California’s New School Accountability System: Key to the Expansion of High School College/Career Counseling

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Reforming California College and Career Efforts

• California began a major transformation of its education system in 2014, adopting a new accountability system changing the way the state evaluates school performance.
• This major overhaul has brought new opportunities for identifying and supporting college and career readiness.

The Journey
...and what we can learn from it.

Statistics
There are nearly 7 million K-12 students in California’s public schools.
1,943,939 are in grades 9-12.

The call for change
California’s law enforcement, business and retired military leaders know that preparing students to be college and career ready is essential to public safety, a strong workforce, and national security. Students who do not graduate from high school—or graduate unprepared for college or career—are more likely to engage in criminal activity, be unemployed, and are often ineligible for military service.

Historically
Prior to this time the State of California has measured local school success based on only one factor: test scores.
Now – multiple measures that include college and career readiness

The College/Career Indicator (CCI) was designed to emphasize that a high school diploma should represent students completed rigorous course work and are prepared for college AND career postsecondary options.

Decision Makers Discussed

- A broader range of measures is necessary to capture college and career readiness.
- Not all students need the same set of knowledge and skills to succeed in college and careers.
- Profiles of student strengths and weaknesses in relation to specific postsecondary programs of study would allow for better matches between students and programs and would enhance student success.

California’s Deliberation

- College and career readiness can be defined along a continuum from narrow to broad from unidimensional to multidimensional.
- A more expansive definition is more challenging to measure but yields more accurate data at the state level and more actionable information at the school and student level.
- College readiness and career readiness are not exactly the same, but the commonalities are sufficient for developing simultaneous measures.
Researchers define college and career ready?

Conley, 2007, 2010

- The level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed without remediation in a credit bearing course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program,
- And/or in a high-quality certificate program that enables students to enter a career pathway with potential future advancement,
- And/or success is defined as completing the entry-level courses or core certificate courses as a level of understanding and proficiency that makes it possible for the to consider taking the next course in the sequence or the next level of course in the subject area or of completing the certificate.

ACT, 2008

The level of achievement a student needs to be ready to enroll and succeed without remediation in credit bearing first-year postsecondary courses.

Postsecondary means primarily two-year or four year institutions, trade schools and technical schools.

Workforce readiness demands the same level and skills as college readiness.

CA Career Technical Education organized around 15 industrial sectors

Linked Learning Movement to design CTE courses that also meet college entrance requirements

University of California project to design CTE courses that fulfill college requirements

Well Prepared Students...

Complete one of the following from categories 1-6:

1. Career technical education pathway completion with “C” or better plus one other measure below:
   1. Score at Level 3 on either the math or English sections of the 11th-grade Smarter Balanced Assessment
   2. Complete a CTE pathway
   3. Pass at least two International Baccalaureate [IB] exams

2. Score at Level 3 on both the math and English sections of the 11th-grade Smarter Balanced Assessment

3. Complete two semesters of dual/concurrent enrollment in community college courses

4. Earn a 3 or higher on at least two AP exams

5. Complete at least one semester of dual/concurrent enrollment in community college courses

6. Complete the A-G sequence, which are the courses required for UC/CSU admission, plus one other measure below:
   1. Complete a CTE pathway
   2. Score at Level 3 on either the math and English sections of the 11th-grade Smarter Balanced Assessment
   3. Complete at least one semester of dual/concurrent enrollment in community college courses

Results so far...

- The number of school counseling staff statewide (28%) increased (Approximate 3,250 additional school counselors in three years).
- Increased attention key state decisionmakers are paying to research-based strategies and best practices in junior high and high school to provide effective college and career programs.
- Model implementation strategies have begun to emerged.
Aligning Learning & Support and Accountability Measures

Next Steps

- Continuous improvement plan
- Professional development to improve college/career readiness strategies
- Consultation with districts