Integration of College and Career Readiness Strategic Plan

Fall, 2014
Our Mission and Approach

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education seeks to ensure that all Massachusetts students are prepared for success after high school. To attain this goal, ESE works to provide individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills and experiences in the academic, workplace readiness, and personal/social domains to successfully navigate to completion an economically viable career pathway in a 21st century economy. The College and Career Readiness unit, working in collaboration with a variety of interagency and state level partners, provides professional development, technical assistance, and grant funding to promote strategies to help all students become college and career ready, as evidenced by increased graduation rates, MassCore completion rates, participation in career development activities, and enrollment and persistence at postsecondary institutions.

Our Goals:

High School Graduation
- Increase the 5-Year cohort graduation rate
- Increase the 4-Year cohort graduation rate
- Increase the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore) completion rate

Career Development Education
- Increase the number of students that are known to participate in career development activities

Postsecondary Outcomes
- Increase the percentage of high school graduates that enroll in postsecondary education
- Decrease the percentage of high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education that enroll in remedial coursework.
Key College and Career Readiness Projects:

**MassGrad**
In fall 2010, the U.S. Department of Education selected Massachusetts as just one of two states to receive the federal High School Graduation Initiative award. The state received $15 million over five years to fund the High School Graduation Initiative (MassGrad), aimed at decreasing the Massachusetts statewide dropout rate. The project targets the 122 high schools (76 districts) that exceeded the statewide dropout rate of 2.9 in the 2008-09 school year. These high schools are eligible to participate in networking, technical assistance, training, and competitive grant opportunities. Key MassGrad levers include:

- Dropout Prevention and Re-Engagement Work Group
- Implementation and Planning Awards
- MassGrad Coalition Challenge Awards
- Gateway to College Start-Up Awards

More information about MassGrad is available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/CCR/massgrad/

**Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS)**
The Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) is a data-driven system that identifies students in grades 1-12 who may be at risk of failing to meet key academic milestones. The system uses a risk model informed by historical data to help districts target students for additional supports and interventions. Five EWIS reports are free and available to all public school districts through Edwin Analytics. Agency staff members provide professional development and technical assistance to districts regarding EWIS use. In addition, an Early Warning Implementation Guide was published in September 2014 to support use of early warning data throughout the school year, in conjunction with other local efforts.

More information about the EWIS is available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html

**Academic Support Grants**
Academic Support programs are designed for secondary school students and students who have left high school who have not yet met the Competency Determination required for high school graduation. A state line item provides funding for grants that the Department distributes to districts, institutions of higher education and workforce partners that provide academic support programming and remediation services to students scoring in Warning/Failing and Needs Improvement on the mathematics, English language arts (ELA) and science/technology and engineering (STE) MCAS. Among the grant programs offered are several that link academic remediation with career exploration and the development of Individual Learning Plans. The line item saw a significant cut (36%) in FY15, yet the Department remains committed to supporting programs that serve those working to earn their Competency Determination.

More information about Academic Support is available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/as/
ICCR Task Force Recommendations:

**MassCore:**
MassCore is the Board of Education’s recommended program of high school studies, which includes four years of English and mathematics (including Algebra II), three years of history and social science, three years of lab sciences, two years of foreign language, a year of the arts, physical education and other additional learning opportunities e.g., work-based and community service learning. The agency encourages districts to provide students with the opportunity to complete this rigorous course of study in preparation for success after high school. Current agency work to promote MassCore includes:

- Dissemination of best practices for increasing MassCore completion rates;
- Work internally with licensure, digital learning, district and school turnaround, and curriculum and instruction units to enhance student access to rigorous coursework; and
- Improved data collection and analysis regarding MassCore completion.

More information about MassCore is available at:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/masscore/

**Connecting Activities:**
Connecting Activities supports career development education, providing career awareness and exploration activities and quality work-based learning experiences that are connected to classroom teaching and learning for high school students across the Commonwealth. Priority is given to students who are most at risk of dropping out or not acquiring their Competency Determination. The primary goal of Connecting Activities is to support the design and implementation of brokered “work and learning” experiences during the school year and summer to support career development education and academic achievement for all students. Employer connections are brokered by the 16 regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) working in partnership with districts/schools and School to Career/Connecting Activities networks.

More information about Connecting Activities is available at:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/

**Early College Career Pathway Designs:**
The Department, in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education (DHE), the Executive Office of Education (EOE) and with support from Jobs for the Future (JFF), works to promote early college designs—programs that incorporate credit-bearing college coursework, academic supports and career development activities into the high school experience. Partnerships are between secondary and postsecondary institutions so students can earn up to two years of college credit or even an associate degree while still in high school. The Department, in collaboration with partner organizations, provides technical assistance and professional
development to secondary, postsecondary, and workforce development partners to offer early college pathways for students across the Commonwealth.

More information about Early College Designs is available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/EarlyCollegeDesignLandscape.docx

Other Agency and Statewide Projects that Support College and Career Readiness Goals:

While the College and Career Readiness team works diligently to ensure that the Department meets the Success after High School targets described above, many other offices and initiatives across the agency and beyond support the Department in ensuring that all students are prepared to succeed in the world that awaits them after high school. The complete list of these offices and initiatives is too exhaustive to list here, however some of these offices and initiatives are included below:

ESE Offices/Initiatives:
- Career/Vocational and Technical Education (CVTE): e.g. STEM Early College High Schools
- Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA): e.g. support for high school SLIFE students and graduation rates
- Office of Special Education Policy and Planning (SEPP): e.g. support for postsecondary transition planning for students with disabilities
- Office of District and School Turnaround (ODST): e.g. supporting our lowest performing high schools
- Center for Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) : e.g. promotion of rigorous course taking
- Office of Learning Supports and Early Learning (OLSEL) : e.g. academic support, civic engagement, and behavioral health

Other Interagency/State Initiatives:
- Executive Office of Education (EOE): Early College High Schools, Career Academies
- Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD): Career Pathways initiative
- Department of Public Health (DPH): Youth Employment Safety Initiative
- Department of Transportation (DOT): Construction Career Days
- Division of Career Services (DCS): Mass CIS, WIA Youth Initiatives
- Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE): Future Ready
- Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA): YourPlanForTheFuture
- Rennie Center, MassINC and Boston University: Massachusetts Institute for College and Career Readiness (MICCR)
- Jobs for the Future (JFF): Pathways to Prosperity, Youth CareerConnect, SAP
- Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp): YouthWorks, Signaling Success
- Contextualized Learning in Classroom and Community Settings: Contextual Learning Portal
- Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA): MA Model for School Counseling