

THE AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT

Update

In June, Governor Patton, Tom Layzell, Bill Brundage (Commissioner for the New Economy), Jim Ramsey (President, University of Louisville), staffs from the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Department of Education, and Mike Fleitz of the Kentucky Council of Carpenters attended a meeting in Washington, D.C., of the five state partners in the American Diploma Project, where they reviewed plans drawn up in each of the states, along with drafts of the ADP benchmarks in mathematics and English.

At its July meeting, the Council on Postsecondary Education approved a state plan drawn from the recommendations made by the American Diploma Project Policy Panel at the March meeting of the P-16 Council. This plan was endorsed by the P-16 Council at its June meeting. Commissioner Gene Wilhoit reviewed the recommendations for the Kentucky Board of Education at its June meeting and advised that the Board wait until the ADP benchmarks in mathematics and English language arts were issued before recommending changes to the core content. He recommended that no new components be added to the writing portfolio or the CATS test but that the meaning of “transactive” writing be clarified. No specific recommendations were made regarding mastery of content standards, and Board members discussed how postsecondary admissions requirements might reflect current research on the importance of high school mathematics. The Board agreed to work with other agencies to develop a communications plan to educate citizens about more demanding postsecondary and new economy expectations for high school graduates, including more advanced communication, mathematics, and problem-solving skills.

The ADP benchmarks, workplace and postsecondary work samples, and rationale statements were revised and circulated for review in late August. After the final round of national review, the ADP will hold a capstone meeting in November for formal national presentation. When the ADP benchmarks are finalized and made public, the Kentucky Board of Education will then take up the issue of refining Kentucky’s content standards based on this national research.

Attachment C-1**American Diploma Project (ADP) Policy Panel Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Kentucky's educational P-16 partners will align pre-service and professional development activities with refined content standards reflecting the benchmarks developed by the American Diploma Project (ADP), as described in 2(b.), 3(a.), and 4(c.).

- a. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will partner with the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) and the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) to align pre-service, internship, and professional development with these refined content standards. **(Lead: KDE)**

Policy Question:

Should the KBE incorporate the benchmarks developed by the American Diploma Project into the program of studies/core content?

What are the implications on current graduation requirements and other content areas beyond math and language?

How will the partners assure the detailed coordination will occur?

What complementary changes must be identified and carried out by CPE and EPSB?

- b. The CPE and the Department of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) will align Kentucky's adult education and literacy professional development plan to these refined postsecondary and workforce standards. **(Lead: CPE/DAEL)**
- c. The CPE will include within its statewide faculty development effort programs that familiarize postsecondary faculty with refined K-12 standards and with emerging standards for college learning. **(Lead: CPE)**

Recommendation 2: Kentucky's P-16 educators will align writing programs and initiatives.

- a. The KDE will convene higher education and elementary and secondary educators to reach an agreement on the appropriate components of transactive writing for the analytical writing expectations of postsecondary and workplace purposes. **(Lead: KDE)**

Policy Questions:

Does the current writing portfolio adequately address analytical writing?

Should the analytical component be incorporated into the transactive component of the writing portfolio?

Should an additional analytical component be added to the writing portfolio?

?? *Should an additional analytical component be part of the school's accountability?*

- b. Concurrent with (a), postsecondary administrators and businesses will establish pilot programs in which they will use the writing portfolio as a component of admissions, placement, and employment decision-making. **(Lead: CPE, with The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) and other business organizations)**

Policy Question:

?? *What are the implications for the statewide mandatory placement policy?*

- c. Postsecondary institutions and businesses will use results from the writing portfolio for admissions, placement, and hiring purposes. **(Lead: CPE, with KWIB and other business organizations)**

Recommendation 3: The KBE, the KDE, the CPE, and the Cabinet for Workforce Development (CWFD) will strengthen Kentucky's educational expectations around mastery of refined content standards based on the benchmarks developed by the ADP.

- a. Examine core requirements and consider end-of-course assessments or other assessments to demonstrate proficiency against refined content standards. **(Lead: KDE)**

Policy Question:

Should Kentucky revise content standards and benchmarks to align with the ADP benchmarks and refined content?

- b. Use the Kentucky Employability Certificate and the Manufacturing Skills Standards as a means to demonstrate mastery of competencies. **(Lead: CPE/DAEL)**
- c. Align adult literacy and numeracy standards to refined standards. **(Lead: CPE/DAEL)**
- d. The KBE, the KDE, and the CPE will develop reliable means to assess and report individual student performance measured against refined standards to be used beyond school and district accountability. **(Lead: KDE)**
 1. Clarify what CATS' scores can and can't do beyond school and district accountability.

Recommendation 4: The P-16 Council requests that the KBE examine existing graduation requirements consistent with the recommendations of the March 2001 P-16 Council meeting.

- a. Assume a curriculum that prepares all students to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce. **(Lead: KDE, with CPE and CWFD)**

1. Elementary, secondary, workforce, business, and the new economy will help define rigor regarding courses.
2. Local P-16 councils will engage in a conversation about what it would take for students to meet the entrance requirements of postsecondary institutions and workforce.

Policy Question:

Do the current graduation requirements prepare students to meet the entrance requirements of postsecondary institutions, the workforce (with and without supported employment), or the military?

Are there additional/alternative ways beyond graduation requirements to increase the rigor of the curriculum?

- b. Conduct predictive validity studies of postsecondary performance and persistence related to: **(CPE AND KDE, jointly)**
 1. Course-taking patterns including Algebra II and four years of math.
 2. Student performance, as measured against refined standards.
- c. The KDE, with assistance from postsecondary education and business leaders, will consolidate the Program of Studies and Core Content into one user-friendly document. This document will be aligned with emerging postsecondary and workforce readiness standards based on benchmarks developed by the ADP.
(Lead: KDE, with KWIB)

Policy Questions:

Should the document be aligned with emerging postsecondary and workforce readiness standards based on the benchmarks developed by the ADP?

Recommendation 5: The P-16 Council will work with all agencies to develop a communication plan to educate citizens regarding postsecondary and new economy expectations for high school graduates.

- a. Send a letter from the P-16 Council to the legislature on the success of education reform and the importance of accountability. **(Lead: P-16 Council)**
- a. Continue funding local P-16 councils and set up a means for regular two-way flow of communication. **(Lead: CPE)**
- b. Connect K-12 learning with Kentucky's new economy needs identified in the Office of the New Economy's "Seeding Innovation." **(Lead: KDE, with ONE)**