



A New Mindset for a New Era

Preparing Every Child for College and Career Readiness

A community presentation on the moral imperative
to achieve College and Career Readiness for all students.

*What do our children need from us
to enter society as fully functioning citizens?*

College and Career Readiness.

This is our standard. This is our moral imperative.

What is College & Career Readiness?



Definition

A student is College and Career Ready if, by the end of high school, they can qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses or career-oriented training programs — without needing remedial coursework.



**Credit-bearing college
coursework**



Career training pathways



No remediation required

This is our standard. And our moral imperative.

CCR Is the End of a Long Journey

Proficiency at every grade level, in every subject, builds to graduation — and to CCR.



CCR is the endpoint of a long developmental process. Every grade, every subject, every year matters.

A Long Way to Go

Nation's Report Card (NAEP) 2024 — The most recent national data:

31%

of 4th graders
proficient in Reading

27%

of 8th graders
proficient in Math

22%

of 12th graders
proficient in Math



Only 35% of high school seniors are academically ready for entry-level college coursework.

Nearly 2 out of 3 students who cross the graduation stage are not truly ready for what comes next.

The Problem Is Not Just Performance. It Is Belief.

"Some have it, and some don't."

— The belief that quietly lowers expectations and limits what we build

The Innate Ability Mindset

A widespread cultural belief that intelligence is fixed at birth — distributed unequally — so that some children simply cannot achieve at high levels.

Why This Is the Problem

This mindset leads to disbelief in our children's capacity to achieve CCR — and that disbelief becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

It is the most important obstacle standing between our students and their future.

Intelligence is developed. It is not fixed.

Sustained effort at challenging work grows capability.

Great teachers have always known this.
Now it's time to build it into everything we do.

**Think
You Can.
Work
Hard.
Get
Smart.**



**Smart is something
you can get.**

We call this the Get Smart Mindset.
Teach it. Live it.
Build it into everything.

It Has Already Been Done

Brockton High School, Massachusetts — A case study in transformation

1999 — Before

- 75% of students failed state Math exams
- 44% failed English exams
- ~1 in 3 students dropped out
- School culture: 'students have a right to fail'

2005 — After

- 98% of seniors graduated
- Largest single-year improvement in Massachusetts
- National School Change Award winner
- One of only 6 schools in the U.S. honored

What changed? A school-wide commitment to belief in students — and systematic support for rigorous learning.

The Three M's: Our Path Forward



Mindset

SHIFT THE BELIEF

Replace the Innate Ability Mindset with the Get Smart Mindset — in educators, students, and the whole community. Teach it. Model it. Live it.



Mission

DECLARE THE GOAL

Commit to 90% College and Career Readiness within 5 years. Not 'improvement.' Not 'progress.' A concrete, measurable mission with a real number.



Method

BUILD THE SYSTEM

Mobilize professional expertise through empowered, data-driven educator teams working together — not in isolation — to reach every student.

What We Are Committing To



Teach the Get Smart Mindset to every educator and every student as the foundation of our transformation.



Achieve ELA and Math Proficiency at all grade levels across our schools.



Make dramatic reductions in our dropout rate.



Move at least 90% of our 12th graders to College and Career Readiness within 5 years.

This is not a plan. It is a promise.

A solid red vertical bar runs along the left edge of the image.

90%

A solid red horizontal line spans the width of the text area below the percentage.

College and Career Ready

within five years — that is our mission.

Why This Cannot Wait

Every year we wait is a year of students who leave our schools without the tools they need to succeed.



Tolerating continued organizational failure represents, inescapably, moral failure.



We have the proof — other schools have done it. The knowledge exists.



We have the people — educators who care and who can develop the skills to deliver results.



What we need is the will — and a community united behind a clear mission.



Will You Join Us?

The Efficacy Institute

efficacyinstitute.org



Join us in the mission.

Here is what that means:



Embrace and teach the Get Smart Mindset in your home, classroom, or organization.



Support your district's commitment to the 90% CCR Mission.



Hold us accountable — and stand with us when the work gets hard.



Bring others into this conversation.

"Smart is something you can get — and we can get there together."