



TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: TEXAS COLLEGE READINESS STANDARDS

What are the *Texas College Readiness Standards*?

The *Texas College Readiness Standards* define what students should know and be able to accomplish in order to succeed in entry-level college courses or workforce opportunities upon graduation from high school.

Who drafted the *Texas College Readiness Standards*?

H.B. 1 of the 79th Texas Legislature (Third Called Session) mandated that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency appoint “vertical teams” in the disciplines of English/language arts, science, social sciences, and mathematics. The “vertical teams” were charged with drafting the standards.

What role did the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board have in developing the *Texas College Readiness Standards*?

The “vertical teams,” consisting of teachers and faculty members with subject matter expertise and direct experience in public high school and college classrooms around the state, worked independently to develop the *Texas College Readiness Standards*. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency, selected vertical team members as required by statute, but had no formal role in the development of the draft standards.

Why does Texas need college readiness standards?

The *Texas College Readiness Standards* articulate a baseline of knowledge necessary for students to successfully participate in college and function in the modern workplace. College readiness standards represent the next step in aligning public and higher education curriculum in order to facilitate a seamless transition between high school and college or the workforce. This alignment will reduce the need for remedial education for recent high school graduates and ultimately increase the number of Texans graduating from college.

How are the adopted *Texas College Readiness Standards* different from high school graduation standards?

High school graduation standards provide a defined, focused set of core skills that should be mastered in a relatively limited and defined set of courses by the time a student graduates from the public school system. The *Texas College Readiness Standards*, in contrast, are specifically designed to better prepare students to succeed in a broad range of challenging entry-level college courses or workforce opportunities that a student can reasonably expect to experience upon graduation from high school.

What is the difference between the Report of the Commission for a College Ready Texas and the *Texas College Readiness Standards*?

The Commission for a College Ready Texas (CCRT) is a 21-member panel appointed by Governor Perry in April 2007 to solicit input from Texans on what skills and knowledge a student must possess in order to be college ready, as well as provide expert advice and resources to support the work of the vertical teams developing the college readiness standards. The CCRT's report offers contextual data and information to support the need for college readiness standards in Texas. Additionally, it includes a summary of public feedback received by the Commission as well as an evaluation of an early draft of the *Texas College Readiness Standards* developed by the vertical teams.

The *Texas College Readiness Standards*, in comparison, were developed by the vertical teams and provide the actual framework of what is important to know to succeed in college in the four subject matter areas: English/language arts, social sciences, science, and mathematics.

How are the *Texas College Readiness Standards* organized?

The *Texas College Readiness Standards* are organized in four “levels” or areas:

- 1) *Key Concept*: Such as “Reading”
- 2) *Organizing Component*: Such as “Comprehend texts of varying lengths”
- 3) *Performance Expectations*: Such as “Identify the intended purpose and audience of the text”
- 4) *Sample Performance Indicators*: Such as “Explain how the language of an effective text targets the intended audience”

Are the sample performance indicators provided in the *Texas College Readiness Standards* prescriptive for all public high school teachers?

No. The sample performance indicators simply provide examples of how students may demonstrate the knowledge and skills outlined in the *Texas College Readiness Standards*. The inclusion of the performance indicators are designed to provide general guidance on how a teacher might measure a student’s knowledge and skills against the *Texas College Readiness Standards*. They also provide an indication of the rigor with which a subject must be taught to achieve college readiness.

How much of the knowledge and skills outlined in the *Texas College Readiness Standards* must be mastered in order to be deemed “college-ready?”

The *Texas College Readiness Standards* do not represent a learning checklist or a detailed list of all prerequisite knowledge necessary to be “college-ready.” As a general rule, the more standards a student can master, the more likely the student will be “college-ready.” Additionally, a student will be better served by mastering individual standards in depth, rather than passing over all of them in a superficial fashion.

Before adopting the standards, did the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board consider input from the public?

Yes. A draft of the *Texas College Readiness Standards* was made available to the public for review and comment. The Coordinating Board received close to 1,000 individual and group comments from all sectors of the education community, as well as the general public. The vertical teams reviewed and considered all comments received during the public comment period. When appropriate, this input was integrated into the standards accordingly.

What are the next steps now that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has adopted the *Texas College Readiness Standards*?

As required by statute, the *Texas College Readiness Standards* were formally adopted by the Coordinating Board on January 24, 2008. The standards must now be approved by the Commissioner of Education. Then, the standards will be forwarded to the State Board of Education for ongoing implementation to align the standards with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum for public education. The implementation phase could take several years to fully achieve so school districts, teachers, and students will have time to adjust.

Resources:

Texas College Readiness Standards (as adopted by the Coordinating Board on 1/24/08)
<http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/CRS.pdf>

For more information please contact:

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