



High school standards and expectations for college and the workplace



Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education



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Summary

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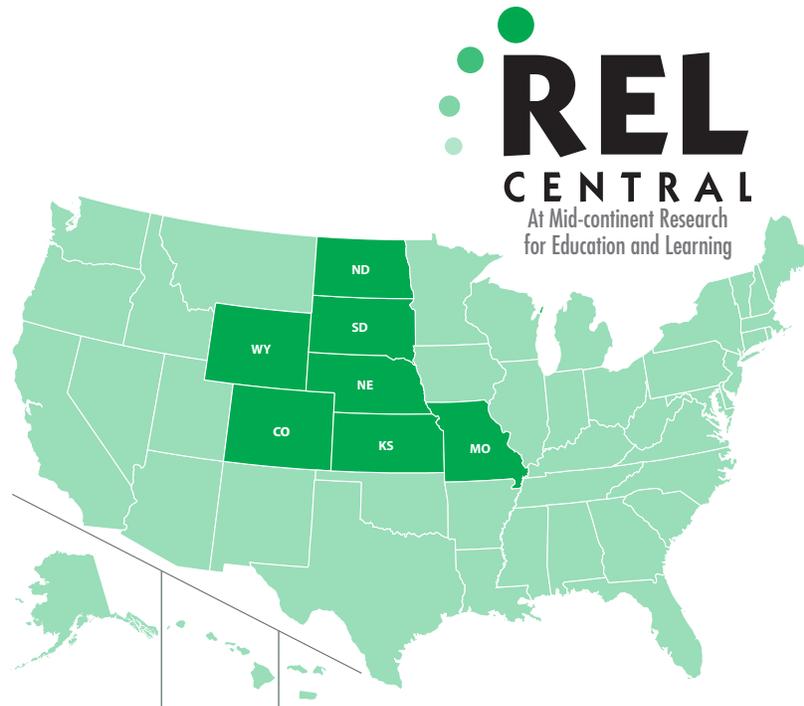
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Summary

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State standards for high schools in a majority of Central Region states cover 82 percent of the language arts topics but just 57 percent of the mathematics topics identified by both of two national studies as important for success in college and the workplace.

Colleges and employers are growing increasingly concerned that high school students lack the knowledge and skills needed for success after graduation. To find out whether the expectations of the Central Region states match the expectations of colleges and the workplace, state standards for what students should know and be able to do in English language arts and mathematics are compared with expectations common to two national studies on skills needed for entry to college and the workplace. To get a sense of how states are performing generally, six states outside the region were selected as a comparison group, based on standards rated as exemplary by outside evaluators.

Academic standards in a majority of Central Region states (Colorado, Kansas, Missouri,

Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming) include 82 percent of the content in English language arts considered important by both national studies. Eight topics in English language arts were not commonly found in the Central Region's state standards, while four topics were missing in the standards for a majority of comparison states.

In mathematics just 57 percent of the topics considered important in the national studies were covered in the standards in a majority of the Central Region states reviewed. Twenty-five topics were not addressed in the standards for a majority of the states in the Central Region, and 22 topics were missing from the standards for a majority of comparison states. Although the comparison states fared somewhat better, the difference is not substantial.

Overall, the missing topics suggest areas for review for possible inclusion in the academic standards for the Central Region states.

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