COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS METRICS AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Spring 2022

MASTER METRICS LIST

Description

This master metrics list includes data metrics recommended or employed by members of the Northern Illinois University P-20 Research & Data Collaborative (RDC) across their portfolio of collaborative, college-and-career-readiness-related (CCR) projects. The RDC's accumulated project experiences emphasize the importance of developing aligned and consistent data practices, including identifying and tracking key metrics like those listed here. In parallel to its use of this list across various project spaces, the RDC offers this list as a resource for local, state, regional, or national partners operating in the CCR space.

The listed metrics cluster into three categories—High School Outcomes and Postsecondary Transition, Postsecondary Success, and Employment Outcomes—spanning secondary education, postsecondary education, and workforce. Within categories, overarching guiding questions further group the metrics. This category-question taxonomy provides a framework to inform metrics strategy and use.

Calculating the listed metrics may require partners to enhance their data definition, collection, and integration practices. CCR data sit in a developing space where programmatic [and data] definitions often vary and novel state- and local-level collections are common. Clarifying and aligning definitions, where appropriate, and understanding various CCR data sources can facilitate integrating CCR data. Such integration requires keys for matching data across sources. The necessary keys will vary per the granularity of the metric and data of interest. Publicly available keys include school or school-district identifiers like the RCDTS number in Illinois. Use of student-level identifiers [and data] requires legal authorization, which is assumed for selected internal staff (e.g., agency leadership or researchers) but is governed by data sharing/access agreements for qualified external parties (e.g., academic researchers, staff from other agencies, the RDC and other university partners). The RDC is available to consult individuals or entities interested in enhancing their CCR data practices or otherwise accessing and using CCR data in Illinois.

The listed metrics are not all applicable to a particular project or a particular community's initiatives, nor are they exhaustive. Some of the metrics, such as the College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI) and College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE), are specific to the Illinois context. Generally, metrics will vary in their purpose and scope as well as the data required to create them. Likewise, partners and projects will differ in context and interest and may focus on different facets of CCR. Therefore, users of this list should treat it as a starting point and reference to be tailored to their context-specific metrics work.

As these metrics are deployed, all data should be disaggregated to promote greater understanding of differences and possible inequities across student subgroups. Where possible, data should be disaggregated by demography (race/ethnicity, low-/lower-income, special needs, English learners) and, where relevant, by pathway cohort (e.g., IT pathway students, health

science pathway students, etc.). Data from targeted metrics (e.g., transitional instruction or early college credit outcomes) should be further disaggregated by appropriate categories. Additionally, consideration should be given to analyzing and reporting key school characteristics in connection with the metrics (e.g., per-student expenditure, accountability status).

In addition to the metrics list, this document includes a set of reference qualitative research questions the RDC seeks to explore in relation to implementation of CCR and pathways programs. It is intended as an initial framework to feed a cycle of continuous improvement by exploring why a program may or may not be facilitating the intended college and career readiness outcomes. It includes questions that address:
- Program inputs and activities including measures to address equity;
- Stakeholder perceptions; and
- Facilitators and barriers to equitable implementation.

This is a living document that will develop and grow over time. The RDC welcomes partners to help shape the document's structure and contents. Please contact Charlie Rosemond at crosemond@niu.edu with any questions, comments, or suggestions.

High School Outcomes and Postsecondary Transition

1. **Are students graduating high school ready for college-level instruction?**
   a. *High School Graduation: # / % of students graduating high school (using four-year, five-year, and six-year cohort graduation rates)*
   b. *9th Grade On Track: # / % of high school students meeting 9th Grade On Track expectations*
   c. *PSAT Proficiency: # / % of high school students scoring at Proficient levels on the PSAT math and ELA*
   d. *SAT Proficiency: # / % of high school students scoring at Proficient levels on the SAT math and ELA*
   e. *Developmental Course Placement: # / % of high school graduates transitioning to an Illinois community college placed into developmental math and English*
   f. *Developmental Course Enrollment: # / % of high school graduates transitioning to an Illinois community college enrolling in developmental math and English*
   g. *Transitional Instruction Enrollments: By type of transitional instruction course, ratio of transitional instruction enrollments to students not meeting college-ready requirements in math and English during high school*
   h. *CCRI Overall: # / % of high school graduates meeting the CCRI overall*
   i. *CCRI College Ready Sub-Indicators: # / % of high school graduates meeting each of the CCRI College Ready sub-indicators*

2. **Are students accelerated toward a career area of interest while still in high school?**
   a. *Career Interest Designation:* # / % of students with career interest area by end of sophomore year (using relevant CCRI sub-indicator)
   b. *CCRI Career Ready Sub-Indicators:* # / % of students meeting each of the CCRI Career Ready sub-indicators
   c. *Pathway Participation:* # / % of students participating in a pathway
   d. *Pathway Completion:* # / % of students completing a pathway (either CTE Concentrator or CCPE attainment)
   e. *CCPE Attainment:* # / % of students attaining the College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE)
   f. *Multi-disciplinary Participation:* # / % of students participating in coursework across multiple Endorsement areas

3. **Are students earning college credit and credentials while in high school that accelerate attainment of postsecondary education and career goals?**
   a. *Early College Credits Earned:* # / % of students earning college credit, and average college credits earned, by grade-level (disaggregated for AP, dual credit, IB, credit by exam)
   b. *Early College in General Education:* # / % of graduating class students earning early college credit in Math and/or English
   c. *Early College in Career-focused Courses:* # / % of graduating class students earning at least six hours of early college credit in career-focused courses
   d. *Early College Credit Levels Earned:* # / % of graduating class students earning a total of early college credits by "band" (AP, dual credit, IB, credit by exam): 0; 1-5; 6-9; 10 - 14; 15 or more
   e. *Dual Credit Course Pass Rates:* # of students who score an A, B, or C in a dual credit class in comparison to the total # of students enrolled in the dual credit class aggregated across all dual credit classes
   f. *Industry Credentials:* # / % of students obtaining an industry credential (using relevant CCRI sub-indicator)

4. **Are students engaged in professional learning experiences aligned to their career interest areas? (See Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary for related definitions)**
   a. *Participation in Career Exploration:*
      i. Type of Experience: Site visit, job shadow, career fair, guest speaker/panel, other, N/A
      ii. Partners: Employers/businesses, community-based organizations, in-house, other, N/A
   b. *Participation in Team-Based Challenges:*
      i. Type of Challenge: Embedded within course curriculum, through a student organization/CTSO, through an extracurricular organization, other, N/A

    ii. Partners: Employers/businesses, community-based organizations, in-house, other, N/A
  c. *Participation in Career Development Experience:*
    i. Type of Experience: Internship, cooperative education, school-based enterprise, supervised agricultural experience, work experience, other, N/A
    ii. Partners: Employers/businesses, community-based organizations, in-house, other, N/A

5. **Are students guided and supported through key milestones in the high school to college transition?**
   a. *FAFSA Completion:* # / % of graduating class students completing FAFSA
   b. *MAP and PELL Receipt:* # / % of graduating class students receiving MAP/PELL
   c. *College Applications:* # / % of graduating class students submitting at least three college applications
   d. *High School Plan:* # / % of high school sophomores completing four-year high school educational plan
   e. *Post-High School Plan:* # / % of graduating class students completing post-high school education/career plan

6. **Are students enrolling in postsecondary after graduating high school?**
   a. *College Enrollment - 12 months:* # / % of students enrolling in college within twelve months of high school graduation (disaggregated by community college, university, or career training)
   b. *College Enrollment - 16 months:* # / % of students enrolling in college within sixteen months of high school graduation (disaggregated by community college, university, or career training)
   c. *Military Enlistment:* # / % of students enlisting in the military within twelve months of high school graduation

Postsecondary Success

Note: Generally, all postsecondary success metrics should be disaggregated for analysis by demography and high school characteristics of interest, such as transitional math and/or English completers, early college credit earners, and CCPE recipients. The RDC is available to consult on data definition, collection, access, integration, and analysis in this area.

7. **Are students persisting through postsecondary and earning credentials?**
   a. *Fall-to-Spring Retention:* Of those students entering an Illinois community college in a given year, # / % of first-time, full-time degree seeking students retained from fall-to-spring
   b. *Fall-to-Fall Retention:* Of those students entering an Illinois community college or university in a given year, # / % of first-time, full-time degree seeking students retained from fall-to-fall

    c. Gateway Math and English: Of those students entering an Illinois community college in a given year, # / % of first-time, full-time degree seeking students:

        i. Enrolling in college-level math and English courses in their first year (with disaggregation for transitional course completers)

        ii. Of those enrolling, passing college-level math and English courses (with disaggregation for transitional course completers)

    d. *Credit Accumulation - 20 credits:* Of those students entering an Illinois postsecondary institution in a given year, # / % of first-time, full-time degree seeking students accumulating twenty credits during their first year of postsecondary enrollment

    e. *Credit Accumulation - 30 credits:* Of those students entering an Illinois postsecondary institution in a given year, # / % of first-time, full-time degree seeking students accumulating thirty credits during their first year of postsecondary enrollment

    f. *Community College Advancement:* Of those students entering an Illinois community college in a given year (first-time, full-time), # / % advancing within 150% of catalog time. Breakdown into five categories:

        i. Students who completed a program of at least two years, but less than four years

        ii. Students who completed a program less than two years

        iii. Students who did not complete a program of study but have transferred to another institution

        iv. Students who did not complete a program of study but are still enrolled

        v. Students who did not complete a program of study and are not currently enrolled

    g. *Credential Attainment - 9th grade cohort:* Of those students commencing ninth grade in a particular year, # / % students attaining at least one of the following within ten years:

        i. College certificate

        ii. Associate degree

        iii. Bachelor's degree

    h. *Credential Attainment - Graduating class cohort:* Of those students graduating high school in a particular year, # / % students attaining at least one of the following within six years:

        i. College certificate

        ii. Associate degree

        iii. Bachelor's degree

    i. *Credential Attainment - Population;* # / % of adults ages 25-44 and 25-64 with a postsecondary credential in the geographic area of analysis

8. **Are students continuing their secondary pathway into postsecondary and earning related credentials?**

    a. *Enrollment in Postsecondary Pathway - Participants:* # / % of pathway participants graduating from high school in a particular year and enrolling in a

related postsecondary program at an Illinois community college within a three-year postsecondary analytical period

b. *Enrollment in Postsecondary Pathway - Completers:* # / % of pathway completers (CTE concentrator or CCPE recipient) graduating from high school in a particular year and enrolling in a related postsecondary program at an Illinois community college within a three-year postsecondary analytical period

c. *Pathway Community College Credential Attainment - Participants:* # / % of pathway participants graduating from high school in a particular year and earning a related credential from an Illinois community college within a four-year postsecondary analytical period

d. *Pathway Community College Credential Attainment - Completers:* # / % of pathway completers graduating from high school in a particular year and earning a related credential from an Illinois community college within a four-year postsecondary analytical period

e. *Subsequent Postsecondary Enrollment:* For (c) and (d) above, # / % of those earning a credential enrolling in further postsecondary education within a two-year, post-attainment, analytical period (with analysis of whether the subsequent postsecondary education program is in the same two-digit CIP, or a different CIP)

f. *Pathway University Degree Attainment - Participants;* # / % of pathway participants graduating from high school in a particular year and earning a related degree from an Illinois university within a six-year postsecondary analytical period

g. *Pathway University Degree Attainment - Completers:* % of pathway completers graduating from high school in a particular year and earning a related credential from an Illinois university within a six-year postsecondary analytical period

Employment Outcomes

Note: Employment outcomes are generally longer-term than either high school or postsecondary outcomes, and involve more complicated systems for data access and analysis. The below outcomes should be further developed with State agency partners and, where possible, supplemented by information collected by colleges (such as surveys of program completers, or employer reports). The RDC is available to consult on data definition, collection, access, integration, and analysis in this area.

9. **Are students continuing their secondary and postsecondary pathways into employment?**

a. *Employed in Pathway Sector:* Of students earning a credential in pathway area (using 2-digit CIP code) during the analytical time period and not continuing enrollment in postsecondary, # / % employed in the same sector (using NAICS)

b. *Employed in IL:* Of students earning a credential during the analytical time period, # / % employed in IL in reference quarter (t) after credential attainment. Proposed reference quarters (t):

       i.   Second quarter after attainment
      ii.   Fourth quarter after attainment
     iii.   Eighth quarter after attainment
     iv.   Twelfth quarter after attainment

c. *Employed in Region of Credential Attainment:* Of students earning a credential during the analytical time period, # / % employed in the same economic development region (or other relevant geographic analytical area) as the credential provider in reference quarter (t) after credential attainment. Proposed reference quarters (t):
       i.   Second quarter after attainment
      ii.   Fourth quarter after attainment
     iii.   Eighth quarter after attainment

d. *Stable Employment:* Of students earning a credential during the analytical time period, # / % working for the same Illinois employer for at least three consecutive quarters in reference quarters (t-1), (t), and (t+1) after credential attainment. Proposed reference quarters (t):
       i.   Fourth quarter after attainment
      ii.   Eighth quarter after attainment
     iii.   Twelfth quarter after attainment

10. **Are students earning postsecondary credentials employed initially at a living wage and then experiencing earnings growth?**

a. *Earning a Living Wage:* Of students (1) earning a credential during the analytical time period; (2) employed in IL in reference quarter (t) after credential attainment, the previous (t-1) quarter, and the subsequent (t+1) quarter; and (3) not subsequently enrolled in further postsecondary education, the # / % with (t) quarter earnings at or above 85% of the living wage threshold for one Adult and one Child in the relevant statistical area, based on MIT's Living Wage Calculator. Proposed reference quarters (t):
       i.   Second quarter after attainment
      ii.   Fourth quarter after attainment
     iii.   Eighth quarter after attainment
     iv.   Twelfth quarter after attainment

(Note: if the individual is employed with two or more Illinois employers, the highest-paying job is selected)

b. *Annual Earnings Growth:* Using the earning calculation in (a), the difference in average annual earnings between (i) the year before credential attainment, (ii) the first year after credential attainment, and (ii) the second (and subsequent) year after credential attainment

REFERENCE QUALITATIVE IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

Description

This set of reference qualitative research questions is intended as an initial framework for understanding the implementation of college-and-career-readiness-related (CCR) projects to feed a cycle of continuous improvement. All questions are not applicable to each project, nor are they intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they are preliminary inquiries for practitioners at various levels of implementation to initiate an exploration into why a program may or may not be facilitating the intended college and career readiness outcomes. They address CCR programs aimed at high school and the high school to college transition. Data sources may include anonymous surveys and interviews of students, caregivers, counselors, high school teachers, college instructors, high school and college administrators, and professional partners. Where possible, data should be disaggregated by demography to promote greater understanding of possible inequities across subgroups. If the inquiry spans multiple schools or districts, consideration should be given to analyzing key school characteristics such as per-student expenditure and accountability status.

1. **Are students accelerated toward a career area of interest while still in high school?**
   a. How are students involved in career exploration activities?
      i. *What are the careers and what are the exploration activities?*
      ii. *What measures are in place to ensure activities are equitably accessible to all student populations?*
   b. How are students recruited into various pathways?
      i. *How are school counselors approaching advising students on pathway enrollment?*
      ii. *What support is provided to assist counselors in equitably advising students on pathways?*
      iii. *How are caregivers included in pathway enrollment options?*
   c. Why do students enroll or not enroll in various pathways?
      i. *What do students and caregivers say about why they enroll or do not enroll in various pathways?*
      ii. *What do teachers and administrators say about why students enroll or do not enroll in various pathways?*
   d. What do administrators identify as systemic barriers to equitably accelerating students toward a career area of interest while still in high school?

2. **Are students earning college credit and credentials while in high school that accelerate attainment of postsecondary education and career goals?**
   a. Why do students enroll or not enroll in early college credit and credentials?
      i. *What is the process for counseling students into general education and career-focused early college courses?*

        ii.   *What measures are in place to ensure early college credit and credentials are equitably accessible to all student populations?*

       iii.   *How are caregivers included in early college credit and credential options?*

       iv.   *What do students and caregivers say about why students enroll or do not enroll in general education and//or career-focused early college courses?*

b. Why do students succeed or not succeed in general education and//or career-focused early college courses?

       i.   *How do students perceive the content and quality of early college courses?*

       ii.   *How do teachers/instructors perceive the content and quality of early college courses?*

       iii.   *How qualified, prepared, and supported are the teachers/instructors?*

       iv.   *What do students and caregivers say about why students succeed or do not succeed?*

       v.   *What do teachers/instructors say about why students succeed or do not succeed?*

c. What do administrators identify as systemic barriers to equitably ensuring students earn early college credit and credentials?

3. Are students engaged in quality professional learning experiences aligned to their career interest areas?

a. Why do students engage or not engage in professional learning experiences?

       i.   *What learning experiences are available to students?*

       ii.   *What is the process for connecting students to professional learning experiences?*

       iii.   *How are caregivers involved in the process of connecting students to professional learning experiences?*

       iv.   *What do students and caregivers say about why students engage or do not engage in professional learning experiences?*

       v.   *What do students and caregivers say about the alignment of available professional learning experiences to student career interest areas?*

       vi.   *What measures are in place to ensure a variety of quality professional learning experiences are equitably accessible to all student populations?*

b. What is the quality of the professional learning experiences?

       i.   *How do teachers/instructors perceive the quality of professional learning experiences?*

       ii.   *How do students and caregivers perceive the quality of students' professional learning experiences?*

       iii.   *How do partners, mentors, and the community perceive the quality of the professional learning experiences?*

       iv.   *How are professional learning experience partners prepared and supported?*

      c.   What do administrators identify as systemic barriers to equitably ensuring students engage in quality professional learning experiences aligned to their career interest areas?

4. **Are students guided and supported through key milestones in the high school to college transition?**
    a. How are students and caregivers supported in completing FAFSA?
        i. *What measures are in place to ensure support is equitably accessible to all student populations?*
    b. How are students guided and supported in submitting college applications?
        i. *What is the process for including caregivers?*
        ii. *What measures are in place to ensure guidance and support is equitably accessible to all student populations?*
    c. How are students counseled and supported in completing high school and post-high school education/career plans?
        i. *What is the process for including caregivers?*
        ii. *What measures are in place to ensure guidance and support is equitably accessible to all student populations?*
    d. How do students and caregivers perceive the guidance and support offered them for the high school to college transition?
    e. What do administrators identify as systemic barriers to equitably ensuring students are guided and supported through key milestones in the high school to college transition?

5. **Are students completing high school ready for college-level instruction?**
    a. How prepared do high school teachers think their students who qualify as college-and-career-ready are for college-level instruction?
    b. How prepared do college faculty think their students who qualify as college-and-career-ready were for college-level instruction?
    c. How do college students perceive their high school college and career preparation?
    d. What do administrators identify as systemic barriers to students completing high school ready for college-level instruction?