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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### District, college math professionals propose high school curriculum changes Requiring math course each year would improve students' prospects

North Charleston, S.C. – [Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative's](#) Math Pathways Project Team (MPPT), made up of math professionals at the district and college level, has reviewed and evaluated the region's high school math curriculum.

Today, the team has released a statement with recommendations for the regional school districts, which include [Berkeley County School District](#), [Charleston County School District](#), [Dorchester School District 2](#) and [Dorchester School District 4](#).

These recommendations are intended to open pathways to college and career access related to science, business, technology, engineering and other STEM-related disciplines.

### Statement regarding the tri-county region's math curriculum

After careful study, the Math Pathways Project Team has reached consensus on the following recommendations directed to the four school districts serving Lowcountry students:

1. All students should complete four credits of math in high school, including Algebra 1 and 2, Geometry and a fourth higher-level math course beyond Algebra 2.
2. All students should enroll in and complete a math course each year of high school. Students who complete required math credits prior to ninth grade may receive graduation credit for that coursework; however, these students should still enroll in and complete a math course during each high school year.
3. Students planning on pursuing a STEM career should take an Algebra-based course, preferably Pre-Calculus, as their fourth level math course. If Pre-Calculus is completed prior to senior year, students should enroll in and complete an additional Algebra-based course.
4. High school math courses beyond Algebra 1 should include a final course exam that is common across the district and aligned exclusively to the set of priority standards that are set for that course.

In a [study](#) conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, findings showed that of all pre-college courses, the highest level of math a student completes has the strongest influence on postsecondary-degree completion, and completing a course beyond Algebra 2 more than doubles the odds that a student who enters a postsecondary program will complete their degree.

Local high school graduates arrive at college largely unprepared for college-level math courses. Almost nine in 10 tri-county students enrolling at [Trident Technical College](#) require math remediation, while nearly 40% of those taking the math placement test at other MPPT-member colleges fail to pass and must either remediate or lose access to STEM-related majors.

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This lack of proficiency is, in part, because students do not take a math course their senior year of high school, and consequently do not have the required level of knowledge to succeed in college-level courses.

Requiring a math course every year would significantly improve the prospects of college-bound students to access a STEM-related field and avoid remediation. While the MPPT recognizes that many students will graduate high school with no interest in STEM or no interest in attending college, being current and capable in math equips all students with critical thinking skills important to any career as well as the completion of a two- or four-year degree down the road.

The MPPT has also concluded that most final exams for high school math courses beyond Algebra 1 are not common, district-wide assessments, and, therefore, may have little to no accountability for the content assessed.

To ensure that all students are assessed on their proficiency with the standards applicable to each course, the MPPT strongly encourages school districts to create or obtain and use common final course exams that are tied exclusively to the state adopted South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for Mathematics.

Respectfully submitted,

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### About the Math Pathways Project Team

The Math Pathways Project Team (MPPT) was initiated in October of 2015 by Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative's Postsecondary Education Consortium and High School Graduation Network to open pathways to STEM-related college and career options. MPPT is comprised of representation from the region's four school districts (Berkeley County, Charleston County, Dorchester District 2 and Dorchester District 4) and colleges and universities across the state (Charleston Southern University, Clemson University, The Citadel, College of Charleston, University of South Carolina and Trident Technical College). Since that date, the team has been engaged in the review and evaluation of the region's school district math curriculum, the colleges' and universities' entry requirements and the readiness of high school students to enter post-secondary education and/or to enter into the workforce.

### About the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

The Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (TCCC) is a community-wide movement in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, South Carolina focused on improving the quality of life of its citizens and its workforce through education. Using data and focused community collaboration across a continuum from "cradle-to-career," TCCC serves as a catalyst for widespread systemic change, with the ultimate goal of increased student success and economic prosperity for all.

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[www.TriCountyCradleToCareer.org](http://www.TriCountyCradleToCareer.org)

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