

SECTION I

PART E STATEWIDE REMEDIAL EDUCATION POLICY *DRAFT*

1.00 Introduction

Colorado Revised Statute 23-1-113.3 authorizes the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (Commission) to establish criteria to be used by all public higher education institutions in the state in identifying students who need remedial courses in English and mathematics, and to develop standards whereby institutions may offer remedial courses. The Commission is required to review and revise these standards periodically to ensure they are allowing for the greatest student success.

The Commission recognizes that too many students are not prepared for college-level work when they enroll in an institution. Colorado's Master Plan for higher education, *Colorado Competes*, challenges the state's system of higher education to improve the effectiveness of remedial education and to thereby increase student persistence and completion rates.

The policy applies to all state-supported institutions of higher education admitting first-time undergraduate students, including students admitted into extension programs. The governing boards and institutions of the public system of higher education in Colorado are obligated to conform to the policies set by the Commission within the authorities delegated to it by C.R.S. 23-1-113.3.

This policy comprises the following sections:

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2.00 Policy Goals

The Colorado Statewide Remedial Education policy is intended to promote clear communication between and among students, K-12 and higher education, and the public. The policy is informed by national best practices and by data on student performance in Colorado. The policy further is intended to promote alignment among education policies in the state, including Colorado Department of Education's high school graduation guidelines, statewide admissions standards, and statewide transfer policy (gtPathways). Finally, the policy seeks to provide flexibility to institutions and allow multiple pathways to educational success for students.

The Remedial Education Policy is designed:

1. To enable students to be successful in credit-bearing math and English courses.
2. To improve student outcomes in basic education by ensuring that all students have accurate and timely information regarding course, degree and support options.
3. To provide transparency by informing stakeholders, students, K-12 and higher education, and the public about outcomes of remediation.

3.00 Terminology

Assessment Tests: Colorado accepts six assessment instruments for determining if the first-time student is college-ready in English or mathematics based on the relevant college-ready cut scores listed in Table 1. Institutions of higher education may choose to use any or all approved primary assessments listed below. Institutions must accept ACT or SAT at a minimum.

ACT Assessment Test:

English: ACT Assessment English or ACT Writing (Writing assessment is not required)

Math: ACT Assessment mathematics

SAT Assessment Test:

English: SAT Verbal or SAT Essay Writing

Math: SAT Mathematics

Accuplacer Assessment Test:

English: Sentence Skills

Math: Elementary Algebra

Compass Assessment Test:

English: Writing skills test

Math: Math placement test

Partnership for Assessing Readiness for College and Career (PARCC*) Assessment

English language arts/literacy

Mathematics

Smarter Balanced* Assessment

English language arts/literacy

Mathematics

** Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced instruments (SBAC) are currently being deployed and field-tested nationally and by the Colorado Department of Education in an effort to implement and assess statewide college and career readiness standards for students. The research and validation studies will be available by 2016-17, at which point Colorado institutions of higher education will begin to utilize the approved college-readiness scores.*

Basic skills courses means courses that are prerequisites to the level of work expected at a postsecondary institution.

First-Time Undergraduates, as applied in this policy, means an undergraduate students enrolling in a higher education institution for the first-time with less than 24 semester credit hours postsecondary experience. Enrollment in personal enrichment or occupational certificate programs is not considered previous postsecondary experience. Prior enrollment as a high school student concurrently enrolled in a higher education institution does not preclude a student from being categorized as first-time.

Three groups of students are included in the definition of first-time undergraduate, unless exempted:

- first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates;
- non-degree seeking undergraduates who change to degree-seeking status; and
- Non-degree seeking first-time undergraduates who have graduated from a Colorado public or private high school (or its equivalent) during the previous academic year.

National assessment test scores include, but are not limited to, ACT test scores and SAT test scores.

Primary Evaluation means the assessment administered for admission purposes.

Remedial Courses means basic skills courses designed for students who lack the academic competencies necessary to succeed in a college-level curriculum.

Secondary Evaluation means an institution-specific secondary-evaluation process used to place a student into courses after admission, when the student's primary assessment indicates he/she is not college-ready in one or more areas.

Supplemental academic instruction, as interpreted for this policy, means co-requisite instruction in English and mathematics for students with limited academic deficiencies who are placed into college-level coursework that is approved for statewide transfer pursuant to C.R.S. section 23-1-125 (3). "Supplemental academic instruction" does not include prerequisite basic skills courses.

4.00 Statutory Authority

23-1-113. Commission directive - admission standards for baccalaureate and graduate institutions of higher education - policy - definitions (1.5) (a) (I) The commission shall establish and the governing boards shall implement a policy pursuant to [section 23-1-113.3](#) to identify matriculated students who need basic skills courses in English and mathematics and standards and procedures whereby state institutions of higher education may offer basic skills courses as provided in [section 23-1-113.3](#). The commission, in consultation with the governing boards, shall

ensure that the policy aligns with the admission policy adopted pursuant to subsection (1) of this section. In identifying the standards for basic skills, the commission may differentiate requirements for mathematics based on the prerequisite skills needed for required courses within a student's declared program of study.

(II) As part of the policy established pursuant to this paragraph (a), the commission may authorize a state institution of higher education to provide supplemental academic instruction even though the institution is not authorized to provide basic skills courses pursuant to [section 23-1-113.3](#). The institution may receive stipend payments from the state pursuant to [section 23-18-202](#) on behalf of an eligible undergraduate student, as defined in [section 23-18-102 \(5\)](#), who is enrolled in a college-level course that includes supplemental academic instruction.

5.00 Role and Responsibilities

5.01 The Commission shall:

- 5.01.01 Design and implement statewide policies for remedial education.
- 5.01.02 Provide the General Assembly information on the number, type and cost of remedial education provided.
- 5.01.03 Develop appropriate funding policies that support the institutional roles and missions.
- 5.01.04 Ensure the reliability and validity of placement or assessment tests.
- 5.01.05 Ensure that Governing Boards inform each student identified as needing basic skills remedial coursework which state institutions offer such basic skills courses and the approximate cost and relative availability of such courses, including any electronic on-line courses.

5.02 Governing Boards shall:

- 5.02.01 Ensure that each first-time undergraduate student enrolled at one of its institutions has been assessed in English and mathematics prior to enrolling in the first semester of the student's college career.
- 5.02.02 Ensure a secondary evaluation process is in place at each institution that will allow students who test below the college-ready cut scores (see Table 1) to be placed into college-level coursework as appropriate.
- 5.02.03 Ensure that each enrolled first-time undergraduate student identified as needing basic skills remedial coursework is provided with written

notification identifying which state institutions offer such basic skills courses, including any electronic on-line courses.

5.02.04 Ensure that each enrolled first-time undergraduate whose assessment score indicates inadequate college preparation in English and/or mathematics has the appropriate advising information regarding the necessity to enroll in remedial skill classes or Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) courses during the first semester following a placement test.

5.02.04.01 Students scoring at or above the cut score (see Table 1) are ready for college-level courses. Institutions may not require students to take remedial coursework if they have been deemed college-ready. However, scores may or may not indicate readiness for a program of study.

5.02.04.02 Institutions may place students scoring below the cut score (see Table 1) into college-level courses in some cases with SAI based on the institution's secondary evaluation process and if that institution has an approved SAI program.

5.02.05 Ensure that institutions inform students needing remediation of the responsibility to complete the coursework within the first 30 semester hours.

5.02.06 Require institutions to:

- Specify the test administration policy, including dates and location of test administration (e.g., contract with another college).
- Specify its practices for informing students regarding the availability of remedial courses, including any electronic on-line courses.
- Specify the practices for determining how the students who are diagnosed as needing remedial courses have satisfied the remedial requirements.

5.03 Institutions shall:

5.03.01 Assess students for college-readiness in English and mathematics if a student has not already been assessed; the institution shall ensure that the state-approved tests are administered as required.

- 5.03.02 Provide a secondary evaluation for students scoring below the cut score (see Table 1). Institutions shall make every effort to do so prior to enrollment.
- 5.03.03 Inform students identified as needing basic skills remedial coursework that remedial courses must be completed no later than the end of the first year (i.e., within the first 30 semester credit hours after being matriculated as a college student). For students with unmet remedial needs who have completed 30 or more semester credit hours, institutions must require that student meet with an academic advisor on the need to address basic skill deficiencies before registering for additional coursework.
- 5.03.04 Offer basic skills courses as allowed within statutory role and mission.
- 5.03.05 Place students in the appropriate level of coursework upon assessment. Students not meeting the specified minimum cut score may be deemed college-ready based on an institutionally-designed secondary evaluation.
- 5.03.06 Offer co-requisite Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI), if they choose to implement SAI and have a Commission-approved policy in place, to students deemed to have limited academic deficiencies.
- 5.03.07 Submit remedial and Supplemental Academic Instruction data to the Commission.
- 5.04 **Students shall:**
 - 5.04.01 Take the required assessment and placement tests, if necessary, prior to the first term of enrollment.
 - 5.04.02 Provide to the institution official assessment scores from assessments that student has taken.
 - 5.04.03 Take the appropriate remedial coursework no later than the end of their first year (or within the first 30 semester credit hours) if identified as needing remediation.

6.00 Students Exempt from Assessment

- 6.01 The following students are exempt from assessment:

- 6.01.01 Students who successfully completed* a college-level English and/or college-level mathematics course;
- 6.01.02 Students who have completed one of the assessments found in Table 1 within the past three years are exempt from assessment;
- 6.01.03 Students who successfully completed* necessary remedial course(s), if required, in English and/or mathematics;
- * Note: "Successfully completed" refers to a student who earns a grade of "C- "or higher or who has satisfactory completion;*
- 6.01.04 Students who earned a transfer-oriented associate degree (i.e., A.A. or A.S.), excluding A.G.S. and A.A.S. graduates. Commission Academic Affairs Policy section I part F: Admissions Standards Policy requires transfer students to have completed basic skills courses before being considered for transfer admission;
- 6.02 International students (students who have a non-U.S. transcript) may be exempt: institutions may choose to determine possible remedial needs based on a secondary evaluation.
- 6.03 The following students are also exempt from assessment, unless the student intends to take college-level English or mathematics courses:
- 6.03.01 Pursuing a career and technical certificate;
- Note: Some institutions' assessment requirements may be more stringent than that set by the Commission (e.g., requiring assessment of certificate-seekers).*
- 6.03.02 Concurrently-enrolled in high school, taking courses in their determined program of study that would otherwise not require assessment for placement;
- 6.03.03 Enrolled as exchange students, coming from another institution, state or country for study, for a defined period of time (e.g., academic term or year); or
- 6.03.04 Non-degree seeking undergraduate students (unless recent high school graduates) until the student becomes degree-seeking.

7.00 Process and Procedures

7.01 Funding

7.01.01 Any state-supported institution of higher education with a two-year statutory role and mission may offer and receive state general funds for basic skills courses.

7.01.02 Any state-supported institution of higher education without a two-year role and mission is prohibited from claiming general fund support for basic skill credit hours. However, these institutions may offer basic skills courses by contracting with a Colorado public community college or on a cash-funded basis, except for Metropolitan State University of Denver and the University of Colorado Denver. Colorado statute states that the Community College of Denver is the only institution on the Auraria campus authorized to deliver basic skills courses – for state support or for cash. These institutions may also offer Supplemental Academic Instruction with college-level courses (if authorized by the Commission).

7.01.03 Institutions of higher education with a two-year statutory role and mission may include basic skills credit hours generated by concurrently enrolled students in the 12th grade in the number claimed for state general fund support.

7.02 Accountability and Data Reporting

7.02.01 Any institution that provides basic skills courses, whether the courses are delivered for cash or receive state support, and/or provides Supplemental Academic Instruction, shall collect data to evaluate student performance, including data that describes the students who take basic skills courses and/or Supplemental Academic Instruction courses, the SASID to connect the student to the school district from which they graduate, the basic skills and/or Supplemental Academic Instruction areas that required instruction, and the credit hours earned in these courses.

- 7.02.02 All institutions providing basic skills or Supplemental Academic Instruction courses shall submit the required files to the Commission, following its prescribed data definitions and reporting dates.
- 7.02.03 The institutions shall provide any financial information, including FTE generated by remedial and Supplemental Academic Instruction courses and program costs, following prescribed data definitions and formats.
- 7.02.04 The Commission shall transmit annually to the Education Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Joint Budget Committee, and the Department of Education, an analysis of the data including:
 - 7.02.04.01 The number of students who take basic skills and/or Supplemental Academic Instruction courses;
 - 7.02.04.02 The costs of providing basic skills and/or Supplemental Academic Instruction courses; and
 - 7.02.04.03 Whether students who complete said basic skills and/or Supplemental Academic Instruction courses successfully complete the requirements for graduation/transfer/completion.
- 7.02.05 Pursuant to C.R.S. 23-1-113.3, the Commission must provide a high school feedback report to Colorado school districts on remediation of their recent high school graduates. For that report, recent high school graduates are defined as degree- and non-degree seeking undergraduates. The high school graduation cohort from the Colorado Department of Education will be used to assign basic skills students to a high school and/or district.
- 7.02.06 The Commission shall disseminate the analysis to each Colorado school district, the public high schools within each district and institutions of higher education, complying with Commission's adopted Privacy Policy.

8.00 College-Readiness Assessment Cut Scores

Table 1 below provides scores on assessment tests recognized under this policy that institutions shall use in identifying students who need remedial courses in English and mathematics.

This table will be evaluated by the Commission every three years against Colorado specific data. The Commission may adjust the cut scores based on empirical data of student performance in college English and college mathematics courses.

Table 1 – College-Ready Assessment Cut Scores

Assessment Test	Math Subscore	English Subscore
ACT	19	18
SAT	460	430
ACT Writing Subscore* / **	---	TBD
Accuplacer*	TBD	TBD
Compass	63	79
PARCC***	TBD	TBD
SBAC****	TBD	TBD

** These subscores are being researched by the Department and will be added.*

***Not required, not a primary assessment, but can be used as a secondary evaluation.*

**** Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced (SBAC) instruments are currently being deployed and field-tested nationally and by the Colorado Department of Education in an effort to implement and assess statewide college and career readiness standards for students. The research and validation studies will be available by 2016-17, at which point Colorado institutions of higher education will begin to utilize the approved college-readiness scores.*