



MARYLAND STATE
BOARD OF EDUCATION

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standard: Policy Document

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Proposed Draft
Version 1.0

Maryland State Board of Education

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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I. Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback Process

Timeline	Activity
May 23, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interim report on the CCR Standard Empirical Research Study predictive validity study was released and presented to the State Board.
July 25, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interim report on the CCR Standard Empirical Research Study content and standards alignment study was released and presented to the State Board.
September 26, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers from American Institutes for Research (AIR) presented the final research report findings to the State Board.
October 24, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSDE staff presented initial proposal for adopting a new CCR Standard to the State Board of Education. The State Board reviewed, discussed, and amended proposal to include additional components.
October 25, 2023 – November 30, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Feedback Survey open. MSDE and the State Board received over 598 responses with feedback and input on how the CCR Standard should be defined.
November 9, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Public Hearing at State Board of Education Meeting. 20 stakeholders shared their input on adopting a new CCR Standard.
December 5, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education review of stakeholder feedback and discussion on CCR Standard.
January 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education adoption of new CCR Standard.
October 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEA Chief Academic Officer meeting: CCR Feedback Session.
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Version 1.0 of this policy document is released for public comment.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education reviews and discusses this policy document.

II. Purpose

As part of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the Maryland State Board of Education is required by law to adopt a College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standard that students can meet by the end of 10th grade or by the time a student graduates from high school (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1). Meeting the CCR Standard is not required to graduate from a Maryland high school.

The Blueprint statute specifies that "A student shall meet the CCR standard when the student meets a standard in English language arts, mathematics, and, when practicable, science that enables the student to be successful in entry level credit bearing courses or postsecondary education training at a State community college." (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1(c)(2))

Once a student meets the CCR standard in high school, they enter a Post-CCR Pathway that allows the student to work towards earning college credits and/or an industry-recognized credential. Students who meet the CCR standard are entitled to enroll in credit-bearing courses at Maryland community colleges.

Until the Accountability and Implementation Board determines that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future has been fully implemented, students who have not yet met the CCR standard shall have initial access to Post-CCR Pathways and introductory CTE courses. When the Accountability and Implementation Board determines that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future has been fully implemented, Post-CCR pathways shall be available only to students who have met the CCR standard, except under limited circumstances determined by the Board.

In addition to the Post-CCR Pathways, students in the 11th and 12th grades who have not yet met the CCR Standard, and students in younger grades who are not on track to meet the CCR Standard by the end of their 10th grade year, should be enrolled in coordinated CCR Supports to assist the student in meeting the CCR Standard as soon as possible.

This policy document explains the different options available for students to demonstrate they are College and Career Ready, and the specific criteria that must be met for students to be identified as meeting the CCR Standard. Additionally, this document includes more detailed business rules for meeting the CCR Standard, benefits of meeting the CCR Standard, and guidance around providing CCR Supports for students who have not yet met the CCR Standard, as well as responsibilities for different entities to implement this policy successfully.

III. Definitions

- A. **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs:** Coursework that allows a student to earn an industry recognized occupational-credential or postsecondary certificate or participate in a registered apprenticeship program or youth apprenticeship program.
- B. **College and Career Readiness (CCR):** The skills and knowledge that enable students to be successful in entry-level credit-bearing courses or postsecondary education training at a State community college. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1)
- C. **CCR Supports:** Students who do not meet the CCR standard by the end of the 10th grade participate in the CCR Supports that enable them to meet the CCR standard before they graduate from high school through individualized instruction, supports, and services.
- D. **College Preparatory Programs:** Coursework that consists of either an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, a comparable program consisting of Advanced Placement (AP) courses specified by the College Board, or the Cambridge AICE Diploma Program.
- E. **Credit-Bearing Course:** A course that earns credit toward a diploma, certificate, or degree at a Maryland community college or other open-enrollment public institutions of higher education.
- F. **Dual Credit:** High school students earn both high school and college credits simultaneously for passing the same credit-bearing course.
- G. **Dual Enrollment:** Occurs when a student is simultaneously enrolled in a secondary school and an institution of higher education, as part of a credit or noncredit certificate or license program, course, or sequence of courses that leads to certification or licensure at an institution of higher education in the State.
- H. **Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP):** The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) assesses all Maryland students' progress towards proficiency on the Maryland state content standards in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L), Mathematics, and science.
- I. **Post-CCR Pathway:** Once students meet the CCR Standard, they are eligible to participate in the Post-CCR Pathway. The three types of Post-CCR Pathways include College Preparatory Programs, Early College and Dual Enrollment Programs, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs. Each student who meets the CCR Standard must be enrolled in at least one of the Post-CCR Pathways listed above.
- J. **Proficient:** A score of Level 3 or 4 on relevant MCAP assessment, or for the interim CCR Standard applicable only during the 2024-25 school year, a score of at least 520 on SAT Math exam.

IV. Policy Standards

A. CRITERIA TO MEET THE CCR STANDARD

1. According to Blueprint statute, codified in MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1, “[a] student shall meet the CCR standard when the student meets a standard in English language arts, mathematics, and, when practicable, science that enables the student to be successful in entry level credit bearing courses or postsecondary education training at a State community college.” Under Education § 705.1(d)(2)(i), “[m]eeting the CCR standard shall initially require a student to achieve the equivalent of a score of 4 or 5 in the mathematics and English portions of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career grade 10 assessments or the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program grade 10 assessments or any successor assessments.”
2. From School Year 2021-2022 through School Year 2024-2025, the “Interim CCR Standard” is in effect and may be used by students to indicate that they have met the CCR Standard. Under the Interim CCR Standard, a student will be designated as “College and Career Ready” if they meet at least one of the standards listed below for English AND one of the standards listed below for Math:
 - a. English (any one of the below options):
 - i. Score 3 or 4 on fall or spring MCAP English 10
 - ii. Score 2 or 3 on early fall 2021 MCAP English 10
 - iii. Score 4 or 5 on the PARCC English 10 (2015-2019)
 - b. Math (any one of the below options):
 - i. Score 3 or 4 on fall or spring MCAP Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry
 - ii. Score 2 or 3 on early fall 2021 MCAP Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry
 - iii. Score 4 or 5 on the PARCC Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry (2015-2019)
 - iv. Score of 520 on the Math SAT

3. Beginning with the School Year 2023-2024, the CCR Standard adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on January 23, 2024 has been in effect and may be used by students to indicate that they have met the CCR Standard. Under the current CCR Standard, a student will be designated as “College and Career Ready” if they meet or exceed at either one of the two options below:
 - a. **Option 1:** Students can meet the CCR Standard by demonstrating both Academic Success and Math Mastery.
 - i. **Academic Success** is achieved by earning a High School Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher. **AND**
 - ii. **Math Mastery** may be achieved by either earning a final course grade of A, B, or C in Algebra I, **OR** alternatively by scoring Proficient or above on the Algebra I MCAP assessment.
 - b. **Option 2:** Students can meet the CCR Standard by scoring Proficient or above on BOTH the English 10 MCAP assessment **AND** the Algebra I MCAP assessment.
4. Beginning with the graduating class of 2030-2031 (students in grade 9 or below in school year 2027-2028), the Math Mastery option of the College and Career Readiness standard shall be updated to define math mastery as one or more of the following achievements:
 - a. Earning a final course grade of A, B, or C in **both** Integrated Algebra 1 **AND** Integrated Algebra 2; **OR**
 - b. Scoring Proficient or above on the Integrated Algebra statewide assessment; **OR**
 - c. Earning a final course grade of A, B, or C in an Advanced Mathematics Pathways course in which Integrated Algebra is a prerequisite.
5. Starting in School Year 2025-2026, students may meet the CCR Standard by meeting at least one of the below options:
 - a. Earn a one-year core-content High School Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher in their 11th grade or 12th grade year. This GPA is not cumulative of previous years and only includes courses completed in the student’s 11th grade or the student’s 12th grade year. This GPA is also calculated by only including all ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and CTE courses taken that year; other elective courses are not included in this calculation.
 - b. Earn a grade of C or better (unless otherwise specified by dual enrollment agreements) in at least **two** core-content dual enrollment or dual credit courses at any point in the student’s high school career. One of these courses must be a Math course and one of these courses must be an ELA, Science, or Social Studies course.
 - c. Meet performance threshold on at least **two** advanced academics (AP or IB programs) assessments at any point in the student’s high school career. At least one of these courses must be a Math course. For Advanced Placement (AP) assessments, scoring a 3 or higher, International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme assessments, scoring a 4 or higher.

- d. Meet the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks on the SAT or ACT:
 - i. To meet the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks on the SAT, as defined by the College Board, students must earn a score of at least 480 on the Reading and Writing section **AND** earn a score of at least 530 on the Mathematics section.
 - ii. To meet the College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT, as defined by the ACT, students must earn a score of at least 18 on the English section **AND** earn a score of at least 22 on the Mathematics section.
- e. Obtain a score of “Advanced” on both the Math and English/Language Arts Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessments.
 - i. Participation in the Alternate Assessments is reserved only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who have been determined by their IEP teams as eligible to participate in the Alternate Framework.
 - ii. Note that participation in the Alternate Assessments is never a decision to be made based on administrative convenience or outside of the IEP team process, as students participating in the Alternate Framework are participating in a program of study that is more likely to result in earning a Certificate of Program Completion rather than a Maryland High School Diploma.
 - iii. Please see the “Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) - Mathematics, ELA and Science / Alternate Assessments” page on MSDE’s website for more information on the DLM assessments. Please see the “Guidance for IEP Teams Working with Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Assessment and Eligibility for the Alternate Framework” document for more information about the Alternate Framework.
- f. Earn Silver or better on the ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) assessment.
- g. Earn a state-approved Industry-Recognized Credential, aligned with a Career and Technical Education and/or Comprehensive Arts pathway.
- h. Complete the high school level of a registered apprenticeship program.

B. BUSINESS RULES FOR THE CCR STANDARD CRITERIA

1. Meeting the CCR Standard through Option 1 (GPA and Math Mastery) may only be utilized by students at the end of their 10th, 11th, and 12th grade years. Students at the end of their 9th grade year may not meet the CCR Standard through Option 1.
 - a. Students at the end of their 9th grade year may meet the CCR Standard through Option 2 (Proficient or above on both the English 10 State assessment (MCAP or successor) and the Algebra State assessment (MCAP or successor)).
2. To achieve the Math Mastery component of Option 1 through an Algebra I course grade, the final cumulative course grade must be used. An interim course grade that only reflects a segment of the full course may not be used (e.g. A student's grade for one quarter or one semester of a full year course may not be used.)
3. Achieving Academic Success through a high school GPA must use the student's unweighted GPA. The unweighted GPA shall be calculated using all courses, not just core content courses.
4. Once a student meets the CCR Standard, this designation cannot be revoked for that student. This applies even if the student's GPA decreases below the threshold in future years.

C. BENEFITS OF MEETING THE CCR STANDARD

1. Students who meet the CCR Standard are entitled to be enrolled in credit-bearing courses at any Maryland community college or other open-enrollment public institution of higher education. Students who meet the CCR Standard during high school may take advantage of this benefit while they are still in high school or after graduation. (MD Code, Education, § 15-126)
2. All students who meet the CCR Standard are provided with access to Post-CCR Pathways, at no cost to the student or the student's parents, including the cost of any fees. These include the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, a comparable program consisting of Advanced Placement courses, or the Cambridge AICE Diploma Program; an early college program or dual enrollment program; or a Career and Technology Education (CTE) program. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1)
3. According to the [Maryland State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board: Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment](#), for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026:
 - a. Students who have met the CCR standard are entitled to their LEA covering the costs of 2 dual enrollment courses per Fall and Spring academic semester per student, for a possible total of 4 dual enrollment courses per year per student; and the exam fees directly connected to courses that students are enrolled in for their first attempt at a specific exam.
 - b. Students may enroll in additional dual enrollment courses beyond those covered by the LEA. The costs of these additional courses will be the responsibility of the student. This includes enrollment beyond the guaranteed two courses per Fall and Spring semesters or courses taken outside the Fall or Spring semesters, such as during the Summer semester.
 - c. Students who have not yet met the CCR standard shall have initial access to Post-CCR Pathways, such as developmental and/or corequisite dual enrollment courses (e.g., CCR supports) and introductory CTE courses. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1)
 - i. When the Accountability and Implementation Board determines that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future has been fully implemented, Post-CCR pathways shall be available only to students who have met the CCR standard, except under limited circumstances determined by the State Board of Education. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1)
 1. At this time, students who have not yet met the CCR Standard will no longer have initial access to Post-CCR Pathways. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1)
 - d. LEAs may choose to cover the costs of additional tuition and fees beyond the minimums defined above, including whether to cover the costs of Initial Access courses, including AP courses and assessments for up to two AP courses per student at any point in their high school career, for students before they meet the CCR Standard.

4. "Initial Access" shall be defined as any of the following:
 - a. The first two courses of a CTE program of study
 - b. Up to two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme courses.
 - c. Up to two dual enrollment or dual credit courses

D. CCR SUPPORTS

1. Starting in School Year 2023-2024, students in the 11th and 12th grades who have not yet met the CCR Standard shall be provided with the appropriate CCR Supports to assist the student in meeting the CCR Standard as soon as possible. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1(f))
 - a. LEAs should develop a clear process and procedures to identify and provide the appropriate CCR Supports for each student. These CCR Supports could include opportunities for academic scaffolding, opportunities for earning an IRC, retaking a course or reattempting an assessment.
 - b. When appropriate for the specific student, LEAs should consider whether the student should be encouraged to retake a course that they have not earned a C or higher.
 - i. When making this decision, LEAs should consider if the student's grade was just below the cut-off score and have a GPA at or near the "Academic Success" cut-off of 3.0.
 - ii. Additionally, students earlier in their high school career should be encouraged to retake a course as this can help boost their overall GPA.
 - c. When appropriate for the specific student, LEAs should consider whether the student should be encouraged to reattempt an assessment that they have not yet scored proficient.
 - i. When making this decision, LEAs should consider how soon after their first attempt the student can reattempt an assessment.
 - ii. Additionally, the LEA should consider whether the student is later in their high school career and raising their overall GPA to the "Academic Success" cut-off of 3.0 is mathematically possible.
 - iii. LEAs should analyze the assessment data and provide targeted academic supports before the student reattempts the assessment.
 - iv. The school should also offer the appropriate and differentiated intervention, tutoring, and/or other instruction for the student before the student reattempts the assessment.

2. If a student progresses to an Advanced Mathematics Pathway course without meeting the CCR Standard, they should receive co-requisite support such as a math lab course, high dosage tutoring, or enrollment in a digital individualized math intervention program. For more information, see the PreK- 12 Maryland Mathematics Policy Guidance documents.
3. Starting in School Year 2023-2024, students in any grade up to and including 10th grade who are not on track to meet the CCR Standard by the end of their 10th grade year shall be provided with the appropriate CCR Supports to assist the student in meeting the CCR Standard as soon as possible. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1(f))
 - a. For CCR-specific strategies related to Mathematics, Literacy, Social Studies, Science, Digital Learning and School Library Media, Advanced Academics, Language Development Supports, Individualized Learning Supports, and Strategies for Systems and School District Leadership, LEAs should reference the MSDE-developed College and Career Readiness Guidebooks, available on the MSDE website at <https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCCR/guidebooks.aspx>
 - b. To provide students with the appropriate CCR Supports, LEAs should offer the necessary structures and supports to schools, including the relevant professional development.

V. Responsibilities

A. LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Consistent with the [Maryland State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board: Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment](#), for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026:
 - a. For students who have met the CCR standard, as it relates to the responsibility to cover the costs of tuition and fees of dual enrollment courses that are part of the Post-CCR Pathways taken during the school year, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are responsible for, at a minimum:
 - i. Two (2) dual enrollment courses per Fall and Spring academic semester per student, for a possible total of four (4) dual enrollment courses per year per student; and
 - ii. Exam fees directly connected to courses that students are enrolled in for their first attempt at a specific exam.
 - b. LEAs may choose to cover the costs of additional tuition and fees beyond the minimums defined in Item 1.
2. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, LEAs shall enroll each student who meets the CCR standard in at least one post-CCR pathway at the student's choice, which may include a competitive entry college preparatory program, an early college or dual enrollment program, or a Career and Technical Education program. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1(g)(1))
3. LEAs must develop accelerated pathways and enrichment programs for gifted and talented students to achieve CCR before the end of 10th grade. (MD Code, Education, § 8-201(b)). While developing the accelerated pathways, LEAs should ensure that they meet all state and federal accountability and assessment requirements for all students.
4. LEAs must provide the appropriate CCR Supports for students that have not yet met the CCR Standard. (MD Code, Education, § 7-205.1(f))

B. MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. In the summer and fall of 2024, MSDE published a series of information and guidance documents for LEAs that will support each local school district in their implementation of programs and structures necessary to support all students in meeting the CCR Standard. <https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCCR/guidebooks.aspx>
- B. MSDE, along with AIB, shall monitor the implementation of the CCR Standard and related practices through the Blueprint Implementation Plan submissions and other standard reporting. MSDE will collect students' CCR statuses through the High School Data Collection (HSDC).

C. MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. As set forth in the [Maryland State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board: Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment](#), the State Board and AIB shall review the number of students who meet the CCR standard and who enroll in dual enrollment courses each year during this period for alignment and may revise this policy accordingly. The State Board and AIB will review this policy during the Fall of 2025 and discuss any needed revisions or extensions for Fiscal Year 2027.

VI. References

A. Laws & Regulations

1. MD Code, Education, [§ 7-205.1](#)
2. MD Code, Education, [§ 8-201](#)
3. MD Code, Education, [§ 15-126](#)
4. MD Code, Education, [§ 15-127](#)

B. Board Policies and Resolutions

1. [Maryland State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board: Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment](#)
2. The State Board adopted an [interim CCR standard](#) on February 22, 2022.
3. The State Board adopted the [current CCR standard](#) on January 23, 2024.

C. MSDE Documents and Guidance

1. [College and Career Readiness \(CCR\) Standard: Definitions and Frequently Asked Questions \(July 31, 2024\)](#)
2. [College and Career Readiness Guidebooks](#)
3. [Success for all Students in the General Education Classroom](#)
4. [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\) - Mathematics, ELA and Science / Alternate Assessments - MSDE](#)
5. [Guidance for IEP Teams Working with Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Assessment and Eligibility for the Alternate Framework](#)

D. Research

1. [Empirical Research Study of Maryland's College and Career Readiness \(CCR\) Standard](#) – completed by the American Institutes for Research (AIR)
 - a. [College and Career Readiness Empirical Study – Board Presentation](#)
 - b. [Final Report](#)
 - c. [Final Report Appendices](#)

VII. History

A. Introduced [date]

B. Adopted [date]

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