Achieve | *Perspective Newsletter*

January 2016

Dear Reader,

When President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, it officially brought the No Child Left Behind era to a close. Moving forward, states will have greater flexibility as they give careful consideration to the systems they will put in place to ensure every child receives a quality education. How should states choose which student performance indicators they use to improve overall achievement? Are they reporting those indicators in a way that is transparent and understandable to the public? As 2016 begins and states begin preparing for the transition, Achieve looks forward to continuing to provide support, tools, and resources to ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college or a career.

Michael Cohen, *President, Achieve*

Fordham announces accountability design competition

To help spur creative thinking about redesigning school rating accountability systems, the Fordham Institute recently announced an accountability design competition. Those interested in participating can submit specific indicators for states to use in grading schools, including indicators of academic achievement, student growth or an alternative, progress toward English language proficiency, and student success or school quality. Participants are also encouraged to

suggest ways to calculate summative school grades and possible "labels" for the grades or ratings themselves. Proposals are due January 24, and select participants will be invited to present their proposals at an event hosted by Fordham on February 2.

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From The News & Observer: Setting the record straight on Common Core math

Jere Confrey and Ron Preston of North Carolina recently published a great piece praising the NC Academic Standards Review Commission's decision to keep the Common Core State Standards in place and correcting the account of the mathematics standards offered in a report by the commission's mathematics working group:

"A summary of 554 K-8 survey responses in their report's appendix shows that 69 percent of teachers believe that the N.C. Math Standards do not limit their flexibility, 76 percent believe they have appropriate support to teach the standards and 64 percent believe they can translate them into instruction. In a survey conducted by the Department of Public Instruction, 3,069 educator responses to the K-8 surveys indicated that 96 percent of the standards had an approval rating of 80 to 100 percent; of the 923 high school educator responses, 89 percent of the standards had approval ratings above 70 percent."

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GreatSchools and PARCC Launch Parent Guide

PARCC states have partnered with GreatSchools to launch the Great Kids Test Guide for Parents, a new resource to assist parents in helping their children prepare academically for the next grade level and for college and careers.

The guide, which can be found at UnderstandTheScore.org, was developed as a road map for parents. It gives them information about what their child needs to know at each grade level and how they can help their children succeed academically, based on how they performed on the PARCC assessment. It also explains what knowledge and skills are needed for each area of the test and which parts are especially tough for kids, while offering easy ways to boost a child's skills at home.

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Achieve announces two new board members

Achieve recently announced that former Maine governor John R. McKernan, Jr. and University of Maryland physics professor S. James Gates have joined its board of directors. By joining the board, Governor McKernan and Dr. Gates will help guide Achieve's work to lead and support state efforts to improve systems of standards, assessment, accountability, and graduation requirements so that all students are prepared for postsecondary education, work, and citizenship.

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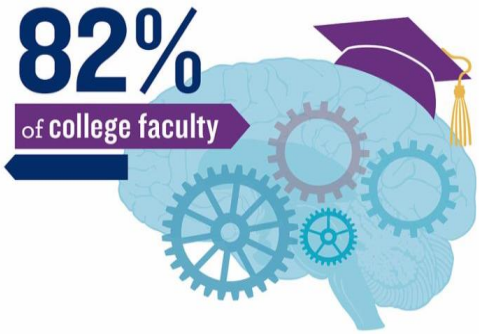

were dissatisfied with their students' preparation to think critically

SOURCE: Achieve, *Rising to the Challenge: Views on High School Graduates' Preparedness for College*, July 2014.

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All students should graduate from high school ready for college, careers, and citizenship.

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