

Working Group 3

College and Career Readiness Pathways

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Policy Area:

World class instructional system that includes a career and college ready standard set to global standards that most students are expected to meet by the end of grade 10 and all students are expected to meet by the end of high school

For all high school students who meet the CCR standard, access to (a) globally-recognized programs preparing students for admission to selective colleges, (b) college-level programs preparing students to receive an Associate's degree **qualifying them for transfer to junior year of 4-year selective and non-selective colleges and** (c) **a variety of high school and community college pathways related to career and technical education [details under review by CTE subgroup.]**

Element Detail 3a

Element: Develop a **fully aligned instructional system**, including curriculum frameworks, course syllabi and assessments with clear examples of standard-setting work and formative assessments to ensure that students stay on track

Design Assumptions:

An aligned instructional system includes:

1. **Standards, or curriculum frameworks with standards embedded**, in core subjects (English language arts, mathematics, sciences, social studies/history) that map out the core learning goals of each subject at each grade level, laid out in a logical development sequence reflecting the content standards that students have been exposed to previously and the latest developmental science on how students absorb new skills and ways of thinking
2. **Curriculum resources** for each subject at each grade level, built on the curriculum framework and standards. These should include, for each subject matter cluster:
 - a. State-developed course syllabi for each course at each grade level, with sample lessons for teachers to use as models.
 - b. State-approved units of curriculum for all subjects and grade levels, aligned with the curriculum frameworks (assembled from courses and units developed by teachers and others in and beyond Maryland, reviewed and approved for quality by MSDE or other State-approved authority)

Schools identified as low-performing by their scores on state-wide tests would be targeted for visits by inspection teams assembled and working under the supervision of MSDE; those inspection teams, on concluding their inspection, could recommend to MSDE that the school be required to use the state courses as designed until such time as its students are on track to meet the CCR standards by the end of 10th grade. In such cases, the inspection team would be obligated to recommend and to provide appropriate forms of training and technical assistance to the designated schools, including the option of pairing these schools with other schools serving similar student bodies with more success. Other schools (i.e. those not low-performing) would be encouraged, but not obligated, to use the State approved units (3b above).

3. **An assessment system** designed to assess the qualities specified in the curriculum frameworks and standards and based on evidence of meeting the frameworks and standards. Assessments must include:
 - a. Summative assessments that meet federal assessment requirements
 - b. Summative assessments that provide means by which to judge whether students have met the State career-and-college-ready (CCR) standard
 - c. Evidence of meeting high school graduation standards in all subjects not covered by the CCR standard
 - d. Formative assessments available for all subjects at all grade levels for teachers to use to determine whether students are on track for success against the CCR standard and the high school graduation standards.

Implementation Considerations:

1. The work should start with an inventory of the current instructional system and then build on curriculum review processes already in place at MSDE to develop curriculum frameworks and lesson “seeds”, which are outlines of lessons for teachers to expand, but considerable work will be needed to accomplish this goal
2. MSDE may find that curricula already developed by others are satisfactory and can be certified for use in a system designed to enable students to meet the CCR standard by the end of grade 10. But it is very important that curricula so certified not simply be consistent with Maryland academic standards but also that they are fully aligned with a tight framework leading to achievement of the CCR standard by the end of grade 10.
3. Designing this system would be a multi-year effort that will involve the development and piloting of each component by teachers and incorporating their feedback
4. The system would require an online platform to house this set of tools
5. The strongest teachers in each content area and grade level should play key roles in this work

Element Detail 3b

Element: Establish and implement a **CCR standard** set to global standards that most students should meet by the end of grade 10 and all students should meet by the time they leave high school. This standard will certify that students have the literacy and numeracy needed to succeed in first-year credit-bearing courses in open enrollment postsecondary institutions in the State. Review CCR standard periodically to ensure that it is internationally competitive.

Design Assumptions:

1. Setting the standard:
 - a. At the outset, the CCR standard will be set where PARCC set it: a score of 4 on PARCC Algebra 1 and English 10 exams and a qualifying score on MISA
 - b. At such time as PARCC is no longer a viable option (and because PARCC's standard was not empirically set for success in Maryland), the State should commission an empirical study of what content has to be mastered to what standard to have a high probability of success in the first year of an open-enrollment college program in Maryland
 - c. The State should also conduct the research needed to establish whether the CCR literacy and numeracy standards set by the empirical study [and maybe science too?] are comparable to the global standard in top performing countries for the same age cohort as in Maryland and whether they also align with the workforce needs of Maryland. This entails having a sample of Maryland students take the assessments of top-performing jurisdictions as well as Maryland assessments and comparing the results
2. Assessing student achievement against the standard:
 - a. The State will use PARCC and MISA, as long as PARCC is a viable option
 - b. When PARCC is no longer being used, the State should consider the following options [this whole issue of assessment needs to be discussed by WG #3]:
 - i. Adopt Smarter Balanced assessment (if matched to the Maryland College and Career Ready standards and accompanied by a wide range of resources for teachers to help them get students to the required level of achievement)
 - ii. Adopt Cambridge International's IGCSE exams (these will do the best job of measuring the kind of skills called for by Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, but it is expensive)
 - iii. Develop a Maryland-specific exam, possibly using items from PARCC or the Massachusetts Next Generation MCAS exam (this might not be cost effective or likely to fully measure the skills called for by Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards)
3. Maryland should participate in the OECD PISA survey so that it can compare its education system and student achievement to the best in the world

Implementation Considerations:

1. This would be a major policy change and an implementation calendar would need to be negotiated with open enrollment postsecondary institutions

2. This policy change would need to be communicated clearly, early and often to all constituencies, including parents and students
3. If teacher-scored exams are adopted, scoring of exams could be a strategy for professional development for teachers
4. [Other implementation considerations to be drafted per guidance from WG #3]

Element Detail 3c

Element: Commission’s Preliminary Report calls for the reorganization of schools so that teachers trained to diagnose and address students learning needs can work collaboratively to monitor students and intervene when a student is struggling. Teachers would meet regularly to monitor student progress, decide on an intervention – academic or referral to services – and assign a single teacher to take responsibility for following the student until he or she is back on track. (See Working Group 2 elements)

As it will take several years to put this system in place, it will be necessary to develop a transitional program to address the needs of struggling learners. This will be a **tutoring program** for all K-3rd grade students identified as needing support. Students who continue to need tutoring beyond 3rd grade should be provided with this support. Over time, the roles of tutoring and monitoring students will be assigned to regular teachers as their time is freed up to do this work and they are trained in diagnosing and addressing learning difficulties. [Note: Suggest to WG #2 that they include teacher PD and sufficient time in the school day for this purpose]

Just as the Commission’s Interim Report proposed several measures to greatly reduce the proportion of students falling behind, it also proposed measures for enriching the curriculum for students who need and could benefit from challenges that go beyond the standard curriculum. Those challenges will be provided not by accelerating their curriculum, but by enriching or deepening it. But here, as in the case of students falling behind as they go through school, it will take time to put that curriculum in place for all the students who could benefit from it. In the meantime, the supports now provided for students identified as gifted and talented should continue to be provided.

Design Assumptions for Transitional Program:

1. All K-3rd grade students identified by teachers as needing literacy or numeracy support should be provided with tutoring in small groups of students
2. The aim of the tutoring is to get the students on grade level before 3rd grade
3. Students can transition out of tutoring support as soon as their teacher determines they are ready
4. Students in upper elementary school who continue to need tutoring should continue to get these services
5. Tutors should be trained reading and math specialists
6. As a new system is implemented, school leaders and teachers should be trained in new approaches to supporting students. This will involve three strands of training: training for school leaders on the system of supports; training for veteran teachers in schools; and training for new teachers in teacher prep institutions on the pedagogy as well as the new system.
7. The special education system would remain in place for students with disabilities, but as more students are supported early, fewer students will be referred for special education services

Implementation Considerations:

1. HB 1415 (Chapter 361) authorizes funding for evidence-based early literacy intervention in grades K-8 with a priority for K-3rd graders in a school with a high concentration of students living in poverty. The bill mandates \$2.5 million in each of fiscal 2019 through 2022 for the program.
2. HB 1415 funding expires after fiscal 2022, with a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of the program at that time. Because tutors are considered a transitional program, needed until teachers have time and capacity to provide this support themselves, it is not anticipated that funding will be renewed.

Other Options:

1. Current legislation (HB 1415) funds reading tutors; could expand to include math tutors as well
2. Many students should be able to transition from tutoring by 3rd grade
3. As expertise in diagnosing and supporting learning difficulties is added to teacher preparation and schools are organized in ways to allow teachers time to provide this support directly, this activity can be phased out.

Element Detail 3d

Element: Develop **programs for students in middle school and early high school** who are not likely to meet this CCR standard by the end of 10th grade to help them meet it as soon thereafter as possible

Design Assumptions:

1. Starting in middle school, students likely not to meet the CCR standard by the end of 10th grade should be offered an option to work towards the CCR standard at a differentiated pace
2. This would mean that there would be alternative, “extended” classes that work towards the *same standards*, but spend *more time* (and with more support) on the content in order to assure that students will succeed
3. Teachers would recommend students to take this option, informed by standardized assessments, formative assessments and based on their experience in the elementary curriculum. Parents can appeal this recommendation and request students not be placed in an “extended” curriculum, but students will be transferred back in if they are not succeeding in the standard curriculum
4. If any student moves more quickly than expected, he/she should be transferred into the standard stream of classes
5. Students can be placed in the differentiated option for specific subjects

Implementation Considerations:

1. There would be a development and start-up period to develop new curriculum materials and course syllabi.

Other Options:

1. Consider offering grants to districts to develop alternative curricula for middle school and early high school students, with additional strategies to teach the same materials

Element Detail 3e

Element: Require all local school systems to provide all high school students with access to a set of **post-CCR programs** that includes: 1) at least one of the following: an AP Diploma program (consisting of Advanced Placement courses specified by the College Board), the International Baccalaureate Diploma program or the Cambridge Examinations International General Certificate of Secondary Education college preparatory program; 2) a two-year general education program leading (at no cost to parents or student) toward the award of an Associate’s degree on graduation from high school with the possibility of transfer to the junior year of a four-year college, and 3) access to CTE programs that allow students to explore various career options and to acquire technical credentials with significant value in the labor market offered by Maryland high schools and community colleges [details to be provided by the CTE subgroup]. All such programs sited in Maryland high schools would include the

opportunity to take the full range of courses now typically offered by Maryland high schools to the extent permitted by the student's calendar.

Design Assumptions:

1. Local school systems will ensure that all high schools that offers at least one of the selective college preparatory programs will be certified by the organization that provides and scores their examinations and will train staff to deliver the curriculum
2. Local school systems will partner with Maryland colleges and approved out-of-state institutions to offer programs leading towards Associate's degrees. Students can take college credit courses at their high school or at the college, depending on the specific agreements between districts and postsecondary institutions. Some courses can count for high school and college credit, under dual enrollment agreements.
3. [CTE path TBD]

Implementation Considerations:

1. MD will need to set a date by which all local school systems must offer students access
2. The community and 4-year colleges must work out partnership agreements with school districts to enable these districts to offer college credit courses and associates degree programs at no cost to parents and students.
3. The associates degree program could be offered on the community college campus and/or high school campus; the advantage of offering it on the high school campus is that the students need not travel to college, can participate in high school extracurricular programs, and need not mix with older students if that is seen as a problem [WG #3 needs to discuss this]
4. With respect to all community college programs during the last two years of high school, Maryland policymakers will have to decide how to fund them. It's impractical to continue the practice of having the state pay both the community college system and the high schools for these offerings.
5. MD will need to make "start-up" funds available for IB/Cambridge IGCSE/AP programs in situations where these are not already available

Element Detail 3f.

Revise state high school graduation requirements to allow students who meet the CCR standard, to move into one of the three pathways described in Element 3e (AP/IB/Cambridge, AA degree, or CTE programs [TBD], provided that, in addition to meeting the CCR standard, the student satisfies course requirements set by the State

Board for graduation. Students who take one of the upper division options offered by the high schools will be able to take as many of the courses now offered by their high school as their schedule will allow.

Design Assumptions:

1. The State Board and General Assembly should make whatever changes are required in the high school graduation requirements to ensure that students who meet the CCR standards by end of 10th grade will be able to take all other courses required to graduate by the end of 10th grade. That should include requirements in History and Social Studies. There will be students who, despite the fact that the courses are available in the freshman and sophomore years, choose not to take them until their junior and senior years, and they should be able to do that.

[To be discussed: what entity/agency is responsible for students pursuing the 3 post-CCR pathways; whether student's high school is still responsible and what if any additional high school courses they must take]

Element Detail 3g

Element: Develop 11th grade programs for students who do not meet CCR standard by the end of 10th grade

Design Assumptions:

1. Schools may need to design different interventions for different groups of 11th grade students, depending on how far they are from meeting the CCR standard:
 - a. Students who are close to meeting the standard can be offered targeted tutoring one on one or in small groups, based on a careful diagnosis of what concepts or skills they need to work on. These students can enroll in the full range of upper level high school courses in subjects other than the ones they are still working on to meet the CCR standard, provided they are likely to be able to pass the CCR assessment by the end of the first semester of 11th grade. They cannot move on to the upper division programs until they meet the CCR standard
 - b. Students far from being able to meet these standards should be offered year-long classes in English and mathematics aimed at helping them achieve mastery by end of 11th grade. Such classes should not be a repeat of 10th grade English and mathematics but, rather, specially designed classes focused on identifying each students' problematic areas and using engaging and applied strategies to help address their issues. The classes themselves should be organized around engaging content and themes,

including a career or academic areas such as the arts, technology or healthcare. Students in these classes should be able to build a full high school program of courses in addition to these courses.

- c. Students who have not met the CCR standard by 12th grade should be permitted to stay in school until age 21 as they are working toward that standard.

Implementation Considerations:

1. This program should be phased out as struggling students in grades 4-10 are identified and supported early as described in 3-d above.
2. In order to develop implementation assumptions, the following will be needed:
 - a) An estimate of the number of students passing English and math exams at each of the grade levels (9th, 10th, and 11th) initially and after the system of supports, and the number who do not.
 - b) An estimate of a rate of phasing out these programs as more and more struggling students are “caught” in elementary and middle school and put on a track to the CCR at that point.