# ESSA Boot Camp

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# Break Out Session: Indicators of College and Career Readiness

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National Urban League







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Championing the Success of English Learners







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### These groups worked together to answer some critical questions about possible indicators

- What might be important?
- How is it measured?
- What do data/research tell us?
- What are benefits/risks of including this measure in a school rating system
- If a state is headed toward using this measure, what questions should advocates ask? What should they watch out for?

### **Indicator-specific factsheets...**

Summarize what research and data tell us about an indicator, and highlight benefits and considerations related to rating schools on that indicator

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### Raise questions to ask if your state is considering including the indicator in school ratings

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Now will the state encore that the data are accurate? In these a process for eaciting districts to verify that data are correct? What does that process involve?

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<sup>1</sup> Reset or pullwinery Education True analysis of size from the California Expansion of Education and another size

# We also produced two other tools for advocates:

#### Indicators:

What to include in school ratings

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# Our focus today: Measures of college and career readiness

We'll discuss the college-related indicators first, followed by a discussion of potential career-related indicators.

# On the College side, we'll look at:

### • Courses

- Completion of college prep curriculum
- Advanced courses (AP, IB and the like)
- Test-based Measures (like ACT, SAT)
- Percent of students who enter college (and percent who don't need remediation)

### **General Theme**

 On the course-taking indicators, important to understand there are two parts: participation and success. If states are going to measure one, they have to measure the other.

# **1. College prep course sequence completion**

**Definition:** A recommended series of classes in high school, typically designed to be more rigorous than the standard course of study. May or may not be aligned with requirements for entry into the state higher ed system.

- For example:
  - In California: A-G Course completion is a recommended course sequence required to be completed in order to be considered for admissions to a University of California school
    - Two years of history/ social science, English, and Mathematics; one year of Laboratory Science and of a language other than English; four years of other "A-G" courses, including visual and performing arts and college prep-electives
  - In Massachusetts: MassCore is a recommended program of studies intended to be more rigorous than the typical MA high school course of study
    - Four years of English and Math; three years of history and a lab-based Science; two years of the same foreign language; one year of an arts program; five additional "Core" courses on subjects ranging from business to technology

Why it matters: Research shows that a rigorous course of study is key for success in college. Studies also show that a lot of students are "meandering toward graduation" rather than taking a coherent course of study.

# **Course Sequencing: How are schools doing on it?**

- Very different performance between the two states
  - In CA, there is a wide range of course completion rates across schools and subgroups, with historically underserved students typically completing the A-G sequence at lower rates than white students
  - In MA, MassCore completion rates tend to be higher across groups. On average, however, completion rates are lower for historically underserved groups especially for ELL students.



Preliminary EdTrust analysis of CA Department of Education and MA Department of Education data



#### 50<sup>th</sup> Percentile MassCore Completion Rates

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### Course Sequencing: What can we tell from how results on this indicator relate to results on others?

• In CA, the higher a school's proficiency rate, the higher the A-G completion rate is likely to be. In MA, there is no relationship between proficiency and MassCORE completion.



Preliminary EdTrust analysis of CA Department of Education and MA Department of Education data



# So what do we do with this?

- The data show big differences between the two states. What does that mean?
  - The way a college-prep curriculum is defined likely matters.
    - In CA, there is greater alignment with higher education and actual course certification by state institutions of higher education.
  - This definition should be a key part of deciding whether the indicator can be used for accountability.

# **Course Sequence Completion: Implications for Accountability**

### Benefits:

- Sets the expectation that all students should complete a coherent course sequence
- Especially useful if sequence is aligned to the admissions requirements for the state system of higher education
- Is an indicator that may be relevant to students and parents

### **Risks:**

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- If not done thoughtfully, the measure can be weak and not provide much information
- People could mistakenly think they will meet the admission requirements for state systems of higher education if this measure isn't fully aligned with admissions requirements
- They may be pushback from CTE and arts educators if those courses are not reflected in the sequences
- Including this indicator in accountability could incentivize reduction in rigor for the courses

### Considerations: If a state is considering this indicator, what are the key questions to ask?

How is a "college prep curriculum" defined?

- Does it align with courses required for college admission?
- Is course content defined (especially in math and science)?
- Who gets access to it?
  - Recommended, required, default?
- How is it measured?
  - Participation, success or both?
  - Denominator 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort or graduates?

# **2. Advanced Coursework**

**Definition:** Courses that provide opportunity to earn college credit in high school. Includes, but may not be limited to, AP, IB, dual enrollment.

- This presentation focuses on AP courses, simply because there is a great deal of data available around them.
- The questions that we'll surface are relevant to other types of advanced courses, too.

Why it matters: Programs like AP/IB are designed to provide high school students with a head start on a college education. But today, access to these classes (and success in them) is far from equal.

# Advanced Courses: How are schools doing?

- In FL, we only had participation data for the all students group, which hovered around 30%.
- In MA, participation rates are often lower for historically underserved groups.
- Note: "Participation" was calculated differently for Florida and Massachusetts, so the two should not be compared.
  - In MA, the participation rate is the percentage of **all students** in the school who took one or more AP exam.
  - In FL, the participation rate is the percentage of all students in grades 10-12 who took one or more AP exam.





Preliminary EdTrust analysis of FL Department of Education and MA Department of Education data

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# Advanced Courses: How are schools doing on it?

- In FL and MA, schools often have higher scores for their white students than for their students in historically underserved groups
  - Note: "Success" was calculated differently for Florida and Massachusetts.
    - In FL, success is the percentage of students scoring a 3 or higher on one or more AP exams.



In MA, success is average score across all test takers and exams in the school.







### Advanced Courses: What can we tell from how results on these indicators relate to results on others?

- In both MA and FL, there are generally positive relationships between participation/success and proficiency rates across groups
  - There is an exception here for ELL students in MA, for whom there is a negative relationship between AP success and proficiency
- For participation rates, there is sometimes a fair amount of spread at higher levels of proficiency, meaning schools that look good on proficiency sometimes look bad on AP participation, though this is generally not true the other way around



Proficiency Rate Preliminary EdTrust analysis of FL Department of Education and MA Department of Education data



Proficiency Rate

# Advanced Courses: Benefits and Risks

### • Benefits:

- Including these indicators in accountability may incentivize schools to offer more advanced opportunities.
- Inclusion in accountability may highlights gaps in access to/success in advanced classes
- Advanced course access/success matters to students and parents
- Information provided by these indicators may not be captured by existing indicators – e.g., some high performing schools (based on proficiency) may be doing a better job of this than others.

### • Risks:

- Because these courses are meant for college applications, including them might stress college-ready over career-ready
  - Is that a negative?
- These courses and exams that go with them – cost money. If states do not subsidize the tests, then inclusion of the indicator in an accountability system may be unfair to high poverty schools and lowincome students.
- Depending on the type of course and indicator used, schools could respond by watering down course content.
- Small schools/schools in rural areas may have a harder time offering advanced courses.

### **Considerations: Questions to Ask**

- How will participation and success be measured?
- Will participation and success be separate indicators, or one combined measure?
- How will courses be approved and valued?
- Another note: Federal dollars to help more lowincome students into AP were collapsed into a block grant, which can be used for a variety of purposes. Relevant?

# **3. Assessment-Based Measures of College Readiness (ACT and SAT)**

### Why it matters:

• Colleges use these tests as part of their admission requirements. Low scores on these tests can prevent students from getting into the school of their choice.

# **College-entry exams: How are schools doing on it?**

- Participation rates appear low across the board, BUT note that they are calculated by dividing number of tests taken by the TOTAL number of students in the school (not just juniors and seniors).
- Average SAT scores for white students in MA tend to be higher than those of historically underserved students





Preliminary EdTrust analysis of MA Department of Education data

### College-entry exams: What can we tell from how results on this indicator relate to results on others?

- By and large, the higher a school's proficiency rate, the higher its SAT participation rate as well. This holds true for nearly every subgroup, although the relationship is weaker for historically underserved groups.
- In general, the higher a school's proficiency rate, the higher the average score on the SAT for nearly all subgroups



Average SAT Score and Proficiency Rates - Latino Students, MA

Proficiency Rate

Preliminary EdTrust analysis of MA Department of Education data

# **College-entry exams: Implications for Accountability**

#### • Benefits:

- ACT/SAT are tests that "matter" in high school
- Including these indicators in accountability may get schools to put systems in place to make registering for the SAT/ACT easier/more accessible
- Including might incentivize schools to start providing SAT-prep courses
  - Downside of this is it could provide an obvious advantage to wealthy schools
- It's not a state-created performance measure, so it could provide an external check on student outcomes

#### Risks:

- Because these tests are meant explicitly for college applications, including them might stress collegeready over career-ready
  - Is that a negative?
- There is a cost to taking these tests. Without subsidies, low participation rates may be an indicator of students' inability to afford them, rather than of something with the school
  - The College Board waives the fee entirely for qualifying low income students
- There are serious challenges with SWD getting the accomodations to which they are entitled, especially if the goal is a score they can actually use for admissions purpose.
- The prevalence of SAT/ACT prep in wealthy schools/districts may give those places an extra (and unfair) advantage.

### **Considerations: Questions to ask**

- How will participation and success be measured?
- Will participation and success be separate indicators, or one combined measure?
- How will you ensure that all students have access to these often costly tests?

# 4. Measures of College Going

**Definition:** This indicator is generally defined as the "percent of graduates who enroll in college" – though this definition raises as many questions as it answers.

• We'll be looking at data from New Jersey, which uses information from the National Student Clearinghouse. NSC data include most students who go to school anywhere in the U.S.

### What do we know about it?

- Low income students, students of color, ELLs and students with disabilities are less likely to enroll in college than their peers.
- Enrollment rates have been increasing in recent decades, but the gaps in enrollment rates haven't changed much.
- Low income students and students of color are more likely to start their college education at a community college or a for-profit institution.

### How are schools doing?

In New Jersey, college-going numbers are relatively high across the board, with the notable exception of students with disabilities. However, students from historically disadvantaged groups are less likely to enroll in four-year schools than students from historically advantaged groups.



#### Average percent of graduates enrolling in college, New Jersey, 2014



Average 2 Year

Average 4 Year

### Enrollment by type of college, New Jersey, 2014

Preliminary EdTrust analysis of NJ Department of Education data

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# How does college enrollment relate to other measures?

- In NJ, there is a strong relationship between high school proficiency rates and postsecondary enrollment. That relationship is actually stronger for historically disadvantaged groups.
  - This is probably because for white students, both proficiency and enrollment rates are generally high.



Preliminary EdTrust analysis of NJ Department of Education data

# **Implications for accountability**

#### Benefits

- May incentivize schools to support students through the college enrollment process.
- May incentivize schools to encourage students to consider going to college.
- A meaningful indicator for parents and community members.
- May be useful in differentiating between higher performing schools.

#### **Risks**

- Schools may respond by pushing students to enroll in non-selective institutions that won't necessarily support them to succeed.
- Schools may push students to enroll in college, but pay no attention to their academic preparation.
- Students may wind up in a situation where they are accumulating lots of debt, with no degree.
- Does including this metric without a career counterpart place too much emphasis on college?

# **Considerations/Questions to Ask**

- Does the state have data, and what data are available?
  - National Student Clearinghouse data are expensive.
  - Many states can track college enrollment only within their state and some only in public institutions.
    - Using within-state public-only enrollment figures for accountability could create all sorts of other bad incentives for schools.
- What's being measured?
  - Does it matter whether students are enrolling in a 2-year or a 4-year school?
- How do you set goals?
  - What is the ultimate goal?
- How do you measure success?

# What are some potential ways of measuring success in college?

- Data challenges become bigger and bigger as we get into higher ed data, but a couple of possibilities <u>may</u> include:
  - Remediation rates
  - Degree completion rates

# Challenges with including collegelevel measures in accountability

- Data availability/ data quality in general
- Very few high schools have these data for ELs an students with disabilities.
- Especially when it comes to attainment:
  - Time lag
  - Mismatch in responsibility: Colleges themselves play a huge role in helping their students attain a degree. And different colleges often perform very differently with similar students. Is it fair to hold <u>high schools</u> accountable for college degree attainment?

# What about measures of Career Readiness?

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### **Changing Perceptions of Career Readiness**

# Pre-2000College or Career Readiness2000College For All2008College & Career Readiness2016College Ready Plus

### **State Experimentation with Career Readiness**

# Widespread experimentation and today 34 states publicly report some type of career readiness indicator

- 1. Workforce Readiness Assessments
- 2. Courses With Dual Credit Opportunities
- 3. Work-Based Learning
- 4. Industry-Recognized Credentials
- 5. Career Guidance

### **Limitations and Challenges**

# Each of the approaches face limitations and have yet to overcome major challenges facing career readiness

- 1. Career education remains stigmatized ("less than college")
- 2. Lack of shared accountability across systems
- 3. Employer leadership and engagement is not systemic

### **Career Readiness in ESSA Accountability**

How the business community can support states and districts in implementing career readiness:

- 1. Adopt a combined college and career readiness indicator
- 2. Implement by addressing key gaps and systemic challenges tied to meeting employer requirements



### **A New Framework for Defining Career Readiness**

College Readiness	 Career Readiness	→	Postsecondary Readiness
Academic Achievement	 Workforce Readiness Assessment		Workforce Readiness Assessment & Acad. Prof.
College Plan	 Career Plan	→	College & Career Plans
Advanced Coursework	 Career Courses	→	Career Courses/Advanced Coursework/Dual Credit
	Work-Based Learning	→	Work-Based Learning
	Industry-Recognized Credentialing		Industry-Recognized Credentialing

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### **College Ready Plus**



combination of measures that when consistently and reliably validated by the business community makes for a robust career readiness approach

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Credentialing

### **Example Measures**



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### **Example Measures**



### Special Roles for Business in Advancing Career Readiness

The business community is uniquely positioned to support states and districts with implementing career readiness



Manage employer requirements



Endorse districts and schools



Manage work-based learning



**Evaluate performance** 



Track industry recognized credentials

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### Important Roles for Attention by Both Business Reps and Other Advocates

- Insist on college AND career, rather than college OR career.
- Insist on an end to the practice of shunting lowincome, EL, SWD and students of color disproportionately down a watered down "career" track, while students with more advantages are placed in the college track.

# **California Case Study**

Can we do both—and do them well?

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# **California's College and Career Index**

- Adopted in concept July 2016; details still being worked out
- Identifies benchmarks that students in the 4-year graduation cohort must meet to demonstrate College and Career Readiness
- To be used for district and school accountability; students will not receive individual CCI reports
- Four performance levels:
  - 1. Well Prepared
  - 2. Prepared
  - 3. Approaching Prepared
  - 4. Not Prepared

# **Measures in the model**

To start:

- Advanced Placement (AP) exams
- Early Assessment Program (EAP) for English-language arts (ELA) and math
- A-G
- Career Technical Education (CTE)
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Dual enrollment

And eventually:

- State Seal of Biliteracy
- –Golden State Seal Merit Diploma

# What didn't make the cut and why

Didn't make the cut	Why
Percent of students who enter college, percent who succeed in college	No data system connecting K-12 and PSE
SAT or ACT	Strong advocacy from some corners against these measures; feeling that that don't effectively predict college success, are culturally biased, favor college-ready over career-ready in the model, are unaligned to Common Core, and are untested for use in accountability systems
GPA	The data is not readily available. There is still strong advocacy from some corners to include this, arguing it is a strong predictor of college success.



IB Career Related Programs

### WELL PREPARED

### Does the student meet at least 1 measure below?

- Three or more Advanced Placement (AP) Exams (Score 3 or higher)
- Scored "Ready" on Early Assessment Program (EAP) for both English-language arts (ELA) and Math
- Scored "Ready" and "Conditional Ready" on EAP plus Passed Approved Grade 12 Course
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma
- Three or More IB Exams (Score 4 or Higher)
- Two or More Years of Academic/Career Technical Education (CTE) Dual Enrollment
- CTE Pathway Completion plus one year of Dual Enrollment

### PREPARED

### Does the student meet at least 1 measure below?

- Two AP Exams (Score 3 or higher)
- Scored "Ready" in one EAP subject area and "Conditional Ready" in the other EAP subject area but Did Not Take or Pass Approved Grade 12 Course
- Scored "Conditional Ready" on EAP for both ELA and Math plus Passed Approved Grade 12 Courses
- Two IB Exams (Score 4 or Higher)
- a-g completion plus one College/Career Indicator (CCI) Measure from "Approaching Prepared"
- One Year of Academic/CTE Dual Enrollment
- CTE Concentrator and scored "Conditional Ready" on EAP for both ELA and Math
- CTE Pathway Completion plus one CCI Measure from "Approaching Prepared"

#### APPROACHING PREPARED

### Does the student meet at least 1 measure below?

- One AP Exam (Score 3 or higher)
- Scored "Conditional Ready" on both ELA and Math EAP
- Scored "Ready" and "Not Ready" on EAP
- One IB Exam (Score 4 or Higher)
- a-g completion only
- CTE Concentrator and scored "Conditional Ready" in one EAP subject and "Not Ready" in the other EAP subject
- CTE Pathway Completion

#### **NOT PREPARED**

### The Student Did Not Meet Any Measures Above. This Student is NOT PREPARED for College/Career.

\* Measure: Each measure identified in this conceptual model may be a college measure, a career measure, or a combination of both.

#### Note: The following measures will be added when Statewide data are available (2017-18).

- State Seal of Biliteracy
- Golden State Seal of Merit Diploma
- Articulated CTE Pathways
- IB Career Related Programs

# **Key issues**

- College <u>and</u> career readiness vs. college <u>or</u> career readiness
- How to weight indicators in order to properly balance incentives
- How effectively does the Smarter Balanced assessment measure college <u>and</u> career readiness?
- How to ensure that career pathways are *high-quality* pathways