



# Quick Reference Guide: State Level Graduating College and/or Career Ready

## Data Report: Success After High School

The Department reports data about ELs' success after high school and convenes a forum to review best practices.

Beyond a personal achievement for ELs and their families, high school [graduation rates](#) are also a measure of the quality of a school system and the economic outlook of a community. All aspects of the educational system must work coherently together to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to earn course credit needed for graduation and college-entrance requirements, and ultimately to prepare all ELs for success after high school. The Department's forums and data reports can prompt districts and schools to evaluate and enhance educational programs, in an ongoing sustained way, leading to EL success after high school.



## Data Report: Graduation and Dropout Rates

The Department reports data about ELs' graduation and dropout rates and convenes a forum to review best practices.

Graduating from high school comes with deep implications for EL's future educational opportunities and earnings. For the past 20 years, federal law has used graduation rates as one metric to evaluate school effectiveness. For the past few years, the Department has engaged in several reform strategies to improve EL education and outcomes across the state. Yet, challenges remain ahead for organizing systems and continuously building the capacities of all educators and administrators to ensure that all ELs graduate college and career ready. One such challenge is the persistently high EL dropout rate. For the past few years, [the annual dropout rate of ELs in Massachusetts high schools](#) more than tripled the dropout rate of all students. The educational system continues to attend to this inequity strategically, ensuring communication and coherence between the state, district, school and classroom levels.

It is of critical importance that teachers, guidance, and other support personnel partner with EL and their families to provide guidance and support in college and career planning.

**The EL dropout is 3 times higher than the average dropout rate for all students.**

High dropout rates have been inversely correlated with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• higher income</li> <li>• better housing</li> <li>• healthier food</li> <li>• social support</li> <li>• prestige</li> <li>• power</li> <li>• mental/emotional/ physical health</li> </ul> 
High dropout rates have been directly linked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• substance abuse</li> <li>• pregnancy</li> <li>• poverty</li> <li>• welfare</li> <li>• lack of employment</li> </ul> 

**Much work is still needed to address the EL graduation and dropout rates to both increase fairness and maintain an equity-focused accountability system.**

In addition to offering technical assistance, forums, and professional learning opportunities to districts, the Department continues to:

- strengthen support by disseminating evidence-based practices, strategies, protocols, tools, and success stories related to EL [graduation](#) and [dropout rates](#)
- procure research-based focusing on factors that affect EL dropout decisions, for example:
  - in different EL subgroups
  - in different ELE program models
- hold convenings to work collaboratively with districts to plan and take action toward [dropout reduction](#)
- improve [data collection and reporting systems](#) focusing on graduation and dropout rates

As districts and high schools dive into data-based inquiry and action cycles exploring EL graduation and dropout rates, they can gain greater understanding about contributing factors. For example, data may be used to identify characteristics of students who graduate in more than four years (i.e, some ELs with limited or interrupted formal education and some ELs with disabilities).

Districts can use the Department's data reports in various other ways. In providing such data, the Department supports districts and schools in their planning to improve local policies, programs, curriculum and instruction, and wrap-around

services geared toward improving EL graduation rates. For example, the data that can trigger [Early Warning Systems](#), guide the development of graduation policies, [measure the effectiveness of interventions](#), and help administrators to better understand the benefits of attendance for older students who may be aging out of high school before graduating.

## College and Career Partnerships

The Department incentivizes partnerships with business, workforce development agencies, and institutions of higher education to develop career awareness and participation.

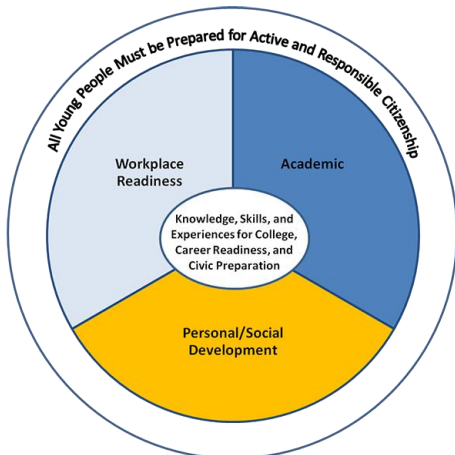


Effective partnerships between key college and career stakeholders – including district leaders, institutions of higher education, businesses, the community, families, and [workforce development agencies](#) – can support the preparation and transition of ELs to the post high school world in a manner that strengthens student readiness and the long-term sustainability of their success.

[Partners benefit](#) from ELs’ linguistic and cultural assets, which can contribute to effective communication across multiple contexts, multiple ways of framing and expressing thinking, and to developing relationships in a variety of sociocultural contexts in a global society.

**EL’s multilingual and multicultural abilities and experiences are desirable [assets to be leveraged as students enter a global market.](#)**

The Department articulates [evidence-based models for partnership](#) initiation, implementation, and continuous improvement. The Department also incentivizes various types of partnerships and supports the building of ongoing relationships to increase college and career awareness and pathways for ELs. For example....



- partnerships leading to dual or concurrent enrollment programs can allow ELs who have not yet graduated from high school to enroll in one or more postsecondary courses and earn postsecondary credit
- [early college](#) high school partnerships can allow ELs to simultaneously complete requirements toward earning a regular high school diploma and earn credits that are transferable to the institutions of higher education in the partnership, as part of an organized course of study toward a postsecondary degree or credential, at no cost to the participant or the participant’s family
- [innovation pathways](#) give students coursework and experience in a specific high-demand industry, such as information technology, engineering, healthcare, life sciences and advanced manufacturing

Source: MA DESE [Definition of College and Career Readiness and Civic Preparation](#)

Partners can reinforce and share information with ELs and their families about schools, career paths, scholarships, financial aid, resumes, and application processes. Support for strategic family and community partnerships can also increase the quality of educational programs when they provide extracurricular options and augment and enrich classroom-based learning that supports post-high school EL success.

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

Graduating College and/or Career Ready: What can educators at the state level do?

- Prompt districts and schools to evaluate and enhance educational programs leading to EL success after high school
- Maintain valid [data collection and reporting systems](#) that are rich in information [disaggregated by EL subgroup](#), including data about EL success after high school
- Use longitudinal data to understand the long-term outcomes for those who do not complete high school
- Articulate [evidence-based models for partnership](#) initiation, implementation, and continuous improvement.

# Planning Resources

## DESE Practical Tools and Resources

[College and Career Readiness Supports and Initiatives](#) This webpage provides a series of resources educators can use to promote college and career readiness.

The [Early Warning Indicator System \(EWIS\)](#) has a large collection of resources to help educators intervene to prevent students from failing or dropping out. The collection includes tools, videos, and resources to increase student graduation rate.

[Connecting Activities](#) An initiative that leverages a statewide infrastructure to support college and career readiness for all students.

## DESE Guidance

[Dropout Reduction](#) This website provides educators with resources and guidance on preventing students from dropping out.

## Federal Resources

[Dear Colleague \(2015\) Letter](#) Highlights the importance of ensuring that ELs are college and career ready.

## Other Featured Resources

[Language and Diversity & the Workforce: The Growing Need for Bilingual Workers in Massachusetts's Economy](#) A research report that explores the increased demand for bilingual workers in Massachusetts.

[Building Educational Success through Collaboration in Los Angeles County: Partnering to Create College Going Cultures: A Resource Guide](#) This guide provides practical suggestions for forging partnerships with higher ed.

[The Unintended Consequences for English Learners of Using the Four-Year Graduation Rate for School Accountability.](#) A report from the Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy examines why high-school age English-learners drop out of school, how graduation rates are calculated, and the effects of these rates on students and instructional models.

[Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York](#) This report discusses the diversity of the English learner populations in American secondary schools and recommends techniques to improve the way they are taught, noting that literacy interventions for these students must be designed and implemented differently if they are to be successful. The report includes extensive data drawn from a specially commissioned demographic analysis by the Migration Policy Institute.

[The Role of Schools in the English Language Learner Achievement Gap](#) An analysis of public school data from key states finds that ELs tend to go to public schools that have low standardized test scores. However, these low levels of assessed proficiency are not solely attributable to poor achievement by ELs. These same schools report poor achievement by other major student groups as well, and have a set of characteristics associated generally with poor standardized test performance--such as high student-teacher ratios, high student enrollments and high levels of students living in or near poverty. When ELs are not isolated in these low-achieving schools, their gap in test score results is considerably narrower. This report quantifies the extent of EL concentration in low-achieving public schools and the degree to which this isolation is associated with the large achievement gap in mathematics between ELs and other major student groups.

[Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education](#) This website has information and resources on ensuring students graduate from high school ready for college and career and the benefits of this for the state as a whole.

[Skills USA- Massachusetts](#) The Massachusetts chapter of Skills USA and focuses on skill development, leadership opportunities, and a commitment to service.