



Achieve

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

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News Clips

More Michigan Students Graduating On Time

Battle Creek Enquirer reports that more Michigan teens are graduating from high school on time, and fewer are dropping out. [More...](#)

Common Core State Standards in Colorado

Michael Mazenko, an English teacher at Cherry Creek High School in Colorado, writes in an op-ed in *The Denver Post* that with Common Core standards, change is coming to schools, and reading is no longer "an option." [More...](#)

Perspective Newsletter Feb. 2013

Commentary

The Future Ready Project 2.0 Website

After collecting feedback on and reactions to Achieve's advocacy resource center over the past year, [The Future Ready Project](#), we are proud to present the new and improved Future Ready Project 2.0 website. You spoke and we listened! With a sleeker design and more easily navigable pages the website provides research-based communications and advocacy materials to support the sustainability of the college- and career-ready agenda and its related policies, including the Common Core State Standards, college- and career-ready assessments, rigorous graduation requirements and advances to state accountability systems.

This website represents all of Achieve's communications, outreach and advocacy resources, and is designed to provide all college and career readiness advocates with the information, strategies, messages and tools they need to effectively make the case for the college- and career-ready agenda in their states and communities. With customizable resources and fact sheets, we encourage all stakeholders to take the materials available on the site and tailor them to best fit their constituent audiences.



Looking for data and talking points to support your advocacy? Check out *Make the Case: Facts & Research*, which has key fact sheets on major college- and career-ready [policies and reforms](#), relevant [research](#) to inform your case-making, [public opinion data](#) organized by audience, great sources of local and state [data](#) and [pages](#) designed to help you jump right in and tackle common communications challenges.

California Schools Gear Up for New Standards

Victorville Daily Press reports that according to Eagle Ranch Principal Peter Livingston, the school has started to implement the Common Core State Standards, designed to teach students to develop higher-level thinking skills, especially in English, language arts and mathematics.

[More...](#)

Putting together a communications strategy or plan and need some help? *Plan Your Strategy: Tools & Messages* offers [tools](#) for planning a communications strategy including a modifiable plan [template](#), [messaging](#) tools for communicating about college and career readiness, resources targeted at engaging [business](#) leaders, [videos](#) of current students and recent graduates talking about college and career readiness, [flexible fact sheets](#) designed to help you bust common myths about the college- and career-ready agenda and communications [tools](#) from other national and state organizations.

Want to see what materials are already out there? *Find Relevant Resources* is a brand new searchable [database](#) of advocacy and communications resources, tools, campaigns and materials, developed by Achieve, other national organizations and state and local organizations. With a growing collection of over 150 resources currently available for parents, educators, businesses and a variety of other audiences, this database has appropriate materials for any and all college- and career-ready case-making. The Future Ready Project website isn't meant to be one-sided - we encourage and welcome your contributions. Please use the [contact us](#) page to upload resources you've successfully used in your college- and career-ready advocacy and help us continue to build our collective library of resources. And follow us on Twitter [@TheFutureReady](#) for the latest research, resources and happenings around the college and career readiness agenda.

News

Sandra Boyd Named Achieve's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Senior Vice President

On February 11 Michael Cohen, president of Achieve announced the promotion of Sandra Boyd to serve as Achieve's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Senior Vice President. In her new role, Ms. Boyd will provide overall organizational leadership, serve as "second in command" on a daily basis and be responsible for organizational activities and operations. Her specific areas of responsibility will include leadership of Operations (Human Resources, Information Technology, and Contracts) as well as Legal Compliance and Internal Communications. [Read the news statement...](#)

DQC Communications Strategy Webinar

Kate Blossveren, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives at Achieve, highlighted tools and strategies for states building communications plans on February 19 on a DQC hosted webinar. "The Power of Communication" was a discussion of communications challenges and success. Experts on developing and implementing communications strategy shared their experience to help you get started on your own communications plan. Colleen Flory, Assistant State Superintendent,

Policy Implementation, at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, discussed her state's communications challenges, what they learned, and how they have moved forward. David Mansouri, Director of Advocacy and Communications at Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE), recounted the successful Expect More Achieve More campaign in Tennessee, a communications partnership between the state and SCORE. [View a recording of the webinar...](#)

New Resources

Building a Grad Nation

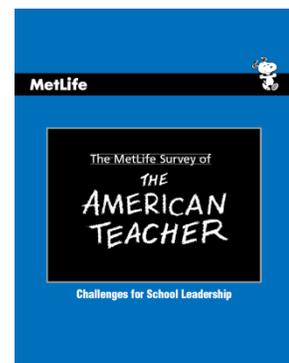
The work to improve graduation rates took a significant leap forward according to the 2013 [Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenge in Ending the High School Dropout Epidemic](#) report released by Civic Enterprises, the Everyone Graduates Center, America's Promise Alliance and the Alliance for Excellent Education. The most comprehensive graduation research report of late found that for the first time the U.S. is on track to meet the national Grad Nation goal of a 90 percent high school graduation rate by the class of 2020.



The national high school graduation rate increased 6.5 percentage points since 2001 with an average growth rate of 1.25 percentage points each year from 2006 through 2010 to 78.2. As a result of this acceleration more than 200,000 additional students received diplomas in 2010 than in 2006. Other findings include: the national graduation rate increased 5 percentage points since 2006; only two states, Wisconsin and Vermont, already have a graduation rate of 90 percent; the number of "dropout factories" decreased by 583 between 2002 and 2011; seven southern states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas led the nation in "dropout factory" high school declines. While increases in African American and Hispanic graduation rates drove the accelerated pace, significant disparities remain.

The MetLife Survey of The American Teacher

The job of running the nation's schools has become more complex, challenging and stressful, the new [MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership](#) reveals. The survey - the 29th in an annual series commissioned by MetLife and conducted by Harris Interactive - examines the views of teachers and principals on the responsibilities and challenges facing school leaders, including the changing roles of principals and teachers, budget and resources,



professional satisfaction and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness. The survey finds that educators are confident about implementing Common Core but unsure of impact. A majority of teachers (62 percent) and nearly half of principals (46 percent) report teachers in their schools already are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching this year. Most principals (90 percent) and teachers (93 percent) are confident or very confident that teachers in their schools already have the academic abilities and skills needed to implement these new, rigorous standards. "The survey's findings underscore the responsibilities and challenges educators must address to ensure America's young people are prepared to compete and collaborate in the global economy," said Dennis White, vice president of corporate contributions for MetLife.

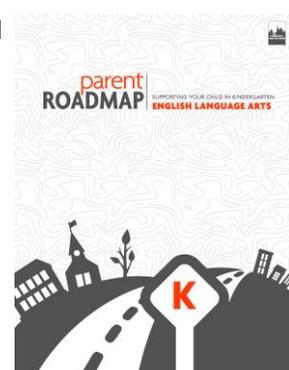
For Each and Every Child

The need to improve the country's education system is urgent, according to the Co-Chairs of the Equity and Excellence Commission. The Commission's report, [For Each and Every Child](#), highlights the need to eliminate "education disparities affecting millions of underserved and disadvantaged students." The 27-member Commission includes scholars, teachers' union leaders, state and local education officials and education reformers and advocates, and was charged to provide advice to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education "on the disparities in meaningful educational opportunities that give rise to the achievement gap, with a focus on systems of finance," as well as ways that the federal government can address such disparities. It notes that, "Fixing our nation's equity and excellence gaps is eminently doable—indeed, the recent formulation of Common Core State Standards provides a unique moment to leverage excellence and equity for all and to build on efforts to foster critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, and communication."



Common Core Implementation Resources

The Council of the Great City Schools published Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core Standards in English language arts (in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) and mathematics (in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) for the high school grades. It has also developed other resources over the last several months to help with the implementation of the Common Core Standards: two 30-second [Public Service Announcements](#) (one in English and one in Spanish) that tells the public what the Common Core Standards are; two [three-minute videos](#) (one in English and one in Spanish) that explains the Common Core in a slightly longer form (particularly good for



presentations to community and parent groups); a 45-minute [professional development video](#) for central office and school-based staff and teachers on the shifts in the Common Core in English language arts and literacy; a 45-minute professional development [video](#) for central office and school-based staff and teachers on the shifts in the Common Core in mathematics; and [resources for adapting basal texts](#) to the rigor of the Common Core in English language arts and literacy. In addition, the Council of the Great City Schools, working with Institute for Mathematics and Education and Achieve, has developed [draft mathematics progressions documents](#) for teaching across grade levels.

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