

ISBE College and Career Readiness Guidance (March 2025)

Core Requirements:

- **GPA:** *One of the below options*
 - Cumulative GPA (“Distinguished Scholar”): 3.75 or based on the 4.0 scale.
 - Cumulative GPA (“College and Career Ready Scholar”): 2.8 or higher based on the 4.0 scale.
- **Attendance:** 95% attendance junior and senior year (average of the two years must be 95% or better).
- **Composite Score:** ACT composite score of 30 or SAT composite score of 1400.
- **EITHER**
 1. Earned College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE) under the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act

OR

 2. All of the following:
 - **Career Area of Interest:** Student identifies a career area of interest by the end of the sophomore year.
 - **Academic Indicators:** At least one per subject
 - **Career Ready Indicators:** Three or more

Academic Indicators (at least 1 per subject)	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH
ELA Advanced Placement (AP) Exam (Score of 3 or Higher)	Math AP Exam (Score of 3 or Higher)
ELA AP Course (Grade of A, B, or C)	Math AP Course (Grade of A, B, or C)
Dual Credit English Course (Grade of A, B, or C)	Dual Credit Math Course (Grade of A, B, or C)
International Baccalaureate (IB) ELA Course (Grade of A, B, or C)	IB Math Course (Grade of A, B, or C)
International Baccalaureate Exam (Score of 4 or Higher)	International Baccalaureate Exam (Score of 4 or Higher)
Transitional English (Grade of A, B, or C)	Transitional Math (Grade of A, B, or C)
	Algebra II (Grade of A, B, or C)
Minimum ACT Subject Scores of 18 in English and 22 in Reading	Minimum ACT Subject Score of 22 in Math and Take Math Course in Senior Year
Minimum SAT Subject Score of 540 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	Minimum SAT Subject Score of 540 in Math and Take Math Course in Senior Year

Career Ready Indicators (three or more)
Career Development Experience During High School Career
Industry Credential at Any Point in Time before Graduation

Military Service or an Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Score of 31 or Higher During High School Career
Dual Credit Career Pathway Course (College Credit Earned)
Completion of Program of Study before Graduation
Attaining and Maintaining Consistent Employment for a Minimum of 12 Months During High School
Consecutive Summer Employment During High School Career
25 Hours of Community Service During High School Career
Two or More Organized Co-Curricular Activities During High School Career

ISBE Accountability College and Career Readiness

Implementation Guidance

October 2018

Revised April 2024

College and Career Readiness Data Points

College and Career Readiness is composed of multiple points of data. Many data points are currently collected (e.g., SAT composite score and course assignments entered into the Student Information System [SIS]), while others will require additional collection efforts by districts. College and Career Readiness recognizes cumulative achievements, so data may be added to SIS at any time.

Except where specifically required (e.g., 95 percent attendance junior and senior year), districts may include all years of high school to recognize data points, such as community service, career development experience, dual credit, and consistent employment. Information gathered for College and Career Readiness should be used to guide students, families, schools, and communities.¹ Districts may want to consider adding recognition of College and Career Readiness achievement on student records and transcripts. Additional information regarding Report Card Metrics may be found on the [ISBE Report Card Metrics webpage](#).

The guidance provided in this document follows the format of the [ISBE College and Career Readiness Report Card Business Rules](#) by section and terminology. Additional questions may be sent to CTE@isbe.net.

General Readiness Indicators

Grade Point Average

Grade point average (GPA) will be determined by districts. A district will enter one of three codes into an indicator file in SIS that will specify if the student meets the “distinguished scholar” standard with a GPA of 3.75 or higher on a 4.0 scale, meets the “college and career scholar” definition of a GPA of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale, or has a GPA under 2.8 and does not meet the standard.

Implementation Guidance: Districts will continue to determine their own system for calculating GPA and the equivalent for College and Career Readiness. This information will be gathered on each student at the end of their senior year and will represent a cumulative GPA. *The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate data (3.75 or Above, 2.8 – 3.74, Below 2.8, and None) to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

¹ College and Career Readiness should not be used as the sole basis to advise individual students on postsecondary opportunities. Rather, College and Career Readiness should serve as one part of a comprehensive approach to identifying next steps for a student in terms of identifying interests and experiences upon which a student can build.

95% Attendance Junior and Senior Years

As specified in 105 ILCS 5/19.05, “a day of attendance shall be counted only for sessions of not less than 5 clock hours of schoolwork per day.” Activities outlined in 105 ILCS 5/19.05 (k), including dual credit, Supervised Career Development Experience, youth apprenticeship, and blended learning, count toward the calculation of clock hours of schoolwork per day.

Implementation Guidance: Local school boards determine a day for which students are receiving instruction as guided by 105 ILCS 5/10-19.05. For the purposes of guidance, it may be helpful to utilize the opposite of attendance by reviewing the definition of “truant” as defined in the School Code (105 ILCS 5/26-2a) “... as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof. ‘Valid cause’ for absence shall be illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the board of education in each district, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student.” *ISBE uses attendance data currently entered into SIS by districts to calculate an average of attendance junior and senior years for each student.*

Identify a Career Area of Interest by the End of Sophomore Year

A student may indicate a career area of interest by participating in pathways as defined by a local board of education, creating an individualized plan as part of the [College and Career Pathway Endorsement](#) program, or engaging in activities as part of [Career Pathways Dictionary](#) (adopted by the Illinois Community College Board, ISBE, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board, the P-20 Council, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission).

Implementation Guidance: The identification of a career area of interest by a student will be determined by school districts within a range of career exploration activities, such as those suggested in the [Postsecondary and Career Expectations framework](#). *Students who were sophomores in spring of 2020 had until the end of 2020 to identify a career area of interest. The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

College and Career Pathway Endorsement

The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act includes a voluntary opportunity for school districts to award [College and Career Pathway Endorsements](#) to high school graduates. Students earn endorsements by completing an individualized learning plan, a career-focused instructional sequence, and professional learning opportunities. Students earning a College and Career Pathway Endorsement will not need to fulfill the criteria of the ELA and Math Academic Indicators, career area of interest by the end of the sophomore year, and three career ready indicators.

Implementation Guidance: An eligible school district shall complete an application for awarding pathway endorsements to students within their school or district. (Contact CTE@isbe.net for more information.) The eligible school district shall certify:

1. An individualized planning process spans Grades 9-12 and includes an annual process for updating the plan.
2. The career-focused instructional sequence is articulated to a certificate or degree program with labor market value, with opportunities for ongoing student advancement.
3. Completion of a minimum of two career exploration activities or one intensive career exploration experience, a minimum of two team-based challenges, and at least 60 cumulative hours of participation in one or more supervised career development experience.
4. Readiness for non-remedial coursework in reading and mathematics by high school graduation through criteria certified by the eligible school district and a local community college. After completion and approval of the application to ISBE, districts will provide ISBE's CTE Department the list of students that have been awarded a pathway endorsement. The names of students will then be shared with the SIS team.

Academic Indicators

ELA Advanced Placement (AP) Exam

- An official AP Exam score of 3, 4, or 5 in any AP ELA course as reported by the College Board to ISBE or to the district

ELA AP Course

- Acceptable values are A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any AP ELA course as reported in SIS
- The AP courses that apply are:
 - 01005A000 AP English Language Composition
 - 01006A000 AP English Literature and Composition
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater credit course credits

Dual Credit English Course

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any dual credit designated ELA course as reported in SIS
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater credit course credits

International Baccalaureate (IB) ELA Course in High School

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any IB designated ELA course as reported in SIS
- The IB courses that apply are:
 - 01007A000 IB Language A (English)
 - 01011A000 IB Language A: Language and Literature – English
 - 01012A000 IB Literature and Performance

IB ELA Exam in High School

- An official IB Exam score of 4, 5, 6, or 7 in any IB ELA course as reported by the IB to the student, school, or district

Transitional English

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards as reported in SIS for course 01004A001 Transitional English
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater course credits

Minimum ACT Subject Scores of 18 in English and 22 in Reading

- An official ACT score as reported to the student, school, or district, with an English subscore of 18 and reading subscore of 22 as reported in the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS

Minimum SAT Subject Score of 540 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing

- An official SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score of 540 as reported by the College Board either:
 - To ISBE as part of its state-required SAT administration in Grade 11, or
 - As reported to the student, school, or district from an optional national administration day as reported in the College and Career Ready Readiness Report in SIS

Math AP Exam

- An official AP Exam score of 3, 4, or 5 in any AP math or AP computer science course as reported by the College Board to ISBE or to the district

Math AP Course

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any AP math or AP computer science course as reported in SIS
- The AP courses that apply are:
 - 02124A000 AP Calculus AB
 - 02125A000 AP Calculus BC
 - 02203A000 AP Statistics
 - 10157A000 AP Computer Science A

Dual Credit Math Course

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any dual credit designated math course as reported in SIS
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater credit course credits

IB Math Course in High School

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any IB designated math course as reported in SIS
- The IB courses that apply are:
 - 02131A000 IB Mathematical Studies
 - 02132A000 IB Mathematics
 - 02133A000 IB Mathematics and Computing-SL
 - 02134A000 IB Further Mathematics

IB Math Exam in High School

- An official IB Exam score of 4, 5, 6, or 7 in any IB math course as reported by the IB to the student, school, or district

Algebra II

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any course designated as Algebra II, Integrated Math III, or High School Math III as reported in SIS
- Algebra II courses that apply are:
 - 02056A000 Algebra II or 02057A000 Algebra III
 - 02303A000 High School Math 3
 - 02064A000 Integrated Mathematics III
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater course credits

Transitional Math

- Acceptable values are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, Exceeds Standards, and Meets Standards for any course designated as transitional math as reported in SIS
- The transitional math courses that apply are:
 - 02055A001 High School Transitional Math 4 – STEM
 - 02153A001 High School Transitional Math 4 – Technical Math
 - 02201A001 High School Transitional Math 4 – Quantitative Literacy
- Must accumulate 1.0 or greater course

Minimum ACT Subject Score of 22 in Math and Take Math Course in Senior Year

- Requires a combination of two criteria:
 - Official ACT score as reported to the student, school, or district, with a math subscore of 22 as reported in the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.
 - An earned math course credit during the student's senior year as reported by district grade data in SIS

Minimum SAT Subject Score of 540 in Math and Take Math Course in Senior Year

- Requires a combination of two criteria:
- An official SAT math score of 540 as reported by the College Board to either:
 - ISBE as part of its state required SAT administration in Grade 11 or the student, school, or district from an optional national administration day as reported in the College and Career Readiness Report and
 - An earned math course credit during the student's senior year as reported by district grade data in SIS

Implementation Guidance: ISBE uses academic data currently entered into SIS by districts to determine whether a student has met the indicators in English and math. However, districts will submit aggregate “yes” or “no” to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS if a student has met the criteria via ACT scores (which are not collected) and a retake of the SAT that shows a higher subject score.

Career Ready Indicators

Career Development Experience During High School Career

This is a supervised work experience relating to an individual's career area of interest that meets all the following:

1. Occurs in a workplace or under other authentic working conditions.
2. Is co-developed by an education provider and at least one employer in the relevant field.
3. Provides compensation or educational credit to the participant.
4. Reinforces foundational professional skills, including, at a minimum, those outlined in the [Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment](#).
5. Includes a Professional Skills Assessment that assesses skill development and is utilized as a participant feedback tool.
6. Takes place for a minimum of 60 total hours.

Career Development Experience may not consist solely of technical training by an education provider.

Implementation Guidance: Career Development Experiences may include any of the following, provided the experience meets the definitional criteria: internship, school-based enterprise, supervised agricultural experience, work-based learning, cooperative education, research apprenticeship, remote work for a client or employer, student-led enterprise, or youth apprenticeship². The [Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment](#), developed by a collaborative of state agencies and organizations, includes personal ethic, work ethic, teamwork, and communication. A Professional Skills Assessment is a tool-based observational assessment of a participant's performance in a Career Development Experience administered by an adult supervisor addressing foundational professional skills, including, at a minimum, those outlined in the [Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment](#). The Professional Skills Assessment tool should be used primarily as a feedback tool and development strategy and not as the sole basis for a grade or credit determination. [Illinois WorkNet's Observational Assessment and Worksite Evaluation](#) tools may be used as a Professional Skills Assessment.

² A youth apprenticeship is a program for youth (ages 16 to 24) currently enrolled in a secondary school or pursuing a high school equivalency, including those with disabilities, that includes at minimum the following:

1. 450 hours of paid-on-job training under the supervision of a mentor.
2. At least two semesters of related instruction that ideally counts toward a high school and/or postsecondary credential, but minimally leading to an industry credential.
3. Ongoing and a final assessment measuring success in mastering skill standards.
4. Career exploration where participants learn about several positions within the employer and the field.
5. Wraparound supports (e.g., case management and counseling) and holistic upskilling (e.g., technical skills and soft skills).
6. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are supported to apply for one or more of the following: entry-level employment, admission to a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship program, or admission to other articulated postsecondary education options (including two-four year programs). Programs must include a documented partnership with an employer. For any industry area in which an industry credential does not yet exist, a group of employers that are representative of the industry in Illinois should

determine the critical core competencies participants should earn through the apprenticeship and agree to a formal process for recognizing mastery of those competencies. (Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary, 2018)

Students whose experience was interrupted in March, April, or May of 2020 by school and/or business closures or layoffs related to COVID-19 may receive credit on this indicator for the interrupted experience. The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.

Implementation Guidance: A student must, depending upon the requirements of the recognized industry credential, either receive the license or be eligible to receive a license pending the receipt of a high school diploma. A credential issued by a postsecondary education provider is not an “industry credential”; however, the coursework for the credential may qualify as a Dual Credit Career Pathway Course and will often prepare students for an industry credential examination. *The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS. A multi code will be available to enter credentials in the Endorsement area.*

Military Service or an ASVAB Score of 31 or Higher During High School Career

Students make a commitment to serve in the armed services or participate in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Implementation Guidance: There are four ways to meet this indicator:

1. Achieving an ASVAB score of 31 or higher.
2. Making a commitment to serve in the armed services.
3. Enlisting for split training, which entails enlistment at age 17 as a junior with permission of a parent or guardian, attendance at Basic Combat Training before senior year, training one weekend per month through senior year with a local unit, and planned attendance at Advanced Individual Training after senior year.
4. Participating in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Students whose experience was interrupted after March of 2020 by school and/or business closures or layoffs related to COVID-19 may receive credit on this indicator for the interrupted experience. The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.

Dual Credit Career Pathway Course (College Credit Earned)

As defined in 110 ILCS 27/5, “dual credit course” means a college course taken by a high school student for credit at both the college and high school level. **A course that is used to fulfill an ELA or math dual-credit academic indicator cannot also be used to fulfill this Dual Credit Career Pathway Course indicator.**

Implementation Guidance: The following should be considered toward meeting this metric: a dual credit course, or a dual credit course in Career and Technical Education (CTE) or included within a career-

focused instructional sequence for a College and Career Pathway Endorsement program in accordance with the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act. This information is currently captured in the student course assignment record in SIS, which is entered annually by the district. Completion of a program of study before graduation This is completion of coursework that is necessary to qualify a student as a CTE concentrator.

Implementation Guidance: As defined by the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), “CTE concentrator” means:

1. At the secondary school level, a student served by an eligible recipient who has completed at least 2 courses in a single career and technical education program or program of study; and
2. At the postsecondary level, a student enrolled in an eligible recipient who has
 - a. earned at least 12 credits within a Career and Technical Education program or program of study; or
 - b. Completed such a program if the program encompasses fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total.

Districts make the determination of whether programs, courses, applied learning experiences, and activities performed with other organizations count toward College and Career Readiness. *This information is currently captured in the student course assignment record in SIS, which is entered annually by the district.*

Attaining and Maintaining Consistent Employment for a Minimum of 12 Months During High School

This is verified employment of a continuous nature during a 12-month period.

Implementation Guidance: Part-time employment may be verified through pay stubs, timesheets, or a signed letter from an adult supervisor that includes the number of hours worked. Suggested consistent employment may include a total of 480 hours, which is an average of 10 hours per week for 12 of the 24 months. *Students whose experience was interrupted in after March of 2020 by business closures or layoffs related to COVID-19 may receive credit on this indicator for the interrupted experience. The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

Consecutive Summer Employment During High School Career

This is verified employment for two consecutive summers.

Implementation Guidance: Employment may be verified through pay stubs, timesheets, or a signed letter from an adult supervisor that includes the number of hours worked. Suggested consecutive summer employment may include a cumulative 120 hours per summer. *The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

25 Hours of Community Service During High School Career

This is a volunteer service or activity performed by students to address a social issue in the community, such as (but not limited to) poverty, disaster relief, education, the environment, homelessness, or community wellness.

Implementation Guidance: The student should receive written verification by an adult, non-relative supervisor of the community service that both describes the services performed and documents the number of hours served. Service-learning opportunities may count towards College and Career Readiness. *The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

Two or More Organized Co-curricular or Extracurricular Activities During High School Career

These are activities, programs, and applied learning experiences that:

1. Are connected to or mirror the academic curriculum, but for which students do not receive academic credit;
2. Take place outside of school or after regular school hours and may be operated by outside organizations; and
3. Instill adaptive competencies and/or skills spelled out in the [Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment](#), including personal ethic, work ethic, teamwork, and communication.
 - a. As defined in Section 10 of the [Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act](#), (110 ILCS 148/10) adaptive competencies mean “foundational skills needed for success in college, careers, and life, such as, but not limited to, work ethic, professionalism, communication, collaboration and interpersonal skills, and problem-solving.”
 - b. Essential Employability Skills are foundational skills needed for success in college, careers, and life including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. Personal Ethic: Integrity, respect, perseverance, positive attitude.
 - ii. Work Ethic: Dependability, professionalism.
 - iii. Teamwork: Critical thinking, effective and cooperative work.
 - iv. Communication: Active listening, clear communication.

Implementation Guidance: Districts determine level of participation. Acceptable co-curricular activities may include student newspapers, student council, musical performances, art shows, mock trials, honors societies, debate competitions, mathematics, robotics, and engineering teams and contests. Students may count extracurricular activities, such as sports teams and general interest clubs, toward the requirement. Adaptive competencies and Essential Employability Skills may be incorporated within existing courses or programs. These competencies should be assessed based on how students apply and integrate into actions. **Multiple years of the same activity do not represent different activities (e.g., multiple years of a sport, multiples years on Student Council.** *Students whose experience was interrupted in after March of 2020 by business closures or layoffs related to COVID-19 may receive credit on this indicator for the interrupted experience.* *The district will collect and compile the initial data prior to submitting aggregate “yes” or “no” data to ISBE through the College and Career Readiness Report in SIS.*

Additional Resources: [Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment](#), [Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act Essential Employability Competency Statements](#), and [Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary](#).