

From the Superintendent's Desk
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Last spring, our ad hoc citizen committee on Communications and Community Relations recommended that the Superintendent write articles for inclusion on the school district's website. They thought it may be one way to improve communication between home and school as well as help parents and community become better acquainted with the Superintendent. I welcome this opportunity. And, as I tackle this task, I hope to bring attention to things you may be interested in hearing about related to education.

Last Thursday and Friday (September 15 & 16), I attended the Fall State Superintendent's Conference in Madison. I attended a number of general and concurrent sessions. In the Friday morning session, Dave Schuler, past president of the American Association of School Administrators, presented "Re-Defining College and Career Readiness for Life Beyond High School", he talked about what schools need to be doing to ensure that students are college, career, and life ready by the time they graduate from high school. In this article, I would like to talk about what was shared to help ensure students are **college-ready** when they leave high school.

Did you know that according to ACT (the American College Testing Program), out of the 1.9 million students who take the ACT in high school, only 40% of high school graduates are college-ready by meeting 3 or 4 of the ACT college readiness benchmarks?

If you go to the website www.RedefiningReady.org, you will see a number of college readiness indicators listed. For example, if a student maintained a 2.8 GPA (grade-point average) or higher while in high school, and met at least one or more of the following benchmarks listed below, there is a strong likelihood he/she will be ready for college:

- Take an AP (Advanced Placement) course and score a "3" or higher on the AP exam
- Take an AP (Advanced Placement) class in high school and earn a "C" or higher grade
- Take college developmental/remedial English and/or math and earn a "C" or higher grade
- Take dual credit college English and/or math and earn a "C" or higher grade
- Take Algebra II in high school and earn a "C" or higher grade
- Score a "4" or higher on the International Baccalaureate exam
- Score a passing grade on the college readiness placement assessment - in this part of the country, students typically take the ACT (not the SAT) exam.

Dr. Schuler talked about additional factors that contribute to "college readiness":

- Earning A,B, & C grades
- Taking a math class during the senior year in high school
- Successfully completing a math class after Algebra II in high school
- Enrollment in a Career Pathway Course Sequence

- Participating in a college academic advisory
- Participating in college-bound bridge programs
- Being able to successfully complete the FAFSA (Free Applications for Federal Student Aid)

I found this information very interesting. If I still had a son or daughter in middle or high school, I would want him/her to be aware of these indicators to be able to gauge whether they'll be ready for college after high school. I'm looking forward to the new state requirements for academic and career planning in schools which go into effect in 2017-18. I believe it will help our students to be better equipped and informed for life after high school.

In my next column, I will talk about what **career readiness** means.