

Taking Root

Communicating the College- and Career-Ready Agenda

A strong communications strategy is central to successfully adopting, implementing and sustaining reform. A communications strategy that clearly lays out the rationale for higher expectations in high school – particularly the connection between a rigorous high school experience and success in college and careers – can go a long way towards building public support for a major reform effort.

A strong communications effort is not dependent on a big budget or the ability to buy media. There are many effective strategies that are low to no cost. More important to the effort is leadership, organization, outreach to key players and consistency of message.

To help states Achieve has developed an accompanying set of tools and resources around communications, under the banner *Taking Root: Communicating the College- and Career-Ready Agenda*, recognizing that strategic communications and outreach are critical for the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of college- and career-ready policies.

SOME OF THE MATERIALS DEVELOPED INCLUDE

- *Putting the Pieces in Place for a Statewide Communications Strategy*
- *Communicating Internally and Externally*
- *Communications Channels for Every Budget*
- *Building a College- and Career-Ready Coalition*
- *Hosting a College- and Career-Ready Roundtable*
- *Engaging the Media*
- *Communications Research*
- *Measuring a Communications Strategy's Success*
- *A Mid-Course Audit of Your College- and Career-Ready Communications Strategy*

Achieve has also developed a set of templates for states to use as they develop, launch and refine their own communications and outreach strategies.

THE COMMUNICATIONS TEMPLATES INCLUDE

- *College- and Career-Ready Communications and Outreach Plan Template*
- *Sample Organizing Principles*
- *Sample Strategic Tactical Plans*
- *Sample Key Three Messages*
- *Sample One-Pager on your College- and Career-Ready Coalition*
- *College- and Career-Ready Flexible Fact Sheets*

Achieve hopes this comprehensive set of resources provides states with the information and guidance they need as they plan and implement their own communications and outreach strategies, focused on the goal of graduating all students ready for college and careers.