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HIGHER ED
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UPDATE



November 2014

Key Higher Ed Associations Endorse Standards

Last month, the [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#) (AASCU) Board of Directors passed a policy signaling strong support for the Common Core State Standards. AASCU represents over 420 public colleges and universities across the United States. In its [2014 Policy Agenda](#) the organization says, "A strong high school curriculum aligned with college standards is integral to student success and should be available to all students. AASCU strongly endorses the Common Core State Standards... and we call upon states to facilitate the timely implementation of the Common Core, develop sound assessment mechanisms, and ensure collaboration among stakeholders in the P-16 continuum."

The [National Association of System Heads](#) (NASH), the association of chief executives of U.S. colleges and university systems, also has been a strong supporter of Higher Ed for Higher Standards. This summer, NASH's Board of Directors passed a strongly worded [resolution in support of the Common Core State Standards](#). The resolution calls on state policymakers to "stay the course and resist calls for scaling back, diluting or delaying implementation of the standards or aligned assessments." It also calls on states to implement high-quality, aligned assessments. "Implementing higher standards without embracing quality assessments to measure those standards is a misguided strategy," the resolution says. This is the first time NASH has adopted a resolution on any policy issue, underscoring the importance of higher K-12 standards to our nation's higher education systems.

Higher Ed Leadership in States

Illinois and New Jersey postsecondary leaders have stepped forward to publicly endorse higher K-12 standards. These leaders have joined states like California, Colorado, and New York in pledging their support for the Common Core and aligned assessments.



Specifically, the Illinois Board of Higher Education [signed a letter](#) to state policymakers urging them to continue to move forward with the standards and the PARCC assessments. The New Jersey President's Council, which includes the public and private two- and four-year institutions [signed a letter](#) to the New Jersey State Board of Education, pledging its support and commitment to the Common Core.



Washington State community colleges and universities have committed to use Smarter Balanced assessments as a leading indicator of college readiness for placement. [Announced](#) in September, institutions will begin using the assessments in 2015, using 11th graders' scores on Common Core-aligned Smarter Balanced assessments to automatically place students in college-level, credit-bearing math and English courses once they enroll in college. Students who score at a high enough level will be able to skip taking the Accuplacer assessment. High schools also are designing courses to help students who do not achieve high enough scores to better use their senior year to be ready for college coursework.

A [new initiative in Delaware](#) seeks to harness the Common Core to improve preparation and reduce remediation on its college campuses. College faculty and K-12 educators worked together to create a new bridge course called "Foundations of College Math." Delaware seniors who pass this course will be automatically enrolled in credit-bearing, non-remedial math courses in Delaware colleges.

Kentucky Posts Third Year of Gains

After four years of implementing the Common Core, Kentucky students are improving in reading and math, and more students are becoming college- and career-ready along the way. The first state to adopt and fully implement the Common Core, Kentucky [released the results](#) of its most recent student assessments showing increased college- and career-ready rates for the third year in a row. Approximately 62 percent of Kentucky students are now college- and career-ready, up from 54 percent last year and 47 percent in 2012.

Teacher Opinions of Common Core Improve with Implementation

A recent [Gallup Poll](#) finds that K-12 faculty who have the most exposure to the Common Core have a positive impression (61%). Favorable teacher perceptions of the standards occur in states that have fully implemented the standards, showing a clear trend of increasing support of the standards as teachers become more familiar with them.



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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