



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

TO: Indiana State Board of Education
FROM: Alicia Kielmovitch, Senior Director of Policy and Legislation
RE: Graduation Pathways Policy – Updates for 2019-20
DATE: November 13, 2018

Summary of memorandum: The [Graduation Pathways Policy](#), adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) in December 2017, has gone through its phase of implementation over the past year. Around 1.3% of 2018 graduates utilized Graduation Pathways in lieu of the graduation qualifying examination. During the course of implementation thus far, there have been several issues that require the Board to revisit the policy and amend it to address those issues. This document provides contextual information on the issues that have arisen, as well as recommendations for the Board to consider.

Issue #1: CTE Concentrator Definition

Current definition in Graduation Pathways: *Career-Technical Education Concentrator: Must earn a C average or higher in at least 6 high school credits in a career sequence.*

Considerations: This definition is aligned to the state's current Perkins plan. It will, however, misalign with the new federal definition of CTE Concentrator in the reauthorized Perkins V. The new law removes the language around credits altogether and instead focuses on courses. The new federal definition for the secondary level is: a student who completes at least two courses in a single program area.

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet recommends redefining our state definition of a CTE Concentrator to the following: a student that completes at least two non-duplicative advanced courses (courses beyond an introductory course) within a particular program or program of study. This new definition for CTE concentrators must be adopted for two reasons: 1) to align with the new federal definition, and 2) to ensure quality across programs of study. The GWC's *definition* is based upon advanced course completion, rather than accumulation of foundational or introductory credits prior to taking advanced coursework. By having a CTE concentrator definition that is based upon course completion rather than credit accumulation, we can ensure that students are getting through the same course content regardless of where they are enrolled. Additionally, K-12 CTE pathways need to align to postsecondary coursework and employment opportunities, which can only be accomplished through the depth of knowledge.

Recommendation: Adopt the GWC CTE Concentrator for the Graduation Pathways definition of CTE Concentrator: a student must earn a C average in at least two non-duplicative advanced courses (courses beyond an introductory course) within a particular program or program of study. This new definition will begin with the 2023 graduating cohort (freshmen beginning in 2019-20).

Next Steps: Though current high school students are grandfathered under the current CTE Concentrator definition – earning at least 6 high school credits in a career sequence – schools may opt to use this new definition of two courses for their current students. DOE will define the “advanced courses” that will constitute a CTE Concentrator beginning in 2019-20. They will present those courses for Board approval at the December 12, 2018 Board meeting. The Department of Workforce Development will also present recommended funding levels for all CTE Courses at the December Board meeting.



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Issue #2: Defining ‘Core Content’ for Liberal Arts

Current definition: *AP/IB/Dual Credit/Cambridge International courses or CLEP Exams: Must earn a C average or higher in at least three courses; at least one AP/IB/Dual Credit/CI course or CLEP exam must be in a core content area (e.g., English, math, science, or social studies) and/or be part of a defined curricular sequence.*

Considerations: As students are pursuing a liberal arts dual credit pathway, often they may take a random assortment of courses, many of which do not count towards general education or major requirements at colleges and universities. This type assortment of dual credit courses – nicknamed random acts of dual credit – can cost students at postsecondary institutions, since they expend Pell Grant money or accumulate as directed electives without any purpose. The Graduation Pathways Panel attempted to correct this through requiring either one of the AP/IB/Dual Credit courses to be in a core content area or have all three courses as part of a defined curricular sequence. The latter typically occurs through robust and rigorous CTE programs, but the former has caused some disagreement in the field. It has been difficult to define core content in a way that correlates with current secondary course requirements and guarantees students receive college credit for those courses.

There are two options to help ensure that core content in liberal arts is simply defined: 1) Use the [Core Transfer Library](#) (CTL) or 2) Use the [Liberal Arts Priority Dual Credit Crosswalk](#). The benefits of using the latter is that these courses are paid for by the state for low-income students or cost \$25 for students. These are also legislatively designated as priority courses for students. The downside of the Priority List is that it is limited and certain courses (e.g., Physics) are not represented. The Core Transfer Library, however, is comprised of 88 of the most taken courses across all public Indiana universities and 6 private universities. These are the most common courses that are transferred between and accepted at all universities. These courses qualify for general education requirements at universities and also go toward the TGEC. The disadvantage is that not all of these courses are state-funded and some are beyond the current definition of core content – e.g., English, math, science, or social studies. The CTL includes courses that overlap with CTE (such as Introduction to Microcomputers) and in more diverse subject areas (such as foreign language). While this does open up the definition of what ‘core content’ means, it can assist both schools and students in maximizing the transferability of earned Dual Credits and also meet the Dual Credit requirements.

Recommendation: Use the Core Transfer Library to outline the “one core content” dual credit/AP/IB requirement. Students pursuing liberal arts tracks must have at least one course corresponding with the CTL.

Next Steps: DOE will work to update guidance to the field regarding the requirements.

Additional Policy Updates:

- **Project-based, Service-based, and Work-based Learning Experiences:** As educators have started implementing the employability skills experiences, they have started using the [Policy Guidance document](#) to develop programs that match the design principles. In the Guidance document, courses lending themselves to executing the design principles of each experience are listed, though completion of the courses alone does not fulfill this requirement. As educators have adopted these and other courses, there has been consternation over whether the design principles can only be used in the designated courses or if they can be applied more widely. The message from SBOE and DOE staff has been that if the student’s experience aligns with the design principles of any of the



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employability skills experiences, then that experience will qualify for this requirement. One example from a school is with Welding I – the Guidance document has Welding I listed as a potential Work-based Learning experience; however, if adapted correctly, Welding I could have experiences that qualify under Project-based Learning. The emphasis from staff has been the rigor and quality of the experience for the student, rather than merely checking boxes.

- **Locally Created Pathways Adoption Guidance:** The Board has approved two [Locally Created Pathways](#) (LCP) thus far. As demonstrated in the 2018 graduation data, schools are beginning to adopt these pathways to suit their students' needs. To help clarify and simplify the components of each LCP, SBOE and DOE staff developed guidance for schools and districts to follow. DOE will be posting this guidance to their website, and SBOE staff will send this guidance as schools submit the required [notification of adopting an LCP](#).
- **Deep Dives into Graduation Pathways Data:** In early 2019, SBOE staff will work with DOE staff to conduct deeper dives of the data of 2018 graduates who utilized Graduation Pathways. By examining the details and nuances of the data, it is staff's hopes to be able to give the Board a fuller and clearer picture of the first phase of implementation, as well as advise the Board on any potential policy shifts that may be necessary before full implementation of Pathways begins in 2019-20. These data dives will include the following:
 - Correlating the use of employability skills experiences by Postsecondary-Ready Competencies and diploma types;
 - Disaggregating the Postsecondary-Ready Competencies, employability skills experience, and diploma types by the reported Post Graduate Information;
 - Disaggregating the Postsecondary-Ready Competencies, employability skills experience, diploma types, and Post Graduate Information by the ESSA subgroups and geographic locales;
 - Identifying trends in the data; and
 - Comparing those students that utilized Graduation Pathways in 2018 and passage rates on ISTEP 10.