Re-Imagining Grades 9 - 14

COSA/OASE Work Group Recommendations

May 1, 2014

Re-Imagining Grades 9-14

To achieve the 40-40-20 Goal, we must redefine and restructure Oregon's education system for high school and the first two years of college. The COSA/OASE Workgroup has identified the following barriers to, and solutions for, putting into place an aligned, articulated, learner-centered education system for students in grades 9-14 that provides a smooth and effective transition through high school into college and other postsecondary programs.

Barrier: High schools do not consistently provide preparation essential for postsecondary success.

Solution: Align high school coursework to CCR standards and college expectations in collaboration with community colleges and universities.

Barrier: Too few high school teachers are able to offer dual enrollment courses due to teacher certification requirements and lack of funding.

Solution: Enhance opportunities for acceleration through dual enrollment by facilitating a consistent statewide certification process, offering grants to speed teacher certification, and standardizing any course costs for students.

Barrier: There is a lack of aligned CTE pathways from high school to community college and a shortage of CTE-certified teachers in high schools.

Solution: Expand CTE opportunities through aligned program planning for grades 9-14 and through more efficient CTE certification procedures with funding support.

Barrier: Lack of a fully scheduled program in grades 11 and 12 leaves students unprepared to tackle the rigor of postsecondary courses or to navigate the existing institutional divide between high school and postsecondary education.

Solution: Create a blended and academically rigorous 11-14 system in which students move seamlessly through multiple pathways into postsecondary education.

Barrier: Developmental education at the postsecondary level often fails to move students forward, and they drop out.

Solution: Reduce the need for developmental education through an improved and consistent process of CCR assessment and remediation during high school, coupled with college placement criteria accepted statewide.

Barrier: Each institution has its own independent accountability system, which limits collaboration in support of student success.

Solution: Create an integrated P-20 monitoring and reporting system that holds high schools and postsecondary institutions mutually accountable by tracking long-term outcomes of various pathways to degrees or certificate completion.

Barrier: Many families, particularly those from historically underserved groups, see postsecondary education as inaccessible or even unnecessary.

Solution: Initiate a public engagement strategy to inform and inspire families to make success in postsecondary education an important and attainable aspiration for their children.

Current Status

The economy of Oregon, like that of most other states, has evolved in recent decades to place greater emphasis on knowledge and advanced technology fields. Nationwide, today's entering high school freshmen will graduate to face an economy in which 63 percent of all jobs and 90 percent of new jobs in growing industries require them to pursue at least some postsecondary training[1].

The ever-increasing need for a highly skilled workforce was one of many factors contributing to the standards movement in the 1990s and 2000s, which was intended to create a K-12 system that adequately prepared students for success after high school. Building on these early standards initiatives, several states developed standards specific to college and career readiness (CCR). More significantly, governors and chief state school officers collaboratively sponsored the development of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)—a rigorous set of English/language arts and mathematics standards that are designed to meet CCR standards and propel students toward college and career readiness by the end of their high school careers.

Models of accelerated learning complement the Common Core State Standards movement, with its goals of strengthening rigor and raising expectations. During the past decade, high schools and postsecondary institutions have formed partnerships and engaged in extensive experimentation with models that accelerate student learning and acquisition of college credit. These trends require that the traditional high school experience—in which the senior year is a less than challenging year for many students and a high school's responsibilities toward students end at the annual graduation ceremony—be reimagined as part of a larger and more flexible continuum of formal education designed to ensure students with differing aspirations and abilities are prepared to continue their learning after high school. In fact, the emerging role of high schools is to ensure students are well prepared to be successful in "transferable, entry-level, college-credit-bearing courses leading to a degree, certificate, or workforce-oriented training program" (proposed Oregon College and Career Readiness Definition). At the core of such a transition is a focus on transforming the key purpose of education to that of helping students learn how to learn, so that they can succeed in a wide variety of pursuits.

If the new standard to which we aspire is college and career readiness, high schools must not only take on the challenge of enabling students to be successful in acquiring content knowledge in academic courses. College and career readiness necessitates helping students assimilate key cognitive strategies and higher-order thinking skills such as problem formulation, analysis, interpretation and effective communication, as well as such study habits and personal attributes as time management, persistence, precision, self-awareness, self-monitoring and self-efficacy. It also requires helping students integrate key transitional knowledge and skills that will enable them to proceed smoothly into a postsecondary environment, from the procedural knowledge of how to successfully navigate requirements for the desired career path and college admissions, to comprehension of college-level and workforce/career norms, culture, and expectations.

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As Oregon's education leaders reimagine how grades 9-14 education can be better connected to promote students' success in college and careers, we begin with the Oregon 40-40-20 Goal, which was adopted in 2011. This goal states that by 2025, all adult Oregonians will hold at least a high school diploma or equivalent, with 40 percent holding an associate's degree or a meaningful postsecondary certificate/credential and 40 percent holding a bachelor's or advanced degree. According to the 2010 U.S. Census American Community Survey, 28.9 percent of adult Oregonians (age 25+) hold a bachelor's degree or higher, 26.7 percent hold an associate's degree or one-year certificate, and 11.1 percent do not hold a high school diploma. To achieve the 40-40-20 Goal, it is necessary to pursue significant improvements that redefine Oregon's education system for high school and the first two years of college (grades 9-14).

[1] Carnevale, A.P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2010). Help wanted: Projections of jobs and education requirements throiugh 2018. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

Desired Outcome

Our desired outcome is that all members of the high school class of 2025—today's first graders—will graduate with a high school diploma or equivalent, with 40 percent going on to attain an associate's degree or meaningful postsecondary certificate/credential, and 40 percent going on to attain a bachelor's degree or higher. In order to achieve the state's goal for high school graduation and postsecondary success, the state needs to put in place a well aligned and articulated, learner-centered education system for students in grades 9-14. That system should ensure that all students graduate from high school fully ready for college or other postsecondary career programs – and, for a majority of students, that they graduate from high school having made significant progress toward attainment of a college or university degree, or career-technical credentials. Even those students who will likely choose to enter directly into a career should be given adequate preparation for postsecondary programs, because most career opportunities today entail a recognized expectation of advanced training. The state's education system should provide a smooth and effective transition through high school into college and other postsecondary career programs.

During the 2013-14 legislative session, the legislature passed SB 222 to establish an Accelerated Learning Committee. This seven-member legislative committee is examining methods to encourage students to obtain college credit while in high school, and will also consider the alignment of funding, assessments, and procedures between high schools and postsecondary institutions. The committee's report is due to the legislature on October 1, 2014. The Reimagining Grades 9-14 Work Group has shared its recommendations with the Accelerated Learning Committee in order to assist the latter in its deliberations.

Recommendation — Preparing Students for Success

High School to Post-Secondary Transition: Preparing Students for Success

The transition from high school to postsecondary education constitutes a critical juncture in a student's academic life. Creating a seamless transition that facilitates student success is a key strategy for accomplishing the 40-40-20 Goal. There are a number of barriers that Oregon needs to overcome and interventions and improvements the state can make to support that smooth transition.

1. BARRIER: High schools do not consistently provide preparation essential for postsecondary success.

SOLUTION: Establish an alignment between the cognitive and content demands of high school and college courses and integrate consistent college and career readiness expectations across the high school curriculum.

College and career readiness involves much more than meeting reading and math benchmarks. Students need competence in a well-delineated array of cognitive strategies, content knowledge, academic behaviors, and contextual skills and awareness in order to be successful in college and the workplace. Over the past decade, breakthrough work has been done in the area of preparing students to be college and career ready. Systemic approaches, diagnostic tools, and college readiness assessments are now available to schools and districts. Some states have implemented these strategies statewide.

Much of this work involves a retooling of high school syllabi and curricula to align with college and career standards. Teachers need to raise their expectations of themselves and of their students, including organizing course content according to key concepts, explicitly developing students' understanding of the structure of disciplinary knowledge, engaging students in close reading of non-fiction material, and offering ongoing opportunities for students to undertake authentic research projects and to write and deliver thorough and refined analytical arguments well-supported by evidence. Courses and course expectations need to encompass critical thinking and problem-solving skills and require students to exhibit perseverance in producing high-quality products. These expectations are not significantly different from those that will be required for success on the Smarter Balanced assessments that the state will implement in 2015. However, our high school teachers and community college faculty have not had the professional development or collaborative planning time to ensure that high school and community college coursework is aligned with these higher standards and expectations. In each of the institutions, we not only need to turn the standards into learning targets that students can understand, but we also need to refine the instructional practices that will enable students to reach the targets.

Oregon needs a statewide strategic initiative to align high school courses to college and career standards. This initiative would best be accomplished through a four- to five-year professional development program that entails: (1) collaboration

within and across school districts in deconstructing college and career readiness (CCR) standards into student learning targets and in understanding the relationship between these standards and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); (2) refinement of course syllabi to embed these standards and targets into structured learning opportunities; (3) implementation of formative assessment and other practices that promote student goal setting, self-monitoring, and metacognition; (4) deployment of interim and summative course assessments that accurately assess progress toward achievement of college and career readiness targets; (5) the development and institutionalization of programs and practices that successfully provide key transitional knowledge and skills, such as CCR advisory or Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID); and (6) collaboration with community college and university faculty throughout this process.

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The initiative should encompass partnerships with community college and university faculty to support alignment and transition, at a minimum, in the critical course areas of writing and math to ensure that courses are well articulated into pathways that can support student success. These partnerships should place equal value on the input of school districts and higher education, and should respect the work that has already been accomplished in developing CCR and CCSS standards. Although implementation will need to be phased in across districts, every district should have the opportunity—either through its own internal professional development program or through collaborative networks of districts—to access these resources in a non-competitive manner.

High schools, working in partnership with colleges, universities, and business and community representatives, can help prepare students with the transitional knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary success. Often called "college knowledge," these supports provide access to information, strategies, and techniques that support students in developing cognitive strategies, learning techniques, and navigating the application process. Through programs such as consistent advisory periods using a college and career readiness curriculum, or implementation of such college and career readiness programs as AVID, high schools can significantly increase the number of students well prepared for postsecondary success.

In addition, students need individualized information connected to their interests and aspirations to self-monitor their progress towards meeting their postsecondary goals. Information from a range of sources can be combined into a student profile, including not only traditionally collected data such as grades and test scores, but teacher observations and ratings of students, student self-reports, and other measures such as internships and public service experiences. This broader collection of information enables students who wish to pursue different careers to have evidence they are developing the knowledge and skills needed to enter the field. A student profile show students why it is important to strive to achieve academically, develop the learning skills and techniques, and meet key milestones they will need to accomplish their aspirations and career goals.

Oregon has a number of organizations and institutions with the professional expertise as well as the online course planning and CCR assessment tools to support such a strategic initiative. Building on the professional expertise within these organizations and the networks of collaboration emerging in the regional achievement compacts, the state is well-positioned to take advantage of these local resources to successfully implement an initiative that can accelerate progress toward the 40-40-20 goal.

Recommendation: *Similar to the strategic investments passed in the last legislative session, we recommend a joint, multi-year strategic investment in high school and community college course alignment to college and career readiness standards that encompasses statewide professional development, opportunities for cross-district curricular collaboration, implementation of college and career readiness advisory and support programs, and support for online tools to facilitate curricular alignment, assessment development, and student profiles.*

Recommendation — Reducing Barriers for Dual Credit

2. BARRIER: Too few high school teachers are able to offer dual enrollment courses due to teacher certification requirements and lack of funding.

SOLUTION: Enhance opportunities for acceleration and successful transition by reducing certification barriers to teaching dual credit courses in high school, and by underwriting at least a portion of students' costs for enrollment in these courses.

Research has demonstrated that students who earn college-level credits in high school are more likely to be successful in completing postsecondary degree or certification requirements. Acquiring college-level credits not only enables students to experience and become familiar with the level of rigor in college courses, but also makes the college experience more accessible and affordable.

There are numerous vehicles for facilitating these early credits, including credit through Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses, dual credit classes, and classes taken on community college and university campuses. A major barrier to high schools that want to provide these opportunities for students is their faculty members' lack of certification to teach dual credit academic courses. It is important that dual credit courses are taught by well-qualified instructors and that the courses are consistent in rigor and alignment with those offered on the college campus. As an incentive to encourage high school teachers to pursue the necessary coursework and course preparation to teach rigorous and well-aligned dual enrollment classes, the state should establish a College Now Preparation grant program that underwrites the tuition cost and provides course preparation time for these teachers.

Research has demonstrated that students who earn college-level credits in high school are more likely to be successful in completing postsecondary degree or certification requirements.

In 2013, a group of superintendents and community college presidents convened by COSA and the Department of Community College and Workforce Development formulated a number of recommendations to the State Board of Education for changes in regulations that would assist in overcoming the certification barriers to teaching dual credit courses. In essence, the recommendations focused on providing community colleges with greater latitude to approve instructors who had a master's degree and demonstrated competencies in that area rather than requiring a master's degree in the specific subject field. These revisions were approved at the State Board of Education meeting on June 20, 2013:

OAR 589-007-0200 (excerpt below) Sets out policy for 2+2 and Dual Credit Programs in community colleges

(b) "Dual Credit" is defined as awarding secondary and post-secondary credit for a course offered in a high school during regular school hours, as determined by local school board and community college board policy.

(2) Before developing programs with high schools, each college shall file with the Department a policy for governing Two Plus Two and Dual Credit programs. Policies must include the following:

~~(a) Requirements for instructors equivalent to that of other college instructors in the discipline, including:~~

~~(A) Masters degree for instructors of Lower Division Collegiate courses; and~~

~~(B) An appropriate combination of education and experience for instructors of professional technical courses.~~

(a) *Institutional standards for instructor qualifications (standards for teachers of lower division collegiate courses) must include a master's degree in a subject area closely related to that in which the instructor will be teaching; however in subject areas in which individuals have demonstrated their competencies and served in professional fields and in cases in which documentation to support the individual's proficiency and high level of competency can be assembled, the master's degree requirement* may be waived by the college president or substituted according to the community college's personnel policy.

Many community colleges report that they have not yet had time to process and implement this change and thus still adhere to a general policy that dual credit instructors must meet the same certification requirements as on-campus faculty. Our hope is that this will change in short order, because this discrepancy between the State Board of Education regulation and a range of current community college practice poses a barrier to students' progress. Oregon would benefit from an immediate and collective effort on the part of community college presidents and faculty to align their policies to the new state policy to better support dual credit options.

Recommendation: *OEIB and the Higher Education Coordinating Council should strongly encourage community colleges to adopt the standards set by the State Board of Education to enable effective high school teachers to offer dual credit courses for college credit, and HECC should work toward statewide consistency among Oregon's community colleges and public universities regarding dual-credit-instructor qualifications.*

In addition, in order to expand the number of students accessing dual credit opportunities, the state should launch a College Now Preparation grant program to fund the coursework of teachers interested in and committed to teaching dual credit courses in their high schools.

Expansion of dual credit opportunities, in which students take a course at their high school that qualifies for both high school and college credit, faces the twin barriers of costs for both school districts and students. In addition, there is a great deal of variability and inconsistency in the registration and tuition charges for community college and university courses taught through such programs as College Now. In some cases, the community colleges provide course credit for dual credit courses taught by high school teachers at no charge to the school district or student. In others, there is simply a charge for registration, although that charge varies among colleges. In still other cases, there is a substantial per-credit fee that must be paid by either the school district or student. For economically disadvantaged students, this tuition charge is at times reduced or underwritten by either the school district or college. This lack of consistency of payment fees for dual credit across the state creates differential access opportunities for school districts and students. Given the financial challenges facing school districts in Oregon, the expense of dual credit fees limits the number of opportunities a district can offer students for taking courses for college credit. In order to encourage expansion of dual credit opportunities, the state needs to bring consistency across the community college and university systems and provide a subsidy to the high school, community college or university to support registration and tuition costs.

In particular, the registration and/or cost paid by the student for taking dual credit courses can be a barrier to students' enrollment, especially in high-poverty districts. For example, in one district, the cost for a student to obtain college credit for a four-credit business course articulated through the community college jumped this year from $10 to $60. Payment of this registration fee is the responsibility of the student, thus putting such courses beyond the reach of some families—especially those who have been traditionally underserved by higher education. These fees vary greatly among community colleges in the state. A lower, standardized, statewide cost would encourage higher enrollment while ensuring that students/families maintain a financial incentive to do their best to successfully earn the credit.

There are other vehicles for obtaining college credit, including students taking courses on community college and university campuses and college instructors teaching courses on the high school campus. For credit courses taken on the community college or university campus, either the student or the school district pays the tuition costs. These courses can be costly, although programs such as the University of Oregon's DuckLink program attempts to offset some of these costs. The DuckLink program enables high school students to take courses on the University of Oregon campus. The university does not charge the normal fees associated with courses and reduces the tuition to between $318 and $324 per course depending on the number of credits for the course. If the student is economically disadvantaged, the sending school district picks up the cost of the tuition. The student is still responsible for the cost of books and materials. In spite of the generosity of the University of Oregon, such costs represent a barrier for many students and school districts. In the case of other community colleges and universities, the policies vary in terms of cost and who is responsible for the tuition and fees. Providing opportunities for students to take courses on a college campus or having a college instructor teach on a high school campus are valuable experiences for students. Establishing consistency in cost and in state support for funding these dual enrollment experiences would contribute to expansion of dual enrollment opportunities and would increase the number of students who take advantage of them.

Recommendation: *The state should provide a subsidy to school districts or colleges for dual credit course costs and establish a standard student-paid fee per course for any high school student who wishes to enroll in a college credit course on campus.*

Recommendation — Developing Robust CTE Pathways

3. BARRIER: There is a lack of aligned CTE pathways from high school to community college and a shortage of CTE-certified teachers in high schools.

SOLUTION: Enhance opportunities for acceleration by reducing certification barriers to teaching CTE courses that can support the transition to CTE pathways in community college.

Even steeper challenges face school districts that want to offer high-quality career and technical education (CTE) experiences in high school for college credit. Due to ever-increasing budget constraints over the past two decades, many school districts have all but eliminated their CTE program. For many students, CTE courses provided a reason to stay in school as well as a pathway to a successful career. In fact, there is a great deal of evidence that students who identify a CTE program of study or course pathway are much more likely to graduate. However, due to the restrictions in school funding, what often currently remains available to students are unaligned elective courses such as woodworking or very limited career pathways in such areas as culinary arts or health occupations. Even the traditional experiential programs in middle school have been cut and replaced by core or remedial classes to ensure students are progressing in meeting state proficiency standards. In rural areas this problem is particularly acute, with very limited access to CTE offerings at any level.

In the meantime, Oregon's students wait in vain for rigorous CTE courses and fall ever further behind the curve for entering well-paid, competitive careers.

High schools certainly need to increase the number of educators qualified as CTE instructors. At the same time, high school CTE courses need to align with career and technical pathways so that students can transition smoothly to community college CTE programs. Earning a CTE certification generally requires that students complete extensive coursework or demonstrate mastery of performance standards. Oregon community colleges have led the national trend to offer students "stacked and latticed" CTE credentials or career pathways. Oregon community college career pathways have credentials that build on each other and "stack" to demonstrate deeper levels of learning in a technical core, and credentials that involve a certain set of competencies that are relevant to multiple technical focus areas. A well-aligned grades 9-14 system and properly trained teachers would give high school students a head start in earning career pathway certificates. However, this progressive approach requires rethinking our current CTE certification process at the high school level.

WORKING EXAMPLE: Texas has fully integrated CTE standards into the state's K-12 academic standards. The result is that all students can pursue a career certificate while also meeting the state's academic benchmarks. This integration of career and academic curricula provides high schools with greater flexibility to deliver a variety of postsecondary pathways while also meeting state academic readiness expectations.

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=4881

At the present time, high school teachers who followed the traditional pathway to the classroom and who now wish to teach a college-credit CTE course face requirements for maintaining their standard teaching license while also acquiring the additional skills and knowledge for the CTE program. Meanwhile, skilled individuals from industry who wish to teach CTE courses to high school students find themselves lacking in pedagogical skills and facing significant challenges in trying to meet state licensure requirements. These two groups of talented people are on opposite sides of the same dilemma as they attempt to reach the same goal. In the meantime, Oregon's students wait in vain for rigorous CTE courses and fall ever further behind the curve for entering well-paid, competitive careers.

There are a number of major hurdles to providing CTE coursework in Oregon's high schools.

a. ***Availability of courses leading to certification:*** Only a few college-based preparation programs offer the certification, and they are generally 'on campus' and 'during the day' programs. If a potential CTE teacher does not live near a major university, it is virtually impossible to obtain the necessary coursework.

OSU-Cascades offers a professional development program for industry persons who wish to earn teaching certification. Programs such as this one could be studied for possible replication in other areas of the state.

WORKING EXAMPLE: The state of Washington has a model of 'one weekend a month' certification classes offered through regional state universities. Under this model, a teacher who wants to add a CTE endorsement is provisionally certified in CTE for one year while he/she enrolls in the required coursework and attends one weekend per month. Upon successful completion of the year's courses, the teacher is issued a CTE teaching certificate.

http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/CTE NotCertified.aspxhttp://www.southseattle.edu/programs/conted/cte.htm

b. ***Funding:*** Few high school teachers or potential CTE teachers from industry can afford the costs associated with certification. The course tuition is expensive and enrollment often entails regional travel. In the Washington model described above, the program is funded through greatly reduced fees that are paid by the teacher's district. The teacher is responsible for any related travel, meals, and lodging during the weekends. On the industry side, most individuals considering a move from industry to education are not given credit on teacher salary scales for years of industry experience, nor do they generally possess the formal college degrees that are rewarded by these scales. Accordingly, the entry-level salary does not attract strong candidates.

c. ***Program approval process:*** In order for teachers to receive certification, the program they will teach in has to be approved as well. The program must have a strong career and technical focus and meet one of the CTE standards. It must lead to and align with a program in higher education, typically at a community college. This alignment of program skills and knowledge in a "crosswalk" with the community college program generally results in one or more courses articulated in a specific program of study. The program approval process typically involves staff at an ESD as well as faculty at a community college and can take six months or more. Program approval precedes the approval of certification for the teacher. Program approval generally involves a great deal of time and energy on the part of the school district, the school administrators and the prospective CTE teacher. Due to the range of ESD program priorities, there are regional differences in both the CTE program and certification approval process.

d. ***Certification process:*** CTE certificates are issued through the Oregon Department of Education and through the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission. Time is a critical element in recruiting, hiring and assigning CTE-certified teachers from the ranks of both education and industry. Often, it takes an extended amount of time to secure certification due to constrained staffing in both departments and the requirement that program approval precede approval of the teacher's certification. A teacher must demonstrate significant industry experience and then present to an industry advisory board for approval. For some content area teachers such as science teachers wishing to teach a foundations in engineering course this

can be particularly time consuming and challenging in spite of the context expertise they made possess. In general, the ESD manages the process, reviews the teacher's materials and sends the paperwork to ODE for CTE approval. Once approved by ODE, it then goes to TSPC for approval of the endorsement, which can take an additional four to six months. An additional certification barrier is that community college and college instructors in CTE areas who could assist with CTE instruction at the high school level are not certified to do so by TSPC. In order for the state to make the process more efficient, the ESDs, state-level agencies and institutions of higher education need to work seamlessly with each other and with school districts to accelerate the awarding of certificates and the meeting of this urgent instructional need.

To encourage expansion of both CTE opportunities, the state needs more high school teachers who are qualified to teach in these programs as well as a more consistent and efficient program and certification approval process. As an incentive to encourage high school teachers, industry professionals, and community college instructors to pursue the necessary coursework or meet the experience or performance standards, the state should establish a CTE Preparation grant program that underwrites the tuition cost for these teachers. This grant program could also assist in the development of CTE instructors from the ranks of pre-service teachers, and offer experienced educators the chance to access training that qualifies them to teach CTE courses. The program would also enable individuals who are currently teaching trades to adults or are community college faculty to become qualified to offer CTE opportunities and credit to high school students.

Recommendations: *In conjunction with the College Now grant program mentioned above, the state should launch a CTE Preparation grant program to fund the coursework of teachers interested in and committed to teaching CTE courses in high schools. Oregon should swiftly develop a model based on Washington's that would promote the earning of CTE certification, and that would offer non-competitive grants to help needy districts underwrite or defray the costs of certification for prospective CTE teachers and programs. The OSU-Cascades program that certifies industry personnel to teach CTE classes should be studied for its effectiveness and possible replication. The processes of gaining CTE program approval and CTE teacher certification should be merged, shortened, and standardized. The state should establish a standardized formula that equates a number of years of industry experience to years of experience on the teacher salary scale in the same field, and should require districts to honor the formula. School districts—especially those located in rural Oregon—need to be supported through collaboration with trade unions and community colleges in offering a pathway that begins with coursework in high schools and leads to the earning of a journeyman's license in the trade careers. State agencies, including ODE and TPSC, should develop and implement ways to accelerate the processing of CTE certifications, once the required coursework is completed.*

Recommendation — Full programs for all high school students

4. BARRIER: Lack of a fully scheduled program in grades 11 and 12 leaves students unprepared to tackle the rigor of postsecondary courses or to navigate the existing institutional divide between high school and postsecondary education.

SOLUTION: Create and sustain a blended system that blurs the transition between grades 11 and 14.

The less complicated we make the transition from high school to postsecondary education, the more likely it is that students will be successful in making that transition. Breaking down the barriers and institutional walls between public high schools and postsecondary institutions is critical to creating a new system that blends grades 11 to 14 into a smooth sequence. This new system would require a number of changes in the current system, as well as the funding to support those changes.

A precondition to establishing a successful blended system is financial and institutional support for providing a full-schedule program for all 11th and 12th graders. Although public schools are required to offer 990 hours of instruction for high school students, many high schools do not currently provide a full schedule. Some students earn numerous credits early in high school, enabling them to take fewer courses in the 11th and 12th grades. These lighter schedules provide less rigor and poorer preparation for the challenging work required for success in postsecondary education. As a consequence, when students arrive at a postsecondary institution, they are not prepared for the intellectual and time demands placed on them. Other students are not able to secure a full schedule simply because their school district doesn't have sufficient funds to provide full schedules for all students without increasing class size far beyond what is reasonable for teachers and students. In such cases, it is often those parents with the political and social capital to know how to secure full schedules for their children who are successful in doing so, while the children of parents who have less knowledge of and influence in the system are provided with a less rigorous and complete schedule. In the end, this difference significantly impacts historically underserved groups within the state and perpetuates the high school achievement and postsecondary enrollment gap. The lack of rigor created by truncated schedules in the latter part of students' high school education seriously compromises their ability to be successful in a postsecondary environment of high expectations and challenging work.

The lack of rigor created by truncated schedules in the latter part of students' high school education seriously compromises their ability to be successful in a postsecondary environment of high expectations and challenging work.

Although there is a lack of current statewide data on the proportion of students with full schedules and the extent to which students are scheduled, sample data from a number of districts participating on the Reimagining Grade 9-14 Work Group reveal that their students are scheduled from 80 percent to 85 percent of their time in high school. For example, students in schools with a seven-period day are generally scheduled for only six out of seven classes. Students in schools with a block schedule enabling students to take eight classes in a year are often scheduled for only six or seven. Not only does this practice decrease the number of courses a student takes in high school and the richness of his or her high school program, but it also may compromise the student's ability to graduate on time. If a

student takes only six classes a year and fails a class, he or she does not make adequate progress toward graduating on time. Falling behind in one year can then be further complicated by a truncated schedule in succeeding years.

Beyond the restructuring of developmental education, an essential strategy is to enable high schools to play a more significant role in ensuring that students enter college without the need for remediation.

There is a serious need for more data in this area. Such data could be collected by ODE through a study of the percentage of students scheduled for 990 hours. High school students who are scheduled for an average of 85 percent of time receive the equivalent of only 3.4 years of instruction instead of 4. This difference equates to a loss of 5 percent of their instructional time across their entire K-to-12 experience. If ODE finds that high school students statewide are indeed being scheduled for an average of only 85 percent of their four years of high school, then fully scheduling all high school students would require a 5 percent increase in per-pupil expenditures.

In order to achieve the state's 40-40-20 vision, high school students need both a full schedule and a rigorous program of study that will support a successful transition to postsecondary education, including significant progress toward attainment of a college or university degree, or career-technical credentials. It would be particularly important to focus dual enrollment efforts during grades 11 and 12 on such key Oregon Transfer Module courses as Writing 121, Math 111, Communications 111, and History 101 and to align high school coursework so that courses meet the college learning outcomes and can be transferred to any community college or university in Oregon. However, the program of study in grades 11 and 12 does not need to be limited to seat time in high school classes. It could include college faculty offering courses at high school sites, on-campus and online college courses, CTE internships, and proficiency-based courses in a blended experience that supports transition into postsecondary education. A blended program could even be designed so that students spend one portion of the day or year at the high school and another portion at the community college in CTE courses or at a university enrolled in college courses. For rural areas, a portion of the coursework could occur online or in intensive summer programs. This kind of blended program could also integrate transitional support to students who have earned a GED by offering them an opportunity to participate in both transitional and community college experiences.

Recommendation: *Provide financial incentives of up to 5 percent of the State School Fund's per pupil expenditure to support school districts (and their community college, university and CTE partners) that commit to providing a full-schedule program for all 11th and 12th graders that integrates high school and postsecondary on-site and online coursework and internships. The program designs may vary depending on the resources and opportunities in an area.*

In addition to providing transitional support in 11th and 12th grades, support for some students should entail fifth-year transitional options. A number of districts have already initiated programs that provide funding for fifth-year seniors to enroll in a full first year at a community college. These programs have been highly effective in providing support for successful completion of an associate's degree, particularly for economically disadvantaged and students of color who are the first in their family to enroll in college. In these programs, the high school continues to provide ongoing counseling and instructional support while the student is enrolled in a full load of community college courses. The ability to complete a full year of coursework at the community college level has proven to be an effective launch into college and career. At this point,

the funding for these students is drawn from the base of funding provided by the State School Fund and underwrites community college tuition.

WORKING EXAMPLE: A similar program in Colorado, known as "Colorado ASCENT" (Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment), operates statewide and is state-funded through specifically targeted funding. ASCENT permits eligible students to participate in a fifth year of high school while enrolled concurrently on a community college. School districts receive a fixed amount of "per pupil operating revenue" with which they fund the tuition for ASCENT program students. ASCENT program students are not considered high school graduates until they have completed their participation in the ASCENT program. Students participating in the ASCENT program may walk with their peers in graduation ceremonies at their home high schools, but do not receive diplomas until completion of their ASCENT year.

http://www.coloradomesa.edu/:/wccc/ASCENT.html

Those districts that have initiated fifth-year programs have found their four-year cohort graduation rate seriously compromised, thereby undermining the value of the program in the public's perception. Formalizing fifth-year programs throughout the state would allow districts to report students who have enrolled in the program, and have completed all their graduation requirements by the end of their fourth year, as part of the four-year graduation cohort.

Recommendation: *To equitably distribute funding for all districts, districts should be able to provide fifth-year programs for approximately 10 percent of their student population. Funding to support the students' tuition at a community college should be provided by the state, and students in the program should be counted within the four-year cohort graduation rate.*

Blending the transitional years between high school and postsecondary education also involves blended support programs. In particular, students would significantly benefit from blended high school and community college counseling programs that work together to develop student learning plans and program pathways; advisory programs to develop a foundation of knowledge about career planning, college applications, funding and student life; summer bridge and jump-start programs that provide students with additional preparation for the demands of college courses; and transitional counseling through the introductory year of community college.

Recommendation: *Establish a transitional counseling grant program that provides funds to establish and sustain a blended counseling program offering a continuum of support from the region's high schools and the area's community college. The grants should enable current personnel at both the high school and community college levels to learn how to blend services and maximize their effectiveness. Continued funding for this aspect of the program should be included in the additional funding for fifth-year programs.*

Recommendation — Alternatives to traditional remedial approaches

5. BARRIER: Developmental education at the postsecondary level often fails to move students forward, and they drop out.

SOLUTION: Improve placement decisions and reduce the need for developmental education.

The research on developmental education courses at both the community college and university levels reveals that remedial courses at the community college and university level do not prepare students well for success in regular credit-bearing college classes. In fact, they drain students of valuable funds while not providing them with either credit or progress toward their degree. The system of developmental education needs significant restructuring. Currently, community college presidents in Oregon and others around the country are examining more effective alternatives to ensure that students are sufficiently supported so that they can be successful in regular credit-bearing college courses.

Developmental education in community colleges serves two very different groups of students. Some students are enrolling in the community college as adults after an extended absence from academic coursework. For these students, the intent of developmental courses is to reacquaint them with basic knowledge and skills required for success in college courses. The second group of students are transitioning immediately from high school to a community college or university, yet have not scored sufficiently high on a placement test to qualify for regular credit-bearing college classes. The post-secondary remedial coursework for this group of students has not been successful in preparing them for credit-bearing college courses. For both groups, community colleges and universities are exploring a variety of alternatives to the traditional design of remedial coursework as a prerequisite to taking a credit-bearing course.

WORKING EXAMPLE: Texas is piloting the "Mathways" initiative, developed by the Dana Center at the University of Texas. This program targets students identified as needing developmental math and tailors their grade 13 math coursework according to their career aspirations. Students take a foundational course and then enroll in credit-earning algebra, statistics, or quantitative literacy, depending upon which skills match their intended career field.

http://www.utdanacenter.org/higher-education/new-mathways-project/

http://www.utdanacenter.org/higher-education/new-mathways-project/new-mathways-project-curricular-materials/

http://www.txsuccess.com/pdf/mathways_project.pdf

Beyond the restructuring of developmental education, an essential strategy is to enable high schools to play a more significant role in ensuring that students enter college without the need for remediation. High schools can—and want to—diagnostically assess the degree to which a student is college ready and the areas in which the student requires strengthening, as well as provide the interventions necessary to ensure the student is ready for regular college work.

WORKING EXAMPLE: Eight states, including Colorado, allow high school students to take college-required remedial courses through dual enrollment programs. For example, Rangeview High School in Aurora (CO) Public Schools offers a 12th grade course sequence whereby students take intermediate algebra in the fall term (a remedial course), followed by college algebra in the spring term. Students enroll for the entire yearlong sequence, and thus remain with the same instructor and cohort of students.

http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/LtGovGarcia/CBON/1251641634264

This diagnosis and intervention can begin early in high school through assessments such as the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT sequence. Information gleaned from instruments such as these can provide targeted feedback on individual students, as well as more general feedback on whether students overall are receiving adequate preparation in a specific curricular area. A number of school districts in the state have adopted one or more such tools to facilitate diagnostic assessment and intervention planning. To ensure that all schools have a college and career readiness assessment system available to them, the state should integrate one of these assessment packages into the statewide assessment system, offering the tools to all schools at no cost.

WORKING EXAMPLE: The Tennessee SAILS (Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support) program began as a pilot, but has now been rolled out statewide and is one of the governor's signature programs. SAILS uses students' 11th grade ACT results. Students who score below 19 in math are enrolled in a senior year "bridge" math course that prepares them to be college ready upon graduation. This initiative is an example of remediation avoidance and intersystem integration.

www.state.tn.us/thec/Divisions/.../SAILS%20THEC%20Template.pdf

http://www.chattanoogastate.edu/high-school/sails/

Beyond the systemic lack of assessment tools, there is a second and even more significant barrier to high schools' serving the critical function of ensuring students are ready for the demands of college coursework. This barrier is the inconsistency among community colleges and universities in the placement tools that they use and the standards by which they determine whether a student requires remediation/developmental education. In some community colleges and universities, the faculty create their own placement test rather than relying on a nationally standardized instrument. This lack of uniformity adds to the confusion around college-ready standards and expectations.

WORKING EXAMPLE: Colorado is currently the only state in the nation whose statewide postsecondary admission and placement policies recognize the high school CCSS assessments. According to recent survey research by Education Commission of the States, nearly 30 percent of states are considering doing the same thing. For states interested in integrating policies, using the same assessment instruments is an important consideration.

Education Commission of the States, estimate based on unpublished survey research conducted by ECS, fall 2013.

The state has a unique opportunity to bring consistency and coherence to these placement decisions. With the transition from OAKS to the Smarter Balanced assessment—an assessment already based on college and career readiness standards—the state is well positioned to establish cut scores in particular facets of literacy and numeracy to indicate college and career readiness at the 11th grade level. Different standards could be established for community college vs. university readiness, but these standards would be consistent for comparable institutions across the state. Because the test would be administered in grade 11, students whose performance fell short of the cut scores could restructure their senior year to address these gaps and then repeat the assessment at the end of their senior year to demonstrate readiness. It would be necessary for the community colleges and universities to honor the placement results of the tests administered at the high school level, although they might also require the continued study of literacy and math in grade 12 for those students who met the cut scores in the 11th grade.

Recommendation: *Provide a statewide college and career readiness assessment system that begins in 8th grade and monitors both individual students and curricular preparation. In addition, establish consistent cut scores on the Smarter Balanced assessment to assess college readiness and suitability for placement in community college and university courses. For those students who successfully meet the college readiness standard in grade 11, postsecondary institutions could require continued coursework in literacy and math during their senior year to sustain the placement decision. For those students who don't meet the cut scores at 11th grade, a repeat assessment would be administered by the high school at the end of the senior year, with the results honored by postsecondary institutions statewide.*

Recommendation — Mutual Accountability

6. BARRIER: Each institution has its own independent accountability system, which limits collaboration in support of student success.

SOLUTION: Provide data monitoring and reporting for mutual accountability.

Institutional accountability systems often serve to preserve rather than break down institutional silos. If the state is to reimagine grades 9-14 as a blended system of smooth transitions, then our accountability systems need to monitor and report data that serves the purpose of mutual accountability. As a base, the state needs to track individual students from early childhood through postsecondary education, no matter which pathway the student takes. This data system is one that the state is already pursuing.

However, we must go further and focus on specific outcome variables that enable us to share accountability for results. We need to monitor and study the variety of paths we make available to students to help them achieve the target outcome of a postsecondary certification or degree. We also need to study the checkpoints along the way, from college readiness interventions at the high school level to various strategies for securing college credits and certificates in high school, and from transitional counseling support systems to supports provided to ensure success at the college level. We need to engage in continuous research and refinement through a data system that allows us to assess the effectiveness of the variety of strategies we put in place to assist students.

A great deal can be done with an integrated P-20 data system. Programs of research that include qualitative research, efficacy studies, and early warning indicator development around school dropout rates, reasons, and policy and program interventions are already well established. The state can build into the reconceptualization of 9-14 education a plan and budget for a program of research that comprehensively and rigorously examines the degree to which students successfully reach postsecondary goals, and targets along the way, given well-designed, alternative programmatic options. This research must be built on a solid statewide data system.

The most critical indicators for shared accountability are the completion rates for technical certificates and associate and bachelor degrees. Tracking long-term outcomes of various trajectories is the key to mutual accountability. However, our current systems of accountability are inadequate in providing clarity in some areas. For example, community college students who transfer to universities without an associate degree are recorded as non-completers, thereby not giving credit to the community college for the preparation it provided in order to launch a student into a four-year institution. Tracking long-term outcomes must take into account positive transitions between institutions as well as overall completion.

Recommendation: *Establish accountability standards for community college and university transfer, certification, graduation, and completion rates and establish a program of research that identifies those pathways from high school to postsecondary education that are most successful in achieving those results.*

Recommendation — Aspiration and Public Engagement

7. BARRIER: Many families, particularly those from historically underserved groups, see postsecondary education as inaccessible or even unnecessary.

SOLUTION: Initiate a public engagement strategy to encourage students and parents, particularly historically underserved and under-informed students and families, to aspire to success in postsecondary education and to inform them of opportunities and requirements for admission and financial aid.

Many students and families, particularly those who have been historically underserved, have limited experience and insight into the world of postsecondary education and often are not adequately informed about the opportunities that postsecondary education presents for career advancement. At times, these families don't feel that they can access postsecondary education due to their financial and socio-cultural circumstances. In addition to the persistent achievement gap, these students and families experience an aspiration gap that deters them from applying to institutions of postsecondary education. Raising the aspirations and knowledge base for these families is a critical part of the work that needs to be accomplished to achieve the state's vision for 40-40-20 and ensure equity of opportunity across the state.

One way to achieve this goal is to launch, in collaboration with business and institutions of higher learning, a public engagement initiative that would provide a consistent set of materials for districts to use in their schools and communities, as well as web and media promotions that can be used at a state level. The focus of this public engagement campaign would be on specific opportunities and actions that families and students could take to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. It is critical that these families hear multiple, targeted, and repeated messages about the diversity of postsecondary options to fit myriad career goals, the accessibility of postsecondary education, and the resources available to support degree and certificate/credential attainment. In addition, because some of those families who are the most critical to engage are also less trusting of and comfortable with large institutions and the media, the approach needs to be personalized and the outreach needs to be specifically targeted. A combined local and state initiative to raise aspirations and provide concrete, actionable information could assist in encouraging families and students to apply, enroll, and succeed in postsecondary education. Such national initiatives as the National College Access Network and the Lumina Foundation's KnowHowtoGo campaign have developed valuable resources that can be utilized or adapted for this campaign.

The focus would be on specific opportunities and actions that families and students could take to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Recommendation: *In collaboration with business leaders and postsecondary institutions, launch a statewide public engagement campaign to encourage postsecondary enrollment and provide actionable information to families on how to access postsecondary information and financial aid. The campaign should provide a consistent set of materials in print and on the web to support local initiatives, while also utilizing media to encourage students and families to aspire to success in postsecondary education.*

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