



Achieve

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

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News Clips

**Florida has STEM Jobs, but Not Grads to Fill Them**

*The Sun-Sentinel* reports that despite the openings and Governor Rick Scott's commitment to bring similar so-called STEM jobs to the state, Florida universities aren't coming close to graduating enough students to fill them.  
[More...](#)

**Parents Learn the Basics of Common Core**

*The Citizen* reports that parents who attended the Skaneateles, New York Parent Teacher Committee meeting Monday learned the basics of a new set of standards their children will need to meet to be considered "college- and career-ready."  
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Perspective Newsletter Oct./Nov. 2012

Commentary

The Future of the U.S. Workforce

It is increasingly common to hear policymakers, education leaders, and the media refer to "middle skills" jobs, the "skills mismatch," and "career pathways," as we strive to ensure our education system is aligned with our workforce needs. To unpack these terms - and put them in the context of the college- and career-ready agenda - Achieve recently published three reports in our "Future of the U.S. Workforce" series. Below are a summary of the series' findings.

**Finding #1: U.S. workforce will require more education and skills in the near future**

About 80% of jobs in the workforce are classified as "middle skills" or "high skills" and it is estimated that thirty of the 46.8 million job openings in 2018 (about 64%) will require some education and training beyond high school.

Organizations across all industries are projecting that future jobs at all levels will require more skills, education, and credentials/certifications, with varying degrees of magnitude. A recent survey found that 50% of human resources (HR) professionals anticipate higher education requirements for most jobs and 60% anticipate more jobs with more specific technical requirements in the next 3-5 years.

**Finding #2: Low skills jobs provide few opportunities for advancement or security**

While the fact remains that about a third of current and future jobs require a high school diploma or less, it's critical to remember that these are jobs, not careers, which the data back up in a variety of ways. One way is to simply compare the median incomes for middle skills jobs (about \$43,000) to low skills jobs that require a high school diploma (\$31,000) or



The Future of the U.S. Workforce

Middle Skills Jobs and the Growing Importance of Postsecondary Education



### Next Generation Science Standards- Our Standards, Our Opportunity

Achieve's Stephen Pruitt writes in the November issue of *NSTA Reports* that collaboration is central to the success of the the Next Generation Science Standards. The partnerships among the 26 states and the original partner organizations have been unprecedented and are at the heart of the standards development process. The release of the final NGSS will occur in the first quarter of 2013.

[More...](#)

### Common Core Accountability

New York State Education Commissioner John King offered a spirited defense of the state's decision to roll out end-of-year exams that are tied to new standards with unprecedented speed. "Students are already accountable for the Common Core because when they arrive on a college campus or when they arrive as a first-year employee, they are responsible for those skills. The gap has been that our K-12 system hasn't been equipping all students with those skills."

[More...](#)

less (\$22,000).

Only about 5% of low skills jobs were identified as offering opportunities for leadership, advancement, and prestige compared to about half of middle skills jobs and over 90% of high skills jobs. And, when evaluating the skills required across middle and low skills jobs, in all categories but three, middle skills jobs require a higher level of skills - in both traditional "academic" skills (e.g., reading comprehension, mathematics, writing) and traditional "technical" skills (e.g., critical thinking, complex problem solving, monitoring). Many of these skills cannot be fully developed on the job and require additional education and training.

Finally, although over 80% of respondents say their organizations offer advancement opportunities for low skills workers, at the same time, over 80% of respondents acknowledge that they hire employees with educational credentials above a high school diploma for jobs that (as posted) require only a high school diploma.

### Finding #3: The skills mismatch is real

While the vast majority of HR professionals report that most employees hold the education credentials required for their current jobs, looking ahead, companies will be requiring more education and training across the board for nearly all positions in all industries. By one estimate, the U.S. will fall short by at least 3 million middle and high skills workers by 2018.

In nearly every state, the workforce and labor demands are mismatched, with the mismatch most prevalent between the number and type of middle skills jobs available and the number of workers who can fill them. There are more middle skills jobs available than there are middle skills workers. Part of this is determined by geography, but the lack of aligned education options remains at the heart of this mismatch.

### Finding #4: There are many pathways to middle and high skills jobs, but education and training beyond high school is the common denominator

Middle skills jobs are those that require some education and training beyond high school, but less than a four-year degree, such as an associate's degree, a certification, completion of an apprenticeship program, or significant on-the-job, employer-provided training. In 2010, nearly 850,000 associate degrees and almost 1 million postsecondary certificates were awarded - a number of which lead to higher-paying jobs than jobs requiring bachelor's degrees. The vast majority of these degrees and credentials are still awarded at institutions of higher education - and commonly two-year colleges.

Given the chronically high remediation rates at two-year colleges (which lower the likelihood that students will earn an associate degree from 13.9% to 9.5% and a 1-1.5 year certificate from 22.6% to 13.1%, let alone on time), broadening access to postsecondary programs is not enough without also ensuring that students are prepared for success in those programs with a strong K-12 foundation.

## Common Core in Michigan

David Musselwhite, Team Leader of Michigan PTA's Common Core State Standards Initiative and a former high school math teacher in Detroit Public Schools, writes in an op-ed in *Bridge Magazine* that, "Parents realize the benefits of Common Core as well - that's why the National PTA and Michigan PTA have fully endorsed these new standards." He notes, "Using Common Core as a blueprint, teachers can develop lesson plans, materials, and assessments that can be shared widely. This keeps teachers from constantly reinventing the wheel and allows the best methods and tools to rise to the top." Musselwhite writes, "Educators are finding opportunities to work together at all levels. The Tri-State Collaborative, a forum of educational leaders from New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, has created rubrics for evaluating the quality of Common Core-aligned lesson plans and units. Educators working together to improve outcomes." [More...](#)

**The bottom line:** Employers are demanding more education and training (and will continue to do so in the future) and jobs that require a high school diploma or less are disappearing. Those low skills jobs that do remain provide lower wages and fewer opportunities for leadership and advancement, and require individuals to gain significant skills (likely through formal and education training) to advance out of them. **In other words, middle and high skills careers are the path to the middle class - and a strong K-12 preparation for education and training beyond high school is the path to those careers.**

The Future of the U.S. Workforce series can be found at [www.achieve.org/career-readiness](http://www.achieve.org/career-readiness) or at the links below:

- [The Future of the U.S. Workforce: Middle Skills Jobs and the Growing Importance of Postsecondary Education](#)
- [The Future of the U.S. Workforce: The Limited Career Prospects for High School Graduates Without Additional Education and Training](#)
- [The Future of the U.S. Workforce: A Survey of Hiring Practices Across Industries](#) (with the Society for Human Resource Management)

## News

### What it Means to Be Career Ready

In October a broad coalition of national education, business, philanthropic and policy groups, including Achieve, launched the [Career Readiness Partner Council](#) with the goal of enhancing reform efforts around college and career readiness to include a more comprehensive understanding of what it means to be career ready. The Council's statement, "[Building Blocks For Change: What it Means to be Career Ready](#)," makes clear that career readiness is a process of connecting "education and employment to achieve a fulfilling, financially-secure and successful career." The document establishes that career readiness must foster "adaptability and a commitment to lifelong learning, along with a mastery of key knowledge, skills and dispositions that vary from one career to another and change over time." Achieve believes that all students should graduate from high school with the academic preparation necessary for college, careers, and life. While Achieve's mission has focused on ensuring that graduates have the necessary academic knowledge and skills they need to succeed, Achieve also recognizes that college and career readiness entails more than just academic preparation. That is why Achieve has been pleased to serve as a member of the Career Readiness Partner Council and partner with organizations representing K-12 education, higher



**BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CHANGE:**  
**What it Means to be Career Ready**

The ever-changing demands of the global economy and the desire to remain competitive, coupled with mounting frustration over decades of ineffective academic performance, are converging to create an opportunity for change.

Over a period of time, the United States saw wide-spread stagnation in achievement and attainment in secondary and postsecondary learning. And, increasingly, there is evidence of a mismatch between employer needs and the knowledge and skills of the current and future workforce, as displayed in employment figures and reports from business and industry leaders.

Policy-makers and the public alike are re-examining "college and career readiness" as the solution, but what does it mean? Much of the policy debate focuses on college entrance and completion, without consideration as a solution. However, college readiness is only part of the answer. What is needed is a more comprehensive strategy that bridges the gap between education and workforce preparation.

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To that end, the Career Readiness Partner Council was formed in 2012. The Council unites leaders from national education and workforce organizations with the goal of bringing clarity and focus to what it means to be career ready. This document highlights the consensus of the collaborative efforts of the Council to help inform policy and practice in states and communities.

**Career Readiness Partner Council**

Achieve	Legislative Action for Working Families	National Association of State Boards of Education
Alabama for Excellent Education	Council of Chief State School Officers	National Council of La Raza
American Association of Community Colleges	The Education Trust	National Education Association
American Business Education	Food Innovation	National Governors' Association
American School Computer Consortium	Food Miles Campaign	National League of Cities
ASCD	Gallop	National Youth Employment Coalition
Asia Society	James D. Hunt Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy	Skills for America's Future, The Aspen Institute
Association for Career and Technical Education	The Manufacturing Institute	Statewide Educational Assessment Consortium
Council of the California State Office of Career and Technical Education	National Academy/Institute of Education	
Center for College and Career	National Association of State Boards of Education	

## A Path to Common Core Implementation

Lydia Dobyns, President of the New Tech Network, writes in *The Huffington Post* that the Common Core State Standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the "what takes place after high school," reflecting the knowledge and skills that students need to succeed in college and careers.

[More...](#)

## Common Core in Pennsylvania

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reports Pennsylvania has called for the Common Core to be implemented. The first state tests built on the Common Core are the new high school Keystone Exams, which will be offered in Algebra 1, biology and literature this school year. [More...](#)

## CTE curriculum designed to get students into college programs

*The Nashville Ledger* reports that veteran Williamson County schools teacher Tim Sawyer may have the best assessment of the career and technology education programs found in most Midstate school districts: "We're not your grandfather's vocational ed." He

education, career and technical education, and the business community to create a platform for the critical policy and implementation discussions necessary to ensure all students graduate from high school prepared to reach their full potential. The Council is coordinated by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium. For more information, visit [www.careerreadynow.org](http://www.careerreadynow.org).

## EQuIP Collaborative

On October 3 and 4, educators from 20 American Diploma Project Network states met for the second time as part of the Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) Collaborative. This meeting built on progress that began at an initial convening in May 2012. Educators came together to evaluate instructional materials in ELA/literacy and mathematics, using the Tri-State Rubrics to guide their evaluation process. Participants also learned how to increase the rigor and alignment of lessons and units through the inclusion of mathematical practices. In ELA/literacy, they explored a text selection process and protocol as a means for increasing the alignment of lessons and units. This second meeting expanded the number of states involved in this effort by including three new states. This convening also included a special session on building capacity within states to use this collegial review process to vet and create instructional materials, as well as to increase the number of teachers that can use these rubrics as a tool. To learn more about the collaborative, visit the [EQuIP page on the Achieve website](#) or view this [informational video](#).

## PARCC Governing Board Meets on College Readiness Decisions

The Governing Board of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) met on September 12, 2012, including a joint session with the PARCC Advisory Committee on College Readiness (ACCR). The board meets quarterly to make major policy and operational decisions on behalf of the PARCC consortium related to the overall design of the assessment system, PARCC's procurement strategy, and other significant issues.

At this joint session, the PARCC Governing Board and ACCR discussed public feedback received on draft policies on performance levels and on determining college and career readiness in mathematics and English language arts/literacy on the PARCC high school assessments. The PARCC college- and career-ready determinations (CCRD) describe the academic knowledge, skills, and practices in English language arts/literacy and mathematics students must demonstrate to show they are able to enter directly into and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing courses and relevant technical courses in those content areas at two- and four-year public institutions of higher education. The CCRD policy and performance-level descriptors were approved unanimously by the Governing Board and ACCR on October 25. [More...](#)

adds, "We've gotten a little more technology-savvy and more focused on getting kids into college and keeping them in college." [More...](#)

## **New Policy Brief on School Report Cards**

Over the past week, Achieve has been pouring over the results of several new state report cards - and finding several treasure boxes of college- and career-ready student results! As Achieve details in a new policy brief, "[Transforming Public Reporting to Drive College and Career Readiness for ALL](#)," report cards are a tremendous - and often underutilized - strategy.

Kentucky has raised the bar in a big way this year, rolling out new assessments aligned to the Common Core along with a new accountability formula. Last week it also launched a redesigned [School Report Card](#) that includes not only the accountability and assessment results, but progress toward state, district, and school "delivery targets" on college and career readiness (CCR), proficiency, and achievement gaps. The Kentucky Department of Education has exercised tremendous leadership in setting a goal to increase the percentage of CCR graduates by 50% by 2015, and following up by working with districts to sign a "Commonwealth Commitment" for specific numbers of additional CCR graduates each year. Taking the next step - publicly reporting the targets and how districts and schools are progressing toward the targets - positions education and community leaders at all levels with the right information to rally support for tremendous improvements in college and career readiness for all kids across the state.

Indiana has also released the results of its [A-F school grading system](#), which now includes a CCR indicator that details the percentage of graduates who have passed an AP, IB, or industry certification exam or earned at least 3 college credits (liberal arts or CTE). A [sample high school report card](#) shows how the state will report this indicator, along with other indicators that are used to determine the school grade, to parents and the public in a clear and simple way. The state's [COMPASS](#) data system also includes graphs and charts to illuminate these and other CCR indicators. Notably, Indiana's reporting aligns to a statewide performance goal that 25% of graduates will achieve one of these CCR criteria - and an annual school incentive program that celebrates schools that have reached and those that have made the most progress toward the goal.

## **Consortia Update Webinar Recording**

The two state-led consortia - PARCC and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium - have made great strides to develop new assessment systems ready for use in two years. Over the summer, for example, they released sample items and tasks and are putting together teams of educators to help prepare districts and states for the new assessments. The Alliance for Excellent Education, with participation from the K-12 Center at ETS, held a webinar on October 2 to discuss the consortia's plans. Leaders of the two consortia provided an update on their activities. Achieve Senior Vice President (PARCC) Laura Slover addressed questions submitted by viewers from across the country. [View the recording...](#)

## EVENT: Data for Action 2012 Twitter Town Hall

On November 15, Data Quality Campaign, of which Achieve is a partner, will release *Data for Action 2012*, the eighth annual analysis of states' progress implementing the 10 State Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use. Initial findings this year reveal that states are making progress, but have not created the conditions to change the culture of education data. *Data for Action 2012* will show which states are leading and which are lagging (including a handy state-comparison tool). Achieve ([@AchieveInc](#)) is a co-host of the Twitter Town Hall. Join the town hall by following [@EdDataCampaign](#) and using the hashtag #DFA2012. [More...](#)

## New Resources

### A Case for Dual Enrollment

High school students who take college courses are significantly more likely to attend and graduate from college than peers who do not, according to a study of more than 30,000 Texas high school graduates by Jobs for the Future (JFF). JFF's study, "[Taking College Courses in High School: A Strategy for College Readiness](#)," tracked 32,908 students who graduated from Texas high schools in 2004. Half were "dual enrollment" students - completing college courses that typically award both high school and college credit - and half were not. High school students who had completed even one college course before graduation (defined as dual enrollment) were significantly more likely to attend college, persist in college, and complete an associate's degree or higher within six years. This research demonstrates a solid foundation for investment in and encouragement of dual enrollment, which enable high school students to experience real college coursework, to prepare them for college success.



### Setting Up Students to Succeed

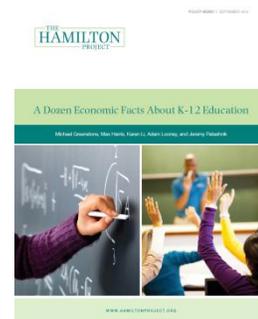
New research by the Center for Public Education at the National School Boards Association suggests that if postsecondary institutions can figure out how to keep college freshmen on track, the nation could be well on its path to meeting the goal of leading the world in producing college graduates. "[High School Rigor and Good Advice: Setting Up Students to Succeed](#)" reports that the answer is linked to higher levels of mathematics in high school, more Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses, and good college advising. The Center analyzed a nationally representative sample of more than 9,000 high school sophomores in 2002 through their second year in college, at both two- and four-year institutions, and discovered these three factors related to students' chances of success



High school rigor and good advice:  
Setting up students to succeed

## Economic Facts about K-12 Education

A new memo from the Hamilton Project explores the direct connection between educational attainment and personal and societal benefits. "[A Dozen Economic Facts about K-12 Education](#)" offers data on education and lifetime earnings, incarceration/institutionalization, marriage, poverty, life expectancy, U.S. international competitiveness, the achievement gap, and quality teachers. The memo also highlights practices that can be changed in the shorter term to improve educational outcomes, such as new R & D investments, learning from successful charter schools and small-scale and replicable models of innovation, and increasing transparency.



## Growing Opportunity

In 2011, The Opportunity Equation initiative, a partnership between Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Institute for Advanced Study, released [Growing Opportunity](#), an update on the 2009 report entitled [The Opportunity Equation](#). This brief update covers some of the major developments in each of the four areas emphasized in 2009 report: equity and excellence; standards and assessments, teaching and leadership, and school and system design. It concludes by looking back at the original recommendations, noting signs of change, and highlighting questions and priorities for the future.



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