

Texas College Readiness Standards Status Report

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Process for Developing Draft College Readiness Standards

- ◆ Draft standards reflect the work of the Vertical Teams
 - Four meetings with reviews between meetings
 - Convergent consensus professional judgment process
- ◆ Vertical Teams were not asked to approve or “sign off” on the draft standards
 - This is to limit ownership because the standards will now be revised based on public comment

Process for Developing Draft College Readiness Standards

- ◆ Benchmarked against existing college readiness standards and state standards
 - Achieve, Inc.
 - ACT
 - Standards for Success
 - National subject area standards
 - Exemplary state standards
 - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

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Key Characteristics of the Standards

- ◆ The reference point for the standards is readiness to succeed in entry-level courses
 - This is tempered by what is possible to do in high school
- ◆ As written, the standards are not a blueprint for an assessment system
 - This allows for the inclusion of key cognitive skills that are not easily assessed

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Key Characteristics of the Standards

- ◆ The standards are not intended as a checklist
 - However, the more standards a student has mastered, the better prepared he or she will be for college success
- ◆ The “performance indicator” level contains representative example performances
 - Many additional examples could be added at this level if greater specificity were desired

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Structure of the Standards

- ◆ Standards are organized into four subject areas and a set of cross-discipline standards
- ◆ Each area presents knowledge and skill expectations hierarchically in order to reveal the structure of the subject area
 - This is consistent with research on key skills for postsecondary success

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Structure of the Standards

v Content Standards identify key knowledge and skills

Example:

I. Biology (Standard)

A. Biochemistry (Organizing concept)

1. Describe the structure and function of enzymes
(Performance expectation)

a. Give specific examples of enzymes and why they are important in the human body (Performance indicator)

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Structure of the Standards

- ◆ Cross-discipline standards enumerate key cognitive strategies and foundational skills necessary for college success
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Research
 - Use of data
- ◆ These have been identified through research as critical for success in entry-level college courses

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Current Status of College Readiness Standards

- ◆ Standards being presented today are in draft form
 - Board is authorizing release of draft standards for public review
- ◆ Input will be solicited until Dec. 7
 - All public postsecondary campuses have liaisons who will encourage comments from faculty
 - TEA will arrange a parallel input process for K-12 educators

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Questions from the Board

- ◆ Questions regarding the current status of the standards, the process used to develop them, their purpose, or their structure and content

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Next Steps

- ◆ Between now and Dec. 7:
 - Input will be gathered on an item-by-item basis via an online instrument
 - More general comments and commentaries will be accepted separately
 - Expert analysis will be solicited to supplement individual and organizational comments
 - Limited validation against current courses may be conducted as well

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Next Steps

- ◆ Results will be compiled on an ongoing basis by EPIC staff
 - Suggestions and comments will be organized by topic and item
- ◆ Vertical Teams will be reconvened to review comments
 - As per HB 1, the VT will make recommendations to the Commissioner of Higher Education regarding changes in the draft standards
- ◆ The Board will receive the final recommendations from the Commissioner in January, 2008
- ◆ State Board of Education will then utilize the standards as outlined in HB 1

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Phase II

- ◆ Once standards are adopted, validation will take place and alignment work will begin
- ◆ Validation is accomplished by comparing the content of entry-level college courses at Texas postsecondary institutions to the standards
 - This enables fine-tuning of the standards, generation of exemplars of college-level work, and identification of best practices college courses to serve as models for college readiness expectations

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Phase II

- ◆ The validation process will lead to the creation of a “reference course” as the definition of college readiness in each subject area
 - A reference course is a hypothetical course set at a sufficiently high challenge level to ensure readiness to pursue additional studies in the subject area
 - This helps ensure sufficient rigor for the standards and not a lowest common denominator model

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Phase III

- ◆ Once standards are validated and exemplars created, instructional materials will be designed
 - Focused on senior year in high school
 - Purpose is to bridge the gap between high school and college course expectations
 - Could conceivably provide diagnostic information to high school students and colleges

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Ultimate Goal

- ◆ The College Readiness Standards will provide a means to align expectations better between secondary and postsecondary education
- ◆ Students will benefit from clearer signals of what they must do to be college ready
- ◆ The standards can then potentially serve a range of other purposes as well

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Questions from the Board



- ◆ Questions regarding the next steps or any of the activities described in Phase II and III
- ◆ General policy questions