

**A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR YOUNG TEXANS:  
College Readiness Standards Under Review by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

AUSTIN, November 30, 2007 – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announced that the public comment period for the *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* will end on **Monday, December 10**. The draft standards are a direct response to the sobering fact that more than 50 percent of Texas high school graduates are not academically prepared to succeed in entry-level college work.

“Texas must tackle this issue now because it is increasingly clear that our young people are not well-prepared for life after high school,” said Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education. “These standards are specifically designed to help students better meet the demands of entry-level college courses or employment opportunities.” Further evidence of the need for college readiness standards was underscored in a recent report by the Commission for a College Ready Texas appointed by the governor.\*

Development of college readiness standards was mandated by House Bill 1 passed by the Texas Legislature in special session in late 2006. The legislation laid out a plan for college readiness to be accomplished through the joint efforts of public education and higher education.

In the first phase, now well underway, the Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Higher Education designated “vertical teams” consisting of faculty from both higher education institutions and public high schools across the state. The vertical team members were chosen for their subject-matter expertise and their excellence as teachers in four subject areas: English/language arts, math, science, and social science. They were asked to answer a difficult question: What do students really have to know and be able to do in order to succeed in entry-level college courses? After months of hard work, the teachers and faculty on the vertical teams independently produced the draft of college readiness standards now available for public comment on-line at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/TCRS.cfm> (until December 10).

House Bill 1 requires approval of the final standards by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Commissioner of Education. The Coordinating Board’s Academic Excellence and Research Committee will review the draft standards and comments at meetings set for December 12 and January 15. After the draft standards have been thoroughly reviewed and edited in light of public comments received, the full Coordinating Board will approve the final standards on January 24. The standards then must be approved by the Texas Education Commissioner. Finally, the legislation requires the State Board of Education to incorporate the standards into the current TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and develop the appropriate curriculum.

“The incorporation of college readiness standards will take several years to fully accomplish,” said Commissioner Paredes, “But what an accomplishment it will be when all young Texans can step confidently into college, the military, or the workforce with a strong educational foundation for rewarding careers and lives.”

\*The report of the Commission for a College Ready Texas may be found at: <http://www.collegereadytexas.org/>



---

---

TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

---

---

---

---

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:  
COLLEGE READINESS STANDARDS

---

---

**What are the Draft Texas College Readiness Standards?**

The *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* define what students should know and be able to accomplish in order to succeed in entry-level college courses or workforce opportunities upon graduation from high school.

**Who drafted the college readiness standards?**

H.B. 1 of the 79th Texas Legislature (Third Called Session) mandated that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency appoint “vertical teams” in the disciplines of English/language arts, science, social sciences, and mathematics. The “vertical teams” were charged with drafting the standards.

**What role did the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board have in developing the *Draft College Readiness Standards*?**

The “vertical teams,” consisting of teachers and faculty members with subject matter expertise and direct experience in public high school and college classrooms around the state, worked independently to develop the college readiness standards. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency, selected vertical team members as required by statute, but had no role in the development of the draft standards.

**Why does Texas need college readiness standards?**

The *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* articulate a baseline of knowledge necessary for students to successfully participate in college and function in the modern workplace. College readiness standards represent the next step in aligning public and higher education curriculum in order to facilitate a seamless transition between high school and college or the workforce. This alignment will reduce the need for remedial education for recent high school graduates and ultimately increase the number of Texans graduating from college.

**How are college readiness standards different from high school graduation standards?**

High school graduation standards provide a defined, focused set of core skills that should be mastered in a relatively limited and defined set of courses by the time a student graduates from the public school system. College readiness standards, in contrast, are specifically designed to better prepare students to succeed in a broad range of challenging entry-level college courses or workforce opportunities that a student can reasonably expect to experience upon graduation from high school.

**What is the difference between the Report of the Commission for a College Ready Texas and the *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards*?**

The Commission for a College Ready Texas (CCRT) is a 21-member panel appointed by Governor Perry in April 2007 to solicit input from Texans on what skills and knowledge a student must possess in order to be college ready, as well as provide expert advice and resources to support the work of the vertical teams developing the college readiness standards. The CCRT’s report offers contextual data and information to support the need for college readiness standards in Texas. Additionally, it includes a summary of public feedback received by the Commission as well as an evaluation of the *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* developed by the vertical teams.

The *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards*, in comparison, were developed by the vertical teams and provide the actual framework of what is important to know to succeed in college in the four subject matter areas: English/language arts, social sciences, science, and mathematics.

**Who approves the college readiness standards?**

The college readiness standards will be approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Commissioner of Education after a robust public comment period.

**Can the public review and comment on the college readiness standards?**

Yes. The *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* will be available for public review and comment until December 10<sup>th</sup>. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is currently soliciting input online so the public may conveniently review and comment on the standards. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will review and consider all submitted comments prior to the January 24, 2008 quarterly Board meeting. The public can download the standards and submit comments at: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/TCRS.cfm>.

**When will the college readiness standards be adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board?**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will adopt the college readiness standards at its January 24, 2008 Board meeting. At this meeting, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will consider possible amendments to the initial draft standards based on public input received during the comment period.

**What happens after the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board adopts the College Readiness Standards?**

The *Draft Texas College Readiness Standards* must also be approved by the Commissioner of Education. Then, the standards will be forwarded to the State Board of Education for ongoing implementation to align the standards with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum for public education. The implementation phase could take several years to fully achieve so school districts, teachers, and students will have time to adjust.

**Resources:**

Draft Texas College Readiness Standards:

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/TCRS.cfm>

Public Comment Form for the Draft Texas College Readiness Standards:

<http://epiconline.org/texas/CRSpubliccomment.php>

**For more information please contact:**

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Office of External Relations

(512) 427-6111