

## GLOSSARY

**ACT**—This refers to the ACT Inc. college admissions test taken by a significant number of college-bound students across the country. ACT previously stood for American College Testing but the organization that develops and administers the test now uses the acronym as its official name.

**Blended institutions**—A subset of dual enrollment whereby high schools and colleges (typically community colleges) collaborate to provide college courses for high school students, who earn both high school and college credit. In most cases these courses are provided on the college campus.

**Business incubator**—An economic development tool designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial enterprises through an array of business support resources and services. A business incubator’s main goal is to produce successful firms that will leave the program financially viable and freestanding. Business incubators exist in many settings apart from colleges and universities, but academic institutions are affiliated with a disproportionately large share of technology incubators. In all of these instances, each partner has committed to the incubation and growth of a competitive local business base.

**Career academies**—A subset of themed high schools where the curriculum of the school is delivered in the context of a particular career area (e.g., information technology, finance, arts), and the career fields are used to relate academic content to application. Specific emphasis is placed upon career exploration and skill development.

**Chunking**—The grouping of certificate and degree course work into small sets of one- or two-semester courses that are designed with a skill or job goal in mind. Degrees can be “chunked” in the sense of rewarding progress with appropriate degrees at appropriate milestones, to both motivate and reward the learner and ensure that higher education translates into specific credentials of value.

**Cluster-based development strategies**—An economic development strategy designed to create a critical mass of institutions and employers to create an interdependent network that is focused on the collective, rather than individual, needs of industries. Clusters are aggregations and alliances of related companies within a given area that have common business needs including similar suppliers, processes, and workforce skills. Clusters form at the intersection of industrial, technological, and regional policy because business managers recognize the opportunities for economies of scale and the benefits of proximity to companies engaged in related fields.

**College ready**—This term has been used to describe whether a student has completed high school with the skills and aptitude to enter and succeed in college. ACT Inc. approximates college readiness by establishing the cut scores at which students are more than 50 percent likely to persist from the first year of college to the second. The other

common definition is whether students have completed the high school courses required for college application.

**Commercialization or technology transfer**—A process whereby a new product or procedure developed by a university or federal laboratory is licensed for commercial development to a private company. The process is highly dependent upon scientists having access to the discoveries of other researchers. Technology transfer is a two-way flow between universities and industry in which academic involvement can take three forms: (1) the product is invented at a university but developed by an existing, private company; (2) the invention originates outside the university and academic researchers improve it; and (3) the invention originates at a university and faculty members participate in its commercial development through the establishment of a startup firm.

**Creative class/knowledge worker**—Scientists, engineers, artists, designers, academics, etc. who work in knowledge-based professions and do creative work that leads to innovation and problem solving. Close to one-third of the workforce in the country is made up of such professionals.

**Criterion-referenced tests**—A measurement of achievement of specific criteria or skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery. The focus is on performance of an individual measured against a standard or criterion rather than against the performance of others who take the same test. The standard for a criterion-referenced test is typically established in conjunction with the curriculum framework established by the body responsible for education (typically the state department of education).

**Cultural capital**—A broad term that refers to the intangible benefits that accrue at home, in a neighborhood, and among family and friends. These are the assets people possess that extend beyond a specific dollar value that contribute to their overall potential for success. This might include having two parents at home, having access to books or a computer, living in close proximity to a library, residing in a neighborhood that provides nurturance and support for its members, etc.

**Curriculum**—The courses offered by an educational institution, or a set of courses constituting an area of specialization. Educators often extend this definition to include what is taught in those courses and how it is taught.

**Curriculum framework/pathway**—A set of guidelines that serve as the standards for what students are expected to learn and at what level. The frameworks are specific enough to describe the types of skills and abilities that should be learned in a given course and at the approximate grade level, yet they are broad enough to give educators discretion in how those standards are met.

**Dual enrollment**—An umbrella term used to describe an array of programs that allow high school students to enroll in courses where they can simultaneously earn both high school and college credit. Dual enrollment also has been extended to apply to students

taking courses that count towards an associate’s degree and a baccalaureate degree, or baccalaureate and postbaccalaureate degrees, for example, at different institutions.

**Entrepreneurship**—“The ability to amass the necessary resources to capitalize on new business opportunities. The term is frequently used to refer to the rapid growth of new and innovative businesses and is associated with individuals who create or seize business opportunities and pursue them without regard for resources under their control. They build something from practically nothing and usually reinvest earnings to expand their enterprise or to create new enterprises. Other words that characterize entrepreneurship include innovative, creative, dynamic, risk-tolerant, flexible and growth-oriented” (The Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership 1999).

**Grade-level content expectations**—Similar to the curriculum frameworks, these are the set of expectations for what should be taught in a specific academic subject area and in a given school year at each grade level covered (see example in Appendix D, Preparation Work Group report, Attachment 1).

**High school equivalent**—Refers to alternate credentials for high school completion (other than a traditional diploma). The most common is the General Educational Development (GED) test. The term is often used in federal data collection to differentiate the different pathways to high school completion. In some states, a GED is considered equivalent to a high school diploma, while in other states it is not.

**K–16 model**—An umbrella term used to describe a policy and structural shift toward preparing all students for postsecondary education and minimizing the barriers for those who choose to pursue it, in recognition of the fact that a postsecondary credential is fast becoming the standard for employability in the marketplace. This often translates into efforts to align the high school course requirements with postsecondary admissions expectations and high school assessments with college placement exams. This term often refers to seamless policy and practices between the K–12 and postsecondary systems.

**MEAP**—The Michigan Educational Assessment Program, Michigan’s version of a criterion-referenced test, which is administered to students throughout the state. Versions of the MEAP are currently taken by students in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8, as well as in grades 10–12 in high school. It serves as the metric for establishing annual yearly progress in line with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

**Michigan Scholar**—A student who has completed the rigorous high school curriculum recommended by the State Scholars Initiative. The course of study must include *at least* 4 credits in English, 3 credits in math (algebra 1 and 2; geometry), 3 credits in basic laboratory science (biology, chemistry, physics), 3.5 credits in social studies (U.S. and world history, geography, economics, government), and 2 credits in the same language (other than English).

**Middle college**—A subset of dual enrollment programs that includes the collaboration of high schools and colleges to provide opportunities for participating students to complete high school and college credits with the same course(s). The middle-college focus shifts away from high-achieving students to either a broad spectrum or an emphasis on middle- and low-achieving students.

**Minimum course requirements**—The number of courses and the respective levels of each subject area that students must complete in order to graduate from high school, set by the body primarily responsible for defining curriculum.

**New or world economy**—According to Atkinson and Court (1998), an economic system based on technological innovations such as high-speed telecommunications and powerful computers, whose most salient features are speed, flexibility, and innovation. The new economy is not limited to firms actually producing technology, but includes those incorporating technological advances into their traditional work as well as those that adopt new organizational models.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**—The most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Act of 1965, NCLB is the federal version of *standards-based reform*. Key provisions of the bill include testing requirements at multiple levels of student performance, establishment of baseline school pass rates, and focuses states and schools on making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward the goal of 100 percent passing for students in mathematics and reading by 2014 in grades 3–8, plus high school. The legislation includes mechanisms for accountability, including designation of schools that do not achieve AYP, and requires supplemental services in persistently underperforming schools, instituting school choice after a certain number of consecutive years of not making adequate progress, and eventually, restructuring of schools that fail to make AYP for a specified number of years.

**Schools within schools**—Current literature suggests that smaller schools are advantageous for students. For high schools the ideal enrollment may be 600 to 900 students, which is much smaller than the typical comprehensive high school. The schools within schools approach attempts to define smaller communities within the larger school. These are typically organized around a particular curricular theme, such as foreign languages, the arts, career and vocation, or science and technology. In some cases, a separate organizational structure of teachers and assistant principals is created for each cluster in separate buildings; in others such separation is not possible.

**Spin-offs/Startups**—Business ventures created as a result of commercialization or technology transfer.

**Standards**—In the strictest sense, standards in the context of education define the competencies and abilities that are the expectations for what all students should learn and demonstrate. They are articulated at different levels of education, e.g., a standard set for mathematics at the high school level might expect algebraic competency, at some

point in elementary school, a standard might be expressed as facility with multiplication, division, etc.

**Talent centers**—A geographic region that has the capacity and amenities to attract and retain well-educated knowledge workers. Talent centers are regions with a concentration of cultural and nightlife amenities, social diversity and openness, recreational amenities, and high levels of high-technology industries.

**University center**—A center in which community colleges partner with four-year degree-granting institutions; extension campuses and services of university and postsecondary institutions (public and private); and multiple learning options (online, etc.) along with university extension campuses and virtual services to enhance postsecondary access and success by allowing more individuals to complete degrees and credentials of value.

