



# Illinois' ESSA College & Career Readiness Indicator

*Definition & Implementation Recommendations*

December 2017

Prepared on behalf of the Illinois State Board of Education

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Proposed Changes to CCRI .....	4
Definition & Implementation Recommendation Development Process .....	6
Research: Existing State Analysis .....	6
Stakeholder Engagement.....	6
Definition & Implementation Recommendations .....	7
Academic Indicators.....	7
Career Ready Indicators.....	9
Data Collection & Reporting .....	12
Local Data Collection Implications .....	12
Reporting Platforms .....	13
Limitations of Data Collection in 2018-19.....	14
Recommendations for Implementation & Community Support .....	14
Appendix: Associated Definitions .....	16

## Introduction

In April 2016, the State of Illinois submitted its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan to the US Department of Education. Included in the school accountability framework is a College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI), which is a multiple factor approach to measuring student readiness upon high school graduation. This new approach to measuring student readiness has been noted by the US Department of Education as an innovative practice, and the CCRI holds great promise for promoting an increased focus on readiness in the state.

ISBE requested that Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University (EdSystems) support implementation of the CCRI by:

- conducting an analysis of existing definitions and data collection structures;
- developing, refining, and providing recommendations on definitions and implementation guidance; and
- identifying key concerns and recommendations for data collection processes to support implementation.

Beginning in May, the EdSystems team embarked on its research and refinement process, and provided several status updates to ISBE throughout the summer and fall of 2017. This report provides an overview of EdSystems' process and outlines their final recommendations for all aspects of CCRI implementation.

## Proposed Changes to CCRI<sup>1</sup>

EdSystems recommends the following changes to the CCRI (as noted in red strikethroughs and additions), for the reasons discussed in the remainder of this document.

### Distinguished Scholar

- GPA: 3.75/4.0
- ~~ACT: 30 or~~ SAT: 1400
- At least one academic indicator in each ELA and Math ~~during the Junior/Senior Year (Algebra II at any time)~~
- Three career ready indicators during the Junior/Senior Year ~~[Algebra II can be in any year, if they earn an A, B, or C]~~
- 95% Attendance junior and senior year

### College and Career Ready

1. GPA: 2.8/4.0
2. 95% Attendance in high school junior and senior year

#### AND

#### 3. Either:

(A) College and Career Pathway Endorsement under Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Act;

#### OR

(B) All of the following:

- One Academic Indicator in each of ELA and Math during the Junior/Senior Year (or Algebra II at any time)
- Identify a Career Area of Interest by the end of the Sophomore Year
- Three Career Ready Indicators during the Junior/Senior Year

### Academic Indicators

ELA	Math
ELA AP Exam (3+)	Math AP Exam (3+)
ELA Advanced Placement Course (A, B, or C)	Math Advanced Placement Course (A, B, or C)
Dual Credit English Course (A, B, or C)	Dual Credit Math Course (A, B, or C)
IB ELA Course (A, B, or C)	IB Math Course (A, B, or C)
<del>IB Exam 4+</del>	<del>IB Exam 4+</del>
<del>College Remedial Transitional English (A, B, or C)</del>	<del>College Remedial Transitional Math (A, B, or C)</del>
	Algebra II (A, B, or C)
<del>Minimum ACT Subject Scores of English 18, Reading 22</del>	<del>Minimum ACT Subject Score of Math 22, + Math in Senior Year</del>
Minimum SAT Subject Score of Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 480	Minimum SAT Subject Score of Math: 530, + Math in Senior Year

<sup>1</sup> From pages 72-74 of ISBE's ESSA State Plan

**Career Ready Indicators [Minimum of 3]**

- ~~Workplace Learning Career Development~~ Experience
- Industry Credential
- Military Service ~~(including ROTC)~~
- Dual Credit Career Pathway Course ~~(college credit earned A or B grade)~~
- Completion of a Program of Study
- Attaining and maintaining consistent employment for a minimum of 12 months
- Consecutive summer employment
- 25 hours of community service
- Two or more organized co-curricular activities

## Definition & Implementation Recommendation Development Process

### Research: Existing State Analysis

In July 2017, EdSystems provided ISBE with its Phase I report for this work. The team had conducted an analysis of existing definitions, sources, and collection processes, as well as drafted preliminary definitions for career-related indicators. The Phase I report included:

- I. An overview of findings as a result of the scan of academic and career indicator existing definitions, sources, and collection processes
- II. Key implementation and policy issues that pertain to career indicators as part of both the CCRI and the College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE) system
- III. Draft definitions and additional sample definitions/research related to career indicators from the CCRI and CCPE system

### Stakeholder Engagement

The EdSystems team gathered feedback on both draft Career Ready definitions and implementation guidance from a variety of statewide committees, as well as conducted direct conversations with both committee members and other stakeholders. The key state committees that reviewed draft definitions and provided feedback are:

- Illinois P-20 Council College & Career Readiness (CCR) Committee
- Workforce Readiness Through Apprenticeships & Pathways (WRAP) Committee of the Governor's Cabinet on Children & Youth
- Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Apprenticeship Committee
- Illinois P-20 Council Data, Accountability, & Assessment (DAA) Committee

### Key Meetings

Meeting	Date
WRAP Steering Committee Meeting	July 26, 2017
CCR Steering Committee Meeting	September 5, 2017
IWIB Apprenticeship Committee Meeting	October 10, 2017
Full CCR Committee Meeting	October 13, 2017
DAA Committee Meeting	November 16, 2017
IWIB Apprenticeship Committee Meeting	December 14, 2017
WRAP Steering Committee Meeting	December 18, 2017
CCR Steering Committee Meeting	December 18, 2017

## Definition & Implementation Recommendations

### Academic Indicators

While ISBE and ICCB already define and collect data describing nearly all of the academic indicators that comprise the CCRI, the EdSystems team, in collaboration with various stakeholder committees, identified several areas for attention or change.

#### *Remove IB and ACT Scores*

Currently, ISBE does not collect International Baccalaureate (IB) test scores, and due to the shift to the SAT, ACT scores are no longer provided to ISBE at the student-level.<sup>2</sup> As such, EdSystems recommends that these options be removed from Academic Indicators in order to ensure clarity for school administrators and the ISBE data team. If ISBE decides to maintain IB test scores, this will require new data collection processes.

#### *Change "Remedial" to "Transitional"*

The term "College Remedial" is not appropriate to describe coursework a student might take at a high school level, as the term "remedial" is commonly understood to refer to coursework that a college student must take to prepare for college-level coursework. Instead, the term "transitional" is used in the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act<sup>3</sup> to refer to coursework taken by high school students for the purpose of preparing them for college-level core academic courses. To ensure PWR Act consistency and avoid confusion, EdSystems recommends that "College Remedial" be changed to "Transitional" in both the ELA and Math indicators. ISBE will need to establish new course codes in its transcript data collection system for reporting of transitional courses.

#### *SAT Scores*

	CCRI Threshold	ISBE Statewide Performance Level 3 (Meets Standards)
<i>ELA</i>	480	540-630
<i>Math</i>	530 + Math in Senior Year	540-660

Members of the Illinois P-20 Council Data, Accountability, and Assessment Committee pointed out that the scores in the CCRI are below the Illinois Statewide SAT Performance levels<sup>4</sup> that represent mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards. Despite this, the general consensus was that given that the CCRI scores correspond to college readiness benchmarks<sup>5</sup> outlined by the College Board, they are a suitable threshold for the purposes of this Indicator.

### Student Selection of Career Area of Interest

The CCRI requires students not attaining College and Career Pathway Endorsements<sup>6</sup> to identify a Career Area of Interest by the end of the Sophomore Year. However, "Career Area" is not defined, raising the

<sup>2</sup> School districts are unlikely to have their students' ACT scores, unless the district is administering the ACT as part of a local district assessment practice. Otherwise, a student or the student's parent/guardian would need to authorize release of the score to the district under FERPA.

<sup>3</sup> The PWR Act was enacted in 2016, following a four-year stakeholder engagement process (110 ILCS 148/1 et seq.)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Statewide-SAT-Performance-Levels-Admin-FAQ.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/about/scores/benchmarks>

<sup>6</sup> Students attaining a College and Career Pathway Endorsement will, by the nature of the Endorsement's criteria, pursue coursework and work-based learning experiences relating to a career area of interest.

question of how specific of a selection high school sophomores should make. EdSystems discussed two options with the Steering Committee of the P-20 Council's College and Career Readiness Committee: (1) using the 16 career clusters in the National Career Cluster Framework<sup>7</sup>, as adopted by Advance CTE (the national nonprofit representing State CTE directors); or (2) using the seven endorsement areas adopted by ISBE and other state agencies for implementation of College and Career Pathway Endorsements under the PWR Act. The seven endorsement areas correspond to and logically group the 16 career clusters, as shown in the table below:

ENDORSEMENT AREA	RELATED CAREER CLUSTERS (from National Career Cluster Framework)
<b>ANFR (Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources</li> </ul>
<b>A&amp;C (Arts and Communication)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts (Performing and Visual), Audio/Video Technology and Communications</li> </ul>
<b>FBS (Finance and Business Services)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Management and Administration</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Hospitality and Tourism</li> <li>• Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Logistics Pathway)</li> </ul>
<b>HPS (Human and Public Services)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Training</li> <li>• Government and Public Administration</li> <li>• Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security</li> <li>• Human Services</li> </ul>
<b>HST (Health Sciences and Technology)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Sciences</li> </ul>
<b>IT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Technology</li> </ul>
<b>METT (Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology, and Trades)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Architecture and Construction</li> <li>• Manufacturing</li> <li>• STEM (particularly Engineering and Technology Pathway)</li> <li>• Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Transportation Technology)</li> <li>• Energy<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>

The Steering Committee discussed that the Endorsement Area categories would provide a more appropriate “grain size” of career interest area for high school sophomores. However, some Illinois districts have established processes for student career interest area selection that relate to the longer-standing National Career Cluster framework. Ultimately, the general consensus of the Steering Committee (which EdSystems endorses) is to allow districts to utilize either the Endorsement Area or

<sup>7</sup> <https://careertech.org/career-clusters>

<sup>8</sup> Energy is an Illinois-specific addition to the National Career Cluster framework.



National Career Cluster framework. For districts utilizing the National Career Clusters, their information can be aggregated up to the Endorsement Area level for statewide data analysis and reporting. While ISBE would need to establish a data collection process enabling either approach, school districts could utilize career exploration and survey activities supported by platforms like Illinois workNet/Career Information System, Career Cruising/Xello, or Naviance. The career interest area selection should be used by districts to advise students on course-taking and work-based learning experiences in their junior and senior year. However, the selection should not prevent a student from switching their area of interest in the junior or senior year upon further reflection and exploration. These selections can also be used by districts to identify areas where there is either an over- or under-supply of career-focused course options based on student interest levels.

### Career Ready Indicators

Across the state, schools and districts are actively working to support students to participate in the relevant coursework and activities included in the Career Ready Indicators of the CCRI, though definitions for each of these components varies by district and even by school. Thoughtful implementation of the CCRI provides a unique opportunity to translate work across the state into one unified language, as well as to spur on districts that have not yet been able to on provide critical experiences like work-based learning or dual credit career pathway courses at scale.

The definitions that follow are based on national, state, and local best practices, as well as robust stakeholder feedback. Wherever possible, they are aligned to the PWR Act, as well as work being done by the WRAP Committee of the Children's Cabinet. Where relevant, implementation guidance and residual questions are noted.

#### *Career Development Experience*<sup>9</sup>

A supervised work experience relating to an individual's career area of interest that:

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 Essential Employability Skills<sup>10</sup> framework; and
5. Includes a Professional Skills Assessment<sup>11</sup> that assesses skill development and is utilized as a participant feedback tool.

The student must participate in at least 60 total hours, which may occur over multiple experiences.

*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, cooperative education, research apprenticeship, remote work for a client or

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<sup>9</sup> Proposed name change from "Workplace Learning Experience" as originally named in ISBE's CCRI, and is based on original statutory reference in PWR Act and stakeholder feedback. In one poll of the P-20 Council's College and Career Readiness Committee, more than three times the number of poll respondents chose "Career Development Experience" as an appropriate name over "Workplace Learning Experience" and other options.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix for definition of Essential Employability Skills

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix for definition of Professional Skills Assessment.

employer, student-led enterprise, or youth apprenticeship. However, a Career Development Experience may not consist solely of technical training by an education provider.

#### *Industry Credential*

A work-related credential, certification, or license that:

1. Verifies, through a valid assessment, an individual's qualifications or competence in a specific skillset related to a particular industry or occupation;
2. Is issued by an industry-related organization or state licensing body with the relevant authority to issue such credentials; and
3. Is broadly sought or accepted by employers as a recognized, preferred, or required credential for recruitment, screening, hiring, retention, or advancement purposes.

*Implementation Guidance:* While a credential issued by a postsecondary education provider is not an "Industry Credential," the coursework for the credential may qualify as a Dual Credit Career Pathway Course and will often prepare students for an Industry Credential examination.

#### *Military Service<sup>12</sup>*

Either (1) split training enlistment, 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 attendance at Advanced Individual Training after senior year); or (2) Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) participation during both the junior and senior year.

#### *Dual Credit Career Pathway Course<sup>13</sup>*

A college course taken by a high school student for credit at both the college and high school level, which is either a Career and Technical Education course 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.

*Implementation Guidance:* Students should fulfill this indicator based on whether they successfully receive college credit for course completion, which may be for a grade lower than B.

#### *Completion of a Program of Study*

Completion of coursework necessary to qualify a student as a high school CTE Concentrator<sup>14</sup>.

#### *Attaining & Maintaining Consistent Employment for 12 Months*

Verified employment for a total of 480 hours<sup>15</sup> beginning with summer prior to junior year and continuing through summer after senior year, including summer employment.

*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. For work experience that will take place during the summer after senior year, verification may be an offer letter from an adult supervisor including anticipated number of work hours. This excludes Career Development Experiences and any hours being counted toward Consecutive Summer Employment.

<sup>12</sup> Proposal for term change to "Military Service (including ROTC)" (proposed change to reflect accuracy in high school context).

<sup>13</sup> Proposal for term change: "A or B course" to "credit earned" to reflect that students demonstrate readiness for college-level coursework by earning early college credit as determined by the postsecondary institution

<sup>14</sup> ISBE's definition for CTE Concentrator differs from the postsecondary definition as utilized by ICCB.

<sup>15</sup> This entails an average of 10 hours per week for 12 of 24 months

### *Consecutive Summer Employment*

Verified employment for two consecutive summers (120 cumulative hours per summer) beginning with summer prior to junior year and continuing through summer after senior year. Employment may be verified through pay stubs, timesheets, or a signed letter from an adult supervisor that includes the number of hours worked. For work experience that will take place during the summer after senior year, verification may be an offer letter from an adult supervisor that includes anticipated number of work hours. This excludes Career Development Experiences.

### *25 Hours of Community Service*

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 must receive written verification by an adult, non-relative supervisor of the community service that both describes the service performed and documents the number of hours served.

### *Two or More Co-Curricular Activities*

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; and,
2. Take place outside of school or after regular school hours, and may be operated by outside organizations.

*Implementation Guidance:* Acceptable co-curricular activities may include student newspapers, student council, musical performances, art shows, mock trials, honors societies, debate competitions, and mathematics, robotics, and engineering teams and contests. Students may count one extracurricular activity (e.g., sports team, general interest club, etc.) toward the two required co-curricular activities.

## Data Collection & Reporting

### Local Data Collection Implications

EdSystems has discussed data collection processes both with the P-20 Council CCR committee as well as district-level data staff to understand potential opportunities and challenges as districts and schools roll out the CCRI in their communities.

Although the academic components of the CCRI are collected and reported through existing mechanisms, the Career Ready Indicators are collected inconsistently across schools and districts, and often are collected through unofficial mechanisms (e.g., Google Sheets) that are difficult to draw down from for reporting purposes. While there is a great deal of work supporting students being able to participate in the relevant coursework and activities included in the Career Ready Indicators of the CCRI, systematic data collection of these types of indicators has been challenging for schools and districts.

EdSystems explored three existing career exploration platforms, Illinois workNet, Career Cruising/Xello, and Naviance, as mechanisms for capturing these data. Career Cruising/Xello and Naviance represent the majority of the market across districts and schools in Illinois, though utilization of their features and potential is varied. While IL workNet has not been traditionally utilized in secondary schools, its features can provide a freely available opportunity for districts to utilize the platform to facilitate their data collection and reporting processes. One additional advantage to platforms such as Xello, Naviance, and workNet is that data collection on component parts of the CCRI can be student-driven and adult-verified, generating a sense of responsibility on the part of the student to monitor and achieve college and career readiness.

The table below briefly addresses the potential for each of these platforms for CCRI data collection purposes.

Platform	Potential for Utilization	Cost
<b>IL workNet</b>	IL workNet currently has several related frameworks for worksite placement, career exploration, and assessments that can be combined to capture data on the CCRI. The primary user would be adult guides, who would manage the overall system. Students would be able to self-guide through a menu of options to complete their CCRI career ready components. Adult guides would be able to view a school-wide report on progress toward the CCRI.  While much of the related component parts are already in use, there are several components that are being rolled out for other initiatives throughout Fall 2017.	Free
<b>Career Cruising/Xello</b>	Xello has a number of self-reporting mechanisms for students to be able to track progress towards completion of the Career Ready components of the CCRI. The Career Cruising Inspire platform can be utilized in particular for facilitating and tracking Career Development Experiences. Some of the data captured through Xello can be fed back into the school's Student Information System.	Platform has associated fees
<b>Naviance</b>	The Naviance platform is equipped for students to self-report, and an adult (counselor or teacher) to verify activity completion. While	Platform has associated fees

each district would need to work with Naviance to establish a local implementation plan, Naviance can create a “package” that districts can utilize to ensure collection of the CCRI component parts.

Chicago Public Schools is currently working with Naviance on two core packages to support data collection on both their “Learn. Plan. Succeed.” Program and the PaCE framework of the PWR Act, both of which are aligned to the CCRI.

### Reporting Platforms

Per discussions with members of ISBE’s data team, student-level data on CCRI component parts will need to be submitted to the ISBE Student Information System (SIS)<sup>16</sup>. As such, ISBE will need to develop a template through which schools and districts can provide these data. Ideally, ISBE would make this template available in May or June 2017, to enable the vendors of local district student information systems to incorporate the template into their local packages. There are two potential mechanisms for submitting Career Ready Indicator data to this template (illustrated below): (1) the local data collection mechanism (i.e. career exploration and tracking tools like Naviance, Xello, Illinois workNet, etc.) can provide data in a template aligned to ISBE’s; or (2) data from the local data collection mechanism gets fed into the local SIS, which in turn is reported to ISBE’s SIS.

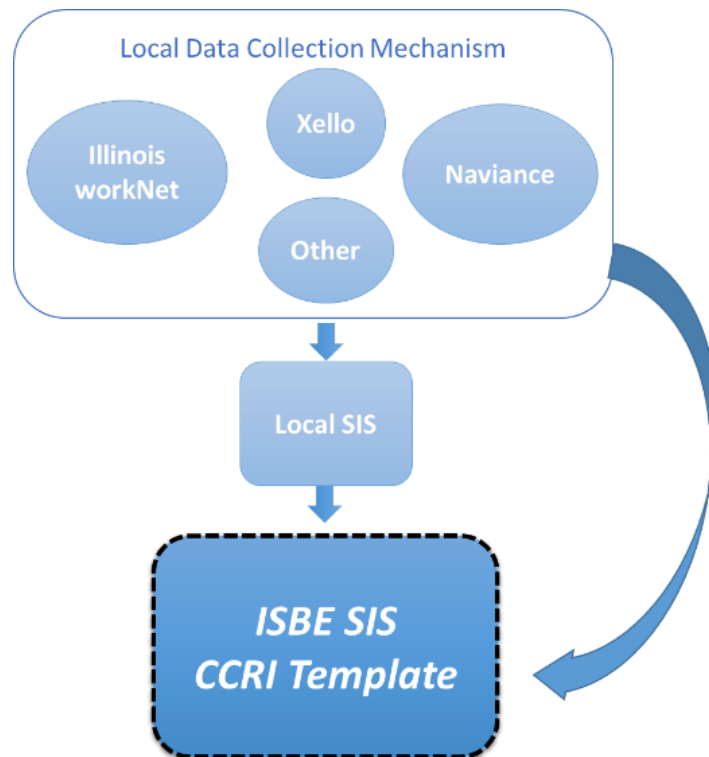


Figure 1: Diagram of CCRI Data Flow

<sup>16</sup> This will include individual student selection of a career area of interest by career cluster or Endorsement Area, as determined by the school or district.

### Limitations of Data Collection in 2018-19

As outlined in the State's ESSA plan, schools will be expected to report on the college and career readiness of the Graduating Class of 2019. Given that most, if not all, schools and districts will only begin to collect Career Ready Indicators systematically in the 2018-19 school year, they will have, at best, incomplete data on junior year experiences of the Class of 2019. As such, the CCRI percentage of the Class of 2019 may appear to be lower than reality. In addition, the College and Career Pathway Endorsements from the PWR Act, which represent one means for students to demonstrate Career Readiness in the CCRI, will not be offered until the Class of 2020.

### Recommendations for Implementation & Community Support

EdSystems, in collaboration with the stakeholder groups identified previously, has identified several areas for consideration as ISBE embarks on implementation of the CCRI in early 2018, particularly around messaging and onboarding of districts to the broader vision of college and career readiness that the CCRI represents.

#### *Building a Culture of College and Career Readiness*

EdSystems recommends that ISBE pursue a robust process for socializing the definitions adopted and their implications for data collection. As noted previously in the report, while many schools and districts are supporting their students to achieve college and career readiness through strategies such as dual credit and work-based learning, approaches and tracking vary statewide based on a variety of local factors. The definitions outlined in this report may be aligned to local efforts, but may require a process by which schools and districts can learn more about the definitions that will determine what their data collection looks like.

To that end, EdSystems proposes that ISBE implement a series of webinars for administrators and counselors to share the definitions and recommendations for data collection. These webinars and stakeholder engagement processes can also highlight the points of connection across the CCRI and the various components of the PWR Act, and how they fit into a broader, robust vision for college and career readiness in the state. Further, ISBE should also identify opportunities to develop awareness of administrators and staff beyond college and career counselors. In particular, teacher preparation programs provide an opportunity to connect efforts around college and career readiness to the classroom.

Ultimately, communicating the ways in which the CCRI is a value-add for student success, rather than an additional reporting requirement, will be critical to broad school and district buy-in and student ownership of their experiences as well. ISBE must communicate that achievement of the CCRI threshold is intended to drive student success in other arenas: attendance, GPA, and a variety of other improved secondary, postsecondary, and career outcomes.

#### *Setting State Data Expectations*

EdSystems recommends that ISBE leverage its existing relationships with data platforms such as Career Cruising/Xello, Naviance, and Illinois workNet/Career Information System to identify core strategies for aligning their data collection to ISBE's data reporting needs for the CCRI. These platform providers may await ISBE's development of a CCRI reporting template in order to develop their own collection processes, and accordingly ISBE should pursue as accelerated a timeline as possible for releasing its reporting template. ISBE leadership can help ensure that schools across the state are more easily able to

collect and report data about their students in a manner that is both consistent and more easily analyzed.

*Technical Assistance for Data Collection*

EdSystems recommends that ISBE provide robust technical assistance to districts as they begin to develop their data collection processes, particularly for Career Ready Indicators. ISBE's quarterly webinars and summer trainings for data officers in school districts around the state are a prime opportunity to share the new collections required and onboard the appropriate staff to what will be asked of them.

*Validity and Continuous Improvement*

As this indicator presumes to reflect student preparedness for college and career, ISBE should identify ways in which postsecondary and industry stakeholders can continue to learn about the indicator and provide feedback in terms of its quality. Ultimately, in order to maintain and validate this indicator longer-term, ISBE should consider various feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement purposes. This may include engaging bodies such as the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Workforce Innovation board, and utilizing resources such as the Illinois Longitudinal Data System to explore and validate outcomes for students meeting the CCRI. From the outset, ISBE should consider what research and analysis supports and partners are needed to determine the correlation of the CCRI to other outcomes such as increased graduation rates, increased postsecondary enrollment and completion rates, and enhanced career outcomes.

## Appendix: Associated Definitions

The terms that follow are either referenced in the CCRI definitions, included in the PWR Act, or established by the Workforce Readiness Through Apprenticeship and Pathways (WRAP) Committee of the Governor's Children's Cabinet. ISBE should also establish systems to collect data on the following definitions to support PWR Act implementation and WRAP Committee policies: Career Exploration Activity, Team-based Challenges, and Youth Apprenticeship.

### *CTE Concentrator<sup>17</sup>*

CTE Concentrator is a secondary student who has earned three (3) or more credits in a single CTE program area (e.g., health care or business services), or two (2) credits in a single CTE program area, but only in those program areas where two credit sequences at the secondary level are recognized by the state and/or its local eligible recipients.

### *Career Exploration Activity*

An activity such as a job shadow, attendance at a career exposition, or employer site visit providing an individual with the ability to engage directly with employers for the purpose of gaining knowledge of one or more industry sectors or occupations.

### *Essential Employability Skills<sup>18</sup>*

Foundational skills needed for success in college, careers, and life including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Personal Ethic: integrity, respect, perseverance, positive attitude
- b. Work Ethic: dependability, professionalism
- c. Teamwork: critical thinking, effective and cooperative work
- d. Communication: active listening, clear communication

*Optional Resources:* Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework and Self-Assessment; Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act Essential Employability Competency Statements.

### *Professional Skills Assessment*

A tool-based observational assessment of a participant's performance in a Career Development Experience given by an adult supervisor and shared with the participant that addresses foundational professional skills including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework. The Professional Skills Assessment tool is to be used primarily as a feedback tool and development strategy and not as the sole basis for a grade or credit determination.

*Optional Resource:* Illinois workNet's Observational Assessment and Worksite Evaluation tools<sup>19</sup> may be used as a Professional Skills Assessment.

### *Team-based Challenges*

A group problem-based learning project relating to an individual's career area of interest that involves a problem relating to employers within that area, including mentoring from adults with expertise in that area, and requires the individual to present the outcomes of the project.

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<sup>17</sup> ISBE currently collects data on CTE Concentrators.

<sup>18</sup> Full Framework can be found at this link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/News/Documents/Essential-Handout-2.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/partners/tools/Pages/Assessments.aspx>



*Youth Apprenticeship<sup>20</sup>*

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

1. 450 hours of paid on-the-job training under the supervision of a mentor;
2. At least 2 semesters of related instruction that ideally counts towards 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; and
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 2- and 4-year programs).

*Implementation Guidance:*

- Program sponsors may serve a subset of youth within the 16-24 age range instead of the full range.
- For any industry area where an Industry Credentials does not yet exist, a group of employers that are representative of the industry (including small, medium, and large firms) in Illinois should determine the critical core competencies participants should learn through the apprenticeship and agree to a formal process for recognizing mastery of those competencies.

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<sup>20</sup>This definition is still in draft form and will be finalized in January 2018 by the WRAP Committee.