

Career-Focused Indicator Profile: Transitions Beyond High School

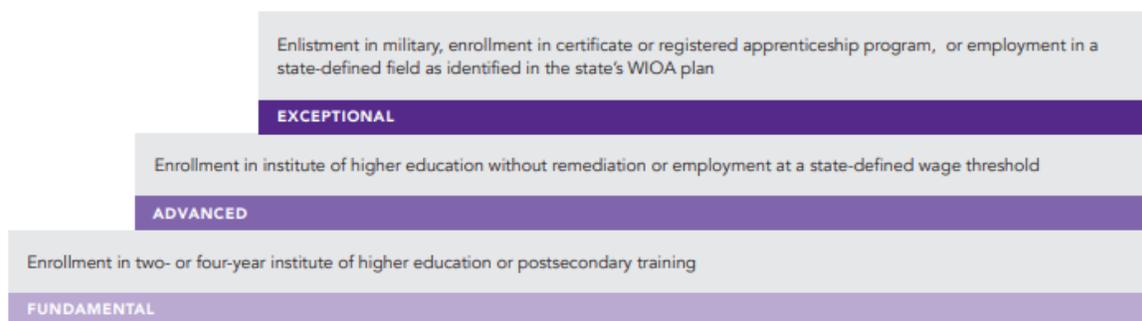
Over thirty states included at least one career-focused indicator in their Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability systems.ⁱ Now, states are in the midst of putting finishing touches on their business rules,ⁱⁱ guidance to local districts, data collection efforts and report cards.

To help states design and implement the most meaningful career-focused indicators, Advance CTE, Education Strategy Group and the Council of Chief State School Officers have developed a series of indicator profiles, organized around the four types of measures recommended in *Destination Known: Valuing College AND Career Readiness in State Accountability Systems*:

- Progress toward Post-High School Credential
- Co-curricular Learning and Leadership Experiences
- Assessment of Readiness
- Transitions beyond High Schoolⁱⁱⁱ

These profiles provide detailed information about how leading states are designing their career-focused accountability indicators to ensure they are based on quality, validated data, are inclusive of all students, and are aligned with meaningful outcomes for students. They should serve as a resource and inspiration for states working on similar indicators.

Transitions beyond High School: *Successful student transition includes placement into postsecondary education, training or the workforce within 12 months of graduation. Examining the quality of each of these transitions is critical to ensure that alignment between K-12, higher education and workforce exists and that students are placed into situations that promote their ability to realize long-term economic success. This means enrollment in higher education without the need for remediation, engagement in high-quality registered apprenticeship certificate programs, military enlistment, or employment in state-defined in-demand fields.*



State Example: Missouri

Missouri is among the few states that maintains separate federal and state accountability systems. Although Missouri does not include any measures of career readiness in its federal, or ESSA,

accountability system, the state system – called the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) – has long valued college and career readiness.^{iv} Specifically, MSIP includes five “performance standards,” the third of which addresses college and career readiness by requiring districts to “provide adequate postsecondary preparation for all students.” This standard has two components:

- The percent of graduates who attend postsecondary education/training or are in the military within six months of graduating; and
- The percent of graduates who complete a state-approved CTE course and are placed in occupations related to or not related to their program area, continue their education, or are in the military within six months of graduating.

*[Number of high school graduates enrolling in postsecondary education or training + entering military] + [Number of CTE graduates entering the workforce]
(unduplicated)*

Number of high school graduates

These two measures are combined into one indicator for accountability purposes, but the disaggregated data by placement type is publicly available.^v The state additionally includes the percent of graduates entering a four-year institution, two-year institution and postsecondary/technical institute, and the percent of CTE students placed in training or the workplace on the state-level dashboard^{vi} as well as district- and school-level report cards.

Districts collect the post-high school enrollment data through the state-developed “February Student Graduate Follow-up” survey. Importantly, the state provides data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to districts prior to the collection of this survey data. The NSC data contain postsecondary enrollment records verified by participating institutions and are intended to be used as a starting point for the follow-up submission, as well as a means of validating the data. If a district’s submitted postsecondary participation rate varies significantly from results obtained from NSC, the state will not accept it without adequate supporting documentation. A district with a 15 percent variance will receive a warning and a 25 percent variance will receive an error.

Unfortunately, there is not any explicit guidance related to enrollment in military or the workforce. These data, therefore, are collected simply through the follow-up survey.

State Example: Colorado

Colorado takes a very similar approach to Missouri in the collection of its “matriculation rate” indicator, which is part of its state accountability system, separate from its federal ESSA system. Colorado collects and publicly reports the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in a CTE (certificate) program, community college or four-year institution of higher education in the school year immediately following graduation. The overall matriculation rate, as well as the disaggregated CTE program, two-year and four-year enrollment rates are publicly reported at the district and school level, lagged a year. The state also counts any students who earned a postsecondary certificate or degree while enrolled in high school in the numerator.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) provides information to support the validation of two-year institutions, four-year institutions, and career and technical education student enrollment

information. CDHE utilizes its Student Unit Records Data System to obtain enrollment information for all students enrolled in public higher education institutions within the State of Colorado. In addition, CDHE holds a contract on behalf of CDE, per statute, with the National Student Clearinghouse, which reports a “capture rate” of 96 percent of graduating students in Colorado who enroll in college. In cases where students’ information is not captured by NSC, those students either will be omitted from the matriculation rate or may be considered through documentation submitted via a “request to reconsider” process.^{vii}

What Stands Out

As more states value pathway completion and dual enrollment in their accountability systems, it stands to reason that the transition between high school and a graduate’s next step – be it postsecondary, the workforce or the military – should be valued as well. Yet, few states have built such transitions into their accountability systems.

Missouri and Colorado are two states – joined by other states such as Michigan and Georgia – that are holding schools accountable for what happens to graduates after high school. Missouri and Colorado are attending to data quality by using NSC to validate locally collected data on postsecondary enrollment. Both states are also parsing out enrollment in various postsecondary institutions and, in the case of Missouri, are including placement into the workforce (however, only for CTE participants).

At this time, no state has yet to include all post-high school options – including enrollment in a two- or four-year institution, certificate/training program, apprenticeship, military enlistment and/or employment – in their federal or state accountability systems and only Georgia is valuing remediation-free enrollment in its College- and Career-Ready Performance Index. There is more work to be done in this space to fully support students’ transitions from high school into the world of college and careers.

These Career-Ready Indicator Profiles are part of a broader effort to analyze states’ approaches to measuring career readiness and continue to push the field forward by designing and implementing effective and meaningful indicators.

All of these issues will be explored in *Making Career Readiness Count: A 2018 Update*, which will be released later in 2018 by Advance CTE, Achieve, Education Strategy Group and the Council of Chief State School Officers as part of the New Skills for Youth Initiative, supported by JP Morgan Chase & Co.

ⁱ Advance CTE & Education Strategy Group (2018). *Mapping Career Readiness in the Every Student Succeeds Act*. Retrieved <https://careertech.org/resource/mapping-career-readiness-essa-full>

ⁱⁱ Business rules typically describe the procedures used to produce outcome data. This may include identifying the data elements that should be sourced to populate analysis databases, the programming codes used to formulate inquiries and the years of data to respond to a given indicator.

ⁱⁱⁱ Education Strategy Group and Council of Chief State School Officers (2017). *Destination Known: Valuing College AND Career Readiness in State Accountability Systems*. Retrieved <https://careertech.org/resource/destination-known>

^{iv} Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. (2017). MSIP 5 Comprehensive Guide. Retrieved https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/MSIP_5_2017_Comprehensive_Guide_0.pdf

^v Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's District and School Information. Retrieved <https://mcde.dese.mo.gov/quickfacts/Pages/District-and-School-Information.aspx>

^{vi} Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's Data Dashboard. Retrieved <https://dese.mo.gov/show-me-success/data-dashboard>

^{vii} Colorado Department of Education. (2016). Matriculation Sub-Indicator (HB15-1170): Overview with Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/matriculation_guidance_and_faq_7_25_16