



# HF 1712: Leveraging World's Best Workforce to Increase College and Career Readiness

Each young person leaving our K-12 education system should have the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and forge the path to a rewarding career. For too many students—particularly those from historically underserved backgrounds—we are falling short. To remedy this, we need to make sure all students stay on track, and that schools ensure equitable access to rigorous courses, like Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), and concurrent enrollment. House File 1712 would address this by gathering better data on student access and outcomes, infusing a stronger college and career readiness framework into World's Best Workforce goals.

## INCREASING TRANSPARENCY ON COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS MEASURES

In 2013, the Legislature passed the World's Best Workforce law, setting a strategic framework for improving student success in Minnesota. And even though one of the goals is to ensure that all Minnesota students are prepared and ready for success in college and career, there are currently no measures for access and success in rigorous coursework. HF 1712 would add measures on:

- The percentage of students enrolled in AP, IB, PSEO, and concurrent enrollment,
- The percentage of students who took the AP and IB exams, and the percentage of who passed, and
- The percentage of students who are on-track for graduation after 9th grade.

Each measure will be disaggregated to shed light on disparities across lines of race, income, and special education services or English Learner status.

## BENEFITS OF RIGOROUS COURSEWORK

With almost two-thirds of the fastest-growing occupations in the United States requiring some type of postsecondary education,<sup>1</sup> it is imperative that students are prepared with the skills and knowledge to succeed in postsecondary programming. Students who take rigorous courses outperform their peers across a variety of academic measures, including academic achievement, college entrance exams, high school graduation, college completion,<sup>2</sup> and more. Rigorous coursework also gives students the opportunity to earn college credit while they are still in high school, which can help them save time and money in college.

## IMPORTANCE OF MEASURING 9TH GRADE ON-TRACK

There is also ample research on the importance of tracking 9th grade success. Students who do better in 9th grade are much more likely to have good grades later in high school, graduate from high school and pursue a postsecondary education.<sup>3</sup> The 9th grade on-track measure would identify if, by the end of 9th grade, a student has earned at least five credits and received no more than one failing grade a semester in a core class—reading, math, science or social studies. If a student doesn't meet these criteria, they are considered off track. Tracking this measure can help schools target support and interventions, and provide an earlier check-point on how students are doing. At least fifteen states are already using the on-track measure, and Minnesota should follow suit.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Khine, K. (2019). "A Greater Number of Jobs Require More Education, Leaving Middle-Skill Workers with Fewer Opportunities." The University of Virginia.

<sup>2</sup> Ackerman, P., Kanfer, R., and Calderwood, C. (2013). "High School Advanced Placement and Student Performance in College: STEM Majors, Non-STEM Majors, and Gender Differences." Teachers College Record; Hughes, K., Rodriguez, O., Edwards, L. & Belfield, C. (2012). "Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment. Community College Research Center"; International Baccalaureate. (2011). "Key findings from research on the impact of IB programmes."

<sup>3</sup> Easton, J., Johnson, E. & Sartain, L. (September 2017). "The Predictive Power of Ninth-Grade GPA." UChicago Consortium on School Research.

<sup>4</sup> Achieve. (February 2018). "New Brief Shows Few States Include 9th Grade On Track to Graduate Measures in ESSA Accountability Plans." <https://www.achieve.org/new-brief-shows-few-states-include-9th-grade-track-graduate-measures-essa-accountability-plans>