

MARYLAND'S COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY COMMITMENT

Why Is Maryland's Commitment To College and Career Readiness So Critical?

A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA IS NO LONGER ENOUGH FOR SUCCESS

Today, nearly every good job requires some postsecondary education and/or training – such as an associates or bachelors degree, certificate, license, or completion of an apprenticeship or significant on-the-job training.

In 1950, 60% of jobs were classified as unskilled, attainable by young people with high school diplomas or less. Today, less than 20% jobs are considered to be unskilled.ⁱ

One result: In Maryland, the demand for middle- and high-skilled workers is outpacing the state's supply of workers educated and experienced at that level.

- **80% of Maryland's jobs are middle- or high-skill** (jobs that require some postsecondary education or training).ⁱⁱ
- Yet only 44% of Maryland adults have some postsecondary degree (associate's or higher).ⁱⁱⁱ

TOO MANY STUDENTS GRADUATE UNPREPARED FOR REAL WORLD CHALLENGES

Currently, far too many students drop out or graduate from high school without the knowledge and skills required for success, closing doors and limiting their post-high school options.

Maryland's graduation rate – both the state-reported and the independently-reported – demonstrates how the education system is not working for all students.

Graduation Rate (class of 2008)	State Reported ^{iv}	Independently Reported ^v
	85%	77%

As of 2009, Maryland had 29 “dropout factories” or high schools that graduate 60 percent or less of their students.^{vi}

Far too many students enter two- and four-year postsecondary institutions unprepared for college-level coursework.

Maryland's Remediation Data

66% of Maryland's students in two-year colleges and 48% of Maryland's students in four-year colleges require remediation.^{vii}

Employers of graduates entering into the workforce directly after high school note gaps in their knowledge and skills:

- 41% of employers are dissatisfied with graduates' abilities.
- Only 18% believe that new graduates, with no further education beyond high school, have the skills necessary for advancement.^{viii}

THE COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY AGENDA

The best way to prepare students for life after high school is to ensure they graduate with a strong foundation in the core academic areas that will leave all doors open in the future.

Over the past five years, states have driven the college- and career-ready agenda – a policy agenda that seeks to ensure all students graduate high school, and graduate ready for their next steps.

The momentum created by the states has been bolstered by the federal government's Race to the Top competition, which has further incentivized the adoption of common, college- and career-ready standards and assessments.

Support is very strong among voters for college- and career-ready policies, across demographic and party lines:

- *89% of voters agree that “to really get ahead in life a person needs at least some education beyond high school, whether that means university, community college, technical or vocational school.”*
- *83% of voters believe all students should “be pushed to take rigorous and broad academic requirements in high school to make sure they have as many options as possible upon graduation.”*^{ix}

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What Maryland Has Accomplished To Date^x

- In 2008 Maryland adopted K-12 academic standards aligned with college- and career-ready expectations.
- In May 2010, Maryland adopted the Common Core State Standards.
- In 2009, the Maryland Regents raised the admissions requirements for institutions in the University of Maryland System, requiring a fourth year of math through Algebra II. These admissions requirements are currently higher than the state's requirements for graduating high school.
- Maryland was a Round 2 winner of the Race to the Top state competition

Maryland is one of only 12 states (including DC) to win the Race to the Top state competition

- Maryland is a Governing State in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a consortium of states working to develop a common assessment system using Race to the Top Common Assessment funds.
- Maryland's longitudinal data system satisfies eight of the ten essential Data Quality Campaign elements, providing a foundation for strong and sound student-level data collection.
- Maryland collects and uses only one indicator of college and career readiness, and will need to expand its range of indicators to get a more complete picture of how their students are faring in K-12 and beyond.

College- and Career-Ready Indicator	Publicly Reported	State Set Goal	Incentive to Improve	Accountability Formula
CCR Diploma				
CCR Testing				
Postsecondary Remediation	NO^{xi}	YES		
Exceeding CCR				

How Maryland Can Further Advance the College- and Career-Ready Agenda

- ✓ ...Leverage Race to the Top funds to advance the state's college- and career-ready agenda, and build support structures for students to ensure they are fully prepared to meet the raised expectations.
- ✓ ...Realize the promise of the Common Core State Standards by implementing them fully and successfully, taking into consideration the related curricular and policy changes.
- ✓ ...Adopt college- and career-ready high school graduation requirements to bring expectations for graduation in alignment with admissions requirements for the University of Maryland System and the Common Core State Standards.
- ✓ ...Remain committed to the goals of the PARCC Consortium and developing a next-generation, computer-based assessment system that is anchored by college- and career-ready tests in high school, will let students know if they are ready for college-level coursework, and will measure the full range of the Common Core State Standards.
- ✓ ...Re-examine the state's K-12 accountability system to determine how it can further reward measures of college and career readiness, in alignment with the state's standards, course requirements and assessments.

ⁱ Carnevale, Anthony P. and Donna Desrochers (2003). *Standards for What? The Economic Roots of K-12 Reform*, Education Testing Services.

<http://www.learndoeearn.org/For-Educators/Standards-for-What.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Skills to Compete <http://www.skills2compete.org>

ⁱⁱⁱ National Center for Higher Education Management Systems' analysis of American Community Survey (2007) <http://www.higheredinfo.org>

^{iv} 2007 Maryland Report Card, <http://www.mdreportcard.org/>

^v Education Week Diplomas Count 2010, www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2010/06/10/index.html

^{vi} America's Promise Alliance (2011). Building a Grad Nation: March 2011 Update. www.americaspromise.org/Our-Work/Grad-Nation/Building-a-Grad-Nation.aspx

^{vii} Maryland Higher Education Commission (2007). *Meeting Maryland's Postsecondary Challenges*.

<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherED/AcadAff/Vandewaterreport.pdf>

^{viii} Peter D. Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, *Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?* prepared for Achieve, Inc., 2005.

^{ix} Achieve (2010). *Achieving the Possible: What Americans Think About the College- and Career-Ready Agenda*. www.achieve.org/AchievingthePossible

^x Achieve (2011). *Closing the Expectations Gap 2011: 50-State Progress Report on the Alignment of High School Policies with the Demands of College and Careers*. www.achieve.org/ClosingtheExpectationsGap2011

^{xi} MHEC's SOAR report includes data for students who took the SAT/ACT and went to college in-state and does not meet Achieve's criteria for this indicator/use.