



## Memorandum

**To:** Eric Witherspoon, Superintendent  
**From:** Pete Bavis, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
**Date:** February 15, 2016  
**RE:** **Goals Update**

## Background

District goals were adopted by the board of education in 2011. These goals, as written, are due for review and revision. Now is the time to revise district goals. Continuity in goals addressing academic, well-being, student-centered facilities, financial stewardship, and community relationships/partnerships is essential to keeping the work of the district focused. It is recommended that the board complete a systematic process to revise district goals, targets, and measures. In September the administration recommended that the board focus on five measures that matter:

- freshman on track (Allensworth & Easton, 2007),
- graduation rate,
- AP access and success (Keng & Dodd, 2007),
- ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (CRB) in English and math (Bettinger, Evans & Pope, 2011), and
- discipline and suspension.

Since this recommendation there have been two developments that are important to consider. The School Superintendents Association (AASA) has recommends the use of multiple measures to assess and demonstrate college and career readiness. In addition, the Harvard Graduate School of Education published *Turning the tide: Inspiring concern for others and the Common Good through College Admissions*. This is relevant because both of these developments could impact our goals and measures.

## Redefining Ready

The School Superintendents Association is supporting the use of multiple measures to assess and demonstrate college, career, and life readiness rather than a score on a standardized test (Appendix A). This work is being done under the title “Redefining Ready.” While the AASA is a national organization; this work is being developed at District 214. While life ready measures are under development, here are the indicators from the report that measure college and career readiness.

## College Ready Indicators

Students are College Ready if they meet either the academic or standardized testing benchmarks listed below.

### **GPA 2.8 out of 4.0 and one or more of the following benchmarks:**

- ✓ Advanced Placement Exam (3+)
- ✓ Advanced Placement Course (C or better)
- ✓ Dual Credit College English and/or Math (C or better)
- ✓ Developmental English and/or Math (C or better)
- ✓ Algebra II (C or better)
- ✓ International Baccalaureate Exam (4+)
- ✓ College Readiness Placement Assessment  
ACT English (18), Reading (22), Science (23), Math (22)  
SAT Exam Math (TBD), Reading and Writing (TBD)

## Career Ready Indicators

**Students are Career Ready if they have identified a career interest and meet two of the behavioral and experiential benchmarks listed below.** In addition, students entering the military upon graduation must meet the passing scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for each branch of the military.

### **Career Cluster Identified and two or more of the following benchmarks:**

- ✓ 90% attendance
- ✓ 25 hours of Community Service
- ✓ Workplace Learning Experience
- ✓ Industry Credential
- ✓ Dual Credit Career Pathway Course
- ✓ Two or more organized Co-Curricular Activities.

Our administration sees great promise in using this multiple measure approach to gauge college and career readiness. This moves away from the use of a single, standardized test score to a more inclusive measure. There is also a natural alignment to our work with Cradle to Career and our use of Individual College and Career Plans (ICAPs).

## *Turning the Tide*

A complement to “Redefining Ready” is the Harvard Graduate School of Education’s report *Turning the tide: Inspiring concern for others and the common good through college admissions*. This report was developed by a coalition of colleges and universities in a joint effort for changes and transparency in the college admissions process. The report is premised on the perception

that too often post-secondary institutions, high schools, and parents are mistakenly placing increasing pressure on students to focus on personal success and competition in an attempt to stand out in the college admissions process. Key here is the ability of college admissions to "send compelling messages that both ethical engagement—especially concern for others and the common good—and intellectual engagement are highly important." The full report is included in Appendix B.

This report is relevant because it is endorsed by over 80 stakeholders in college admissions among them all Ivy League Institutions. This report should bolster the presence of equity, service, and wellbeing in the goals, while cautioning against the use of metrics that encourage overloading of AP courses and simplistic calculations of service hours,

The recommendations in the report fall into three areas:

- community engagement and service;
- ethical engagement and contribution to others across race, culture, and class;
- reduce undue achievement pressure, redefining achievement, and leveling the playing field for economically diverse students.

Here are some highlights from this important report.

1. Meaningful sustained community service. "at least a year of sustained service or community engagement"
2. Collective action that takes on community challenges.
3. Authentic, meaningful experiences with diversity.
4. Service that develops gratitude and a sense of responsibility for the future.
5. Contributions to one's family.
6. Assessing students' daily awareness of and contributions to others.
7. Reducing undue achievement pressure, redefining achievement, and leveling the playing field for economically diverse students.
8. Prioritizing quality not quantity of activities.
9. Awareness of overloading of AP courses. Take AP courses in a limited number of areas. "at the same time, it's vital to increase access to advanced courses for large numbers of students in schools without access to adequately challenging courses."
10. Discourage "over coaching"
11. Transparency in how much ACT and SAT count in the admissions process.
12. Expand students' thinking about "good colleges."

### **Links**

[https://www.d214.org/assets/1/6/College\\_CareerReadinessIndicators\\_AASA-2016.pdf](https://www.d214.org/assets/1/6/College_CareerReadinessIndicators_AASA-2016.pdf)

<http://www.redefiningready.org/>

<http://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/collegeadmissions>