

A vertical grayscale image of a compass rose, showing the needle and the cardinal directions. A thick, red, brush-like stroke is drawn across the middle of the compass, extending from the left edge towards the center.

# COMPASS<sup>®</sup>

## COMPASS<sup>®</sup> Guide to Successful High School Outreach

**Setting the Right Course for College Success**

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**ACT<sup>®</sup>**



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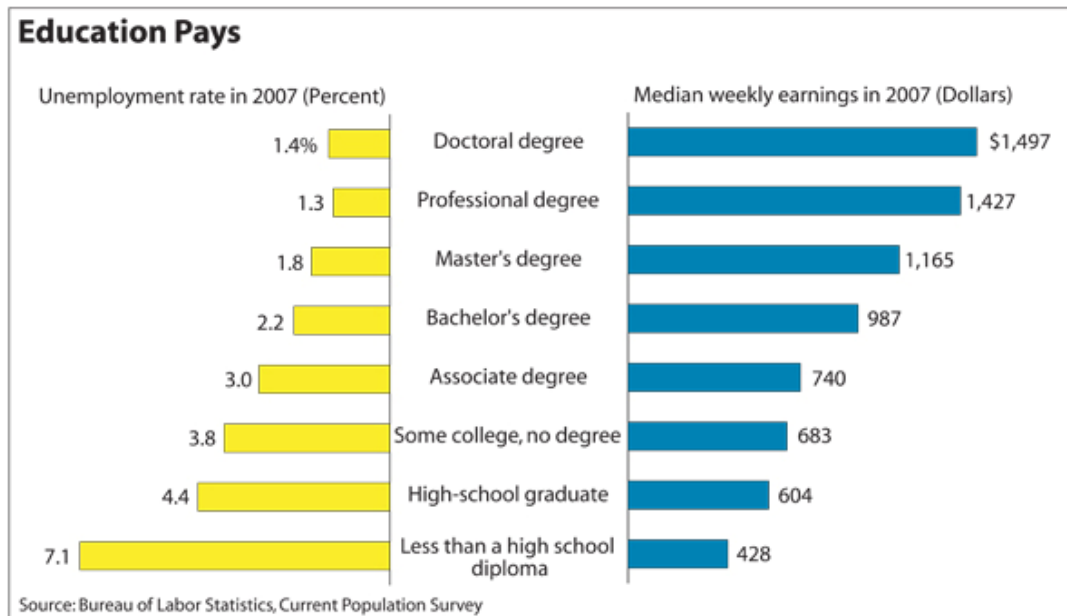
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Postsecondary education is critical for high school students, affecting their ability to contribute to and compete in the modern economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has estimated that **80%** of the fastest-growing jobs in the United States require some sort of higher education.

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040121.html>)



Unfortunately, a large percentage of young people are not receiving the postsecondary education they need to survive in this economy, with minority students especially at risk.

- **14.1%** of high school students do not complete high school.  
(<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/dropout/tables/table4.asp>)
- **34%** of all high school graduates do not transition to college in the fall after graduation.  
(<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2008/section3/table.asp?tableID=902>)
- **42%** of freshmen entering postsecondary two-year institutions require remedial education.  
([http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis/inc/displaytables\\_inc.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis/inc/displaytables_inc.asp))

- **48%** of students under age 20 entering two-year institutions fail to meet the COMPASS college readiness benchmark in Writing Skills of 69.  
([http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04\\_Nat2yr\\_under20.pdf](http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04_Nat2yr_under20.pdf))
- **66%** of students under age 20 entering two-year institutions fail to meet the COMPASS college readiness benchmark in Reading of 88.  
([http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04\\_Nat2yr\\_under20.pdf](http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04_Nat2yr_under20.pdf))
- **91%** of students under age 20 entering two-year institutions fail to meet the COMPASS college readiness benchmark in Mathematics of 65.  
([http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04\\_Nat2yr\\_under20.pdf](http://www.act.org/compass/pdf/F04_Nat2yr_under20.pdf))
- **53%** of the freshmen entering two-year institutions spend one year taking remedial courses.  
([http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pegis/inc/displaytables\\_inc.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pegis/inc/displaytables_inc.asp))
- **Up to 70%** of students in remedial programs fail to complete a degree.  
([http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2004/pdf/18\\_2004.pdf](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2004/pdf/18_2004.pdf))

The reasons why so many students don't proceed on to postsecondary education are numerous and complex. Students may not be aware of the importance of postsecondary education to their career options. They may have a mistaken impression that they aren't eligible. They may think college isn't financially feasible. Or, they may just be intimidated by the whole college registration process.

### **Help More Students Transition from High School to College**

Community and technical colleges have the opportunity to help more students overcome these barriers and successfully make the transition from high school to college through high school outreach programs.

There are three main types of high school outreach programs, each with an emphasis on the needs of students at different stages of their high school careers. For the purposes of this guide, we will refer to these types/stages as:

- **Early Intervention** (late sophomores, juniors)
- **Dual Enrollment** (late juniors, early seniors)
- **College Transition** (late seniors)

Under all three scenarios, the features and flexibility of the COMPASS system can play a key role in ensuring the success of these types of programs.

This guide has been developed by ACT to serve as a practical reference to colleges that wish to implement high school outreach programs. This free publication is available as a PDF download from the COMPASS website. If you would like additional information about the best ways to implement a high school outreach program, an ACT representative from one of our regional offices would be happy to work with you. To locate the ACT Regional Office that serves your state, please go to <http://www.act.org/contacts/field.html>.





## CHAPTER 2

### BENEFITS OF HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH

High school outreach is the generic term for programs in which community or technical colleges collaborate with their local feeder high schools to help more students explore and plan their transition from high school to college.

#### **Benefits to Students**

The direct benefits of an outreach program to high school students include:

- **Clarify Career and Educational Goals** – Many high school students have not actively considered their career options or the educational qualifications required to pursue those options. High school outreach programs frequently include “success planning seminars” that cover these topics.
- **Access and Admission Assistance** – High school students who haven’t actively planned for postsecondary education frequently aren’t aware of how accessible and affordable it is. High school outreach programs fill this gap, in some cases even providing graduating high school seniors with letters of admission to their local community college. Seminars are held to help students with the application process. They usually include orientation sessions so the high school students get firsthand understanding of the college campus and undergraduate experience.
- **Academic Advising Assistance** – High school outreach programs assess students’ skill levels and advise them what resources they should use and what courses they should take while they are still in high school to become college-ready. This helps underprepared students avoid the need for developmental courses once they’ve enrolled in college. Similarly, high school outreach programs can be used to evaluate student eligibility for dual enrollment programs. When targeting high school seniors, assessment results are used to advise students which courses to register for when they enroll in college.
- **Registration Assistance** – Registration can be an intimidating experience for first-time students. An integral component of high school outreach programs is to walk them through the registration process. Some programs give high school students preferential registration to ensure they are able to take the courses they really need during their critical first semester.
- **Support Services** – New students frequently need help, especially during their first semester. High school outreach programs should introduce

prospective new students to the academic support services available to them on campus.

- **Reduce the Need for Postsecondary Developmental Coursework** – When students are better prepared for college coursework, they can avoid developmental courses, which cost extra time and money. Developmental courses are not credit bearing, and they cannot transfer to other institutions. Additionally, developmental courses are not covered by financial aid.

### **Benefits to High Schools**

- **Increase College-Going Rate** - By partnering up with area colleges, high schools can leverage their limited resources and provide more accurate and timely information to help more students transition to college.
- **Closer Relations with Area Colleges** – Close cooperation between high schools and local colleges is a natural outcome of high school outreach programs. Closer cooperation means better services for students, greater efficiency in operations, and the avoidance of redundant efforts and expenses.
- **High School Counselor Support** – High school counselors will have direct communications with their local community college through a high school outreach program. This access will result in better information and access to support materials students need.
- **Increase Student Motivation** – With firsthand exposure to the opportunities presented by the local community college, high school students will be more focused on their learning objectives and motivated to do well in their studies.
- **Encourage Parental Involvement** – Assist parents in knowing more about the college-going process and the next steps for their son or daughter.

### **Benefits to Colleges**

- **Increase Student Readiness** – Developmental courses are a burden on resources and time for colleges as well as students. A high school outreach program results in students becoming better prepared before they even arrive on campus.
- **Increase Student Enrollment** – Most of the high school graduates who do not advance to postsecondary education perhaps are not aware of the opportunity, or they mistakenly believe they are not qualified. High school outreach programs can have a major impact in both areas and can help colleges build strong relationships with students in their feeder high schools.

- **Increase Student Retention** – High school outreach programs typically result in more students who are better prepared for college-level work. They also result in students being placed in courses appropriate to their skill levels. Better prepared students placed in appropriate courses can have a profound impact on student persistence.
- **Increase Campus Diversity** – Minorities and at risk students frequently are targeted in high school outreach programs. Helping these students prepare for and transition to postsecondary education helps colleges meet their diversity goals.
- **Better Resource Management** – Colleges can spread their recruitment and orientation efforts over longer time periods through high school outreach programs.



## CHAPTER 3

### MODELS FOR HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH

For a high school outreach program to be effective and successful, you must determine your primary objectives at the beginning of the process and design the program accordingly. In this guide, we will explore three general approaches: Early Intervention, Dual Enrollment, and College Transition. The needs of your college may vary, and you will need to adjust your planning process to meet the outreach objectives of your institution.

#### **Early Intervention**

Early intervention high school outreach programs help promote college readiness while there is still time for students to affect a change. Early intervention programs target late tenth graders and/or early eleventh graders to encourage those who are progressing well and provide additional guidance to those who may be under prepared. The goals are to help these students determine if they are developing the core skills they will need to be successful in college and recommend appropriate interventions if they are not.

Early intervention high school outreach programs typically include the following components:

- a. Career Exploration – Information and activities to inform students about the career options available to them. These can include counseling sessions, seminars at the high schools, distribution of career literature, and interest inventories that match students' interests with various careers. Career exploration activities frequently include parents as well as students, and parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's education and career decisions.
- b. Educational Requirements – Once students have a better idea about career possibilities, college advisors and/or high school counselors inform them about the educational requirements for the careers in which they are interested. Want to be a forensic pathologist? Better start studying science and math! Advisors will inform the students what types of courses they should take while in high school and what the requirements will be once they enroll in college.
- c. Basic Skills Assessment – Tests are given in the high school to determine if students are on track to fulfill the educational requirements of their chosen careers. Institutions may use students' PLAN<sup>®</sup> or ACT<sup>®</sup> test scores to identify at-risk students. Alternatively, they may use COMPASS to identify current

skill levels in Reading, Writing, and Math, and their readiness for various college-level courses. For a more detailed evaluation of student skill levels, many institutions will use COMPASS diagnostic tests to better identify specific skill areas in which students may need more help.

- d. Educational Interventions – If students are not on track, there is still time to prescribe developmental interventions while the students are still in high school. Interventions may include taking appropriate courses, supplemental education, tutoring, or simply accessing online learning solutions.
- e. Post-testing – This enables educators to evaluate the impact of the interventions and assures students that they are college-ready. In all cases, the college conducting the early intervention high school outreach program needs to have standard policies, procedures, and materials that can be used consistently in all their feeder high schools.

### **Dual Enrollment**

Dual enrollment high school outreach programs are typically administered to students entering eleventh or twelfth grade to determine if they are qualified to be placed in credit-bearing college courses while still enrolled in high school. Dual-enrollment programs allow well-prepared students to get a jump start on their college education, saving a substantial amount of time and money.

Many programs are set up to include all students in a class, inviting those who qualify to consider dual enrollment courses and providing “next step” suggestions to students not qualifying for dual enrollment. Colleges in other locations work with counselors in their feeder high schools to identify appropriate candidates who can participate in the program. Grade Point Average, PLAN and/or ACT scores can be used for this purpose. Students will also take a COMPASS placement test to confirm they have the same core skills as traditional students, thereby confirming they can meet the prerequisites for entry into a college-level course. The college’s standard cutoff scores are used to determine eligibility for enrollment, with placement messages customized for each high school. Students not qualifying for the dual enrollment course(s) are assisted in the development of a plan that can help them address their needs for additional preparation while still in high school.

Dual enrollment courses may be taught either in the high school or at the community college. If there are sufficient numbers of students, the college and high school may make arrangements to have the course taught in the high school during regular school hours. In some programs, the high school students will attend regular classes on the college campus. One advantage of this approach is that it familiarizes high school students with the college experience and facilitates a seamless transition into college upon graduation.

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will receive credit both on his or her high school and college transcripts. Some school districts and states work out arrangements to pay the community college and offer the courses to their high school students for free. In other cases, the high school students will pay the same tuition as traditional students.

### **College Transition**

College transition high school outreach programs target high school seniors in the spring of their senior year and are intended to make the transition from high school to college as easy as possible. Depending on how extensive they are, college transition high school outreach programs may span the entire course of the students' senior year, but typically the activities are concentrated in the spring semester as the students approach graduation.

Activities associated with a college transition high school outreach program take place in the high school and on the college campus. Close collaboration between the college and high school personnel is critical for the program to succeed. Activities you may wish to incorporate into your college transition high school outreach program include:

- a. Career Fairs – Local employers present information on the types of jobs they offer, and what types of postsecondary education qualifications students will need to pursue them.
- b. College Introduction – This includes making available brochures, workshops, and/or in-class presentations on the opportunities available at the local community college. This may be done by college representatives or by high school advisors who have been trained and supported by the college. Student ambassadors also may be employed to help the high school students better relate to the information. These should convey critical information on subjects such as the importance of postsecondary education to the attainment of career objectives, courses of study available at the college, college life, tuition and financial aid, admission and registration procedures, and student academic support services. The key point to make is that postsecondary education is accessible and affordable to all students through the local community college.
- c. Basic Skills Assessments – Use these to determine which courses students should be placed into to optimize their chances of completing them successfully. The same cut scores should be used as those of traditional students who take their placement tests on campus, but placement messages should be customized to address the concerns unique to high school seniors. Placement messages include what courses they should take, how to register,

and how to access campus learning support resources. The assessments may be administered at the high school (e.g., in the computer lab) or on-campus during college visits. The advantage of administering tests in the high school is students will have less anxiety and distractions, and their scores will be more reflective of their actual abilities. If students' test results fall beneath the standard cutoff scores, colleges will often administer diagnostic tests to pinpoint the areas in which students need additional instruction. Colleges may advise borderline students that they will be required to take developmental courses at the college, or suggest how they may brush up their skills over the summer and take the placement test again in the fall before registration.

- d. Academic Advising – College advisors, or high school counselors who have been trained by the college, should review students' career goals, basic skills assessment results, and advise students as to what their next steps should be in terms of procedures for college application, course selection and registration, financial aid applications, and other campus instructional and support services.
- e. Campus Tours – College transition high school outreach programs may include field day visits to the college campus. This allows college admissions personnel the opportunity to introduce the college to large numbers of high school seniors and provide them a firsthand look at the college experience. Colleges that don't assess students' basic skills in high schools may do so at the college testing center during these tours. Alternatively, they may wait and test students during orientation with the understanding that students may be highly preoccupied during orientation, which may affect their test results.
- f. Admission Application – Open enrollment colleges may include a letter of admission with the students' basic skills assessment results, even for students who will need to take developmental courses. The key is to let them know the opportunity is available to them if they wish to pursue it. Alternatively, colleges may still wish to have students go through the regular application process and provide them with the necessary forms and instructions. It is critical to include financial aid information at this time. Doing this while the students are still enrolled in high school provides high school counselors the opportunity to assist with the process.
- g. Orientation – Frequently, colleges will invite high school students who have been admitted to attend a full-day orientation on campus. This allows them to experience the college environment in a structured, supportive manner, have their questions answered, and reduce any anxieties they may have about attending the college. High school students often complete their registration during orientation.



- h. Registration – Colleges may allow high school students participating in a high school outreach program to register early for the courses they need. The goal is to make their first registration experience as painless and successful as possible and give them priority access to the courses they need during their critical first semester.

As with other types of high school outreach programs, thorough planning and standardization of procedures is critical to the success of the program.



## CHAPTER 4

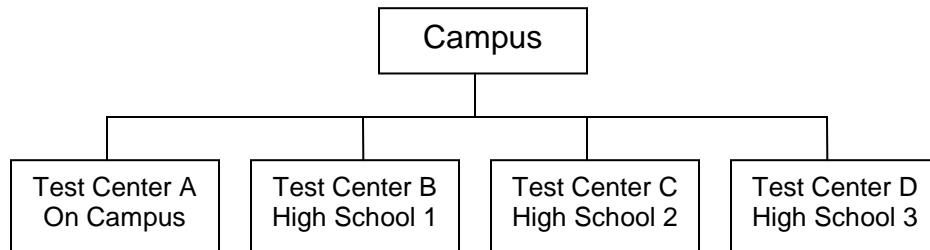
### ENHANCING HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS WITH COMPASS

#### Establish Test Centers Directly in High Schools

COMPASS allows you to easily establish test centers directly in your feeder high schools, administer standardized test packages to all of your potential students, and run centralized reports of the results. The COMPASS software also allows you to customize the placement messages for each high school test center so they are more relevant to the particular needs of their students.

#### High School Test Center Setup

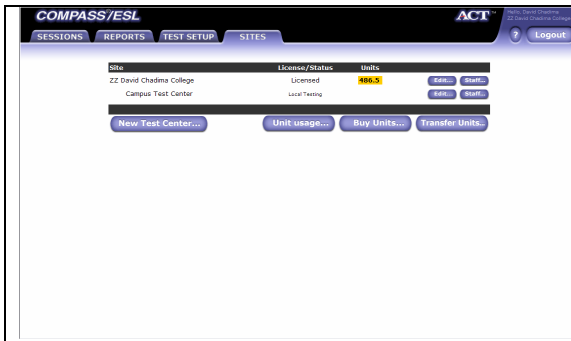
The procedure for setting up a high school test center is exactly the same as setting up a new test center on campus. The site hierarchy is:



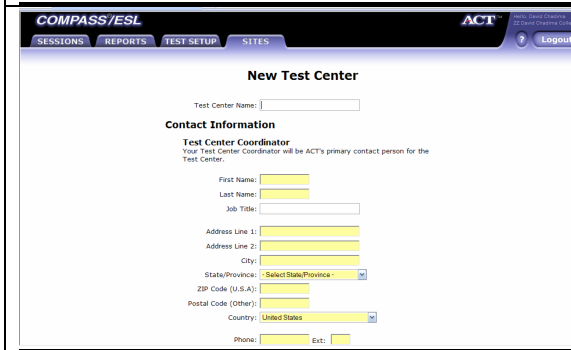
Because COMPASS is an Internet-based program, you are able to set up individual test centers for on-campus testing and for each individual high school in your high school outreach program. This makes it easy to keep the data from each high school separate from the data for your regular on-campus students. This process also allows you to prepare and deliver placement messages that are customized to include the specific resources (and their locations) available for students in each high school.

Most colleges simply use the high school computer lab as their COMPASS testing center, which works well as long as testing schedules are well coordinated and proper security and proctor arrangements can be made.

Before you set up a test center in a high school, you will need to collect information on the high school test center coordinator, technical support coordinator, the test center status, number of copies of Standard Individual Reports, and SSR location. Once you have this information, the process to register a test center is straightforward.



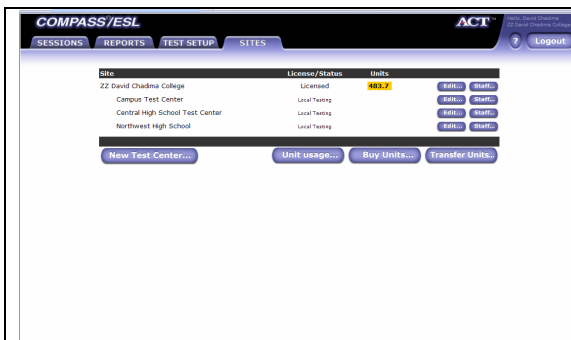
Go to the “Sites” tab and click “New Test Center.”



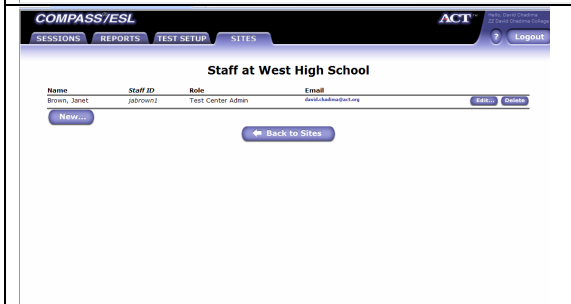
Fill in the fields in the “New Test Center” page. You will need to have the contact information for the “Test Center Coordinator” and the “Technical Support Coordinator” on hand before you fill in the fields. You may also specify how many SRIs to print and where SSRs should be stored.

This process must be repeated for every high school test center included in your institution’s high school outreach program.

If you are the campus level administrator, you should always register yourself as a staff member at each high school test center and grant yourself full administrative rights. This will allow you to login at the test center level if you should desire to do so.



In the “Sites” tab, click on the “Staff” button.



Click “New.”

As you fill in the fields, **DO NOT** use your real name – use an alias that is easy to remember and can be associated with that high school test center. **DO** use your real e-mail address so you can receive the e-mail notification with your user name and password for that high school test center. Be sure to keep a record of all your user names and passwords for each high school test center. **DO** grant yourself full administrative rights. Click “OK” when finished.

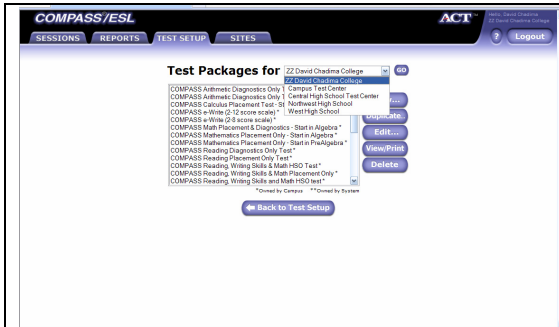
Tests will be administered at the high school test center level. Usually the high school Test Center Coordinator will administer the tests. Be sure the Test Center Coordinator saves his or her user name and password which they will receive via e-mail when you register them. You may want to restrict the Test Center Coordinator (or other test center staff) to proctor rights only.

On the “Sites” tab, click the “Staff” button next to the selected high school test center.

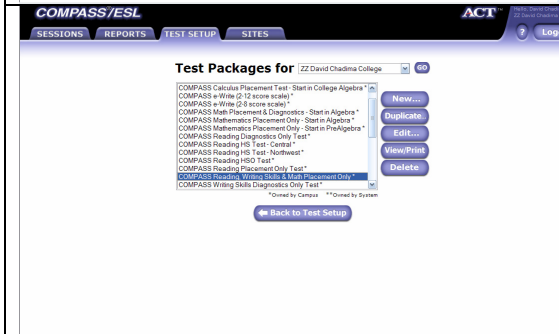
The test center coordinator’s name will appear. Click “edit.”

The next screen will contain the test site coordinator’s information. Simply click the “Proctor” button, and the coordinator will only have rights to launch tests, edit his or her own account info, view and print student records, edit student records, create SSRs, and schedule remote tests. You may want to disable some of these functions as well, and only allow them to launch tests and view and print student records.

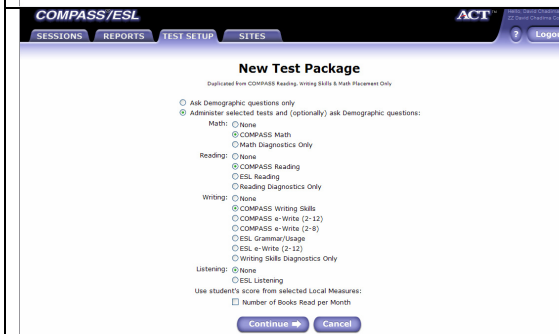




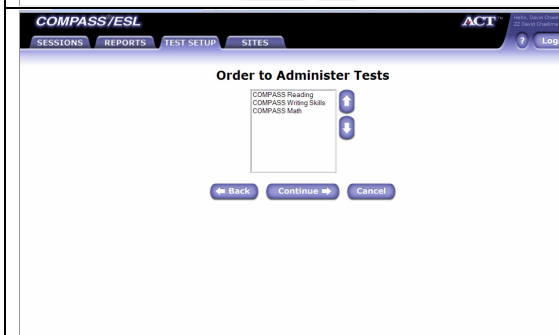
To the right of the “Test Packages for” heading, select the campus level institution, which will be listed first in the drop down menu. Then click the “Go” button to the right.



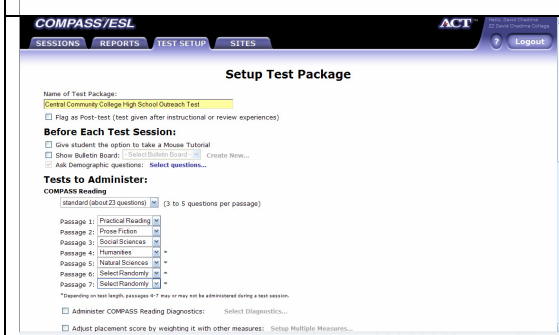
In the “Test Package for” page, select “COMPASS Reading, Writing Skills, and Math Placement Test Only” from the list of test packages that come pre-loaded in the COMPASS software, then click “Duplicate.”



The “New Test Package” page will open. Confirm which content areas you wish to include and click “Continue.”



Confirm the order of the tests.



Give the new test package a descriptive name, e.g., “Central Community College High School Outreach Test,” and set the parameters of the test. If you would like to administer this test at all high school test sites, be sure to select all of the test sites at the bottom of the page. When finished, click “OK.”

	<p>To administer this test at all high school test sites, be sure to select all of the test sites at the bottom of the page. When finished, click “OK.”</p>
	<p>The COMPASS software will take you back to the “Test Packages” page, and the new test package will be listed in the dropdown menu. If you wish to make any additional changes, just click “Edit.”</p> <p>When the high school Test Center Coordinator launches a test at a work station in the high school test center, the standardized test will appear on the list of tests. They simply select the test and click “Go.”</p>

**Create Standard Data Used by Test Packages**

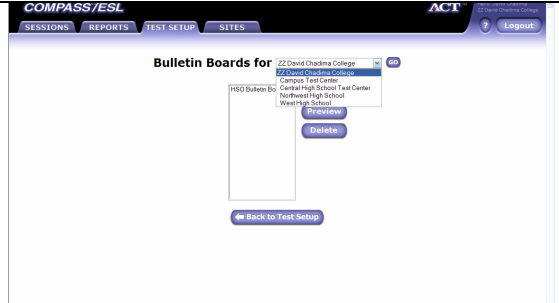
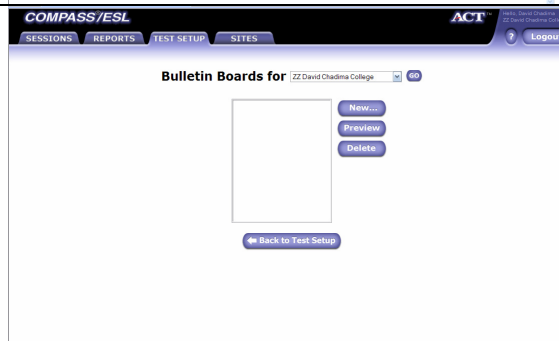
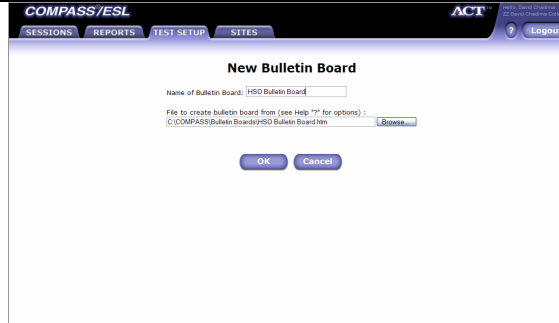
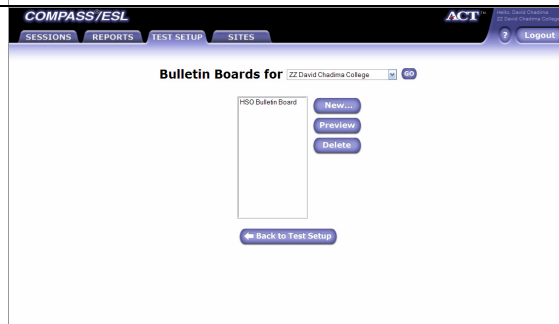
Once the standard test package has been set up, you will need to create standard “Data Used by Test Packages,” which can include Bulletin Boards, Majors and Major Groups, Local Demographic Items, Campus Resources, Transfer Institutions, and High Schools)

The procedure is the same as creating regular “Data Used by Test Packages,” but you must be sure to specify the data is to be used at the campus level, not at the high school test center level.

In this example we will create a standard bulletin board, but the process is the same for all data. To create standard bulletin boards for all high school test centers, you must be logged in as the campus level administrator. Before getting started, you need to create the standard bulletin board text, and save it as an HTML file in a location you can easily navigate to.

	<p>On the “Test Setup” page, click on “Bulletin Boards.”</p>
--	--



	<p>In the drop-down menu to the right of the “Bulletin Boards for” heading, select the campus level institution, which will be listed first in the drop down menu, then click the “Go” button to the right.</p>
	<p>Click “New.”</p>
	<p>Give the standard bulletin board a descriptive name. Navigate to the file where you previously saved the HTML file with the bulletin board message, then click “OK.”</p>
	<p>The new bulletin board will now appear on the “Bulletin Boards for” page. You may specify which test sites may see this bulletin board.</p>

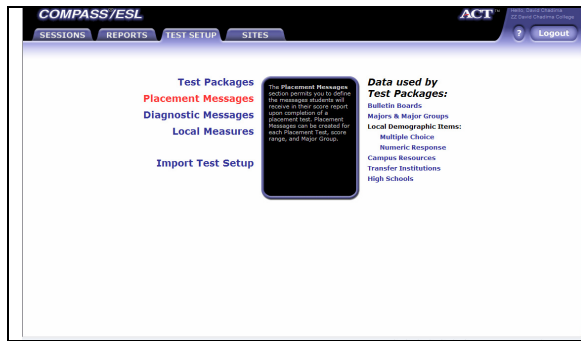
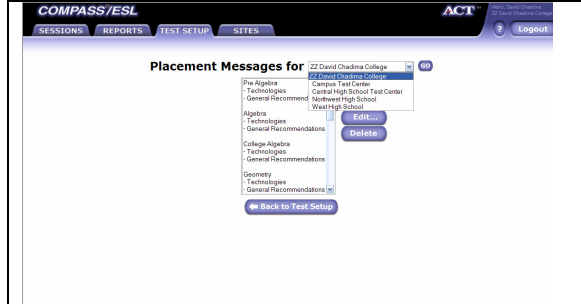
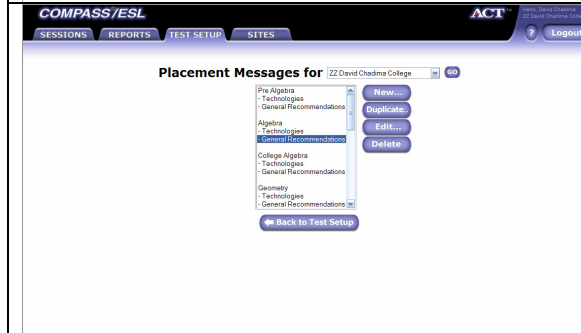
## Create Standard Placement Messages

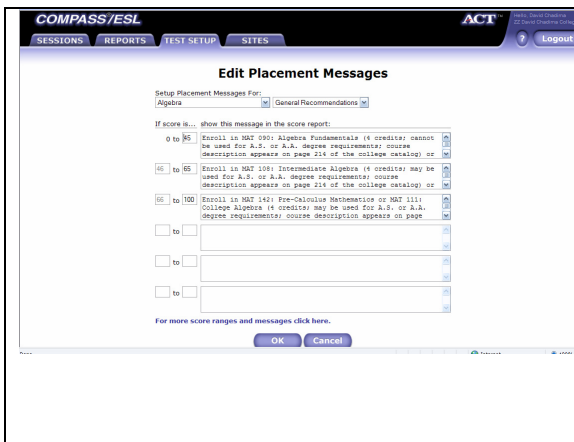
Standard placement messages will appear on all Standard Individual Reports. The COMPASS software comes pre-loaded with sample placement and diagnostic messages and cutoff scores. You must edit these scores and statements so they align with the cutoff scores and placement messages of your high school outreach program.

Placement messages are designed for specified score ranges on each test. The cutoff scores that determine these ranges must be agreed upon with your faculty and are adjusted over time. Please refer to the *COMPASS Guide to Effective Student Placement and Retention in Mathematics* or the *COMPASS Guide to Effective Student Placement and Retention in Language Arts* for additional information on setting cutoff scores. Both of these publications can be found in PDF format at <http://www.act.org/compass/resources.html>.

Once you have determined cutoff scores and what text you want to include in the placement messages, the procedure for setting standardized placement messages is straightforward.

To create standard placement messages for all high school test centers, you must be logged in as the campus level administrator.

 <p>The screenshot shows the COMPASS/ESL interface with the 'TEST SETUP' tab selected. Under the 'Placement Messages' heading, the text reads: 'The Placement Messages section permits you to define the message students will receive based on their test results. Messages can be created for any placement test score range, and Paper or Web.' To the right, under 'Data used by Test Packages:', it lists: 'Inclusive Scores', 'Majors &amp; Major Groups', 'Local Demographic Items: Multiple Choice, Numeric Response, Campus Residences, Transfer Institutions, High Schools'.</p>	<p>On the "Test Setup" tab, select "Placement Messages."</p>
 <p>The screenshot shows the 'Placement Messages for' dropdown menu open. The selected institution is 'ZZ David Chadma College'. Other visible options include 'ZZ David Chadma College', 'Campus Test Center', 'Central High School Test Center', 'Northwest High School', and 'West High School'. There is a 'Delete' button to the right of the dropdown.</p>	<p>In the drop-down menu to the right of the "Placement Messages for" heading, select the campus level institution, which will be listed first in the drop down menu, then click the "Go" button to the right.</p>
 <p>The screenshot shows the 'Placement Messages for' dropdown menu open. The selected institution is 'ZZ David Chadma College'. The dropdown list includes: 'Pre Algebra - Technologies - General Recommendations', 'Algebra - Technologies - General Recommendations', 'College Algebra - Technologies - General Recommendations', and 'Geometry - Technologies - General Recommendations'. There are 'New...', 'Duplicate...', 'Edit...', and 'Delete' buttons to the right of the dropdown.</p>	<p>You will need to have score ranges and placement messages for each of the subject areas you wish to include in your High School Outreach tests. Select a test, and click "Edit."</p>



On the Edit Placement Messages page, you will set your score ranges and fill in the placement messages. Typically, High School Outreach placement messages will include information such as:

- Whether the student is qualified to take a credit-bearing course or a remedial course
- How to register for the recommended course
- What support services are available
- Next steps

When finished, click “OK.”

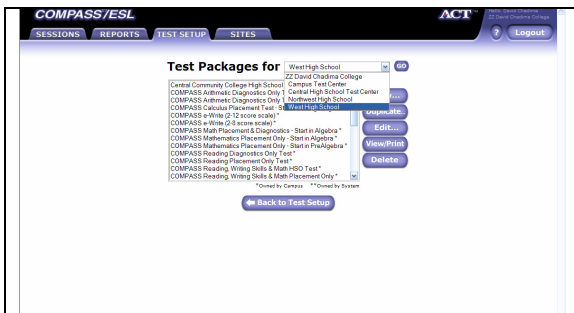
The procedures for establishing standardized diagnostic messages and local measures are the same, the key thing is to specify they are for the campus level.

When the test administrators at the high school test centers launch a COMPASS test, they can simply select the standardized test, and the student can begin testing.

### **Create Customized Test Packages for Specific High School Test Centers**

The standardized bulletin boards and placement messages described in the previous section can be customized to reflect the needs of a particular high school test center. The advantage of customizing these messages is the ability to make references to specifics unique to an individual high school – e.g., the name of the high school in the opening bulletin board, the location of support resources in that high school, the name of the counselor in that high school, etc.

The procedure for creating a customized test package is virtually the same that for creating a standardized test package. The key difference is you will need to specify the test center where the customized test package will be used



To the right of the “Test Packages for” heading, select the test center level institution, which will be listed below the campus level institution in the drop down menu. After selecting the appropriate high school test center, click the “Go” button to the right.

Be sure to create a unique name for each high school test center’s test package. To avoid confusion, it is a good idea to incorporate the name of each high school

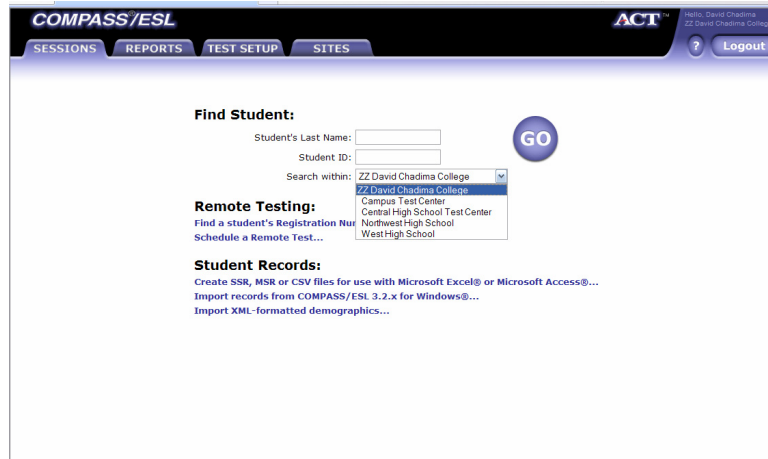
test center into the name of the test package for that school, e.g. “West High School HSO Test.”

In addition to the test package, you will also need to customize the “Data Used by Test Packages,” “Placement Messages,” “Diagnostic Messages,” and “Local Measures” following the same procedures as outlined above. Once again, be sure to specify the test center where the customized data or messages are to be used, and use the “Duplicate” or “New” function to create the customized data and messages, and give them names that are unique to each high school test center.

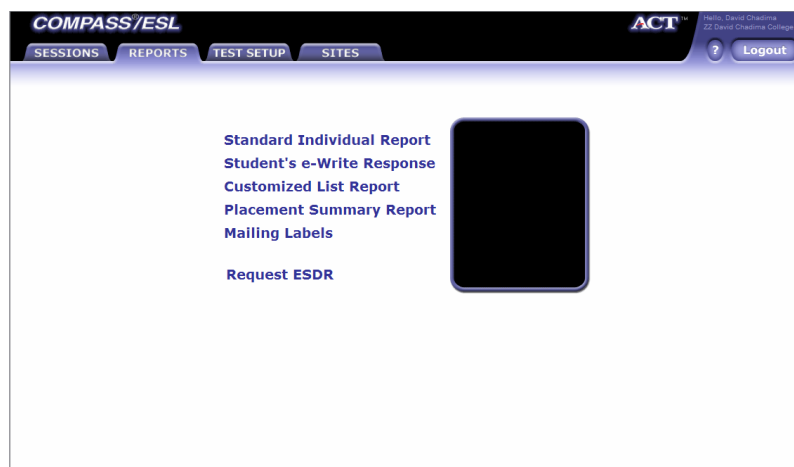
An alternative way to customize bulletin boards and/or placement messages is to log out as the campus level administrator, and then log in as the high school test center level administrator with full administrative rights to modify test packages, data or messages. (See Page 16)

### **Centralized Reporting**

The results for all students, regardless of which test center at which they tested, are available at the campus level search. To find the test results for an individual student, use the “Sessions” tab. You may limit the search to a specific test center by selecting the institution from the “Search within” drop down menu.



The results for groups of students sorted by various criteria are available through the “Customized List Report” function on the “Reports” tab. You can run a report on the results of all students tested in all high school test centers, or you can specify only the results from one particular high school test center.



For a detailed demonstration how to run a Customized List Report, visit <http://www.act.org/compass/tutorial/listreportinternet.html>

### **Identify At-risk Students**

A primary goal of early intervention high school outreach programs is to identify students who are not on track to being college ready and prescribing appropriate interventions.

An efficient way to achieve this is to compare the high school students' PLAN, ACT, or COMPASS scores with the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. Students whose scores fall below the benchmarks are good candidates for developmental interventions to help them become college ready.

ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks are the minimum ACT test scores required for students to have a high probability of success in credit-bearing college courses—English Composition, social sciences courses, College Algebra, or Biology.

<b>College Readiness Benchmarks</b>				
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>EXPLORE</b>	<b>PLAN</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>COMPASS</b>
English / Writing Skills	13	15	18	69
Reading	15	17	21	88
Math	17	19	22	65

For more information about the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, please reference "What Are ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks" which can be downloaded at: <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/benchmarks.pdf>

**Pinpoint Students’ Developmental Needs with Diagnostics**

If a student scores below a college readiness benchmark, the COMPASS Diagnostics Tests may be used as part of a High School Outreach program to pinpoint specific areas for additional work. Testing personnel may develop independent diagnostic test packages to administer to students with PLAN or ACT scores. Alternatively, if COMPASS placement tests are being used to evaluate student readiness, testing personnel can construct COMPASS test packages so that students who are scoring below a specified cutoff score will be routed directly into the diagnostic tests, eliminating the need for retesting.

The COMPASS program includes the following diagnostic tests:



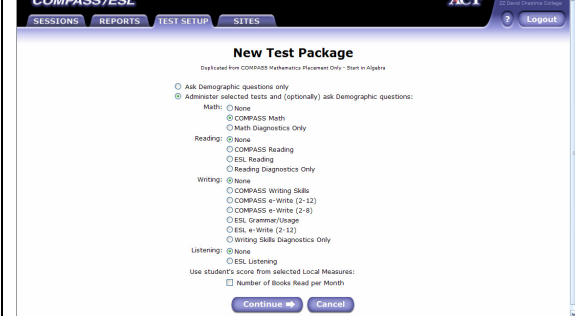
<b>COMPASS Diagnostics Tests Subject Areas</b>			
<b>Reading</b>	<b>Math (Pre-algebra)</b>	<b>Math (Algebra)</b>	<b>Writing Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Comprehension</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Reader Profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integers</li> <li>• Decimals</li> <li>• Exponents, Square Roots, and Scientific Notation</li> <li>• Fractions</li> <li>• Percentages</li> <li>• Averages (Means, Medians, and Modes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substituting Values</li> <li>• Setting Up Equations</li> <li>• Factoring Polynomials</li> <li>• Exponents and Radicals</li> <li>• Basic Operations / Polynomials</li> <li>• Linear Equations / One Variable</li> <li>• Linear Equations / Two Variables</li> <li>• Rational Expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Capitalization</li> <li>• Usage</li> <li>• Verb Formation / Agreement</li> <li>• Relationships of Clauses</li> <li>• Shifts in Construction</li> <li>• Organization</li> </ul>

Colleges can easily align these content areas with either home grown or standardized instructional software programs, e.g., PLATO courseware. Typically, the diagnostic test for each subject area will include approximately ten questions, so testing personnel should be careful not to create test packages that are too lengthy.

## Reduce Test Times with Automated Routing Rules

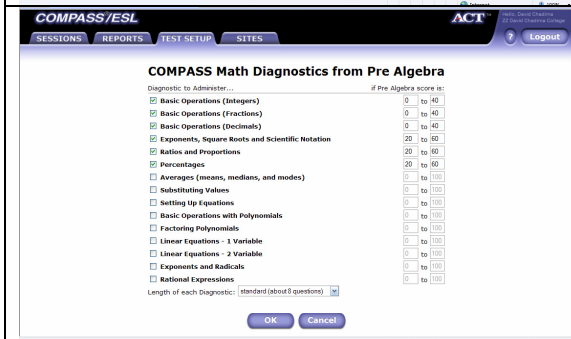
The COMPASS software allows colleges to establish campus-specific placement scores and route borderline students from Placement Tests directly into Diagnostic Tests. This eliminates the need for retesting at a later date and helps identify the specific areas in which borderline high school students need developmental help before they get to college.

The procedure to route students from Placement Tests into Diagnostic Tests is straight forward.

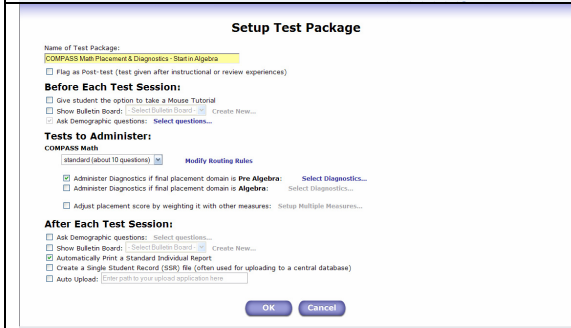
 <p>The screenshot shows the 'TEST SETUP' tab in the COMPASS/ESL interface. Under the 'Test Packages' section, there are links for 'Test Packages', 'Placement Messages', 'Diagnostic Messages', 'Local Measures', and 'Import Test Setup'. A 'New Test Package' button is highlighted. To the right, under 'Data used by Test Packages', a list of data sources is shown, including 'Bullets Boards', 'Majors &amp; Major Groups', 'Local Demographic Items', 'Multiple Choice', 'Numeric Response', 'Campus Resources', 'Transfer Institutions', and 'High Schools'.</p>	<p>To create a test package that routes students directly into diagnostics, select “Test Packages” under the “Test Setup” tab.</p>
 <p>The screenshot shows the 'Test Packages' list in the COMPASS/ESL interface. A list of various test packages is displayed, including 'COMPASS Arithmetic Diagnostics Only Test', 'COMPASS Calculus Placement Test - Start in College Algebra', and others. A context menu is open over the list, with the 'Duplicate' button highlighted.</p>	<p>Select the placement test package in which you’d like to include diagnostics and click the “Duplicate” button.</p>
 <p>The screenshot shows the 'New Test Package' configuration screen in the COMPASS/ESL interface. It includes options for 'Ask Demographic questions only', 'Administer selected tests and (optionally) ask Demographic questions', and radio button selections for 'Math', 'Reading', 'Writing', and 'Listening'. There are also checkboxes for 'Use student's score from selected Local Measures' and 'Number of Books Read per Month'. 'Continue' and 'Cancel' buttons are at the bottom.</p>	<p>The “New Test Package” screen will appear. Click “Continue.”</p>



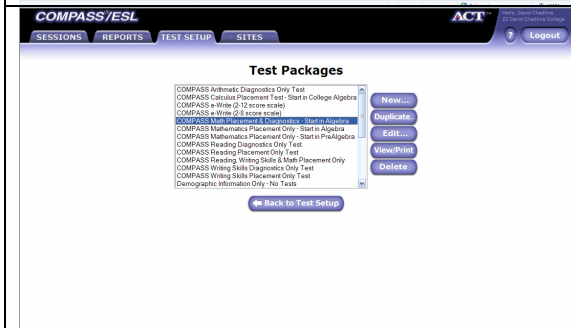
The “Setup Test Package” screen will appear. Rename the test package to include diagnostics. Then check the box next to the “Administer Diagnostics” line if final placement domain is Pre-Algebra. Then click “Select Diagnostics.”



The next screen will allow you to select which diagnostic tests to administer and the pre-algebra cutoff scores. Once you have made your selections, click “OK.”



The software will take you back to the Setup Test Package. Click “OK.”



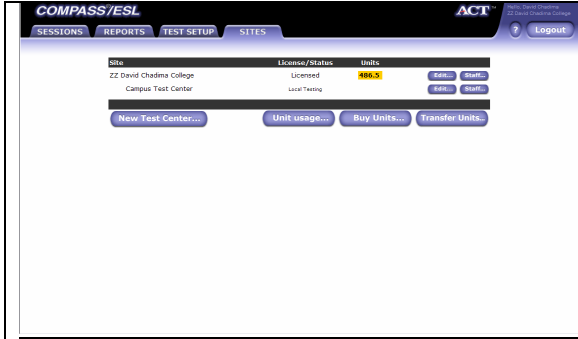
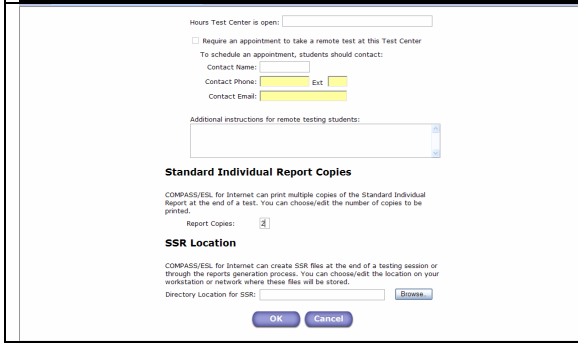
The new test package with diagnostics will now appear in your list of test packages.

## Instant Reporting for Outreach and/or Orientation Programs

A key advantage of using COMPASS in High School Outreach programs is that test results are available immediately upon completion of testing. This allows the high school students, college advisors, and/or high school counselors to begin planning for the students’ academic success during the outreach and/or orientation program while the need is most acute.




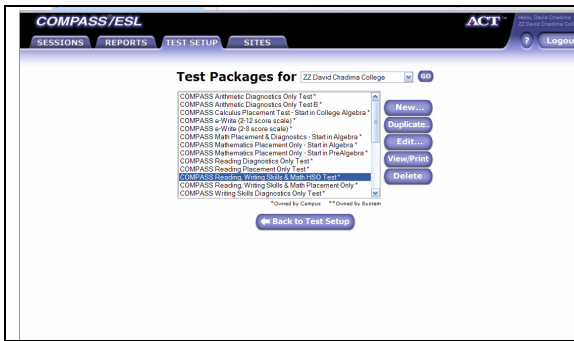
Once a high school has been set up as a testing center, the procedure to specify the number of Standard Individual Reports to print out at the high school immediately upon completion of testing just takes a few clicks of the mouse.

	<p>Go to the “Sites” tab, select the high school test center, and click “Edit.”</p>
	<p>On the “Test Center” page, scroll down to the bottom of the page. Under the “Standard Individual Report” heading, simply type in the number of copies you’d like to have printed. Most High School Outreach programs will print two copies, one for the student and one for the advisor or counselor.</p>

### Post-test to Confirm Student Readiness

Many High School Outreach programs, especially Early Intervention programs that use COMPASS diagnostics, need to post-test their students to evaluate the effectiveness of the developmental intervention and confirm student readiness for college. With COMPASS, post-testing is both convenient and affordable, with post-tests costing only half a unit when a student has previously completed the particular test.

	<p>On the “Test Setup” page, select “Test Packages.”</p>
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Select the test package for which you'd like to post-test students and click "Edit."



Modify the title of the test package to include "Post-Test." Check the "Flag as Post Test" box at the top of the page and the high school test sites that will be post-testing at the bottom of the page, then click "OK."

## ASSET – Paper-and-Pencil Alternative

ASSET offers the ASSET Placement Test as a paper-and-pencil alternative to COMPASS. This is a convenient option for colleges that wish to set up their high school outreach programs in a way that allows them to test large numbers of students at a single sitting (e.g. in the high school auditorium). To learn more about ASSET, please link to <http://www.act.org/asset>.

## APPENDIX 1 – High School Outreach Workstation Setup

Initial setup of each workstation to be used for testing; includes configuration of Internet settings, permissions, download of a secure browser and file of test items to each testing workstation.

**The workstation setup process must be completed for each computer that will be used to administer tests and requires that the operator have power User or administrator rights on that computer when doing the initial workstation setup process.** This is to provide maximum campus system protection and security for the testing process.

First examine the Technical Specifications, Technical Checklist, and XP SP2 Instructions. Links to this information are found at:  
<http://www.act.org/compass/tech/index.html>

To begin the process of setting up the workstations, you will need a staff ID and password created by the campus administrator and sent to you through an e-mail. Go to the URL provided in the e-mail and, after typing your login, select the “Workstation Setup” button. You will have an option to alter your initial password and create an alternative login question. Please make a note of your new login and question.

The COMPASS Test Launcher icon is created by the COMPASS system on the desktop of each workstation when the secure browser and test items are applied to the workstation.

### Four Options for Accomplishing the Initial Workstation Setup Process:

The workstation setup places a secure browser on that workstation for use during the testing process (prevents students from “jumping” out of the COMPASS Internet system, to other Internet sites, or other parts of the campus computer system while they are testing). The process also places a copy of the (encrypted) test items onto the workstation to avoid unnecessary traffic over the Internet when the system is ready to access a next test item for the individual.

Options for Initial Workstation Setup Process:

**Option A: One Workstation at a Time:** Download of the secure browser and test files via the Internet to the individual workstation, this may require 5-20 minutes or so for a workstation, depending on local bandwidth and traffic loads; suggest early morning, late afternoon, etc. to avoid peak Internet use times, or use one of the options below.

**Option B: Distribute from Server to All Workstations on a Network:** Download the secure browser and the test files to a campus server (following Steps 1-4 below).

Then distribute the secure browser and the test files to the workstations supported by that server. Finally, go to each workstation and complete Steps 1-4 below (register the MAC address in Step 1 and select “Do not download anything” in Step 3).

**Option C: Distribute through the Use of “Ghosting” Application:** Download the secure browser and the test files via the internet to the PC you are planning to ghost from (following Steps 1-4 below). Then ghost the remaining PCs. Finally, go to each workstation and complete Steps 1, 3, and 4 below (register the MAC address in Step 1 and select “Do not download anything” in Step 3).

**NOTE:** When “ghosting,” it is necessary to register the MAC address on each individual machine after ghosting is completed for testing to work properly.

**Option D: Burn a CD and Use It to Prepare Each Workstation:** (this is especially beneficial for Outreach center installation.) Download the files to a campus server. Then burn a CD containing the secure browser and test files. Use the CD to copy the secure browser and test files to each individual workstation. Finally, go to each workstation and complete Steps 1, 3, and 4 above (register the MAC address in Step 1 and select “Do not download anything” in Step 3).

### **The Four Step Workstation Setup Process:**

The workstation setup process must be done for each computer to be used for testing. It includes a built-in MAC registration procedure. (NOTE: if you are using a laptop, the Workstation Setup process must be done when the laptop is NOT in a docking station). Via the Internet, this procedure puts the “locked down” browser and the test items onto the workstation. (download requires 5-20 minutes or so, depending on the speed of the Internet connection.).

The workstation setup process includes four steps which accomplish the following required tasks:

**Step 1. Registers the MAC address** of the specific workstation (automatically extracts this information from within the workstation; no need for staff to locate this information manually) to establish it as an eligible part of the COMPASS Internet system.

**Step 2. Allows you to download via the Internet any additional files that may be needed** on that workstation; Java Virtual Machine required for e-Write use; Windows Media Player (if version 9.x or above is not already on the machine).

**Step 3. Allows you to select which COMPASS test files you want to download to the particular workstation,** offering the following three choices:

download the Test Launcher and the COMPASS Placement, Diagnostic, and e-Write test files (**without the ESL test files**; about 50 MB);

download the Test Launcher and all test files, including the ESL files (about 80 MB; **this option is required if you wish to administer the ESL tests on the particular workstation**);

do not download anything (use this option if you have already downloaded the workstation setup file, using either Option B, Option C, or Option D above, or if you are “un-registering” this workstation).

**Step 4. When you click “OK” any registration changes you have requested will take place immediately.** In addition, any files you have selected in Step 3 will begin to download (this process typically can require from 5 to 20 minutes on each workstation, depending on the bandwidth and current traffic load on your Internet connection; suggest early morning or late afternoon to avoid peak Internet use times at your campus; or use Option B, Option C, or Option D above to speed the process of workstation setup).

When you have completed all four steps, a “COMPASS Test Launcher” icon will be added to the desktop for each workstation that has been set up and the workstations are ready for use by the Proctors for administering the COMPASS Test Packages of the institution.

### **Downloading the Test Launcher**

You must go to the Workstation Setup page for every workstation, regardless of which option you choose.

## Workstation Setup

The workstation setup process requires a login that has a minimum of Power User rights. Please refer to the Technical Specifications and Browser Settings section of the [Workstation Setup and Installation Guide](#) for further details, or for help with initial setup.

### Step 1

Enter the requested information. Choose "Unregister" only if you wish to Unregister this workstation.

Status:  Register  Unregister

MAC Address:  [Get MAC Address](#) for this computer.

### Step 2

Download any of the following files that are needed for this Workstation. (Each of these links will open in a new window so you can download and install the needed files without leaving this page.)

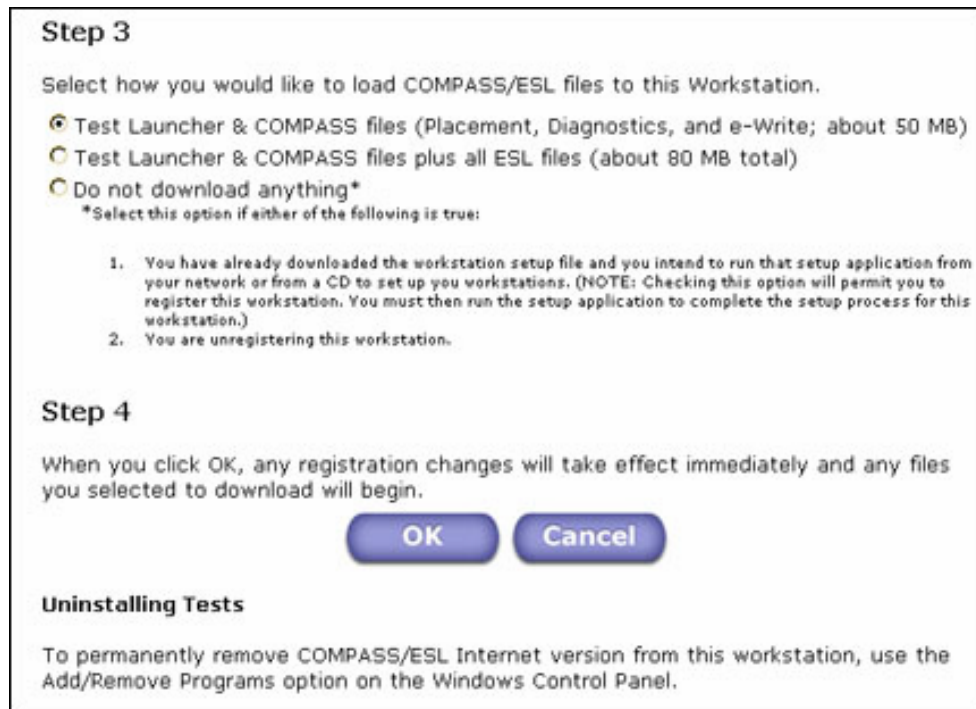
- [Java Virtual Machine](#) (needed to use e-Write)
- [Windows Media Player](#) (version 9.x)
- [MDAC 2.5](#) (needed to use COMPASS/ESL on Workstations with Windows 98se)

*Fig. 1, Workstation setup page, steps 1 & 2*

1. On the Workstation Setup page, you must register your workstation before you can administer tests. Select the radio button next to *Register*.

Click **Get MAC Address**, which will automatically find and insert the workstation's MAC Address. This unique number is used to identify the computer workstation.

2. If your machine is not already equipped with Java Virtual Machine (used for e-Write tests) or Windows Media Player (used for administering ESL tests and online test instructions), you may download and install them from this page by clicking the link.



*Fig. 2, Workstation setup page, steps 3 & 4*

3. You will have the option to download the Test Launcher & COMPASS files, with or without the ESL files.

There are three options presented on the Workstation Setup page. You must select a radio button next to one of the following options:

- Test Launcher & COMPASS files
  - Test Launcher & COMPASS files, plus all ESL files
  - Do not download anything
- If you are setting up your first workstation and wish to save the downloaded files to a network and/or hard drive to install on each subsequent workstation, choose one of the download options with or without the optional ESL files.
  - If you do not plan to install from a network or CD and instead, wish to install the files from the workstation hard drive, choose one of the download options with or without the optional ESL files.
  - If you have already downloaded the Test Launcher & COMPASS files to your network, and/or have burned the files on a CD to install on other workstations, choose “*Do not download anything.*”
  - If you are unregistering your workstation, choose “*Do not download anything.*”

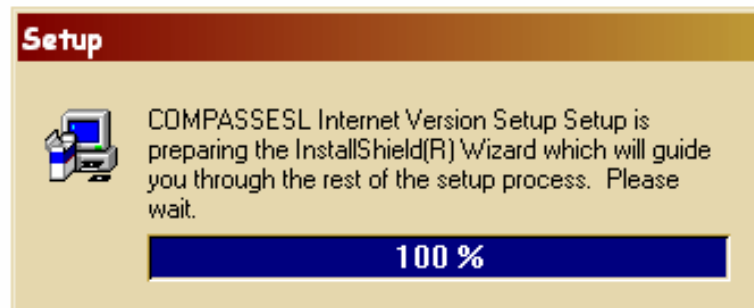
4. Once you have selected a download option, click “OK.”

When you are downloading the setup file, you must leave the computer on and connected to the Internet until the download is complete. Once the download is complete, return to the Login page.

### Individual Workstation Setup Using Option B

1. To complete Workstation Setup, go to the workstation you would like to set up. Using Windows Explorer, find the location of the downloaded file, **COMPASSInternetVersion.exe** (whether it is on CD, hard drive, or network), and double-click on it to begin.

The .exe will open the InstallShield® Wizard, which will guide you through installing the necessary files to your workstation.



*Fig. 3, InstallShield Setup*

2. Once the Wizard is prepared, the Welcome page of the installation setup process will display. Read the information and click “Next.”





*Fig. 4, Installation Setup Welcome*

3. The Choose Destination Location page will display. You may use the default location or select one of your own by clicking the "Browse" button.

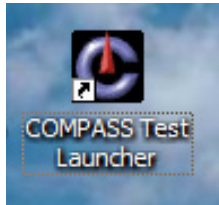


*Fig. 5, Choose Destination Location*

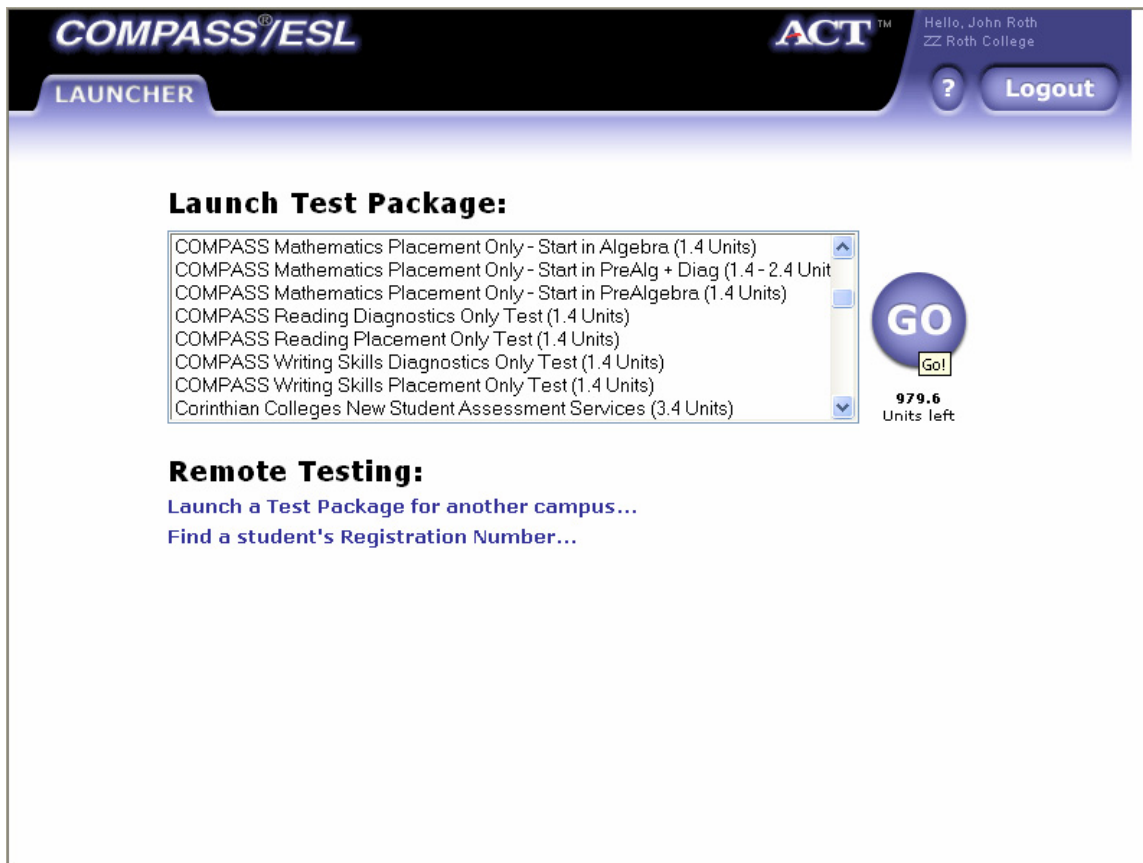
4. Once you have the Destination Folder set, click “Next” to begin the installation process. A progress bar will mark the status of the install process.
5. When the installation is finished, click “Finish” on the Setup Complete page.
6. Go through Steps 1-4 above to register the MAC address for the workstation (specify “Do not download anything” on Step 3).
7. Reboot your computer workstation.

## APPENDIX 2 – Administering COMPASS Tests in High School Test Sites

When the workstation is to be used to administer the COMPASS test to an individual student, the process is started by clicking on the COMPASS Test Launcher icon on the desktop of that workstation. This is followed by the entry of the staff ID and password of an individual with rights assigned for the functions of administering the tests, (Monitor must be set to 880 x 600 before beginning testing.)



To administer a test, highlight a Test Package to administer in the upper window labeled “Launch Test Package,” and the system is then ready for the student to sit down and complete the Test Package selected.



At the conclusion of testing, a report will be printed at your printer (if your high school outreach partner college has activated that feature as part of building the particular Test Package), a “Stop” message will appear for a short time, and the system will then reset

itself to be ready to administer the same Test Package to the next student on that workstation.

To interrupt a Test Package during the testing process, or to jump out of the Test Launcher part of the system, use the “Control-Alt-Q” keys simultaneously.

NOTE: This approach is for staff use only, and this information must not be shared with students.

An “interrupted” student will be able to restart that particular Test Package at a later date at the spot where the testing process was interrupted. The student must be in the same Test Package, must sign in with the same last name and ID #, and must choose the “complete a previous test” option.

## **APPENDIX 3 – Sample High School Outreach Student Guide**

(Reproduced with the permission of Parkland College, Champaign, IL)

### **UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMPASS SCORES**

#### **Why did I have to take this test?**

Through the Department of Education’s Title III “Strengthening Institutions” grant, Parkland College is reaching out to high school juniors and assessing their skills in reading, writing, and math using ACT’s COMPASS test. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate a student’s current skill levels and make recommendations that he or she can take into the senior year in order to make a smooth transition to college or career.

#### **So how does that affect me right now as a junior in high school?**

Taking the COMPASS test as a junior helps you to identify academic areas where you may need extra work in order to be college or career ready by the time you graduate from high school. If you identify these areas now, you and your counselor can develop a senior year schedule that best meets your academic needs.

#### **If you decide to go on to a four-year or two-year college, you will**

be assessed – regardless if you are seeking a degree or just wanting to take a few classes. The most common ways of assessing academic skill levels are:

- 1) high school transcript (used by some four-year schools)
- 2) ACT/SAT or other acceptable test score(s)
- 3) assessment tests in reading, writing, and math (most common method)

COMPASS is commonly used by institutions of higher learning, so your experience taking it now gives you an advantage when you take it again in the future.

#### **If I go to a four-year school and not to a community college, this doesn’t apply to me, right?**

Wrong. Assessment tests are used to determine skill levels at virtually every community college. However, the tests are becoming more and more prevalent at four-year schools, particularly in math.

#### **What’s the difference between the ACT test and the COMPASS?**

The ACT test evaluates the skills that students have already learned. It is administered before college admission and is used to determine whether a student has the skills necessary to have a reasonable chance of success in college. The COMPASS test is administered after admission and determines at what academic level a student should begin post-high school work.

There is no correlation between ACT test and COMPASS test scores, even though both exams are products of the same company.

### **What do I need to know about COMPASS?**

COMPASS is an adaptive, computer-based college placement exam developed by ACT. The test changes for each student based on performance. If a student gets a question correct, they next receive a question of greater difficulty and higher value. If they get a question wrong, then they are presented with an easier question of lesser value. A student is placed into a course level where their skills will not be overwhelmed or underwhelmed.

Because COMPASS is adaptive, it is not possible to determine what questions you received and what questions you answered correctly or incorrectly.

### **You still have a lot to learn!**

COMPASS was designed with the assumption that the examinee is a high school graduate with at least an overall C grade point average. Since you took the test as a junior, you cannot be expected to do as well as a recent high school graduate – particularly in math. You have more than a year of high school left, during which you will have the chance to learn many of the skills that you need in order to be college ready. Take advantage of this opportunity!

### **Will I be able to use my junior year COMPASS scores later on?**

Your junior year COMPASS scores will not appear on your transcript or other permanent record, and they do not count toward the assessment requirement. The scores are also non-transferable to other institutions of higher education. Colleges need to see your academic abilities at the time of matriculation, not your abilities during your junior year. If you take on challenging work during your senior year, then your scores most likely will improve by the time that you assess for college.

### **Why such a big deal over being college ready?**

Recent research has found that approximately 40% of high school graduates are not ready for the academic rigors of college or the professional demands of the workplace, as determined by professors, employers, and students themselves. Eight out of ten college freshmen surveyed also stated that, now knowing the demands of higher education, they would have applied themselves more in high school. Only 25% of employers polled said that a high school diploma was enough education to perform the jobs in their fields.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work? A study by Achieve, Inc., a nonprofit, bipartisan organization created by the nation's governors and business leaders. Feb 2005. Specifically, the study surveyed 1487 recent high school graduates from the classes of 2002, 2003, and 2004 and found that of those in college: 42% are not prepared, according to professors; 39% are not prepared, according to students themselves. Of recent high school graduates in the work force: 39% are not prepared for the demands of the work place, according to employers; and only 25% of employers polled said that a high school diploma was enough education to do the jobs for which they needed employees. 77% of those recent graduates not in college and 65% of those in college say that now knowing what the demands of work and higher education are, they would have applied themselves more in high school.

## Common student misconceptions about college readiness <sup>2</sup>

<u>What You May Believe</u>	<u>What You Should Know</u>
<b>I don't have to worry about my grades or the kinds of classes I take until my sophomore year.</b>	Students need to prepare well for college in order to enroll in college-level courses. Students need to take a carefully planned series of courses starting no later than ninth or tenth grade.
<b>It's better to take easier classes in high school and get better grades.</b>	One of the best predictors of college success is taking rigorous high school classes. Getting good grades in lower-level classes will not prepare students for college-level work.
<b>Meeting high school graduation requirements will prepare me for college.</b>	Adequate preparation for college requires a more demanding curriculum than is reflected in minimum requirements for high school graduation.
<b>I can take whatever classes I want when I get to college.</b>	Virtually all community colleges and many universities require entering students to take placement exams (such as COMPASS) in core subject areas. Those tests determine which classes students can take.
<b>Community colleges don't have academic standards.</b>	Community colleges have stringent academic standards that mirror those of four-year colleges. Community college courses are not "easy."
<b>Four-year colleges will admit anyone.</b>	Most four-year institutions do not admit students who are not college ready. Many four-year schools are in a position where they can be very selective.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from "Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations," a final policy report from Stanford University's Bridge Project, 2003.

**If I'm not ready for a four-year college, I can go to community college and easily make up the work that I didn't do in high school.**

While most community colleges admit all applicants who have completed high school, these colleges also make mandatory course placements based upon assessment scores.

**If I graduate from high school and I am not college ready, I will never be successful in college or in life.**

Many students improve academically in college and go on to be very successful. However, making up work that should have been done in high school is very challenging and costly. Work hard now and avoid this difficult path.



## DO NOT PAY TO TAKE CLASSES IN COLLEGE THAT YOU CAN TAKE FOR FREE IN HIGH SCHOOL!

**Developmental courses** are classes that you must take in order to bring yourself up to college level. If you placed below college level in reading, below English 101 in writing, or below Math 105/108/124, then you would have assessed into a developmental level course had this test been for college placement.

The skills covered in developmental courses are covered in your high school classes. Why would you want to pay to learn these skills when you could learn them for free in high school?



*Some fun facts about developmental courses:*

If you place into a developmental course, you must successfully complete it in order to qualify for other classes.

- You do not receive any credit hours for developmental courses. These courses do not count towards any degree.
- You will have to stay in school longer to finish your degree – in some cases, as long as two years.
- Developmental courses do not transfer to other schools.
- Most financial aid packages will not cover developmental courses.
- Developmental placements limit when you can register and what other classes you can take.
- Developmental courses will cost you extra time and plenty of extra money.

### A PARKLAND COLLEGE EXAMPLE

A 5 CREDIT HOUR MATH 098 COURSE (INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA) WILL COST \$385 PLUS THE COST OF THE TEXTBOOK (USUALLY ABOUT \$150) – AND THAT’S FOR ONLY ONE DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE. SOME STUDENTS WHO ASSESS INTO DEVELOPMENTAL READING, ENGLISH, AND MATH COULD SPEND \$2000 IN JUST TUITION (NOT INCLUDING BOOKS AND FEES) GETTING THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE. IN SOME CASES, THE COST COULD BE MORE.

IN ADDITION, STUDENTS WHO ASSESS INTO THE LOWEST DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE IN EVERY AREA COULD SPEND AS LONG AS TWO YEARS COMPLETING THE DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE – WITH ANOTHER TWO YEARS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THEIR ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE.

## IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO BE COLLEGE-READY!

If you are not happy with your scores, you can work over the next year to bring yourself up to college-level. To do so, you must:

1. **Take challenging courses.** Take a math class during your senior year, regardless of your level, and be sure to take courses that emphasize reading and writing. Your senior year is no time for “easy” classes!
2. **Work hard**, right up to graduation. No senior slack!
3. **Talk to your counselor, as well as your English and math teachers** about what you need to do to be prepared for higher education or the world of work.
4. **You have to do the work!** Your teachers are more than happy to help you, but only you can do the work to improve your skills.

Please understand that *you* have control over your academic success or failure. *You* have power over your attitude, behavior, and choices – all of which will determine how much or how little you learn.

If you are not happy with your COMPASS test results, you can make significant changes to your academic life over the next year regardless of your placements. It is not too late for you to make a commitment to your future.

## YOUR SCORE REPORT

Today you received your COMPASS score report. Your report indicates the level at which you placed in reading, writing, and math.

COMPASS test placements are done in terms of courses offered at Parkland. *Do not focus on the numeric score – look for the course placement.* The course(s) into which you placed are highlighted on your score report. Find your course placement for each discipline on the charts that follow. Each course description gives a brief summary of some of the skills on which you will need to work to be considered college ready. Take the time to study your placement and discuss areas of concern with your counselor and teachers. They will help you sign up for courses that you need to improve or maintain your skills.

## **READING**

Students should focus on the skill set indicated by the placement level. Students should develop the skills through *CCS 099* in order to be college ready.

Developmental	<b>Adult Basic Education:</b> Student needs to focus on developing basic reading skills for successful college-level work. Emphasis should be on textbook and essay analysis, reading efficiency, and note taking.
Developmental	<b>CCS 098:</b> Student needs to focus on intermediate comprehension skills basic to successful academic reading. Skills include reading and understanding different modes of written work in increasing levels of difficulty; understanding and applying active learning strategies; utilizing pre-reading and questioning strategies to activate prior knowledge of a written piece; utilizing general reading strategies to identify topic, thesis, and supporting ideas and to build college-level vocabulary; and practicing higher-order thinking skills to develop the ability to respond to a written piece.
Developmental	<b>CCS 099:</b> Student needs to focus on reading skills basic to successful college-level work. Emphasis should be on textbook and essay analysis and reading efficiency. Skills include utilizing active reading strategies for different types of reading; locating topics and identifying an author's thesis; writing concise yet thorough summaries of reading selections; and responding to readings based on personal experience, analysis, and interpretation. Attention should also be paid to note taking and critical thinking.
College Level	<b>No CCS Course Required:</b> Student is reading on the college level. Academically challenging coursework should be pursued in order to keep skills sharp.

**NOTE:** Diagnostic vocabulary and comprehension tests are given to students who do not place into college-level reading. Upper-range scores in the vocabulary and comprehension diagnostic sections can elevate a student into a higher reading placement.

## **WRITING**

Students should focus on the skill set indicated by the placement level. Students should develop the skills through *English 099* in order to be college ready.

Developmental	<b>Adult Basic Education:</b> Student would be required to complete the Adult Basic Education reading course (see Reading) before enrolling in an English course.
Developmental	<b>English 098:</b> Student needs to extensively practice writing with emphasis on paragraph organization and development. Students should develop ability to write multiple-paragraph essays and engage outside sources and texts. Student should review grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure.
Developmental	<b>English 099:</b> Student needs to extensively practice writing with emphasis on organizing and developing essays and engaging outside texts and ideas. Student should review grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph organization and development.
College Level	<b>English 101:</b> Student needs to focus on essay writing with emphasis on the writing process, purpose and audience, critical analysis, focus, organization, development, clarity, and coherence.
College Level	<b>English 106 (Honors):</b> Student needs to focus on essay writing with emphasis on the writing process, purpose and audience, critical analysis, focus, organization, development, clarity, and coherence. Student is also ready to focus on writing research papers. Necessary skills include adopting a topic, logically arguing a position, narrowing and supporting a thesis statement, developing effective research techniques, accurately documenting sources with a conventional format, and recognizing the particular needs of an audience.

**NOTE:** Students receiving the essay option message would need to write an essay to determine if placement is English 099 or English 101. Please note that 80% of students at Parkland College who opt to take the essay place into English 101. This essay is not provided to juniors assessing in the high schools.

## **MATH**

Students should focus on the skill set indicated by the placement level. Students should also develop the skills through *Math 098* in order to be college ready.

Developmental	<b>Adult Basic Education:</b> Basic computation skills.
Developmental	<b>MATH 094 (Pre-Algebra Skills):</b> Ratio; proportion; percent; conversion of units; area; perimeter; signed numbers; order of operations; formulas; basic equations; basic exponent laws; word phrases; and basic word problems.
Developmental	<b>MATH 095 (Beginning Algebra):</b> Equations; inequalities; exponents (positive, negative, zero); scientific notation; operations with polynomials and an introduction to factoring; modeling and applications; linear equations; the coordinate plane; linear systems of two equations; and multiple approaches to problem solving.
Developmental	<b>MATH 098 (Intermediate Algebra):</b> Relations; functions; graphs and their analysis; systems of linear equations with more than two variables; polynomials and factoring; radicals; quadratic equations and inequalities, absolute value equations and inequalities; algebraic fractions; quadratic functions; modeling and applications; linear and quadratic curve fitting.
College Level	<b>MATH 124 (College Algebra):</b> Relations and functions; linear, polynomial, exponential, and logarithmic models; radicals and complex numbers; systems of equations and matrix methods; sequences and series; and binomial theorem.
College Level	<b>MATH 125 (College Trigonometry):</b> Trigonometric functions; fundamental identities; graphing; solving trigonometric equations; inverse trigonometric functions; complex numbers; and vectors.
College Level	<b>MATH 128 (Calculus and Analytic Geometry):</b> Functions; derivative and its applications; integral and its applications; limits and continuity; trigonometric, exponential, logarithmic, and hyperbolic functions.

**NOTE:** Students receiving the computation skills message would need to take a computation skills test to determine if placement is Math 094 or Adult Basic Education Math. This computation test is not provided to juniors assessing in the high schools.

## APPENDIX 4 – Sample High School Outreach Checklist

(Reproduced with the permission of Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, IA)

### *What colleges should consider when building partnerships with high schools*

#### **Checklist**

1. What will be the purpose for conducting this testing activity? Is it to enroll students? Determine college readiness? Provide instruction? Provide realistic information about a student's skills? Tailor curriculum to meet needs? How to advise students? How to help counselors advise students? Provide better prepared students to enter Kirkwood? Gather pre- and post-test data? Identify what **model(s)** to use:
  - \* **Dual enrollment** Would the student enroll in high school and Kirkwood courses, either for credit or for developmental work? Noncredit?
  - \* **Placement** If testing seniors, would we use Kirkwood placement tests? Would these placement scores be valid? For how long? One year? Could seniors enroll in Kirkwood courses (face-to-face or Internet)? When could they enroll? Do we make remote testing feature available? If testing juniors, do we use current KCC placement tests and messages or customized tests and messages to place in the high school curriculum? If testing sophomores, build customized placement messages for placement in high school curriculum or Kirkwood courses, or both? Who will map score ranges to high school curriculum? Will placement be mandatory?
  - \* **Diagnostic Testing for Instruction** Who would be given diagnostic tests? Only those students who do not place into Kirkwood courses? How will these scores be used? What resources (software, i.e. Skills Tutor, face-to-face, hybrid, Internet courses, modules, learning objects) are available for students to build skills in the high schools or at Kirkwood, or both? Who will map diagnostic score ranges to high school or Kirkwood curriculum? Who will pay for this instruction?
2. Who will decide cut scores and wording of placement messages for each site and each grade level at each site?
3. Who will interpret scores to the student, teacher, counselor, and parents?
4. What training is needed for proctors, counselors, and teachers? Who will provide this training? When do they need it? What ongoing training and support are needed? Who will provide ongoing training and support? What are the costs?
5. How are the high school faculty involved? What training will they need? Who will provide this training?
6. Would high school faculty modify their curriculums to meet needs identified by COMPASS Internet scores?
7. Would high school counselors be involved? What would be their role? What training will they need? Who will provide this training?
8. How would parents be involved? Would scores be reported to parents? Would parents pay for developmental or credit instruction?
9. How will security be maintained? How will Kirkwood's COMPASS testing guidelines be enforced?
10. Who will provide calculators for math testing?

11. What facilities are equipped for administering COMPASS at each site? How are they secured? Who will ensure this security?
12. How many computers are needed for testing? Who will install the COMPASS Internet Version test launcher on them?
13. Who will administer the tests? What training will proctors need? Who will provide this training?
14. How often will the tests be administered? Will tests be made available only during certain periods of time? Or available all the time?
15. How long will this activity take place (time period)?
16. Will this be a pilot project?
17. Which tests will be administered (reading, writing, mathematics placement, diagnostics, ESL, e-Write)?
18. Are multiple test packages needed? If so, what kind?
19. Who will pay for the tests? (initial and re-tests) (student, college, high school, parent?)
20. Can students prepare before taking tests?
21. Can students retest? If so, when? Who pays for retesting (retests cost ½ of initial testing)?
22. What is the total cost of the testing activity?
23. How will this activity be communicated to the high school faculty and staff?
24. What role will the high school faculty and/or staff play in this activity?
25. Do we need a high school faculty and staff COMPASS orientation activity? If so, when and where? Who will provide the orientation?
26. What high school faculty and staff training may be required?
27. What materials and manuals will be created/used?
28. Will SSRs (single student records) be created? Uploaded where? To be imported into Colleague?
29. Who owns/controls the student data? Kirkwood owns the data, but who is authorized to manipulate it? Report it? Report it to whom?
30. How may the student data be used?
31. Identify where the data (or backup data) will be stored.
32. What demographic items or local questions will be used? COMPASS Internet Version can collect 22 demographics and 40 “local items” item questions. Do we have different demographic/local questions for sophomores, juniors, and seniors?
33. What cutoff scores will be used? Who will determine these scores?
34. What placement and/or diagnostic messages will be used?
35. Will students receive counseling or advising after testing? If so, when and by whom?
36. What additional costs might occur (retesting, mileage, staff time, printing, etc.)?
37. Who will create and conduct the program evaluation? When?
38. Who is responsible for managing the testing program? Who decides testing policies, placement issues, and testing issues? Who will be the final authority to resolve issues?
39. Who will provide technical support at each site? Who will be approved to contact COMPASS technical support? Who will manage technical support? Who will proctors call for technical questions?



40. Who will develop a contact list for high school personnel?

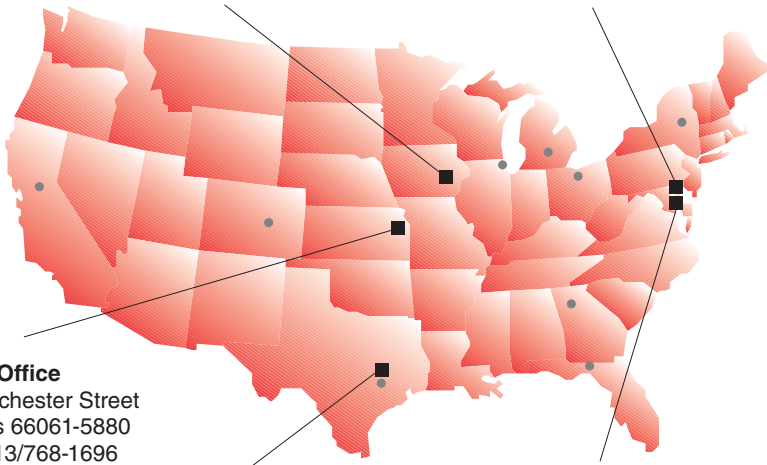
41. Do we need a written agreement or contract? Who will write this agreement? Who will secure written approval from the person with authority?





# ACT Offices

## Postsecondary Services—Assessment Programs



**National Headquarters**  
500 ACT Drive  
P.O. Box 168  
Iowa City, Iowa 52243-0168  
Telephone: 319/337-1000

**Hunt Valley Office**  
Executive Plaza I, Suite 200  
11350 McCormick Road  
Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031-1002  
Telephone: 410/584-8000

**Olathe Office**  
1365 North Winchester Street  
Olathe, Kansas 66061-5880  
Telephone: 913/768-1696

**National Center for Educational Achievement**  
4030-2 West Braker Lane  
Austin, Texas 78759-5329  
Telephone: 512/320-1800

**Washington, DC Office**  
One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 340  
Washington, DC 20036-1170  
Telephone: 202/223-2318

## Field Offices

### WEST REGION

#### Denver Office

3131 South Vaughn Way, Suite 218  
Aurora, Colorado 80014-3507  
Telephone: 303/337-3273

#### Sacramento Office

2880 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite 214  
Rancho Cordova, California 95742-6549  
Telephone: 916/631-9200

### MIDWEST REGION

#### Chicago Office

300 Knightsbridge Parkway, Suite 300  
Lincolnshire, Illinois 60069-9498  
Telephone: 847/634-2560

#### Ohio Office

700 Taylor Road, Suite 210  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230-3318  
Telephone: 614/470-9828

#### Michigan Office

1001 Centennial Way, Suite 400  
Lansing, Michigan 48917-8249  
Telephone: 517/327-5919

### SOUTHWEST REGION

#### Austin Office

8303 MoPac Expressway N, Suite A-110  
Austin, Texas 78759-8369  
Telephone: 512/345-1949

### EAST REGION

#### Albany Office

4 Pine West Plaza, Suite 403  
Albany, New York 12205-5564  
Telephone: 518/869-7378

#### Atlanta Office

3355 Lenox Road NE, Suite 320  
Atlanta, Georgia 30326-1332  
Telephone: 404/231-1952

#### Florida Office

1315 East Lafayette Street, Suite A  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-4757  
Telephone: 850/878-2729