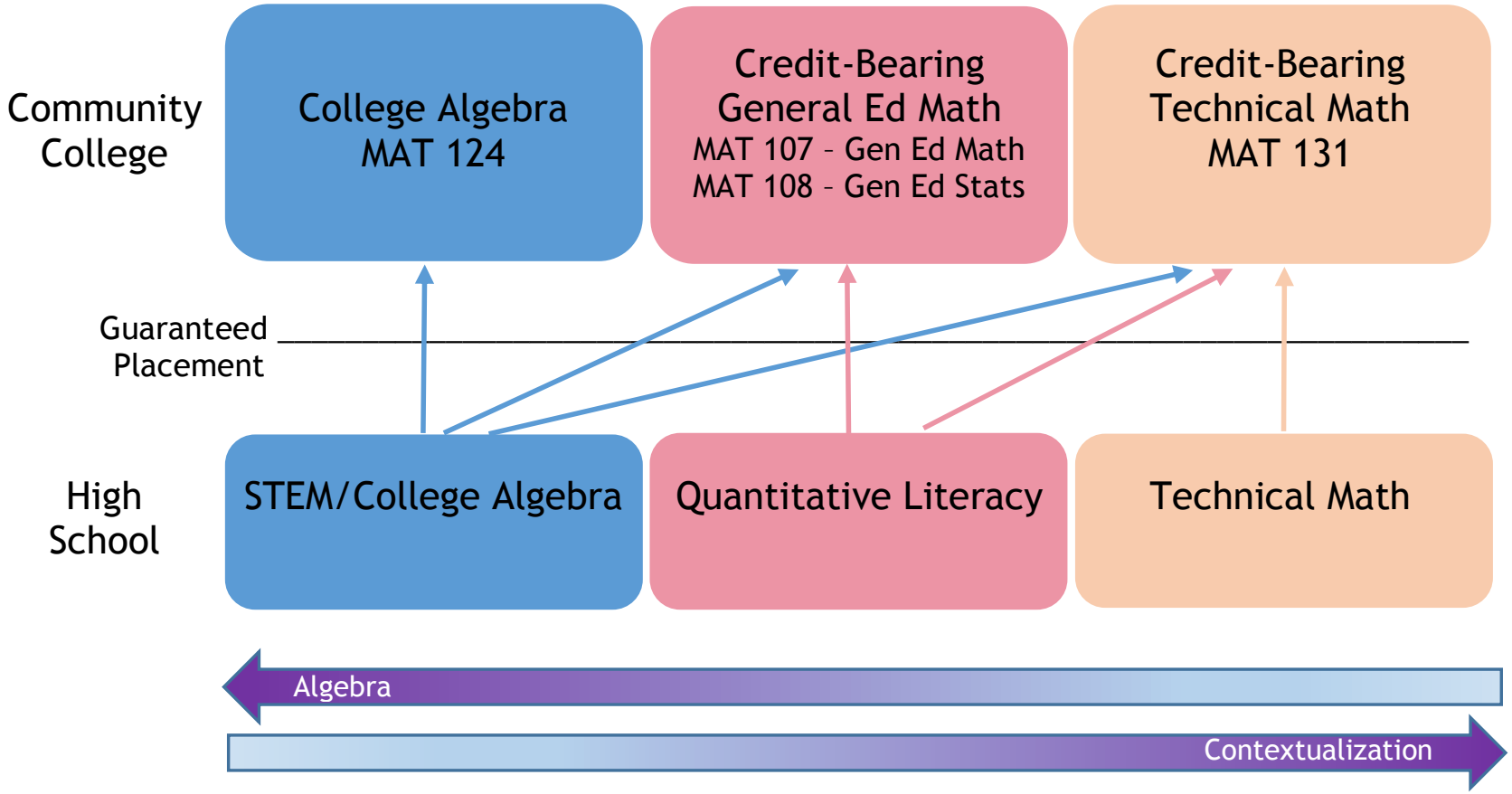
Transitional Math

Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Act

The Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Act (Public Act 99-0674, HB 5729), or PWR Act, was signed into law in July 2016. A major component of the law relates to transitional math courses, which are courses for seniors in high schools.

Transitional Math Pathways



Students who change to a path requiring more algebra may take a placement test or use alternative options, such as bridge courses or co-requisite courses, to accelerate that change.

Students who do not enroll in a College-level math course within 6 months of high school graduation may be placed in a co-requisite course alongside their college-level math course.

Who can take Transitional Math Courses?

- A senior who has met the high school math graduation requirements.
- Transitional math courses are intended for students who are **not** projected to be ready for college-level math courses by the end of the senior year (more on this later).
- The Technical math course is intended only for students who are taking career-oriented coursework while in high school and intend to enroll in a career and technical education program at the community college level that includes a technical math course.

Who can teach Transitional Math Courses?

- A teacher must be certified to teach high school mathematics in Illinois.
- EXCEPTION: If the transitional math class is fully integrated with a career/tech program at the high school, the role of the high school math teacher or community college math instructor must be addressed in the Memo of Understanding, and can range from co-teaching to serving in a resource role when needed.

Rigor and Standards according to the PWR Act Competencies and Policies

- Students must earn a C or better in order to receive placement into the appropriate course at the community college level.
- At least 25% of the overall grade must come from problem or project-based learning tasks.
- A single assessment may not be more than 50% of the final grade in the course.
- No more that 25% of the course grade can come from formative assignments such as homework.
- Additional standards and grading policies may be included in the MOU (see next slide).
- Grading policies stated in the MOU take precedence over any conflicting local grading requirements due to the placement and portability agreements.
- Data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the transitional math courses and will inform ongoing adjustments to courses.

Additional Rigor and Standards according to Parkland College

- Students may not be permitted to retake more than 2 exams. [*Note: Students who attend Parkland College in the future will not be allowed to retake exams in their math classes. So we strongly encourage you to prepare them for that reality in the Transitional Math courses by not offering retakes on exams.]*
- Credit will not be given for assignments that are not turned in or turned in with nothing completed.
- A cumulative final exam for the course will be created collaboratively by mathematics instructors from both Parkland College and the cooperating high school. This final exam should count for approximately 20% of the final course grade and cannot be retaken nor can it be returned to the students.

Memo of Understanding

- All memoranda of understanding must be signed by both the high school and the college and should establish expectations for all involved.
- MOUs will be publically posted.
- The sample MOU being proposed by Parkland College closely follows the sample MOU provided by the state with the addition of the three “Rigors and Standards” presented on the previous slide.

Projected Readiness

- All Illinois high school juniors should be assessed on their college readiness regarding mathematics after the first semester of the junior year.
- A high school junior who has successfully completed state math graduation requirements and meets **at least two** of the following criteria is projected to be ready for college level coursework in mathematics when arriving at a postsecondary institution in Illinois. This determination is conditional based on enrollment in a senior year of math.
  - B or better in Algebra 2
  - C or better in a course higher than Algebra 2
  - GPA of 3.0/4
  - Standardized assessment: Math SAT or PSAT ≥ 530 or Math ACT > 22
  - Placement test score into college-level math at Parkland College: ALEKS ≥ 37
  - PARCC math score of 4 or 5
  - Teacher and/or advisor recommendation of college-level math in the senior year

Projected NOT ready

- A high school junior who has successfully completed state math requirements but has not met **at least two** of the previously listed criteria will be projected as NOT ready for college-level math and will be given transitional math opportunities.

Note: The readiness criteria can be found on pages 21-22 of the Competencies and Policies Manual.

Portability Panels

- Panels comprised of secondary and postsecondary faculty will be formed to recognize the statewide portability of transitional math courses. Math faculty from high schools and colleges will comprise the voting membership, in a manner consistent with current Illinois Articulation Initiative processes, modified to fit this panel. Personnel from ISBE, ICCB, and IBHE [(or their designee(s)] may participate as warranted, particularly as the panels are initially formed and the work gets underway. Long-term staffing will be provided by the ICCB.
- In addition to determining portability of courses, panels will regularly review the transitional math competencies and recommend adjustments to state agencies for approval, as needed.
- We will be forming a local portability panel soon. If you are interested in serving on the panel, please let us know.

Portability Criteria

For a transitional math course to be designated as portable, it must meet the following criteria.

- The course meets all the required process and content competencies
- The course adheres to the statewide policies.

Portability Designation Process and Documentation Requirements

- Each **college** submits courses to the state portability panel
- State panel will review and then grant or deny portability
- Portability code will be included on transcripts
- Subject to ongoing review
- Documentation will be required to prove that a course meets portability criteria
  - MOU
  - Competency and curricular documentation

Time Frame

- MOUs should be signed before the course becomes part of your schedule of classes. This means for Fall 2019, we should start the process soon.
- We understand that not everyone will be ready to start a class in the fall of 2019. That's okay! No one is mandated to start in 2019, as long as you are actively working toward that goal. Mandated implementation will be phased in starting in Fall 2020, and high schools will receive their dates from the state.
- Schools interested in the STEM/College Algebra Pathway may want to wait. (See slides on materials.)

Materials for Transitional Math Courses

One option is to develop your own materials

- You design units that meet all the competencies in a contextualized, integrated way
  - Transitional math courses should enable students to develop conceptual understanding and problem solving competence while increasing college readiness in the path of their choice. The courses emphasize conceptual understanding and modeling rather than procedures and symbolic manipulation. The study of algebra is included in all three pathways; however, its emphasis varies depending on the outcome pathway. Instruction should be contextualized and emphasize authentic applications whenever possible, and instructional strategies integrating mathematics competencies with other academic and career competencies are encouraged for all students. (Transitional Math Competencies and Policies, p. 4)
- Competency rubrics can be found at http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/curriculum/documents-by-pathway/
- Illinois OER and other resources have open-source contextualized activities http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/curriculum/

Materials for Transitional Math Courses

A second option is to use state-developed materials

- Quantitative Literacy and Technical Math have sample units due out in June
- STEM Pathway development happening in two phases
  - Phase I due out in June: Information and projects to incorporate context into a traditional, linear approach
  - Phase II due out summer 2020: Integrated set of units that more fully incorporate the transitional math approach

Materials for Transitional Math Courses

- A third option is to use publisher materials, if they fit
- Publishers are beginning to design high school pricing structures for college textbooks that may fit the Quantitative Literacy Pathway

Questions?

Links

- PWR Act: http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/wp-content/docs/PWR-act-full-language-of-law-final.pdf
- PWR Transitional Math Website: http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/
- Transitional Math Competencies and Policies: http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/TM-comps-and-policies-Aug-2018-corrected-10-25-18.pdf
- State's Curriculum Resources page: http://www.iltransitionalmath.org/curriculum/
- Parkland Transitional Math website coming soon