

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS DIAGRAM

College Readiness

Postsecondary education aspirations, goals, and expectations

Knowledge of postsecondary options and requirements for entry

Understanding of financial aid and application processes

Academic knowledge and skills

Completion of prerequisite courses at a level sufficient to avoid the need for remediation

Understanding of culture of postsecondary institutions

College & Career Readiness

Understanding the link between career goals and the education needed to achieve them

Four-year high school plans linked to education and career goals

Capacity to integrate and apply academic, technical, and employability knowledge

21st century skills (i.e., communication, decision-making, use of technology, and interpersonal skills)

Career Readiness

Career aspirations, goals, and expectations

Knowledge of career options and requirements for entry

Technical knowledge and skills

Understanding of how to find and keep a job

Program completion (e.g., CTE sequence or program of study)

Attainment of industry-recognized credential

Understanding of workplace culture

What the diagram shows: This diagram is a conceptual map that depicts the unique elements that distinguish college readiness from career readiness as well as the common elements that define a secondary student who is college and career ready. The left side of the diagram identifies the elements essential to preparing young people for successful entry into and completion of postsecondary education. The right side of the diagram identifies the elements essential to preparing young people for successful entry into career pathways. The center, where the two circles overlap, identifies the elements common to both preparation for postsecondary education and for careers.

How the diagram can be used: In today's rapidly changing world, the elements depicted in all three portions of this diagram are important. Most students currently leave high school with some, but not all, of the elements on either the left or the right side of this diagram. Very few, if any, leave high school having completed the elements in the central column.

This graphic can be used to guide discussion of what young people need to be well-prepared for college and careers as well as the actions needed to assess and improve the nature and quality of opportunities and supports available to young people.

Helping students or young people achieve college and career readiness involves the collaborative effort of multiple partners, going beyond schools and families to include the broader educational, social, civic, and business communities. High school educators need to collaborate with postsecondary faculty to identify the knowledge and skills required at that level as well as the assessments used to determine college readiness. Similarly, high school and postsecondary faculty need to collaborate with employers to ensure that their students are graduating with the skills needed to transition successfully to their chosen careers.