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College and Career Readiness¹

Purpose: Proficiency in basic academic skills, including math, reading and writing, are foundational to an educated and productive citizen. Successful application of this learning requires high technical and behavioral competencies. Together, these skills are critical for student success, whether at the collegiate level or in the workforce. Therefore, it is equally important that students, teachers, and policymakers have a common understanding and agreement about the specific competencies a high school graduate will need to possess in order to lead a successful and meaningful life.

Definition: College and career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare high school graduates for a successful transition into some form of postsecondary education and/or the workplace.

Competencies:

- **Knowledge of Core Subjects:** Possess proficiency in the core subjects (language arts/communication, math, science, social studies, humanities and health/wellness), and ability to apply this knowledge and understanding to be successful in college or the workplace.
- **Critical Thinking/Creative Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, identify problems and use good judgment to implement solutions and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.
- **Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit correspondence and reports clearly and effectively.
- **Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships, work effectively within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

¹ The definition and most of the competencies were drawn heavily from the National Association of Colleges and Employers' "Definition of Career Readiness and Competencies" (<http://www.naceweb.org/knowledge/career-readiness-competencies.aspx>).

- **Digital Literacy:** Confidently and effectively perform tasks in a digital environment through the use of information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, interpret, create and communicate ideas and information requiring both cognitive and technical skills.
- **Leadership:** Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common outcomes or goals, and use interpersonal skills to encourage others. The individual is able to assess their emotions; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.
- **Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits (e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management), and understand the impact of non-verbal communication. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly, and is able to learn from their mistakes.
- **Career Exploration and Development:** Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals, and identify training, education and competencies necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore career options, and understands and can pursue opportunities.
- **Citizenship/Civic Responsibility:** Think critically about complex issues and evaluate information about issues of public consequence. Demonstrate knowledge of institutions and processes of government and political systems. Possess behaviors, attitudes, and understanding needed to be a knowledgeable, active and engaged member of a community.
- **Financial Literacy:** Possess knowledge and understanding in the following areas: earning income, buying goods and services, using credit, saving and protecting assets and insuring.²

² Council for Economic Education, *National Standards for Financial Literacy*.