supports as made available for AP (fewer states clarify in state policy) (see author’s 2007 database)

- Caveat: More costly than AP
College Counseling

Surprise! Many states are not talking about it!

Yet “college-readiness” efforts of limited use if students don’t know how to get into, pay for college
College Counseling: Why Critical?

- Every student’s not a match for every campus, program

- Not all HS counselors equipped

- Students, parents (perhaps more than you think):
  - Limited knowledge of college admissions reqts, procedures, deadlines
  - Limited knowledge of financial aid reqts, procedures, deadlines (and/or capacity to complete)
Getting in the College Door: Just the First Step

- College readiness – should be in partnership with state college completion efforts

- Rethinking developmental coursework
- Designing successful entry-level courses (i.e., Algebra I)*
- Providing effective student supports*
- Examining availability of key courses
- Evaluating total # of degree credits req’d

*See Ed Trust for more
Discussion
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