

Algebra II College and Career Readiness Phase II – Validation Process

Background

At the request of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Phase II Algebra II team was asked to validate the work of the Phase I Algebra II team. The Phase I team, using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) as the base, analyzed the work around the vertical teams' gap analyses; reviewed descriptions of what it means to be college ready; compared the identified critical college-readiness skills to national college-readiness skills (e.g., SAT, ACT, ADP, etc.); and developed performance expectations associated with each critical college-readiness skill for Algebra II. Our Phase II team was comprised of new members, while Phase I members were on hand to serve as a reference. The charge given to the Phase II team, which included a broad spectrum of high school educators and higher education faculty, was to review, refine, and validate the identified performance expectations associated with each identified critical college and career readiness skill aligned to an Algebra II TEKS.

Process

The first half-day meeting was held on September 21, 2009. Joseph Kulhanek, Ph.D., TEA Director, College and Career Readiness Program, State Initiatives, initiated the meeting with the mission of our collaboration and efforts supported by the conclusions established from Phase I of the process. He provided the committee with background information on the initiative, including the end goal: that the validated performance expectations will be used for assessment, teacher preparation, professional development, and instructional materials. Dave Spence, President of the Southern Regional Education Board, reiterated Joseph's opening remarks and extended connections to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's support and overall national spotlight on Texas' momentum to making college and career readiness more than just words. By the second day, Tuesday, September 22nd, the committee completed its analysis of the alignment created by members of the Phase I committee.

The Algebra II committee attending the September 21st meeting included:

- George Powell, Vice President and COO, K–12 Assessments, Educational Testing Service, San Antonio
- Linda Gann, Northside ISD, San Antonio
- Carlos Jimenez, McAllen ISD, McAllen
- Veronica Meeks, Fort Worth ISD, Fort Worth
- Uris Roberson, Mineloa ISD, Mineloa
- Sharon Benson, Education Service Center, Region Four, Houston
- Kathy Hale, Education Service Center, Region Fourteen, Abilene
- Susan Hull, Dana Center, Austin
- Kathy Mittag, Ph.D., University of Texas at San Antonio
- Paul Swets, Ph.D., Angelo State University, San Angelo

- Mary E. Wilkinson, Ph.D., Lamar University, Beaumont
- James Epperson, Ph.D., University of Texas at Arlington
- Thomas Butts, Ph.D., University of Texas at Dallas
- Lindsey Perry, TEA Mathematics Specialist, Curriculum Division
- Julie Guthrie, TEA Director of Math & Science Assessments, Student Assessment Division
- Joseph Kulhanek, Ph.D., TEA Director, College and Career Readiness Program, State Initiatives
- Lynette Heckmann, THECB Director, College Readiness Initiatives

The committee evaluated the alignment of the 15 Algebra II TEKS standards and CCRS standards assigned to the TEKS. Each TEKS standard was compared with the CCRS standard and then analyzed against the performance expectation. The performance expectation was discussed as a group, focusing on accuracy, need, and wording. When needed, the committee changed the wording within a performance expectation to improve clarity. As with Phase I, Phase II kept to the mission of formulating an expectation of what a student must do to demonstrate mastery of skills needed for success in postsecondary work in college or a career.

The committee first began weighing level of alignment between the identified college readiness TEKS of Algebra II and the description of each corresponding performance expectation(s). The committee's alignment classification between the TEKS and performance expectation was too broad, too narrow, just right, or delete. Following the classification of each performance expectation, the group discussed possible edits, both specifically and globally. An example of a global edit, the statement "should be able to" was consistently replaced with "will." Another global edit disaggregated a single performance expectation into multiple student performance expectations using a, b, etc. There were a few minor edits with which the group easily reached consensus. A greater group discussion centered around what type of functions were implied or not implied, and when to limit types of functions versus when not to limit. The two recommended deletions were based on deep discussion of whether the performance expectation was an essential critical indicator of college readiness or would the expectation indicate college readiness based on how it may be assessed.

After completing the revision process, each member was given two weeks to review and accept or suggest further changes. After receiving email acceptances from each committee member, the new document was sent to Joseph Kulhanek, Ph.D., TEA Director, College and Career Readiness Program, State Initiatives. The validation of this new document reflected the committee's belief that the TEKS and CCRS are closely aligned, and that the performance expectations accurately illustrate a student's readiness for college or career.