

HIGHER ED

for HIGHER STANDARDS



UPDATE

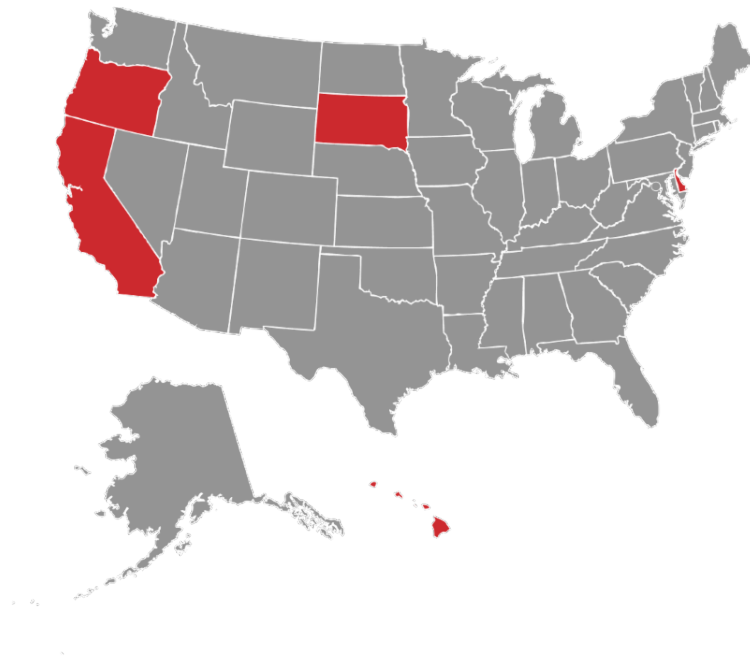
April 2015

COALITION UPDATE

Help us get to 500!

Higher Ed for Higher Standards currently has more than 300 college presidents and state system leaders signed on in 38 states, and we want to continue to grow our coalition of postsecondary leaders who believe that higher K-12 academic standards are critical to improving college readiness, persistence, and success. Please share this with others who might support the cause. Supporters can sign on to HEfHS [here](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON CA, DE, HI, OR, and SD



Higher ed systems and institutions in California, [Delaware](#), Hawaii, Oregon, and South Dakota all recently announced their commitment to use the new Smarter

Balanced assessments as a formal indicator of college readiness, joining all public institutions and nine private colleges in [Washington](#).

[Close to 200 public and private institutions in these six states](#) will begin accepting the assessments in 2015, using 11th graders' scores on Common Core-aligned Smarter Balanced tests to place students in college-level, credit-bearing math and English courses once they enroll in college. Two institutions in Colorado and the community college system in Illinois announced their intent to do the same with the PARCC assessments last month.

More than seven million students will take the Smarter Balanced exams in English/language arts and math in 18 states and one territory this spring. Smarter Balanced continues to work with higher education leaders to expand the pool of institutions using the assessments as evidence of college readiness.

MAKING THE CASE

States Should "Stay the Course" on Common Core Standards

Nancy Zimpher, chancellor of the State University of New York, and John Morgan, chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents, have urged states to keep pressing forward with efforts to implement higher standards that prepare students for college and careers in a recent [essay](#) in Education Week. Noting that high standards are "devalued when they become a tool for political pundits," the authors highlight the higher education community's support for college- and career-ready standards, specifically the Higher Ed for Higher Standards coalition.

"We would ask [lawmakers] to focus less on labels and more on the substance of standards," Zimpher and Morgan conclude. "Lawmakers should think carefully before derailing educational standards that are working."

Zimpher also wrote a blog column addressing the "opt-out" phenomenon, in which some parents have pulled their students out of statewide assessments in some states, highlighting the importance of aligned annual assessments in helping educators to diagnose student learning and improve college readiness. This blog column has received a steady stream of attention in state and national media since its publication on Monday. Click [here](#) to read the complete post.

Colleges Must Prepare for College-Ready Students

Harold Levine, dean of the school of education at the University of California, Davis,

and Michael Kirst, president of the California State Board of Education, wrote for [Education Week](#) about the effects of higher standards on higher education and the steps needed to ensure that colleges and universities are prepared for college-ready students. "Higher education has only recently begun to appreciate the breadth of the potential impacts of the common core on their own practices, from admissions to instruction to student outcomes," they wrote. "As common-core implementation continues to expand and evolve in the K-12 system, how are the thousands of higher education faculty members who teach freshman and sophomore courses in English and mathematics (and the sciences, of course) preparing for their newly admitted students (roughly 3.3 million first-time freshmen projected for 2016), who will almost certainly have different expectations of what and how they learn and are taught?"

Colorado: Postsecondary "Pioneers"

Paul Lingenfelter, president emeritus of the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, wrote an op-ed in [The Denver Post](#) supporting Adams State and Aims Community Colleges as "pioneers" in their use of the PARCC assessment to signal that students are ready for credit-bearing courses in their institutions. He pointed out that these colleges are saving students money by using their credit hours on courses that lead to graduation instead of remedial courses. Though they may be the first to adopt PARCC, Lingenfelter believes that they "won't be lonely for long," as other higher ed leaders recognize the potential for these assessments.

About Higher Ed for Higher Standards

Higher Ed for Higher Standards is a coalition of [higher education leaders](#) that strives to ensure that Americans realize the importance of higher K-12 standards for higher education and student success after high school. [Join us!](#)

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Higher Ed for Higher Standards | 225 Reinekers Lane | Suite 250 | Alexandria | VA | 22314