



May 2017

## New K-2 ELA Reports from EdReports.org

On April 18, EdReports.org release its first-ever set of reports on K-2 English language arts (ELA) instructional materials. These free, Consumer Reports-style reviews provide analysis of the standards alignment and usability of instructional materials.

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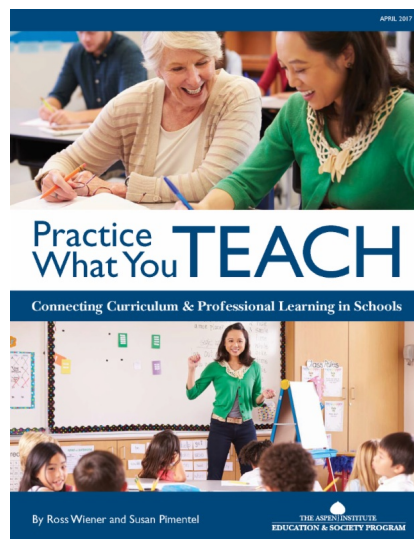
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### *Practice What You Teach: Connecting Curriculum & Professional Learning in Schools*

A new report from the Aspen Institute Education Society Program addresses the need for system leaders to integrate curriculum into professional learning so teachers can focus on their essential roles: creating engaging learning environments and delivering excellent instruction, assessing and responding to the demonstrated needs of their students, and continuously improving their craft.



[Practice What You Teach: Connecting Curriculum & Professional Learning in Schools](#) profiles promising practices undertaken by the Louisiana Department of Education, District of Columbia Public Schools, and the West Virginia Teaching Lab to weave instructional materials and professional learning together, and it outlines six key

recommendations for system leaders looking to make professional learning optimally relevant and useful to teachers by linking these two critical components.

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## College and Career Readiness Begins with a Well-Rounded Education: Opportunities Under ESSA

A new brief from the American Institutes for Research's College and Career Readiness and Success (CCRS) Center, [College and Career Readiness Begins With a Well-Rounded Education: Opportunities Under the Every Student Succeeds Act](#), describes how states leverage ESSA's well-rounded education provision to drive college and career readiness strategies by incorporating: (1) alignment with the state's definition of college and career readiness; (2) employment-focused content aligned with the needs of employers; (3) rigorous academic course-taking; and (4) work-based learning experiences.

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## Helping Parents Understand the Next Generation Science Standards

Achieve recently released [a series of parent guides](#) that explain how science instruction is changing with the Next Generation Science Standards. As [an article](#) highlighting the parent guides in *Education Week* by Liana Loewus explains, "The documents have a simple FAQ-style format and are about four pages long-the kind of thing a teacher

**ASK THE CCRS CENTER** COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS & SUCCESS CENTER

BY GORD ENGLISH, ELLEN GOHINI, SUSAN THERRIAULT, ED.D., and JEREMY BARRISSEN

### College and Career Readiness Begins With a Well-Rounded Education: Opportunities Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Increasingly, states are prioritizing college and career readiness (CCR) for students as a key goal of their education systems. Moving beyond the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act's focus on mathematics and reading/English language arts (ELA) test scores, states are using the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) as an opportunity to set broader goals aligned with skills critical to multiple pathways to postsecondary success. ESSA positions a well-rounded education as a primary policy intent to support states' efforts to fulfill the promise and need for more students who are ready for both college and career by calling on districts and schools to integrate goals and initiatives related to college and career readiness into curricula, improved conditions for learning, and other educational experiences that may constitute a well-rounded education. In doing so, states may then leverage federal funding for a well-rounded education to drive CCR strategies.

**ESSA defines a well-rounded education** as "various activities and experiences in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, art, music, foreign language, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education and any other subject as determined by the State or local educational agency with the intention of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience" (Title I, Part A, Sec. 8520(2)). The brief focuses on understanding CCR goals, goals, and strategies that can be achieved.

#### Urgency for Embedding College and Career Readiness in a Well-Rounded Education

Although overall high school graduation rates are on the rise, reaching 83% for the 2014-15 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a), mounting evidence indicates that schools are not ensuring that all students graduate ready for postsecondary success. Large graduation rate gaps persist between student subgroups. Among college grads, attrition rates are alarming: only 62% of all students who begin a 4-year undergraduate degree in 2008 graduated within 6 years. These rates were notably lower for African Americans (42%) and Hispanics (54%). (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a). Further, of students enrolling in college courses, 20% of

**Figure 1. Student Ongoing Demand for Postsecondary Education or Training by 2025.** By percentage of all U.S. residents aged 18 and over who will be 18-24 by 2025, 29% of labor entrants will be the result of projected 4th-12th education.

Year	U.S. population aged 18-24	Projected 4th-12th education
2014	100%	24%
2015	100%	24%
2016	100%	24%
2017	100%	24%
2018	100%	24%
2019	100%	24%
2020	100%	24%
2021	100%	24%
2022	100%	24%
2023	100%	24%
2024	100%	24%
2025	100%	24%

**Legend:**  
U.S. population aged 18-24  
Projected 4th-12th education  
Labor entrants aged 18-24  
Labor entrants aged 18-24 with some college or associate or bachelor's degree

**Footnote:** 1. Postsecondary graduation rates for the 2014-15 school year by subgroup were as follows: students with disabilities, 65%; English learners, 65%; American Indian/Alaska Natives, 27%; African American, 73%; American Indian/Alaska Natives, 73%; Hispanic, 70%; White, 90%, 90%, and Asian/Pacific Islander, 97% (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a).

**AIR** American Institutes for Research

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could print off and send home with students. Rather than include examples of the complicated, "three-dimensional" standards, the guides show old vs. new classroom activities. ... They also explain the difference between "standards" and "curriculum"-terms that are easily and frequently conflated."

## Preparing Students for a Lifetime of Success

Understanding New Science Standards For Grades 3-5

### How will we prepare students for academic success?

Our state has adopted new standards based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) because we understand that a robust science education in elementary school will pave the way for increased opportunities in middle school, high school, and college.

The (insert name of STATE's science standards) enable our teachers to offer all students interactive science instruction that promotes analysis and interpretation of data, critical thinking, problem solving, and connections across science disciplines—with a high set of expectations for achievement in grades 3-5.

**A quality science education can help expand opportunities for all our students.**

These science standards complement our English/Language Arts and mathematics standards, enabling classroom instruction to reflect a clearer picture of the real world, where solving problems often requires skills and knowledge from multiple disciplines. Further, these standards are designed to benefit and engage all students, whether they currently lack access to a quality science education or already excel in science subjects.



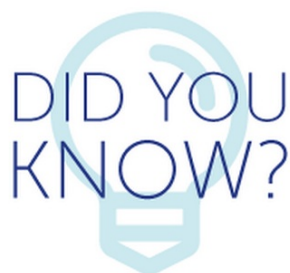
### What is our vision for science education?

(STATE's) standards reflect the latest research and advances in modern science. In order to equip students to think critically, analyze information, and solve complex problems, the standards are arranged such that—from elementary through high school—students have multiple opportunities to build on the knowledge and skills gained during each grade, by revisiting important concepts and expanding their understanding of connections across scientific domains. Parents should understand that while some careers might be similar to the past, it may look different from how they were taught.

**As the current science standards are implemented in schools and districts, they will enable students to:**

- Develop a deeper understanding of science beyond memorizing facts, and
- Experience similar scientific and engineering practices as those used by professionals in the field.

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Achieve's annual report on the college and career readiness of U.S. high school graduates found that only

# 20 states

report how many grads have finished a course of study that will leave them ready for college and career.

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

