Minnesota Department of Education

Process for Using the EXPLORE and PLAN

Early in their academic careers, students should set goals for what they want to do after high school to prepare effectively for the future. Students must be aware of what they need to know and be able to do to be ready for college. To encourage students to take rigorous high school courses and share information with students that helps them understand the progress they are making toward established goals, the Minnesota Department of Education suggests the following process for using ACT's College and Career Readiness System, which continues to be funded by the Legislature:

1. ORDER TESTS

Starting August 20, District Assessment Coordinators can order test materials for the EXPLORE and PLAN through ACT's website ACT's website (www.readiness.act.org):

- Materials for all schools in a district need to be ordered at the same time by the district.
- If you want Minnesota to pay for the tests, you must select the Minnesota DOE contract. After selecting PLAN or EXPLORE, select the "FUNDED BY MINNESOTA DOE EXPLORE 2012-2013 GRADE 8 ONLY" or "FUNDED BY MINNESOTA DOE PLAN 2012-2013 GRADE 10 ONLY" If you do not see these options, contact ACT Customer Services. Otherwise, your district will be billed for the tests.
- Pre-ID labels can be ordered via a link in the email that confirms your order or they can also be ordered through the ACT website. Order labels through the ACT website here: (http://act.org/education/order/preid/index.html).
- Allow 14 days for the tests to arrive in your district.
- The Answer Document Return Deadline is 45 days after the latest materials delivery date in the order but no later than January 9, 2013. If a different return deadline is desired it can be changed by contacting Customer Services at 877-789-2925 or CustomerServices@ACT.org.
- Please note that under the contract with the Minnesota Department of Education, this order process can be used only by Minnesota public school districts, including charter and BIA schools. MDE will fund only 8th grade EXPLORE testing and 10th grade PLAN testing. Districts wanting to test "off-grade" must place a separate order outside of this process. If you have questions concerning this order process, please contact Customer Services at 877-789-2925 or CustomerServices@ACT.org.

2. INCREASE AWARENESS

Provide information to students and parents about ACT's College and Career Readiness System. Informational materials are available at http://www.act.org/readiness/index.html.

3. TEST

The testing window is **September 4 through December 31, 2012** with results returned in time for course planning and student registration in January. Decide whether you will use a 1-day or 2-day administration. The non-cognitive sections (Needs Assessment, UNIACT Interest Inventory, and Plans and Background Information) can be tested separately from the achievement test section (English, Mathematics, Reading and Science). The non-cognitive section will take approximately 60-75 minutes. The achievement test section will take approximately 135 minutes. Students will need Number 2 pencils

and a calculator. Schools should receive the results within a month. Table 7 on the test is an option for schools to administer their own 12 questions to capture student data, which can then be reviewed and analyzed by your school.

4. REVIEW RESULTS

PLAN:

Each school will receive:

- 2 copies of each Student Report
- 1 copy per student, Using Your PLAN Results (available in Spanish on request via School Report Header)
- 1 List Report - alpha by student last name, sorted by grade
- 2 Student Score Labels per student
- Early Intervention Rosters for schools testing 25 or more students
- 1 School Profile Summary Report (schools testing 25 or more students)
- Presentation Packet (schools testing 25 or more students
- Data file

Districts will receive:

- District Profile Summary Report with Presentation Packet
- A copy of each of the School Summary Reports produced for each school in the district
- Data file

EXPLORE:

Each school will receive:

- 2 copies of each Student Report
- 1 copy per student It's Your Future: Using Your EXPLORE Results (available in Spanish on request via School Report Header)
- 1 student roster
- Early Intervention Rosters for schools testing 25 or more students
- 1 School Profile Summary Report (schools testing 5 or more students)
- Presentation Packet (schools testing 25 or more students)
- 1 Interpretive Guide for EXPLORE School Reports
- Data file

Districts will receive:

- District Profile Summary Report with Presentation Packet
- A CD containing PDF files of each School Summary Report
- Data file

5. ADVISING

When you receive the individual Student Reports from ACT, consider asking counselors, advisors or mentors to discuss the results of the test with individual students, especially with regard to their college-readiness scores. Copies of Using Your PLAN Results (available in Spanish) and It's Your Future: Using Your EXPLORE Results (available in Spanish) are included for each student. The student's Score Report and the booklets mentioned above can help the student answer three questions:

- How am I doing so far?
- What are my plans and goals for after high school?
- Am I on track for college?

If you have the Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) or other career planning forms, students can record their scores and use the information to complete their high school course-taking plans and set goals for their future careers as well as examine how the results can be used for planning with the Minnesota Programs of Study (http://www.cte.mnscu.edu/programs/index.html). Data about students' interests can help inform decisions about coursework.

6. PLAN EARLY INTERVENTIONS

You will receive an Early Intervention Roster report, which identifies students who scored below college-readiness in any of the four areas: English, math, reading, and science. Academic interventions can be planned and implemented for these students. The Early Intervention Roster can also identify students who earned college-ready scores but did not indicate that they had college plans. Counselors, advisors, and administrators can encourage these students to attend postsecondary institutions.

7. EXAMINE CURRICULA FOR COLLEGE-READINESS

School committees can use the scores to examine strengths and weaknesses in order to address curricula changes or additions. Connecting College Readiness Standards to the Classroom is provided to help teachers. The ACT materials also include a Curriculum Guide for each area that can be distributed to the teachers in that discipline. Provide time for teachers to consider the college-readiness benchmarks with regard to their courses.

8. TRACK COLLEGE-READINESS

Schools can implement strategies to increase students' college-readiness scores and track results using ACT's College and Career Readiness System and other data. The information can help schools document success in meeting academic standards; evaluate the effectiveness of specific educational programs; monitor progress toward desired educational outcomes; provide career and educational planning, instructional support, assessment, and longitudinal evaluation; and verify student progress from grades 8 through 12.

If you have questions about ordering, send an email to Charles.Rod@act.org or contact your area code representative at MDE listed on the Test Administration section of the MDE website. (Home > School Support > Test Administration) Visit the Test Administration page of the MDE website: (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/TestAdmin/index.html).

If you have questions about the process, please contact:
Angie Johnson, High School Specialist, 651-582-8478, angie.johnson@state.mn.us.
Sally Wherry, Supervisor of High School Initiatives, 651-582-8768, sally.wherry@state.mn.us.