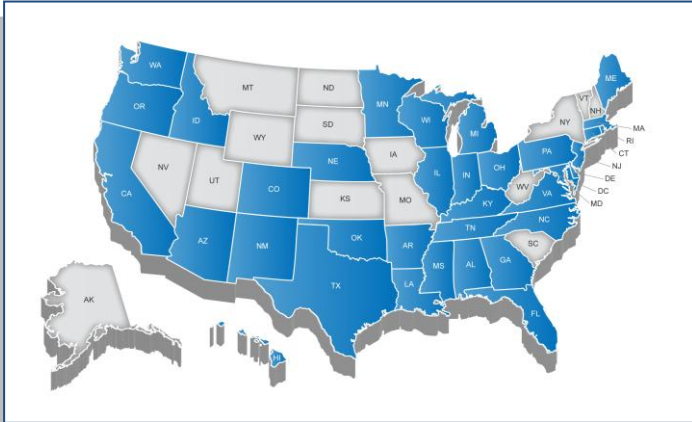




Achieve & The American Diploma Project Network

At the 1996 National Education Summit a bipartisan group of governors and corporate leaders decided to create and lead an organization dedicated to supporting standards-based education reform efforts across the states. To do so, they formed Achieve as an independent, bi-partisan, non-profit education reform organization. To this day, Achieve remains the only education reform organization led by a Board of Directors of governors and business leaders. This unique perspective has enabled Achieve to set a bold and visionary agenda over the past 15 years, leading Education Week in 2006 to rank Achieve as one of the most influential education policy organizations in the nation.

The American Diploma Project Network



To make college and career readiness a priority in the states, in 2005, Achieve launched the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network. Starting with only a handful of states, the Network has now grown to include 35 states educating 85 percent of all U.S. public school students. Through the ADP Network governors, state education officials, postsecondary leaders and business executives work together to improve postsecondary preparation by aligning high school standards, graduation requirements and assessment and accountability systems with the demands of college and careers.

Achieve supports ADP Network states through multi-state convenings, regular Network-wide communications, and on-the-ground support, anchored in:

Technical Assistance to States: Achieve provides technical assistance to states on their standards, assessments, curriculum and accountability systems. The *College & Career-Ready Policy Institute* assisted eight leading ADP Network state in developing statewide assessment and accountability policies that support their college- and career-ready standards and graduation requirements. Achieve's *Common Core Comparison Tool* was used by nearly every state in the nation, with direct, hands-on support from Achieve, and Achieve has provided Common Core "boot camp" to a number of states in the Network to support implementation efforts.

Research and Development: Achieve regularly conducts R&D to help advance the work of the ADP Network states as well as the education reform community at large. Achieve's research includes studies of high school graduation requirements, implementation strategies for the Common Core State Standards, state accountability models, and evaluations of what high school exit exams and widely-used college admissions and placement exams actually measure.

Our work doesn't stop with the publication of reports; we have developed tools that help states change policies and practices. Chief among these are benchmark expectations – model K-12 academic standards – in mathematics and English that reflect the knowledge and skills graduates need to succeed after high school, which served as a pre-cursor to the Common Core State Standards. Achieve also spearheaded a 15-state partnership, the ADP Assessment Consortium, one of the first and largest efforts to develop and administer common mathematics end-of-course exams across states.

Communications Tools & Support: To assist ADP Network states in making the case for reform, Achieve has developed a range of advocacy resources that aim to address common concerns with college and career readiness. One of Achieve's most popular tools is the *Math Works* series, a set of materials that explains why all students need higher-level mathematics to success. Achieve has also developed *The Future Ready Project*, a web-based resource center to help advocates develop, launch, and refine their own college- and career-ready communications and outreach plans, critical for sustaining the agenda.



Looking Ahead

States in the ADP Network have led the way in making the case that education and opportunity are critical to America's ability to innovate, compete and grow in an increasingly sophisticated and technologically-driven world economy. While an impressive amount of progress has been made in the 15 years since Achieve was founded, the reform movement is at a critical juncture where translating good policy into practice will be essential to getting results. To that end, over the next few years, Achieve will focus on:

Common Core State Standards Implementation:

Achieve in partnership with the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) developed K-12 standards in English and math that are internationally-benchmarked; college and career ready; rigorous, clear and focused; and grounded in research. Over forty-five states have adopted the new standards. Achieve is now supporting states as they implement the new standards through multi-state convenings, the development of tools, and web-based and in-person presentations. For more information, see www.achieve.org/achieving-common-core

Next Generation Science Standards: In partnership with the National Academies of Science's National Research Council (NRC), National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Achieve is managing a 26 state-led process to develop next-generation science standards, based on the NRC's recently-released *Conceptual Framework for Science Education*. The next generation science standards will be faithful to the NRC Framework, internationally benchmarked, and rigorous. For more information, see www.nextgenscience.org

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC): Achieve is serving as the project management partner for PARCC, a consortium of states that was awarded a Race to the Top assessment competition grant. PARCC states have committed to building a K-12 assessment system that: builds a pathway to college and career readiness for all students; creates high-quality assessments that measure the full range of the Common Core State Standards; supports educators in the classroom; makes better use of technology in assessments; and advances accountability at all levels. The first exams will be given in 2014-15. For more information, see www.parcconline.org

Advancing the College and Career Ready Agenda: Achieve will continue to work with states to advance the broader college- and career-ready agenda. With work on standards implementation and assessment underway, related policies such as graduation requirements and accountability are equally critical. Additional related policies and issues that reinforce college and career readiness for all are also top priorities, such as credit-based proficiency, postsecondary remedial education, and student supports and interventions.

State Progress on College and Career Readiness

When Achieve formed the ADP Network in 2005, few states had college- and career-ready policies; today, with Achieve's help:

- 49 states and Washington DC have standards aligned with college and career readiness, including those that have adopted the Common Core State Standards.
- 21 states and Washington DC require students to complete college- and career-ready graduation requirements to earn a high school diploma.
- 14 states administer an assessment in high school used by postsecondary institutions to make placement decisions to all students.
- 22 states have P-20 data systems that regularly track student progress across the education pipeline.
- A number of states have begun to incorporate indicators of college and career readiness into their reporting and accountability systems, but only one state has an accountability system that fully values college and career readiness for all students.