Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

OVERVIEW

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

What are the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards?

The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards define what students should know and be able to accomplish in order to succeed in entry-level college courses or skilled workforce opportunities upon graduation from high school.

Who developed the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards?

A law passed by the Texas Legislature in 2006 required development of college readiness standards. The law mandated that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency appoint vertical teams in the disciplines of English/language arts, science, social sciences, and mathematics. The vertical teams were charged with drafting the standards.

The College and Career Readiness Standards rely on a substantial body of P-16 and college readiness research to inform its efforts.

What role did the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board have in developing the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards?

The vertical teams, consisting of public school teachers and higher education faculty members with subject matter expertise, worked independently to develop the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency, selected vertical team members as required by statute, but had no formal role in the development of the standards.

Why does Texas need college and career readiness standards?

The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) articulate a baseline of knowledge necessary for students to successfully participate in college and function in the modern workplace. College and career readiness standards represent the next step in aligning public and higher education curriculum in order to facilitate a seamless transition between high school and college or the skilled workforce. This alignment, which is evidenced in the use of the CCRS to determine college readiness on the End of Course examinations (EOCs) in Algebra II and English III, will reduce the need for remedial education for recent high school graduates and ultimately increase the number of Texans graduating from college.

The increased academic rigor and higher academic expectations derived from the standards sets an expectation for educators and students alike that will lead to increased opportunities for the students of Texas.

How are the adopted Texas College and Career Readiness Standards different from high school graduation standards?

High school graduation standards provide a defined, focused set of core skills that should be mastered in a relatively limited and defined set of courses by the time a student graduates from the public school system. The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, in contrast, are specifically designed to better prepare students to succeed in a broad range of

challenging entry-level college courses or skilled workforce opportunities that a student can reasonably expect to experience upon graduation from high school.

How much of the knowledge and skills outlined in the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards must be mastered in order to be deemed college-ready?

The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards do not represent a learning checklist or a detailed list of all prerequisite knowledge necessary to be college-ready. As a general rule, the more standards a student can master, the more likely the student will be college-ready. Additionally, a student will be better served by mastering individual standards in depth, rather than passing over all of them in a superficial fashion.

Before adopting the standards, did the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Commissioner of Education consider input from the public?

Yes. A draft of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards was made available to the public for review and comment. The Coordinating Board received close to 1,000 individual and group comments from all sectors of the education community, as well as the general public. The vertical teams reviewed and considered all comments received during the public comment period. When appropriate, this input was integrated into the standards accordingly.

What are the next steps now that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Commissioner of Education have adopted the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards?

As required by statute, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards were formally adopted by the Coordinating Board on January 24, 2008, with subsequent approval by the Commissioner of Education. The standards were forwarded to the State Board of Education for incorporation into the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum for public education. In addition, the Texas Education Agency and the Coordinating Board completed the second phase involving vertical teams composed of public school and higher education faculty who assisted TEA in the alignment of standards to the TEKS and development of instructional strategies, minimum standards for curricula, professional development materials, and online support materials.

The final phase includes the implementation of the standards and alignment of the standards with the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™) End-of-Course assessments for English III and Algebra II. Under House Bill 3 of the 81st Texas Legislature, performance measures for college readiness must be established by the Commissioner of Education and Commissioner of Higher Education for the English III and Algebra II End-of-Course assessments to ensure students are prepared to succeed, without remediation, in entry-level college credit courses. End-of-Course assessments are to be administered beginning with students entering ninth grade in the 2011-2012 academic year allowing school districts, teachers, and students adequate time to adjust to the higher expectations and appropriately prepare for the increased rigor in the TEKS established by the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards.

Resources: Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (as adopted by the Coordinating Board on 1/24/08)

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