2020-21 *Ready Graduate* Indicator
Detailed User Guide (2019-20 Graduates)

Section 1: Document Intent

This document is the reference guide for the **Ready Graduate indicator,** including criteria for students to be considered a *Ready Graduate*, details of each indicator element, and the process to ensure data accuracy. The data used for the *Ready Graduate* indicator is reported one year after the graduation of the cohort to provide students and districts sufficient time to demonstrate postsecondary readiness. This year's user guide highlights adjustments to the *Ready Graduate* indicator for 2019-20 graduates resulting from the cumulative impacts of COVID-19 and does not guarantee that the same guidance would pertain to the 2020-21 graduates.

Section 2: Background and Adjustments for 2019-20 Graduates

Ready Graduate Indicator Background

Tennessee has approached the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirement to measure school quality and student success with multiple indicators, one of which is the *Ready Graduate* indicator. The *Ready Graduate* indicator measures the percentage of students who earn a diploma from a Tennessee high school and who meet the criteria of success outlined in Section 3. The intent of this indicator is to recognize and reward schools and districts whose high school graduates demonstrate readiness for meaningful postsecondary education, a training program, and/or workforce entry.

Ready Graduate Indicator Adjustments for the Class of 2019-20

Due to COVID-19, school building closures occurred in spring 2020. Additionally, many of the Ready Graduate data requirements depend on third party administration of certain exams that may have been cancelled.

This disruption to the school year resulted in a State Board of Education decision waiving the state's requirement that students take in the ACT or SAT to earn a Tennessee high school diploma. For seniors who intended to take the ACT or SAT in spring 2020 and were unable to due to school closures, the department will include them in the 2020 cohort and will accept appeals to exclude them from ACT participation rate calculations. ACT/SAT will remain an element in Ready Graduate calculations to benefit students who were able to test and meet the ACT threshold for Ready Graduate classification.

If a third party did not administer an exam due to COVID-19, documentation demonstrating cancellation of Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO)-aligned exams from March-June 2020 will suffice for *Ready Graduate* appeals. Examples may include **cancellation notification letters, announcements of waived testing requirements,** etc. Depending on location, these exams might include Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Armed Forces Qualifying Test

(AFQT), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), or local dual credit.

Students in the 2019-20 cohort will automatically receive EPSO credit for the following course-aligned annual exams that were cancelled: Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Statewide Dual Credit (SDC). Credit for these exams will be based on course enrollment and completion. Districts will not be required to provide any documentation to receive credit for these exams, as the information is already found within the Student Information System (SIS).

Section 3: Indicator Criteria, EPSOs, Elements, and Data

3.1 Indicator Criteria

As outlined in Tennessee's state ESSA plan, the *Ready Graduate* indicator is calculated for all schools with at least 30 students in a graduation cohort. The indicator is calculated by dividing the number of on-time graduates meeting at least one *Ready Graduate* criterion by the total number of students in that cohort.

$$\frac{\text{\# of graduates meeting Ready Graduate criteria}}{\text{\# in the graduation cohort}}$$

For students to be considered *Ready Graduates,* they must meet at least one of the following four *Ready Graduate* criteria (students can only be "counted" once):

1. Score of **21 or higher on ACT** (or 1060 or higher on the SAT); **or**
2. Complete **4 EPSOs; or**
3. Complete **2 EPSOs and** earn an **industry credential; or**
4. Complete **2 EPSOs and** earn a score of military readiness on **ASVAB AFQT.**

All students who graduate with a regular education diploma, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) , are included in the *Ready Graduate* indicator.

The table in Section 3.3 provides details on the elements that make up these criteria, evidence of completion, and the implications of not having an exam opportunity in 2019-20.

3.2 EPSOs

EPSOs allow students to "bank" postsecondary credit or clock hours while in high school. One EPSO credit is intended to approximate the awarding of 3-4 postsecondary credits, or the equivalent of approximately 30 clock hours, in a postsecondary program.

The department recognizes eight types of EPSOs including: Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International Examinations (Cambridge), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Dual Enrollment (DE), International Baccalaureate (IB), Local Dual Credit (LDC), Statewide Dual Credit (SDC), and department- promoted industry credentials (ICs). Find more information on the department's website. A student must complete (i.e., fully participate in) the EPSO for that opportunity to count toward the indicator. Since most opportunities award credit through assessment, a student **must** sit for the aligned exam,[1] if applicable, for an EPSO to be recognized. Dual enrollment and local dual credit opportunities will carry the weight of one EPSO for each 3-4 credit hours/30 clock hours in which a student participates.

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[1] This requirement may be dependent on third party administration of the exam. If the responsible third party (i.e., postsecondary institution) did not administer a normally required EPSO exam (i.e., local dual credit exam), documentation from the responsible third party will be required for appeals.

Students in the 2019-20 cohort will automatically receive EPSO credit for SDC, AP, and IB upon course completion for the 2019-20 school year.

3.2.1 Industry Credentials

Industry credentials are awarded to students based on the mastery of a specific set of industry or job-related competencies. Industry credentials are usually developed in collaboration with employers and validated through a third-party vendor which uses an assessment to determine mastery. Industry credentials are typically awarded or valid for a limited time but may be renewed. Each industry credential is different, so the department has developed resources to aid in the implementation of each credential, which include criteria for obtaining the credential. More information on these resources may be found on the department's industry credential [webpage](#).

Industry Credential Credit

Only industry credentials included in the [department promoted list](#) will count toward the *Ready Graduate* indicator. A student must earn the industry credential, meaning they must complete all testing and/or licensing requirements (not just sit for the exam), for the credential to count. Some industry credentials may align to a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) or other postsecondary institutions and convert to EPSO credit.

Industry Credentials and CTE Coursework

The department encourages interested students to pursue credentials aligned to coursework, as students who have progressed through the sequence of courses in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study (POS) aligned to a specific industry credential will be more likely to earn a credential than students who sit for an exam without appropriate coursework and training. However, alignment to coursework is not a requirement for participation.

Students do not need to have a CTE program of study to earn industry credentials. The department believes students who possess documentation of their knowledge and skills are demonstrating readiness for postsecondary pathways. If a student feels confident sitting for an industry credential because of their experience outside the classroom, we encourage them to test. All students who earn a credential will be included, regardless of the courses they completed or their elective focus of study. Please note that students who have completed a CTE program of study are more likely to successfully earn the credential than students who have not had the experience of aligned coursework and training.

All EPSOs do not need to be within the same CTE program of study. If a student progresses through a program of study and earns an industry credential, the two EPSOs can come from within the CTE program of study or from general education courses. For example, a student could take courses within the Office Management program of study, earn the Microsoft Office Specialist certification, take Statewide Dual Credit Statistics to meet their fourth-year math requirement, and take a Dual Enrollment Spanish course to meet this indicator.

Industry Credential Completion Timeline

There may be some factors (such as age or work experience) that prevent a student from completing the credential exam or licensing process prior to high school graduation. To ensure students who obtain credentials the summer after their high school graduation are included in a school's *Ready Graduate* count, the data for credentials will be pulled no earlier than Aug. 1 each year. After a student graduates, they have the summer to complete the requirements of the credential, prior to the department tabulating the accountability data. This timeframe is similar to the time allotted for students to complete graduation requirements to receive their high school diploma.

3.3 Elements and Data Sources, Requirements, and Visibility

The table below provides details of each *Ready Graduate* element including the source of data, requirements for inclusion, and the location for districts to view these data prior to the review and appeals process. The department encourages districts to view these data using the suggested locations prior to the opening of the *Ready Graduate* appeals window in February.

Element	Data Source	Requirements for Inclusion	District Visibility	Adjustments for Class of 2020
ACT or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	• ACT, Inc. will provide a score file for the department that includes all students who attempted the exam and their highest score, including scores from national administrations. • The College Board will provide a score file for the department that includes all students who attempted the exam on an in-school or national test administration.	• Earn an ACT composite score of 21 or higher. If a student takes the exam multiple times, a student's highest overall composite score (not a combined "super score") will be recognized • Earn a SAT score of 1060 or higher	• Accountability application • Score files sent directly to district from ACT, Inc., and The College Board • Individual student score reports available for download from ACT Success platform	
Advanced Placement (AP)	• Student information system (SIS) data on course enrollment in AP courses will be obtained from Education Information System (EIS). • The College Board will provide a score file for the department that includes all students who attempted an AP exam.	• Complete course and attempt exam (no minimum score required) [2] • **For Class of 2020: automatic EPSO credit for course completion**	• Course enrollment in EIS • Score files sent directly to the district from The College Board	• Automatic credit for course completion
Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)	• SIS data on course enrollment in Cambridge International Education courses will be obtained from EIS. • Cambridge International Education will provide a score file to the department that includes all students who attempted a Cambridge exam.	• Complete course and attempt exam (no minimum score required) [3]	• Course enrollment in EIS • Exam data visible through the *Ready Graduate* viewing platform via the testing file • Score files may be available through CIE directly to districts	• Submit third party documentation

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[2] Dependent on postsecondary institution testing protocols.

[3] This requirement may be dependent on third party administration of the exam. If the responsible third party (i.e., postsecondary institution) does not administer a normally required EPSO exam, documentation from the responsible third party will be required for appeals.

Element	Data Source	Requirements for Inclusion	District Visibility	Adjustments for Class of 2020
College Level Examination Program (CLEP)	• The College Board will provide a score file for the department that includes all students who attempted a CLEP exam.	• Earn a passing score of 50 or higher	• Exam data visible through the *Ready Graduate* viewing platform via the testing file	
International Baccalaureate (IB)	• Student information system data on course enrollment in IB courses will be obtained from EIS. International Baccalaureate will provide a score file to the department that includes all students who attempted an IB exam.	• Complete course and attempt exam (no minimum score required) [4] • **For Class of 2020: automatic EPSO credit for course completion**	• Course enrollment in EIS • Exam data visible through the *Ready Graduate* viewing platform via the testing file • Score sent to districts from IB	• Automatic credit for course completion
Dual Enrollment (DE)	• SIS dual enrollments and courses will be obtained from EIS. • The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) will submit postsecondary student enrollment information to the state's longitudinal data system (P20Connect), which will provide a matched data file to the department.	• Complete course	• Course enrollment in EIS	
Local Dual Credit (LDC)	• SIS data on course enrollment in high school courses that have been appropriately flagged as "local dual credit" will be obtained from EIS.	• Complete course and attempt exam (no minimum score required) [5]	• Course enrollment in EIS	
Statewide Dual Credit (SDC)	• SIS data on course enrollment in high school courses that have been appropriately flagged as "statewide dual credit" will be obtained from EIS. • Results of the challenge exam will be provided through the Early Postsecondary Data System.	• Complete course and attempt exam (no minimum score required) [6] • **For Class of 2020: automatic EPSO credit for course completion**	• Course enrollment in EIS • Exam data located in the Early Postsecondary (EPS) Data System	• Automatic credit for course completion

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[4] Dependent on postsecondary institution testing protocols.

[5] Dependent on postsecondary institution testing protocols.

[6] Dependent on postsecondary institution testing protocols.

Element	Data Source	Requirements for Inclusion	District Visibility	Adjustments for Class of 2020
Industry Credential (IC)	• Examination/certifying agencies will provide a file to the department that includes all students who successfully earned a credential. The department will use the state's longitudinal data system (P20Conenct) to match student records.	• Complete all requirements of a specific credential included on the department's promoted list, including earning a passing score on any assessment(s) and/or completing licensure application, if required[7]	• Districts should collect documentation of individual student credential attainment and/or score reports from credentialing organizations for *Ready Graduate* appeals, in the event attainment data is not included in TDOE reporting.	
ASVAB, AFQT Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)	• The U.S. Department of Defense will provide results to districts who will provide data to the department with documentation. • Scores in Arithmetic Reasoning, Word Knowledge, Paragraph Comprehension, and Mathematics Knowledge are combined to create the Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT) score.	• Students must earn a minimum ASVAB AFQT score required to qualify for admission in-to at least one branch of the military as of June 1 following a student's graduation to demonstrate military readiness for the indicator. 2020 graduates need to earn an AFQT [8] score of 31.	• Score file provided by the Department of Defense	• Submit third party documentation

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[7] Some industry credentials may convert to EPSO credit. The department is working with Tennessee postsecondary institutions to revise the ESSA Industry Credential Conversion Table and will release the updated document in early 2021.

[8] The score considered "passing" for EPSO credit on the ASVAB may change in the future. Annual determination of military readiness will be the minimum ASVAB AFQT score required to qualify for admission into at least one branch of the military as of June 1 following a student's graduation. Scores will be determined on June 1 annually for the following year's accountability.

Section 4: Ensuring Data Accuracy

Section 4.1 Ensuring Appropriate Course Codes and Flags in SIS

Since the 2015-16 school year, specific course codes for AP, IB, Cambridge, and Dual Enrollment have been specified in the Correlation of Course Codes document and in local Student Information Systems. In 2018-19, specific codes for statewide dual credit courses were also added. SIS packages also provide a "flag" option for all high school course codes available to be taught as a local dual credit course, assuming an articulation agreement with a local postsecondary institution to provide a culminating exam is in place.

For all *Ready Graduate* elements where course enrollment information is obtained through EIS, a student must be appropriately placed in the correct course code, and/or the appropriate flags must be checked to reflect that the course was offered as an early postsecondary course eligible for postsecondary credit. If a student was enrolled in a course that was eligible for postsecondary credit, but that student is not placed in the correct course code or flagged course section as reflected in EIS, appropriate documentation must be provided through the Accountability application to ensure the student's progress toward *Ready Graduate* is captured. For Statewide Dual Credit, the department provides specific enrollment and flagging instructions to SDC coordinators. For any other questions about early postsecondary course enrollment, please email Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov.

In addition to local student information systems, dual enrollment course information is also collected from the state's longitudinal data system, P20Connect, where it is provided by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission at the conclusion of each semester. To ensure students who successfully earn college credit at a Tennessee public postsecondary institution prior to high school graduation are captured in this indicator, a student who is identified as completing a course in P20 connect will be given credit for the EPSO, regardless of if they have matching dual enrollment course codes in their high school student information system.

Section 4.2 Data Review and Appeals

Through the Cohort application on the *Ready Graduate* page, districts will have the opportunity to review the data provided to the department, as outlined above. Districts can also appeal data and provide documentation to prove the student meets *Ready Graduate* criteria on this page. As mentioned in the introduction, the data used for the *Ready Graduate* indicator in 2020-21 reporting will be lagged one year and represent students who graduated in spring 2020. The *Ready Graduate* Appeals Guidance is located on the Cohort application.