



The High School Agenda A Meaningful Diploma for Every Young American




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“Every high school diploma must mean that our graduates are prepared for jobs, for college, and for success.”

President George W. Bush

Issues Facing American Education

- ◆ Public high schools are failing to prepare a substantial minority of graduates for skills expected of them today.
- ◆ Employers and instructors are the harshest critics and say many graduates come to them inadequately prepared.
- ◆ More rigorous courses and higher expectations lead to better prepared graduates.
- ◆ Graduates themselves say they would welcome more challenging requirements and raised expectations for high school graduation.

The Vision for High School Transformation

“Every American youth will complete high school with the academic knowledge and skills needed to make a successful transition to postsecondary education or training without needing remediation.”

Preparing America's Future

Key Principles

- High expectations for all
- Innovative learning structures that fully engage students
- High-quality teaching and leadership, and
- Accelerated transitions to work or additional education.

President Bush's New Education Proposals, 2005

- \$1.5 billion for High School Intervention and State Assessments, includes.
 - \$1.2 billion for flexible intervention funding
 - \$250 million – High School Assessments in reading and math, grades 9,10, and 11
- \$200 million for the Striving Readers Initiative
- \$269 million for Mathematics and Science Partnership Program (\$120 million targeted for math acceleration)

President Bush's New Education Proposals (continued)

- \$52 million – Expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) programs
- State Scholars expansion
- \$1,000 Enhanced Pell Grants for State Scholars participants
- \$500 phased-in Pell Grant increase

NGA Action Agenda, 2005

1. Restore value to the high school diploma

Recommendations included aligning high school academic standards with college and workplace expectations, upgrading high school coursework, and creating college- and work-ready tests.

2. Redesign high schools

Recommendations included reorganizing low-performing high schools first, expanding high school options in all communities and providing support to low-performing students.

3. Give high school students the excellent teachers and principals they need

Recommendations included improving teacher knowledge and skills, providing incentives to recruit and keep teachers where they are needed most, and developing and supporting strong principal leadership.

NGA Action Agenda, 2005

4. Set goals, measure progress, and hold high schools and colleges accountable

Recommendations included setting goals and measuring progress, strengthening high school and postsecondary accountability, and intervening in low-performing schools.

5. Streamline and improve education governance

Recommendations included creating a common K–12 and postsecondary agenda and improving coordination across the two sectors.



The Perkins Act Reauthorization:

Challenges for modernizing Career Technical Education



Challenges for Modern CTE

- ◆ All youth need a high level of core academic skills, regardless of their chosen educational and career path.
- ◆ Many high schools and traditional voc-ed are not currently designed to meet this objective
- ◆ Millions of adults currently in the workforce also need to strengthen and acquire new academic and technical skills.
- ◆ Connections between high schools, college and employers must be strengthened.

CTE High School Course Taking

Table 2
 Percentage of Occupational Concentrators and Non-concentrators Completing the
 "New Basics" Core Academic Curriculum and a College Prep Curriculum:
 1990 and 2000

Academic Indicator	1990	2000	Percentage Change
"New Basics" academic curriculum¹			
Occupational concentrators	18.5	51.1	+32.6*
Non-concentrators	45.7	60.3	+14.7*
Gap between concentrators and nonconcentrators	-27.1	-9.2	-17.9*
College prep curriculum²			
Occupational concentrators	10.1	29.2	+19.1*
Non-concentrators	35.9	46.2	+10.3*
Gap between concentrators and nonconcentrators	-25.8	-17.0	-8.8*

SOURCE: Levesque 2003b. Analysis of High School Transcripts.

¹ New Basics = Four years of English and three years of math, science, and social studies.

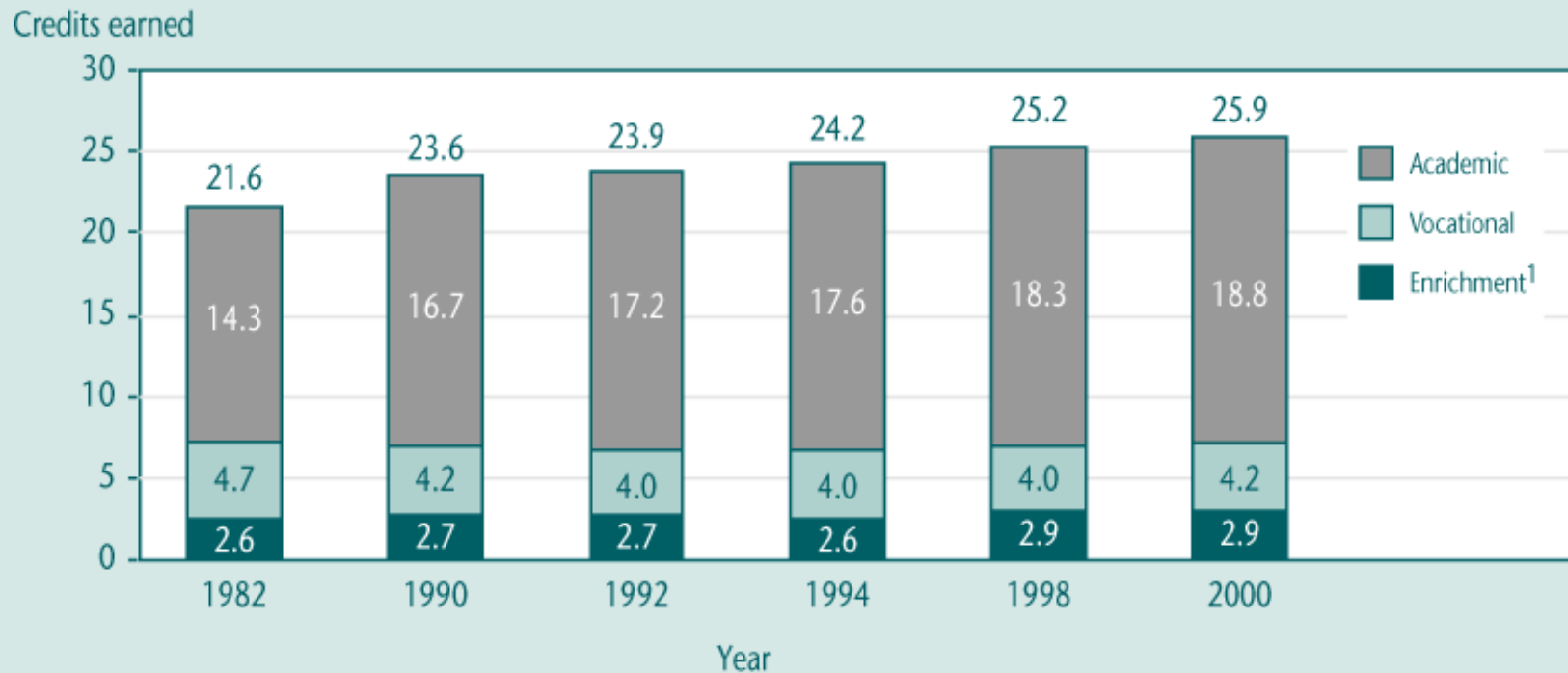
² The "college-prep curriculum" is defined as earning 4.0 or more credits in English; 3.0 or more credits in mathematics at the algebra 1 or higher level; 2.0 or more credits in biology, chemistry, or physics; 2.0 or more credits in social studies, with at least 1.0 credit in U.S. or world history; and 2.0 or more credits in a single foreign language (see Levesque et al. 2000).

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Average High School Credits Earned

Figure 4

Average Credits Earned by High Schools Students, by Type of Course Work: 1982–2000



SOURCE: Levesque 2003b, 2003c. Analysis of National High School Transcripts.

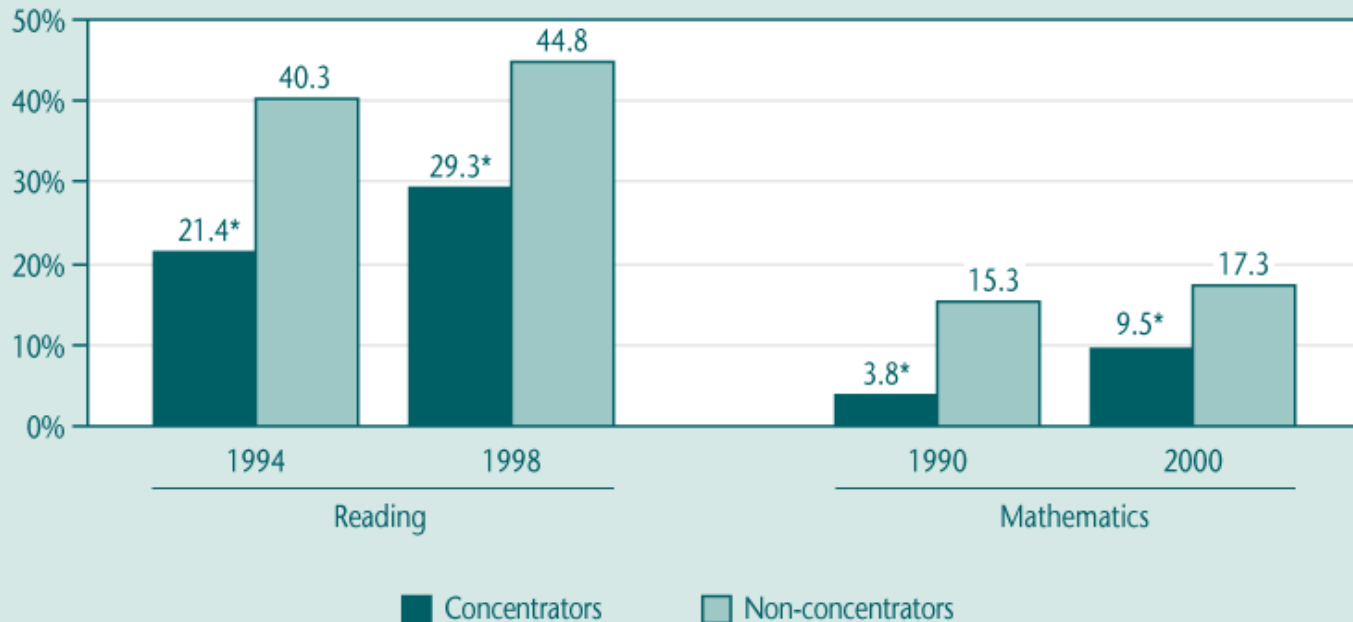
¹Includes courses such as art, music, and driver's education.

Reading/Math Proficiency, CTE and non-CTE

Figure 3

Percentage of Concentrators and Non-concentrators Scoring at or above Proficiency on NAEP 12th-Grade Test Scores: Reading 1994–1998 and Mathematics 1990–2000

Percentage scoring at or above proficiency

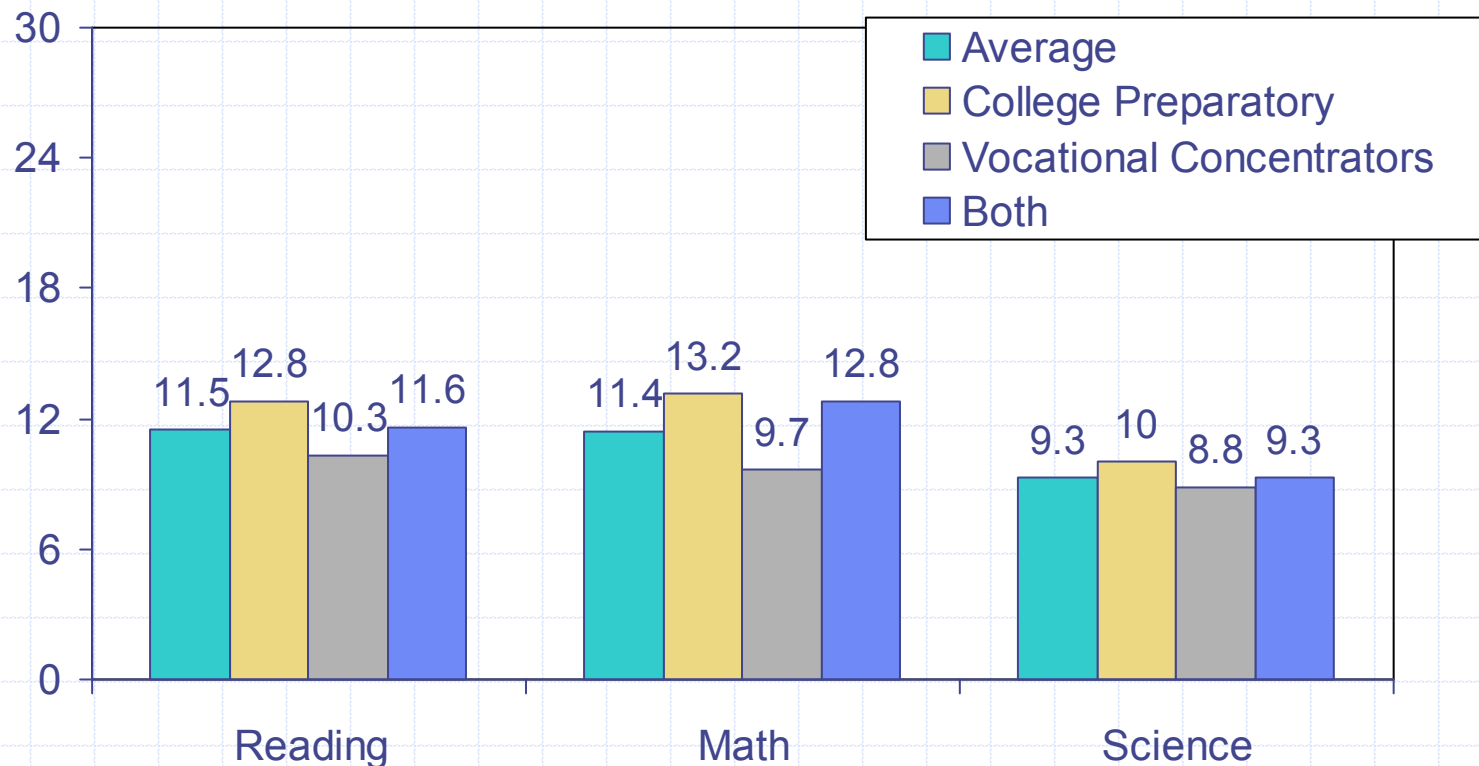


SOURCE: Levesque and Paret forthcoming. Analysis of 12th-Grade NAEP Assessments.

*Difference between concentrators and non-concentrators is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

NOTE: All increases over time are statistically significant at the 0.05 level except for non-concentrators in mathematics (1990–2000).

Academic Achievement Gains For Students Taking Different Courses of Study



Achievement gains between grades 10 and 12

Perkins Reauthorization: Key Issues

Accountability Indicators

- ◆ Linked to NCLB Assessments and Graduation Rates
- ◆ Validity and reliability
- ◆ Technical skills linked to recognized industry standards

Accountability Systems

- ◆ Indicators “solely” developed by States
- ◆ Required local accountability for results

Program Rigor

- ◆ Definition of CTE, Tech Prep, “Culminating” in postsecondary degree or recognized credential vs. “may lead” or “technical skill proficiency”
- ◆ Career Pathways/Model Sequence of Courses
- ◆ Phase-out or maintenance of Tech Prep
- ◆ Academic core for postsecondary/work readiness
- ◆ Allowing linkages to baccalaureate programs – restricting funds to sub-baccalaureate programs

Perkins Reauthorization: *Emerging Consensus*

Career Pathway Programs (“Model Sequence of Courses”)

- ◆ Partnerships between high schools and postsecondary institutions.
- ◆ Challenging academic core.
- ◆ Non-duplicative technical courses leading to degree or certificate.
- ◆ Career pathways that are in-demand and lead to economic self-sufficiency.
- ◆ At least one offered by each grant recipient.

Perkins Reauthorization: Legislative Status

- ◆ **H.R. 366. Introduced on 1/26/05**
 - **Based closely on H.R. 4496 from the 108th Congress.**
 - **House vote expected in April.**

- ◆ **S. 250. Introduced on 2/1/05**
 - **Based closely on S. 2686 from the 108th Congress.**
 - **Senate passes\ld Bill.**

- ◆ **Conference Bill**