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College and Career Readiness Indicator: CCR Outcomes FAQ

Over the course of the past 18 months, the AOE has developed Education Quality Reviews (EQR), a process for school systems to better understand where they are succeeding and where they need additional supports in meeting the Education Quality Standards (EQS). As part of EQR, the AOE, in conjunction with extensive field input, developed two new indicators to learn more about school systems' success in meeting College and Career Readiness (CCR) goals.

Why is Vermont introducing this College and Career Readiness Indicator into the state accountability system?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires each state to develop state accountability plans that employ a variety of school quality indicators. Vermont's ESSA State Plan builds from the Education Quality Reviews and includes two College and Career Readiness indicators. The first uses performance on existing assessments to demonstrate readiness for college and careers. A second, discussed in detail below, aims to learn how many graduates are pursuing college and career opportunities 16 months after graduation. This document will answer many of the questions teachers, administrators, students, and parents have regarding the latter indicator. A similar [FAQ for the former indicator](#) was shared with the field last month and is available on the AOE website.

What does College and Career Readiness mean?

For the past decade, Vermont has been steadily moving toward demonstrations of proficiency versus student seat time to assess student readiness. This has been supported by the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and accelerated with the Education Quality Standards. Vermont defines College and Career Readiness as the student's ability to enter the workforce and/or pursue postsecondary education or training without the need for remediation. To be considered college and career ready, students must possess the foundational skills and learning strategies necessary to directly pursue or continue studies in a career pathway.

All Vermont schools share the goal of all students demonstrating readiness for college and careers at the time of graduation. This includes meeting proficiency-based graduation requirements (or completing secondary school successfully), developing the transferrable skills that cut across disciplines and carry into adulthood, and being prepared to actively engage in civic life.

How does this fit into the Education Quality Reviews?

All school systems will publish an "Annual Snapshot" beginning in late autumn of 2018. This snapshot will show performance on several measures demonstrating strengths and areas in need of improvement in meeting the Education Quality Standards. One measure documents the percent of graduates who are pursuing college, post-secondary training, military service, or employment 16 months after graduation.

What will you be tracking to determine if a student is pursuing a college and career ready outcome?

In addition to assessing readiness for college and careers, schools want to know how successful graduates are in actually transitioning to post-secondary options. This measure tracks the percentage of graduates enrolled in college or a trade school, employed and earning wages, or enlisted in the military.

How will these data be tracked?

The AOE already is developing data-sharing agreements with several organizations so that schools will not have to collect any of these data on their own. We receive data from the National Student Clearinghouse to learn which graduates are enrolled in a college or university. We are currently working with representatives in the military to learn which graduates are active duty in a uniformed service. We have an agreement with the Vermont Department of Labor (DOL) that will enable us to learn which graduates are employed or enrolled in an approved trades program. Again, all of these data will be collected by the state and will not require additional school-level effort.

What counts as employed?

The AOE will use the Vermont DOL's definition of "employment." This definition considers the age of the person (i.e., older than 16), whether they receive wages, and whether they have worked a minimum number of hours and a minimum number of days (both aligned with federal standards). The definition used by DOL also captures unpaid workers in a family business, which is important given Vermont's small business community. Readers interested in a more detailed description may wish to consult the [DOL definition](#).

The AOE and the DOL have a data-sharing agreement under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) where we match Adult Education data based on unemployment information. We will follow a similar process for secondary school graduates.

Aren't some graduates likely to be difficult to track?

We know that we will not be able to track all graduates. For example, a graduate attending a university outside of the US will not be in the National Student Clearinghouse. A graduate employed in another state will not be in the Vermont Department of Labor database. A graduate who has dual citizenship and is serving in a foreign military will not be in US military records.

As we know there will be some error in the collection, the AOE has an initial goal that all Vermont school systems will have 67% of their graduates engaged in work or study that shows they were college and career ready 16 months after graduation. For most other measures, the AOE has a goal that 100% of students in all school systems will achieve the measure.

What should we do to prepare for the change?

This measure will go into effect for the 2018-19 school year. As per 16 V.S.A §941, participation in flexible pathways such as dual enrollment and early college should be reflected in students' PLPs. During the current school year, we suggest discussing which paths students are interested in pursuing and memorializing those discussions in Personalized Learning Plans (PLP).

Whom should I contact with my questions about this change?

For more information about the CCR and post-graduate measures, please contact Jess DeCarolis, Division Director, at jess.decarolis@vermont.gov or Patrick Halladay, Education Project Manager at patrick.halladay@vermont.gov.