



February 2018

# NEW: Three Briefs Exploring State Accountability Plans under ESSA

After analyzing every state's accountability plan as submitted under the Every Student Succeeds Act (see [our tracker](#) for all of the plan details), Achieve has written [a series of briefs](#) examining states' widely-varying approaches to different elements of their plans. The first three briefs, exploring approaches to long-term goal setting around [graduation rates](#) and [academic achievement](#) as well as the inclusion of [on track to graduate measures](#), are now available online. [Read all three briefs](#) to see how your state plans to hold schools accountable, and stay tuned for additional briefs on states' inclusion of college and career readiness indicators coming soon.

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## Accelerating the Pace: The Future of Education in the American South

The Columbia Group, an informal network of state-based organizations working to improve education in the Southeast, recently released a [new report](#) on the results

of the first Education Poll of the South, commissioned in the fall of 2017. Poll results showed broad recognition among voters across the South of the serious inequities children face, and strong support for addressing these issues. Based on the results, the Columbia Group offers four primary ways to begin improving education and closing gaps in the South.



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## *New Research: When Public Opinion on Policy is Driven by Misconceptions, Refute Them*

[New research](#) from Morgan S. Polikoff, Gale Sinatra, and Stephen Aguilar shows that substantial misconception about the Common Core State Standards continue to exist; however, the research also suggests that a simple refutation text the authors created substantially reduces people's misconceptions about the Common Core and increases their correct conceptions. Additionally, the refutation text reduced to zero the partisan effect on support for the standards and improved attitudes toward the standards.



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## *Expanding Opportunities Through Middle-Skills Education*

Making it in today's economy without some education beyond a high school diploma is

becoming harder and harder. By 2020, almost two-thirds of all jobs will require some postsecondary training or education. Middle-skills pathways - which go beyond high school, but not as far as a four-year college degree - can help people achieve success in the labor market. A [new report](#) from the United States Senate's Joint Economic Committee Democrats examines ways to expand middle-skills educational opportunities to help more people access the 44 million middle-skills jobs that pay more than the national median income.



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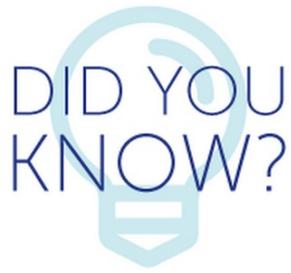
## *The Forgotten 500,000 College-Ready Students*

Among the 1.5 million students who are in the top half of their high school class, more than 500,000 do not complete a postsecondary certificate or college degree. New research from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce shows that almost all of these students attempt college and only have debt to show for it. The Center's [new video](#) introduces the impact this shortage has on individual students as well as the national economy.



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States' long-term graduation rate goals in their ESSA plans range from

**83 to 100 percent**

Read our [new briefs](#) to learn more.

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

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