

Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness

For consideration by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
February 26, 2013

Overview

Massachusetts students who are college and career ready will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary to successfully complete entry-level, credit-bearing college courses, participate in certificate or workplace training programs, and enter economically viable career pathways. In order to meet this goal, the Commonwealth has defined a set of learning competencies, intellectual capacities and experiences essential for all students to become lifelong learners; positive contributors to their families, workplaces and communities; and successfully engaged citizens of a global 21st century.

Beyond achieving college and career ready levels of competence in English Language Arts / Literacy and Mathematics, all high school students should develop a foundation in the academic disciplines identified in the MassCore course of study,ⁱ build competencies for workplace readiness as articulated in the Integrating College and Career Task Force Report,ⁱⁱ and focus on applying academic strategies to problem solving in diverse professional and life contexts, appropriate to individual student goals. Massachusetts will use its 2011 curriculum frameworks,ⁱⁱⁱ which include the Common Core State Standards, as the basis for an educational program that provides students with the academic knowledge, skills and experiences that are essential to postsecondary educational, career, and personal success.

Essential Competencies

Learning

Students who are college and career ready in English Language Arts / Literacy will demonstrate the academic knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to enter into and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in College English Composition, Literature, or technical courses; certificate or workplace training programs requiring college-level reading and writing; or a comparable entry-level reading and writing course at the institution. College and career ready students in English Language Arts/ Literacy will be ***academically prepared*** to:

- Read and comprehend a range of sufficiently complex texts independently
- Write effectively when using and/or analyzing sources
- Build and present knowledge through research and the integration, comparison, and synthesis of ideas
- Use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases

Similarly, students who are college and career ready in Mathematics will demonstrate the academic knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to enter into and succeed in entry-level, credit bearing courses in College Algebra, Introductory College Statistics, or technical courses; certificate or workplace training programs requiring an equivalent level of mathematics; or a comparable entry-level math course at the institution. College and career ready students in Mathematics will be ***academically prepared*** to:

- Solve problems involving the major content with connections to the mathematical practices
- Solve problems involving the additional and supporting content with connections to the mathematical practices
- Express mathematical reasoning by constructing mathematical arguments and critiques
- Solve real world problems, engaging particularly in the modeling practice

Successful achievement of specified levels of competence in English Language Arts / Literacy and Mathematics will be required for students to be placed into entry-level courses in college or participate in certificate or workplace training programs without the need for remediation.

Workplace Readiness

Student preparation for college and career should emphasize career awareness, exploration and immersion as well as development of the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to successfully navigate the workplace. College and career ready students will demonstrate:

Work Ethic and Professionalism

- Attendance and punctuality expected by the workplace
- Workplace appearance appropriate for position and duties
- Accepting direction and constructive criticism with a positive attitude and response
- Motivation and taking initiative, taking projects from initiation to completion
- Understanding workplace culture, policy and safety, including respecting confidentiality and workplace ethics

Effective Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Oral and written communication appropriate to the workplace
- Listening attentively and confirming understanding
- Interacting with co-workers, individually and in teams

Proficiency in these skills is common for success in all workplaces and should be viewed as the foundation upon which additional workplace and career skills are added based on the specifics of any job.

Qualities and Strategies

An ideal preparation for college and career will help students develop a wide range of quantitative and qualitative abilities that go beyond the minimum levels of competence needed for entry-level college courses and employment. In high school, students should demonstrate:

- Higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
 - The ability to think critically, coherently, and creatively
 - The ability to direct and evaluate their own learning, be aware of resources available to support their learning, and have the confidence to access these resources when needed.
 - Motivation, intellectual curiosity, flexibility, discipline, self-advocacy, responsibility, and reasoned beliefs
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Together these attributes provide the framework for college and career readiness and support educational and workplace success as well as serve as the basis for being an active participant in our democracy.

ⁱ [MassCore](#) is a rigorous and comprehensive four year course of high school study recommended by the Commonwealth as preparation for college and career. MassCore is also the vehicle through which high school students can gain competence in computational, scientific, visual, creative, and critical thinking and can engage opportunities for “hands-on” application and exploration of new areas of knowledge and experiences.

ⁱⁱ See [ICCR Task Force Report](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ See current [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#).