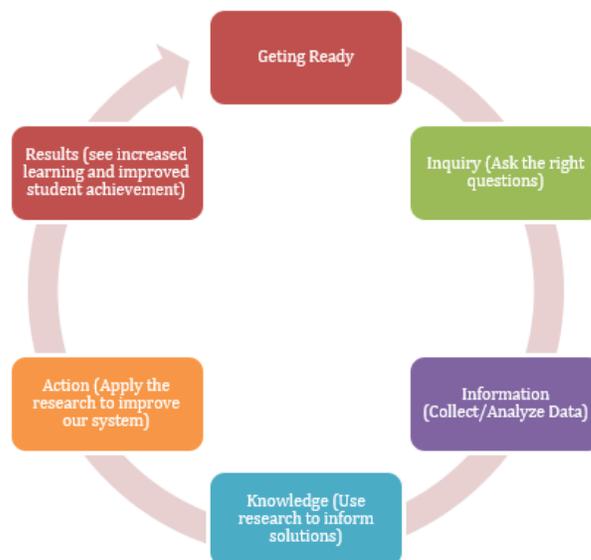# Quick Reference Guide: District Level Graduating College and Career Ready

Regularly Review English Learner Attainment and Post-Secondary Outcomes

District data teams regularly review students' attainment of goals as well as post-secondary outcomes for ELs.

Regular review of English Learners (ELs) high school completion data and post-secondary outcomes helps leaders evaluate district efforts to support EL success after high school. It also assists with continuous improvement and future planning. When reviewing EL data it is important to look at overall trends and areas where ELs may not perform as well as their non-EL peers. These gaps may signal need for changes or additional supports to ensure ELs have equitable access and opportunities, and to improve EL outcomes. To improve EL outcomes related to high school completion, district leaders can use tools such as the Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS). It provides data related to ELs attendance and behavior. District leaders can also explore the Massachusetts Analysis of Dropout Data to understand the link between EWIS data points and graduation rates. This kind of aligned analysis can help areas in need of improvement and potential supports or interventions to implement.

In addition, district leaders can review post-graduation data because graduation is not a guarantee of college and career readiness. District leaders can use the Plans of High School Graduates Report to review information about whether ELs intended to do after graduation. They can also review the Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education Report to review information about ELs attending college. District leaders can also develop local measures of student success in collaboration with ELs, EL families, educators, staff, school leaders and community members. These measures would be tailored to the goals of ELs and their families along with aspirations and intentions of the district.

Include English Learner Dropout Prevention Strategies in District Improvement Plans

The district improvement plan includes actions to track and resolve problems that may be early warning signs for dropout, specifically for ELs.

Districts that effectively support ELs work towards ensuring ELs have the same rate of success as non-EL students in key areas such as high school graduation, performance on coursework, and other important milestones and benchmarks. One way district leaders can support this work is by including actions that address early warning signs for EL dropout in the district improvement plans. For example, district leaders may analyze EL data related to academic milestones that showcase student success such as passing ninth-grade classes and standardized test such as MCAS. This type of data can be used to identify issues, set goals, and develop strategies and action plans for preventing ELs from dropping out. Strategies and actions may be related to programming, curriculum quality, social and emotional supports, attendance initiatives, teaching practices, and improvement of other systemic structures that may interfere with EL success. Beyond action planning, district leaders can realign resources to fund strategies and innovative practices that leverage ELs' assets and meet their needs. To support systemic change, district vision, improvement plans, and resource allocation must coherently support initiatives to track and resolve signs ELs may be at risk of dropping out.

Create Opportunities for Career Development

The district creates opportunities for ELs to participate in educational opportunities related to career development (e.g., awareness, exploration, and immersion activities, including but not limited to internships and capstones).

Districts that support EL success after high school ensure they have opportunities to participate in career development activities shown to promote workplace readiness. These may include career awareness and exploration activities, internships, capstones and other extended learning opportunities. Many districts offer these to all students; districts who effectively support EL post-graduation success ensure ELs have equitable access and appropriate supports for succeeding in these experiences. For example, district leaders ensure career exploration activities are culturally responsive and incorporate ELs interests and self-defined goals. They also make sure career development programs for ELs identify potential barriers to their future career success and offer guidance to ELs and their families for overcoming them. District leaders can promote the use of planning tools such as My Career and Academic Plan and Your Plan for the Future for ELs, and explore program options such as Career Vocational Technical Education and Alternative Pathways to help ELs make connections between academic milestones, graduation, and future goals. They also ensure educators and support staff are well-prepared to support ELs through career development activities and provide focused professional learning when needed. In addition, district leaders regularly engage EL families in discussing and planning for their ELs aspirations and future careers. They also partner with community organizations and business leaders to create a throughline between success at school and success in the workplace.

🎬 Actions-at-a-Glance: Graduating College and/or Career-Ready

- Establish an inquiry-based diverse data team (ESL and content area educators, school leaders, EL parents, etc.) to review EL high school attainment and post-secondary success
- Review EL data on important academic milestones to identify students at risk of dropping out and develop EL-specific strategies for addressing risk factors
- Create relevant programming that connects EL success in high school with success in the workplace
- Partner with representatives from local industry and businesses to evaluate career development programs
- Develop networking events where ELs can connect directly with future employers and gain access to potential internships
- Develop credit-bearing internships to support ELs' path to high school graduation and post-secondary career opportunities
- Gather feedback from local business leaders on student employment readiness and adapt curriculum to meet workplace expectations
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current career preparation activities in preparing ELs for future career success and improve or develop new activities when needed

Planning Resources

DESE Practical Tools and Resources

Planning for Success provides a hands-on planning process designed to build district and school capacity for improvement while building community understanding and support. It includes steps for developing a multi-year improvement plan and annual action plans to assist with implementation.

Plans of Graduates Report provides information on the intentions of high school graduates.

Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) provides tools for identifying students at risk of not meeting important academic goals that help them stay on track to graduation.

District Data Team Toolkit provides tools and resources for establishing, growing, and maintaining a culture of inquiry and data use to inform decisions that impact teaching and learning.

District Planning Process presents a process for district planning.

Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR) provides tools for allocating resources in a way that is aligned with district needs.

Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness provides descriptions and links to initiatives, programs and opportunities focused on life after high school.

My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) provides a student-centered, multi-year planning tool designed to provide students with ongoing opportunities to plan for their academic, personal/social and career success.

Your Plan for the Future provides a tool for students to create a secure personal portfolio, search for college and career information, apply to colleges and universities online, and have a solid college and career plan.

The Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan (WBLP) is a diagnostic, goal-setting and assessment tool designed to drive learning and productivity on the job developed in collaboration with employers, educators and workforce development professionals.

DESE Guidance

Career Vocational Technical Education provides information about a pathway to high school graduation that meets the academic expectations of a district-defined high school graduation benchmarks and the career competencies chosen by the student.

Alternative Education provides information about educational pathways established to serve at-risk students whose needs are not being met in the traditional school setting. Alternative programs can be part of a public school district, charter school, or educational collaborative that can helps students make connections between the academic benchmarks to graduate and their future goals.

Career Development Education (CDE) Career Guide and Glossary provides a variety of activities, definitions and frameworks to assist with efforts to create, or expand and improve college and career education. It includes suggestions for career readiness programming that can be customized to increase opportunities for ELs (see p. 10 – 13).

Other Featured Resources

Dropout Prevention and Recovery provides information about initiatives and strategies to improve high school drop out rates.

Five Steps for Supporting College and Career Readiness provides information for improving college and career readiness programming.