Key Messages

1. To ensure that all students have greater opportunities and access to the careers of their choice, we need a K–12 education system that imparts the knowledge and skills most valued by employers and higher education.

2. Today’s — and tomorrow’s — jobs value postsecondary education and training more than ever. Americans without the requisite knowledge and skills will struggle to access good jobs in the increasingly competitive global economy.

3. Our state chose to adopt the K–12 Common Core State Standards to help ensure that all students graduate from high school with the core academic knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, careers and life, for the benefit of their futures and the future of our nation.
What are the Common Core State Standards?
- The Common Core State Standards are K–12 academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy.
- They were developed by states, and states voluntarily choose to adopt them.
- They are aligned to the expectations of two- and four-year colleges and have been internationally benchmarked.
- The Common Core help ensure comparability across states, districts and schools, mitigating challenges with student and teacher mobility.
- Standards are a critical first step in improving America’s education system. They provide the necessary foundation for local decisions around curriculum, assessments and instruction.

Why the Common Core?
To compete in a knowledge-based global economy, the United States must improve the educational outcomes of all students.

Consider:
- 20% of students entering four-year colleges, and at least 40% of students entering two-year community colleges, must take remedial courses — relearning at their expense what they should have already learned in high school. (National Center for Education Statistics)
- 62% of new jobs available in 2018 will require some postsecondary education. Without a dramatic change of course, U.S. employers will be unable to fill 3 million of these positions. (Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce)

- A 2009 international assessment (PISA) revealed that 15-year-old students from more than 30 countries were outperforming U.S. 15-year-olds in mathematics. More than 25 countries had a higher percentage of students scoring at the highest levels than America, meaning even America’s most advanced math students were outperformed by their international counterparts.
- The Common Core will ensure that teachers teach and students learn the knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, including communications skills, perseverance in problem solving, technical reading and writing, literacy across disciplines, and the most important mathematical skills.

Learn more about the Common Core at www.achieve.org/achieving-common-core.