

1. **General Diploma:** Recommend the Core 40 Subcommittee build multiple content pathways of success within Core 40 diploma option to eliminate the need for students to opt into the General Diploma pathway **thus eliminating the need for a General Diploma option**. SBOE should advocate to the General Assembly for the repeal of IC 20-32-7, 20-32-8, 30-32-9, 20-32-10 and any other conforming changes that are required.
 - a. **Math & Science Pathways:** Create math pathway and potentially science pathway that allows for more flexibility in the required courses of study that lead to a Core 40 Diploma (more in-depth analysis of the number and level of math courses completed by General Diploma students needs to be done to develop pathways). This can be done by the department and/or Board staff for Board approval.
 - i. **Quantitative Reasoning:** Charge the department with considering the tightening of the “math content” within the quantitative reasoning course selections to ensure that the quantitative reasoning course contains a level of mathematics that would benefit the student. The department should also ensure that the quantitative reasoning courses are not counting for both a math credit and credit in some other content area. Understand that a “quantitative reasoning” course could count as the 4th year math enrollment requirement, but should not count as both a math credit and another content area credit.
 - ii. **Traditional Math Pathway:** Recommend to the SBOE for their consideration of the expansion of available math pathways, including the traditional college preparatory math pathway (Alg I, Geo, Alg II), to meet the math requirements for Core 40 and Honors distinction to better prepare students for college and career readiness. We encourage the department, SBOE, higher ed, and employers to develop math pathway options that would be more beneficial to students beyond the traditional sequence.
 - iii. **New Math & Science Pathways:** Encourage the Department, SBOE, and local districts to work together to develop additional course offerings in mathematics and possibly science to align to new pathways and supplement existing fourth year math options.
 1. Solicit input from both employers and Higher Ed institutions to ensure students are adequately prepared for postsecondary options. While new pathway options are important and could alter traditional views on what is needed to gain access to higher education institutions, all students receiving an Indiana diploma should have ample postsecondary opportunities regardless of their pathway choice.
 - b. **Structured Pathways:** Recommend to the SBOE to include within a student’s elective program of study structured pathway options (for all students).
 - i. While the state is interested in allowing students the flexibility to explore pathways options, the state also recognizes the need for this exploration to be structured. Thus, it is recommended that there is some discussion around the possibility of aligning some of those options to CHE initiatives including: degree mapping and metamajors.

¹“Common Employability Skills, A Foundation for Success in the Workplace: *The Skills All Employees Need, No Matter Where They Work*. National Network of Business and Industry Associations.

2. **Core 40 credits:** Recommend to the SBOE to consider modifying its rules to require more credits for the Core 40 graduation requirements should additional courses (Personal Finance, Preparing for College and Careers, etc.) be deemed necessary. This would require students to be mindful of the courses they take and require them to put forth maximum effort in each class as there would be fewer opportunities for students to retake a course they did not earn credit in.
 - a. This requires being mindful of the number of credits that are offered by school districts.
 - b. **Competency:** This requires the possibility of rethinking the way that a student may demonstrate mastery of content, and could include other avenues for earning credit other than seat time. Verify that such a rule exists, and if one does not recommend to SBOE to use its rule making authority to adopt one.
 - i. Ensure that if students demonstrate mastery of content in other ways, they are not opting out of taking higher level courses within a content area.
 - c. **College & Career Pathways:** Consider additional courses that should be required of students to ensure they truly are college and career ready. For example, financial literacy and Preparing for College and Careers. This can be done by the department and/or Board staff for Board approval.
 - i. Course content and curricula for existing courses (i.e., Preparing for College and Careers, Personal Financial Responsibility, Work-based Learning) should be reviewed to verify expectations and suitability for all students.
 - ii. A College/Career Pathway (consisting of either existing or new courses/experiences) would include the following elements:
 1. **Planning:** Career Interest Assessment, Structured exploration of 5-8 Career Clusters/Metamajors, Relevant workplace experience/exposure
 2. **Preparing:** High school graduation plan that integrates a postsecondary education plan with anticipated credential to be earned (one-year certificate, associate degree, bachelor's degree, etc.), understanding of corresponding college admissions requirements and campus visit or equivalent in-person/virtual experience
 3. **Paying:** Financial planning that includes a "Paying for College/Postsecondary Education" plan, personal financial responsibility practices and filing for financial aid.
 4. **Employability Skills**¹: Personal Skills, People Skills, Applied Knowledge, and Workplace Skills are subsets of skills all students will need once they are ready to enter the workforce. Any course preparing students for colleges and/or careers should include a foundation upon which students can further develop their skills in these four areas.
 - d. Do not require more credits simply for the sake of requiring more credits and because most other states require more.
3. **Core 40 Diploma:** Recommend to the Core 40 Subcommittee to create one Core 40 diploma option that ensures a high level of rigor for all students. Present to the State Board of Education for approval of new graduation requirements.

¹"Common Employability Skills, A Foundation for Success in the Workplace: *The Skills All Employees Need, No Matter Where They Work*. National Network of Business and Industry Associations.

- a. **Standard Core 40 Diploma:** Use the current Core 40 graduation requirements and results from steps above as a guide to develop the one diploma option.
 - b. **Core 40 with Honors:** Develop criteria for an honors distinction that goes above and beyond the graduation requirements that is easy for stakeholders to understand and incorporates two specialized pathways to the “honors” distinction: one geared toward a career/technical pathway, the other a “college” pathway.
4. **Transcripts:** Recommend to the Core 40 Subcommittee to continue working toward a student transcript that is meaningful to students, higher education institutions and employers.
- a. Engage all stakeholders in determining a transcript that has utility for all parties involved.
 - b. Ensure there is a mechanism for including student competencies within the transcript.
 - c. Determine a means for employers to gain access to a student’s transcript. This will also include messaging around the significance of the transcript as opposed to strictly looking at whether or not a student earned a diploma.
5. **Options for Students with Special Needs:** Recommend to the Core 40 Subcommittee to investigate how students with special needs will have access to good employment opportunities, especially if they cannot say to an employer that they have earned a diploma. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, recommend to SBOE to modify appropriate rules or code.
- a. Consider the impact of the transcripts and the messaging to employers to value high school transcripts more than they may today mentioned in section 4 above.
 - b. Determine if a diploma for students with special needs is feasible in the current diploma structure. Some details that would need to be required would likely include that:
 - i. the student shall successfully complete IEP goals and requirements and shall meet at least one of the following:
 1. be employed in integrated, inclusive work environments;
 2. demonstrate mastery of specific employability skills and self-help skills;
or
 3. have access to services that are not within the legal responsibility of public education or employment or education options for which the student has been prepared by the academic program.
 4. Benchmark with other states that have recently adopted similar legislation (see Louisiana and others).
 5. Ensure there is a mechanism in place so this cannot be abused by schools as a way to funnel “gap” kids and/or meet state graduation rate requirements.

¹“Common Employability Skills, A Foundation for Success in the Workplace: *The Skills All Employees Need, No Matter Where They Work*. National Network of Business and Industry Associations.

Timeline Considerations

There are two deadlines addressed in HEA 1213 to keep in mind: the October 1st deadline to make recommendations to SBOE and the December 1st deadline of the Board to take action.

February

Meeting with all the members of the Core 40 taskforce teams to discuss plan moving forward

March – May

Monthly Taskforce Meetings

April and June

Larger Subcommittee Meetings with recommendations finalized by mid-to late June

July

- Recommendations presented to Career Council
- Address any concerns from the Career Council

August

- Recommendations to CHE
- Address any concerns from CHE

September 2nd (last SBOE meeting before October 1st)

- Recommendations to SBOE
- SBOE must take action by December 1st

¹“Common Employability Skills, A Foundation for Success in the Workplace: *The Skills All Employees Need, No Matter Where They Work*. National Network of Business and Industry Associations.