



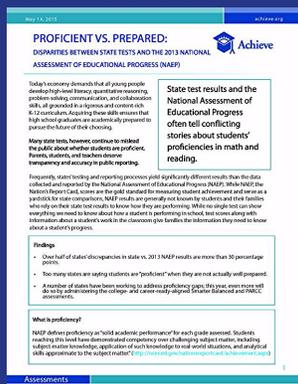
June 2015

Dear Reader,

In order to ensure that more students graduate prepared for success in college and careers, it's imperative that states are first honest about student performance. Achieve's recent "Proficient vs. Prepared" report (described in greater detail below) highlights the large gaps that often exist between student proficiency levels as measured by states and as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). No student is served by a deceptively rosy picture of academic performance. We encourage you to take a look at [the report](#) to see where your state stands as well as our [sample student reports](#) to see ways in which states can increase transparency in student reporting. We hope that you find the rest of the updates and resources featured in this issue to be informative.

Mike Cohen, President, Achieve

Report Highlights Large Gaps between State Test Results and 2013 NAEP Results



A report released by Achieve and the Collaborative for Student Success highlights the fact that too often, state-reported proficiency rates in English Language Arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics are disconnected from other benchmarks of readiness and vary widely from state to state. The report, "Proficient vs. Prepared: Disparities between State Tests and the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)," details the discrepancies - or "honesty gap" - between student proficiencies as reported by

states to students, parents, and educators, and as reported by NAEP, considered the gold standard of student assessment for comparisons across state lines.

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Teacher Panel Identifies 110 Common Core-Aligned Lessons and Units through EQuIP



Achieve recently posted the 110th set of instructional materials found to be of high-quality and aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by the Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products (EQuIP) Peer Review Panel using the EQuIP Rubrics. To increase the availability of aligned lessons and units, Achieve launched the EQuIP Peer Review Panel in June of 2013. The panel is comprised of 84 educators from across the country with over 1200 years of collective classroom experience, and is trained to apply the EQuIP Rubrics and quality review process to lessons and units that have been submitted by states, districts, partners, and educators. The 110 units and lessons available at www.achieve.org/equip were all found to be *Exemplar* or *Exemplar if Improved* by the EQuIP Peer Review Panel.

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Competency-Based Learning Study Finds Common Policy Elements and Needs in Northeast

A [new study](#) conducted by the Regional Education Laboratory Northeast examines how competency-based learning policies have been defined and the need for implementation supports in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. The report is intended for states across the country that are creating policies and guidance for districts and schools implementing competency-based learning policies. The study notes that key supports for successful implementation include a clear communications strategy for all stakeholders to establish understanding and support, ongoing professional development and collaboration support for teachers, and more research and model availability to help guide districts' ongoing efforts.

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Highlighted Story: Why are so many states replacing Common Core with carbon copies?

From Emmanuel Felton, *The Hechinger Report*: "Common Core's staying power might be explained by what it is and isn't. Common Core, after all, is not a curriculum. It doesn't mandate a set of textbooks or tests. It doesn't provide lesson plans or scripts for teachers. It's a list of targets for what students should be able to do at the end of each grade. And how different can those targets really be?"

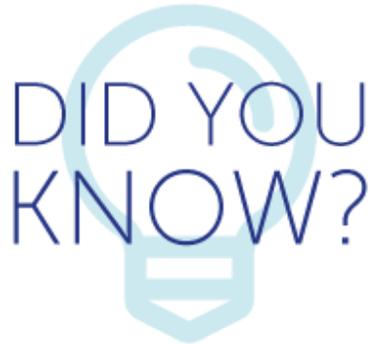
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Achieve Staff Celebrates #ProofPointDay



On May 29, the Achieve team joined in the Proof Point Day celebration, which was established this year to "bring visibility and voice to the hundreds of thousands of first generation college graduates." Check out the [official website](#) and the [#ProofPointDay](#) hashtag on Twitter to see how other organizations across the country celebrated.



When 2013 NAEP proficiency rates in 4th grade reading are compared with 2013-14 state-reported proficiency rates, there are

23

states with gaps of 30 percentage points or more.

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

