Achieve

Closing the Expectations Gap

2013 Annual Report

on the Alignment of State K–12 Policies and Practice with the Demands of College and Careers

Achieve

Achieve is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization dedicated to working with states to raise academic standards and graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability. Created in 1996 by a bipartisan group of governors and business leaders, Achieve is leading the effort to make college and career readiness a priority across the country so that students graduating from high school are academically prepared for postsecondary success. When states want to collaborate on education policy or practice, they come to Achieve. At the direction of 48 states, and partnering with the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, Achieve helped develop the Common Core State Standards. Twenty-six states and the National Research Council asked Achieve to manage the process to write the Next Generation Science Standards. Achieve has also served as the project manager for states in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, which are developing next generation assessments. And since 2005, Achieve has worked with state teams, governors, state education officials, postsecondary leaders and business executives to improve postsecondary preparation by aligning key policies with the demands of the real world so that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to fully reach their promise in college, careers and life. For more information about the work of Achieve, visit www.achieve.org.

Published in November 2013.

Editorial assistance and design: KSA-Plus Communications, Inc.

Contents

Foreword

Over the eight years that Achieve has been surveying the states on their commitment to college and career readiness for all students, states have transformed their aspirations for all students to graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary success into action. A focus on getting the standards, standards implementation and assessments right has laid the foundation for the change that state leaders have long committed to: ensuring that students — all students — have access to a K–12 education that prepares graduates for college, careers and citizenship.

How did states set this foundation? Building upon years of leadership in setting their own academic standards, states led an unprecedented, collaborative effort to create K–12 academic content standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics — the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS have been adopted by 46 states and the District of Columbia, as well as by the Department of Defense Education Activity, whose schools serve the children of military families stationed on bases in the United States and around the world. The CCSS are rigorous and aligned with the knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary success; if fully realized, they will enable high school graduates to seamlessly enter postsecondary education and training without the need for remediation in English and mathematics.

Between the states that have adopted the CCSS and those that have created their own, all states have now have K–12 college- and career-ready (CCR) standards. In doing so they have made an important promise to their students: You will graduate with a diploma that matters and enables you to choose your path rather than having some paths unavailable to you because you did not get the academic knowledge and skills you needed. This is a powerful commitment that states have made, but adopting standards is just the first step.

To fulfill this promise of college and career readiness for all, states — and many districts and schools — have committed to implement their CCR standards as never before. States are, on the whole, taking a more active role in helping to provide supports to teachers and principals, who must have access to the professional development, instructional materials and tools they need to change practice in the classroom. While states have increased their role in a variety of

ways, at the end of the day implementation is a shared responsibility that requires state and local leadership, commitment and time. For states that adopted the CCSS, collaboration on implementation tools is possible not just within but also across states. Importantly, the ability for districts, schools and teachers in different states to work with one another increases the odds that the standards will find their way into classrooms with fidelity. States, districts and schools will need to regularly ask whether their implementation efforts are having their intended effects. They will need to listen to and support their educators to ensure that implementation reaches the necessary depth and scale.

Further, states must have assessments that reflect the full range and depth of their standards. They need assessments that can ask students to do something with their knowledge — to research, to

explain how or why, to actually think and learn in the process of taking a test. They need assessments that give students a chance to solve multistep problems, write essays grounded in text, explain their answers and construct arguments. Assessments must also give results to teachers, parents and students quickly enough to guide instruction and student support, which means the tests should be delivered online. And assessments must tell parents and students if they are on track for graduating ready for college and careers. To meet these needs, states must have assessments that move far past the fill-in-the-bubble, end-of-the-year tests most states have been giving. In short, they need next generation assessments.

Most states decided that instead of building these assessments individually, they would pool their collective capacity and work together to create them. And this is exactly what 42 states and the District of Columbia — which are engaged in developing the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium tests — are doing.

If the states can implement the standards well — a significant undertaking that should not be underestimated and that will take time — and if the assessments can support changes in instruction by reinforcing the rigor and depth of the standards, then all students will have the chance to excel. The nation as a whole could see real improvements, not just in high school graduation rates, but in the rates of high school graduates who are ready for college and careers.

The nation could also see real improvements in postsecondary success, with remediation rates going down and completion rates going up. In an economy in which all careers require at least one year of postsecondary education or training, this significant accomplishment would improve outcomes for individuals, communities and our country.

The trajectory to excellence and equity, however, is not assured. Individual and collective state leadership is facing one of its greatest tests. Every individual state decision to back away from standards, assessments, graduation requirements and accountability ultimately lowers the likelihood that students, the state and our country will meet the promise of college and career readiness for all. It is perhaps no surprise that this year — as implementation of the CCSS becomes real, as states face assessment transitions and as reform moves from rhetoric to reality — calls to stop or slow down are increasing.

Those who are against the CCSS or CCR standards, better assessments, aligned graduation requirements, and accountability systems that value college and career readiness are, in fact, champions of the status quo — a status quo that graduates far too few and fails to prepare many who do receive a diploma for the real world.

International comparisons tell the story: continued middling performance on international assessments by students and even a workforce that does not have the knowledge and skills of their peers from other countries. In a recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) survey of adults' skills in numeracy, literacy and technology, the United States had the *lowest* average numeracy scores among the 16- to 24-year-old age group as compared to other OECD nations and was in the bottom three in average literacy scores in the same age group.[1] U.S. 16- to 24-year-olds were also near the bottom in scoring at the highest level of proficiency in problem-solving in technology-rich environments.[2] A recent study that linked state scores on the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress with the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study found that only one state — Massachusetts — scored at the "high" benchmark in mathematics.

Instead of just bemoaning these facts, state and district policy leaders, educators, and their supporters have changed the discussion by setting ambitious goals to meet these challenges. This is the year that plans and policies become, in many states, realities. Change is hard; pushback is assured. But now is the time to press forward, to not waiver in the commitment to college and career readiness and to do better by this generation, finally fulfilling the promise of preparing all students to succeed no matter their zip code. State leaders set in motion this ambitious and worthy course — now we must see it through.

Introduction

The eighth annual 50-state report from Achieve details the progress — and lack of progress — in advancing state policies to shift the U.S. public education system toward one that prepares all students to graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college, careers and citizenship.

Since the first report in 2005, Achieve has defined and monitored the adoption of a set of core state policies that are essential to making college and career readiness for all students the mission of the K–12 education system: academic content standards, graduation requirements, assessments and accountability systems.

The trends illuminate tremendous progress since 2005 on standards, including universal adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or state-specific college- and career-ready (CCR) standards. Trends in state adoption of CCR graduation requirements and CCR assessments show that progress since 2005 has been slow. And finally, there has been no progress in building comprehensive CCR accountability systems.

All states now have CCR standards. But fewer than half of the states will require all students to learn those standards by high school graduation because they do not require students to take courses that deliver those standards. Most states are on track to have high-quality assessments that will drive instruction of the standards at the level of rigor students need for readiness, but states will need to withstand the pressure they are under to delay or abandon their plans. Finally, no state has an accountability system that sets strong goals for improving college and career readiness for all students, reports CCR results to parents and the public, incentivizes schools and districts to improve rates of students achieving college and career readiness, and differentiates and classifies schools based on these CCR student results.

States cannot make the transformation from systems that require minimal performance to systems that propel all students to college and career readiness without significant changes to policy and practice in *all four areas* of standards, graduation requirements, assessments and accountability. Progress in a few areas provides a foundation for change, but only when attention is paid to all four will states have exercised the policy levers that can influence student outcomes. Their sum is far greater than their parts, and they work best when they are aligned and reinforce one another.

Without graduation requirements that communicate the expectation that all students will learn all standards, the system as a whole will never create equity for all students, much less prepare them for postsecondary success. Without strong and transparent assessments, students, teachers and parents will not understand the level of rigor that is required for students to reach college and career readiness. And without an accountability system that is centered around college and career readiness, schools will focus their accountability strategies on more narrow tactics at a lower level of performance rather than the systemic strategies needed to help students reach college and career readiness. Parents, communities and policymakers will not be able to differentiate between schools that are making progress and those that are not.

Key findings

Standards

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have adopted CCR standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. A total of **45 states** and the **District of Columbia** have adopted the CCSS in both subjects. **Minnesota** has adopted the CCSS in English language arts/literacy and maintains its own CCR standards in mathematics. **Alaska, Nebraska, Texas** and **Virginia** have adopted their own state-developed standards that reflect CCR expectations and have been verified by state postsecondary institutions.

As part of the continuing effort to fully implement the CCSS/CCR standards, states are providing curricular and instructional materials in a variety of ways. Most states are *providing guidance,* such as high-quality processes and exemplars, and developing curricular and supplemental materials aligned to the standards for voluntary use. Far fewer states are *approving/certifying lists of approved materials,* and even fewer are *requiring districts and schools to use materials aligned to the standards.*

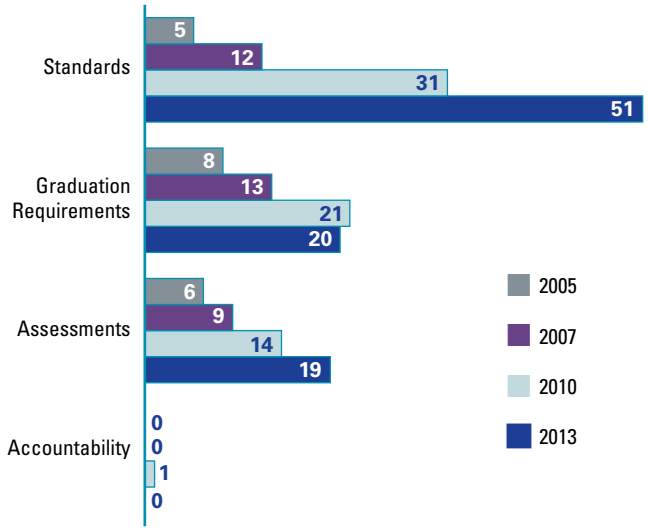
To ensure that educators are well equipped for the transition to the CCSS/CCR standards, most states have *developed a coordinated agencywide plan and calendar for training and support* aligned to the standards, and more than half of the states have *directed regional centers to provide training and support* aligned to the CCSS/CCR standards. Far fewer states have *audited existing training offerings and support for alignment* or *identified high-quality or promising providers for schools or districts to use.* Additionally, nearly all states *facilitate statewide professional learning communities or other structures to provide ongoing support* at the state, regional or local level.

Graduation Requirements

Nineteen states and the **District of Columbia** have adopted CCR graduation requirements in mathematics and English language arts/literacy, a decrease of four states since last year. Of these, **15 states** and the **District of Columbia** already require students to meet these expectations to graduate. An additional **seven states** offer optional courses of study that are at the CCR level, but students must opt into them.

The remaining states have adopted the CCSS/CCR standards but have not yet raised graduation requirements to ensure that all students take courses that deliver the standards.

State Progress in CCR Policy Adoption



Assessments

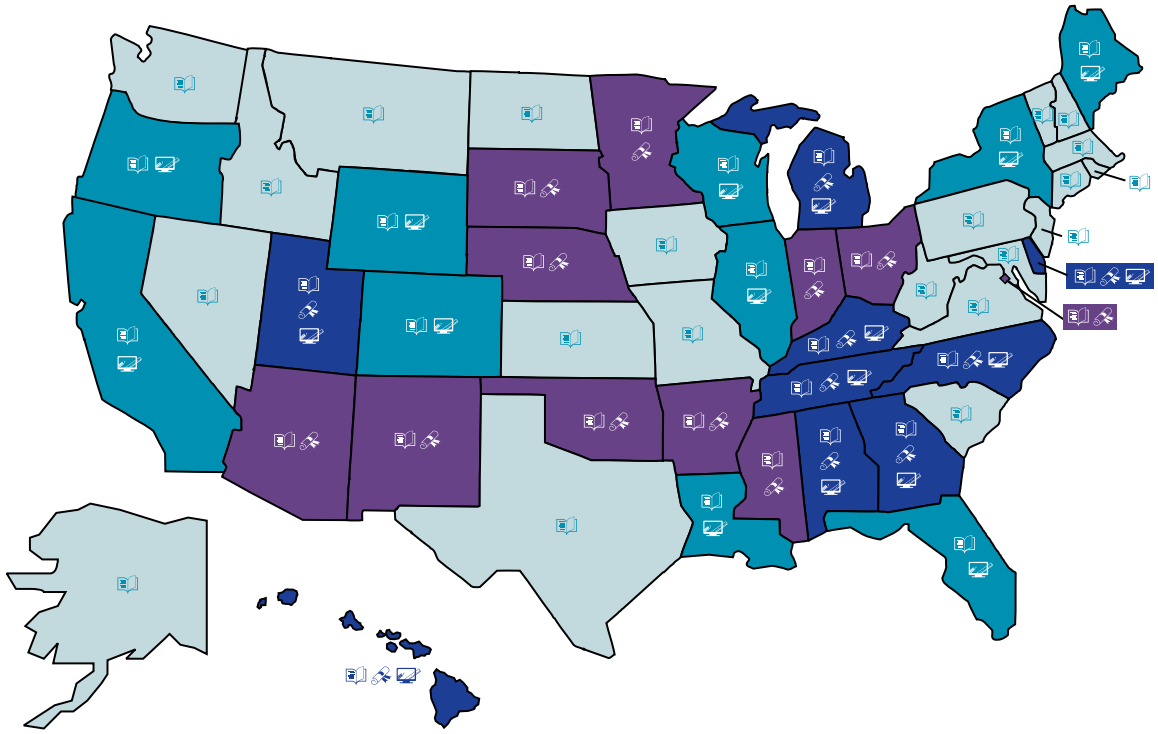
Nineteen states currently administer, or have adopted policies to administer, assessments to all high school students that postsecondary institutions use to make decisions about students' readiness for credit-bearing, entry-level courses. **Five states** have developed assessments aligned to their state standards, while the remaining **14 states** require all students to take a college admissions test such as the ACT or SAT.

In addition, most states **(42** and the **District of Columbia)** currently belong to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and are planning for transition to these assessments in 2014–15.

Accountability

Consistent with years past, state accountability systems are slowly adding some CCR indicators and uses, but this year's report also shows that in other areas, use of CCR indicators is actually flat or declining. **No state** has incorporated a full range of indicators that signals that college and career readiness is the central driver of its accountability system. **Four states,** however, have enough variety of indicators and coherence within those indicators to stand out among other states. These states are on the path toward having accountability systems that value college and career readiness for all students. In total, **35 states** use at least one CCR indicator in their accountability systems — three more states than last year.

CCR Policy Adoption by State



These states have adopted CCR standards and assessments capable of producing a score that colleges value and either require all students to take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards to graduate or default all students into a CCR course of study in 9th grade and permit modifications as needed.

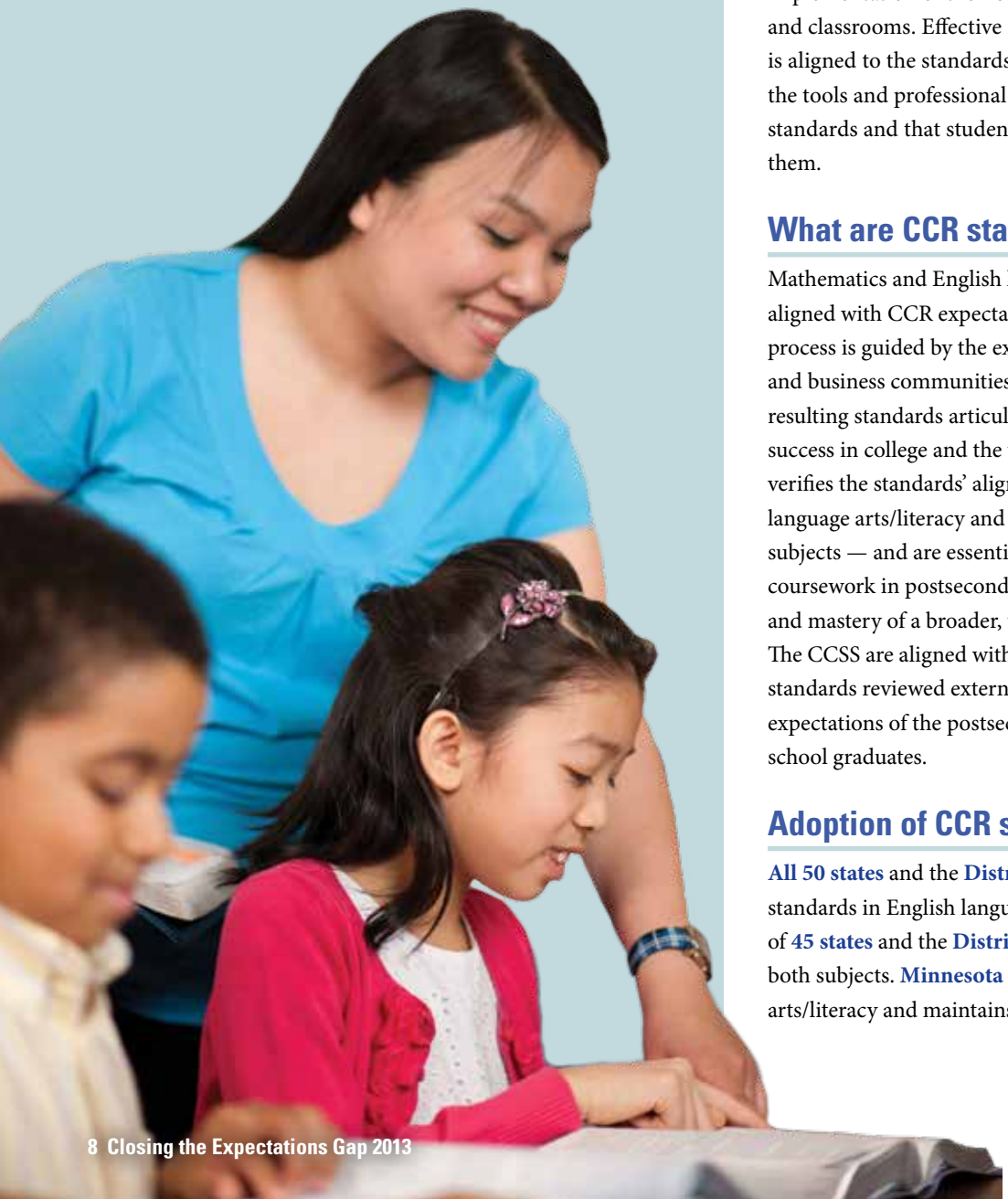
These states have adopted CCR standards and either require all students to take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards to graduate or default all students into a CCR course of study in 9th grade and permit modifications as needed. However, these states do not administer to all students an assessment capable of producing a score that colleges value.

These states have adopted CCR standards and assessments capable of producing a score colleges value, but they do not require all students to take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standard to graduate.

These states have adopted CCR standards but do not require all students to take the full set of standards to graduate, nor do they administer to all students an assessment capable of producing a score that colleges value.

Standards

Academic content standards serve as the foundation for state education systems. They communicate to teachers, parents and students the knowledge and skills students are expected to master in each grade and subject. They are essential for creating curriculum, instructional materials and assessments to drive effective instruction.



Adopting standards is important but insufficient. States, along with districts, must plan and execute strategies to ensure effective implementation of their state standards across all districts, schools and classrooms. Effective implementation means that instruction is aligned to the standards. It also requires that educators have the tools and professional development they need to deliver the standards and that students have the support they require to meet them.

What are CCR standards?

Mathematics and English language arts/literacy standards are aligned with CCR expectations if the state's standards development process is guided by the expectations of the state's postsecondary and business communities, if those communities verify that the resulting standards articulate the knowledge and skills required for success in college and the workplace, and if an external organization verifies the standards' alignment to CCR expectations. English language arts/literacy and mathematics are foundational to other subjects — and are essential for students to access credit-bearing coursework in postsecondary institutions — but students' access to and mastery of a broader, well-rounded curriculum also are critical. The CCSS are aligned with CCR expectations, as are state-developed standards reviewed externally to ensure that the standards meet the expectations of the postsecondary and business community for high school graduates.

Adoption of CCR standards

All 50 states and the **District of Columbia** have adopted CCR standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. A total of **45 states** and the **District of Columbia** have adopted the CCSS in both subjects. **Minnesota** has adopted the CCSS in English language arts/literacy and maintains its own CCR standards in mathematics.

Alaska, Nebraska, Texas and **Virginia** have adopted their own state-developed standards that reflect CCR expectations and have been verified by state postsecondary institutions.

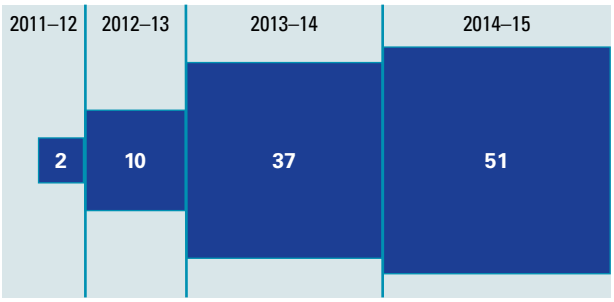
The rapid adoption of CCR standards is without question a bright spot in state progress on the CCR agenda. When Achieve first began reporting on state policies in 2005, only three states had CCR standards.

Implementation of CCR standards

The adoption of CCR standards means little without effective implementation to ensure that instruction is aligned to the standards and that implementation translates into improved student outcomes. Most states built in three to four years between adoption of the standards and when "full K–12 implementation" is expected to occur — that is, when teachers in all grades and both subjects are expected to incorporate the standards into classroom instruction.

The table on page 39 provides a breakdown of each state's reported timeline for implementing the CCSS or other mathematics and English language arts/literacy CCR standards. According to this year's survey, **37 states** report they will have implemented the CCSS/CCR standards by the beginning of the 2013–14 school year. States' journeys toward full implementation will continue, and the role of the state will remain pivotal as high-quality instructional resources are developed and used, training and professional learning opportunities are offered, performance metrics are monitored, and all students have access to the full range of the standards.

Number of States with Plans for Full Implementation of the CCSS/CCR Standards (English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics K–12)



Elements of Effective Implementation

Effective standards implementation requires a variety of activities at the state, district, school and classroom levels, but these activities will vary depending on a state's context. States have used their authority and influence to take the following actions to support effective implementation:

STATE-DRIVEN COLLABORATION

This year's survey again asked states how they were fostering collaboration — either with other states or among districts within their states — to identify, select, pilot or develop high-quality, CCSS-aligned instructional materials.

A total of **39 states** indicated that they are involved in some form of collaboration. Of these, **25 states** reported that they collaborate with other states *and* foster collaboration within their states at the district level. **Seven additional states** reported collaborating with other states, and **five states** indicated that they facilitate cross-district collaboration within the state. An additional **two states** did not indicate the form of collaboration in which they engage.

Two mechanisms that states are using to work together are through the EQuIP (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) and Open Educational Resources (OER) initiatives.

EQuIP seeks to increase the supply of high-quality lessons and units aligned to the CCSS, make them available to teachers as soon as possible, and build the capacity of educators to evaluate and improve the quality of instructional materials for their classrooms and schools. It builds on a collaborative effort of Achieve and education leaders from Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island that developed the Tri-State Rubric. To date, leaders and teachers from more than 25 states have participated in EQuIP convenings and work.

In the past year, EQuIP established a peer review panel of educators to evaluate lessons and units using the rubrics to identify exemplars. The EQuIP peer review panel is accepting materials submissions for evaluation; exemplary lessons and units will be posted. Please see www.achieve.org/EQuIP to learn more about the rubrics, materials, review process and other resources.

States have also worked together with the **OER** community to develop an online tool to help educators evaluate the quality and alignment of OER instructional materials. Further, Achieve has partnered with OER Commons to provide a tool for educators to use in evaluating materials using the rubrics.

Building on these streams of work, **seven states — California, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, Washington** and **Wisconsin** — participated in Achieve's OER Institute. The goal of the OER Institute is to bring these states together to discuss issues and policy barriers surrounding the use of OER in CCR standards implementation. Please see www.achieve.org/oer-rubrics to learn more about the OER rubrics, the online evaluation tool and the implementation work with states.

- Provide or support the development of, access to and use of aligned, high-quality instructional materials;
- Provide or support training and professional learning opportunities that enable ongoing, job-embedded support for teachers and principals, as well as postsecondary faculty; and
- Deploy strong performance metrics to monitor progress.

Provide Instructional Materials: According to this year's survey data, almost all states are supporting the development and use of instructional materials aligned to states' CCSS/CCR standards, albeit in very different ways depending on state contexts. Most commonly, states are guiding/supporting district and/or school use of high-quality curricular or instructional materials by providing processes, protocols and exemplars **(41 states)** and/or developing high-quality curricular and supplemental materials for voluntary use **(30 states).** A number of states have created, for the first time, model instructional curricula for districts' voluntary use.

Some states are concurrently building the capacity of educators while working to develop and increase the use of high-quality instructional resources. For example, to help inform districts' instructional materials choices, in spring 2013, the **Washington** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) facilitated a review process of full-course Open Educational Resources (OER) in Algebra I/Integrated Mathematics I and units in 11th–12th grade English language arts/literacy. After soliciting vendors and developers of open materials, teams of reviewers from across the state used the CCSS Publishers' Criteria and Achieve's Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) and OER rubrics to review submitted materials. OSPI posted the results of this review on its website, showing ratings of the courses and reviewer comments, along with a report discussing the process and results.

Far fewer states are approving or certifying lists of high-quality curricular and supplemental materials at the state level **(17 states)** and/or requiring the use of certain high-quality curricular or instructional materials **(five states).** (See the table on page 40 for state-by-state breakdown of responses.)

Provide Training and Professional Learning Opportunities: States also vary in the extent to which they are training and supporting educators in their implementation of the standards. (See the tables on pages 41–42 for state-by-state breakdowns.) Again, state context matters — some states have historically directly delivered professional development and support to teachers and principals, while others have sought to influence the quality and alignment of training and support through indirect means such as funding or facilitating statewide professional learning communities. In some states, regional centers that receive funding and/or direction from the state agency or exist as independent entities can also be important links along the training and support delivery chain.

Among the states that directly deliver training and support to teachers and principals, **38** have a coordinated agencywide plan and calendar for training and support, **30** have directed regional centers to provide training and support, **eight** have audited existing training opportunities, and **16** have identified high-quality or promising providers.

States have also taken other actions to support teacher and principal access to aligned and effective professional learning opportunities, including facilitating statewide **(33 states)** or regional/local **(33 states)** professional learning communities, facilitating regional centers in providing training and support **(28 states),** providing guidance or criteria for the use of federal funds **(28 states),** or

EXPANDED LEARNING TIME

As states implement the CCSS/CCR standards, many students will need supports — some well before they get to high school. These supports may take a variety of forms, including additional instructional time, tutoring during the school day or year, or a longer school year. Expanded learning time initiatives are showing promising ways to provide additional time during the school day or year for all students in a school and are getting positive results.

Determining the appropriate state role in providing or enabling student supports is a critical and often difficult issue; most states have delegated this responsibility to districts or schools. Please see www.timeandlearning.org for more information about the impact of expanded learning time.

changing definitions of effective professional learning **(11 states).** Other states have partnered with state professional associations, facilitated district curriculum development or provided online professional learning modules.

States' efforts to train and support educators in their implementation of the standards are not limited to the K–12 sector; states are working to engage higher education faculty on a number of CCSS/CCR-related fronts. **Thirty-four states** have provided training on the CCSS/CCR standards to teacher and principal preparation program faculty to build understanding of the standards and alignment with the teacher preparation curriculum. **Twenty-six states** have provided training on the CCSS/CCR standards to postsecondary faculty who teach entry-level, credit-bearing courses to build understanding of the standards. **Fifteen states** report facilitating vertical alignment or "tuning" sessions for secondary educators and postsecondary faculty who teach entry-level, credit-bearing courses.

Beyond these efforts, some states are thinking strategically about how to ensure that K–12 and higher education are working collaboratively on implementation. For example, **Arizona** has established the Arizona College Career Ready Partnership, a statewide collaborative of K–12 and higher education institutions. Members represent Arizona's major universities, community colleges systems, the Department of Education, the Arizona Board of Regents and the governor's office. A series of meetings between high school and higher education instructors in English language arts/literacy and mathematics is under way to jointly develop guidance documents, templates and exemplar lessons for high school courses that will ensure that students graduate from high school ready for college and careers.

Deploy Performance Metrics: Although most states report using performance metrics to monitor the success of implementation efforts, they report using only the broad measures in the state accountability formula, not student performance measures and implementation indicators that are specific to the state implementation plan. Given that accountability measures often combine grade levels and even content areas, this situation severely hampers states' precision in identifying areas of need. And without any indicators of implementation — for example, without even knowing how many teachers received training and support or accessed instructional materials — drawing conclusions that could suggest course adjustments is impossible.

Twenty-three states report using student performance indicators that are specific to the standards implementation plan, and **18 states** report using specific implementation measures. In terms of student performance measures, **Louisiana** encourages districts to monitor the progress of implementation according to eight statewide performance goals, including the percentage of students who enter 4th and 9th grades on time and on grade level and the percentage

DETAILS MATTER: FEEDBACK LOOPS

The expectation that states will lead effective implementation of the CCSS or other CCR standards requires that states not only develop and execute their plans but also have good information about what is and is not working with their implementation strategies. To gain this information, states should have a robust system of feedback loops, particularly for state-provided or state-facilitated training and support for teachers.

This year, most states reported using one or more of the following forms of feedback loops for training and support:

1. User satisfaction surveys for teachers and/or school leaders **(36 states);**
2. Self-reports of changed practice by teachers and/or school leaders who participated in aligned professional development (versus nonparticipants) **(17 states);**
3. Observations of changed practice by teachers and/or school leaders who participated in aligned professional development (versus nonparticipants) **(13 states);** and
4. Impact on student outcomes (e.g., through formative or summative assessments) **(16 states).**

Some states have taken the step of publicly reporting feedback and evaluation results. The **North Carolina** Department of Public Instruction has posted numerous evaluations of its professional development work.[3] These evaluations are centered on answering key questions including "what were direct outcomes of State-level [Race to the Top (RttT)] professional development efforts" and "to what extent are gains in students' performance outcomes associated with RttT professional development?" These evaluations provided data about the quality of various professional development opportunities throughout the year as well as a set of recommendations for future professional development.

Other states are in the process of collecting and analyzing survey information. The **Hawaii** Department of Education has administered a survey based on the Feedback Loops for Common Core State Standards Survey Tool.

State implementation efforts are more likely to succeed at scale with feedback loops. Having accurate, detailed and timely information about the impact that implementation strategies are having on the ground is an essential piece of any state implementation effort.

of students in 9th and 11th grades who are on track to college and career readiness. **Florida** has implementation indicators that are specific to the CCSS — in particular, it tracks and publicly reports the districts that have a CCSS implementation plan that includes components to monitor the fidelity of implementation.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

Based on current plans, nearly all states plan to have fully implemented CCR standards by 2014–15. The most significant challenge for states will be continuously evolving their own roles and strategies to ensure that educators have the support they need to improve their instruction and to ensure that all students have exposure to effective instruction on the full set of CCR standards. It will also require states to continue holding firm in their commitment to their standards.

Recommendations

- States should evaluate their current policies and take the necessary steps to ensure that state assessment, graduation requirements and accountability policies work together to support implementation of the CCSS or other CCR standards.
- States should also leverage every opportunity to facilitate collaborative professional learning around the standards, particularly using their strategies to identify and develop instructional materials.
- States should begin using data on student performance that are available to them now — and that will be available to them in 2014–15 and beyond — to monitor implementation progress and inform adjustments to ongoing efforts to support strong instructional materials, training and supports. For example, states should use data on how well students performed on CCSS-aligned items on the state assessment by grade and subject. If they find that students are struggling in a particular grade and subject, such as 5th grade mathematics, they should adjust their plans to prioritize support for 5th grade math instructional materials and training and support for elementary teachers.
- State policymakers should work with higher education leaders and institutions to focus efforts to systematically improve classroom instruction, including aligning teacher preparation, licensure, and relicensure programs and policies with the CCSS/CCR standards.
- While districts and schools are primarily responsible for providing student supports, states should consider what role they can play in ensuring that all students have the support they need to access and learn the CCSS/CCR standards. At a minimum, promoting strategies that work — including extended learning time, accelerated learning, afterschool programs, data-driven dropout prevention, virtual learning opportunities that expand access and efforts to create personalized learning environments — will be critical.

ALIGNING TEACHER PREPARATION AND LICENSURE POLICIES WITH THE CCSS/CCR STANDARDS

Given that state licensure policies send clear messages about the knowledge and skills teachers must acquire and demonstrate to receive a teaching license, states are taking steps to ensure that teacher preparation programs and licensure requirements are CCSS/CCR aligned. This alignment will help ensure that preservice and in-service teachers have the requisite knowledge and demonstrate mastery of the standards and instructional shifts — a key factor in their ability to successfully teach higher standards. To date, **21 states** have or are currently in the process of aligning their teacher licensure/relicensure policies with the CCSS/CCR standards, and **17 states** are planning to do so in the near future.

Leading states are also actively working to increase awareness and understanding of the CCSS/CCR standards in higher education to align teacher preparation program approval policies with the CCSS/CCR standards. This year, **20 states** reported they have aligned or are in the process of aligning their teacher preparation program approval policies with the CCSS/CCR standards, and **15 states** are planning to do so in the near future.

In **Arizona,** the state's new teacher Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessments — National Evaluation Series subject/content exams align with the CCSS standards. The state is also in the process of realigning the teacher/administrative preparation program approval process and requirements with the CCSS in partnership with the state's institutions of higher education and the State Board of Education office.

In **Hawaii,** teacher preparation programs must incorporate the CCSS into their programs when preparing teacher candidates and are required to submit evidence to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board about how their candidates use the standards in working with P–12 students. The Hawaii Teacher Performance Standards support the CCSS.

In **Colorado,** the state completed a cross-walk of the standards for licensure as well as a more comprehensive study that was released in fall 2012 on revamping the state's educator licensure system to become more effectiveness based. A statewide working group has assembled to develop legislation that would update and revamp the state's educator licensure laws. A key component of this work will be ensuring that the new licensure system is aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards.

Graduation Requirements

Completing a rigorous course of study in high school aligned to CCR expectations is one of the strongest predictors of whether students ultimately will succeed in postsecondary coursework and reach their goals, including attaining a degree.[4] Moreover, requiring students to complete such a course of study is one of the most explicit ways to ensure that the CCSS or other CCR academic content standards reach *all* students.

Establishing a statewide culture of rigor and high expectations for all students — while providing them the support they need to succeed and offering relevant and rigorous coursework, such as career and technical education — will help keep students engaged in school and ensure that they graduate with a diploma that prepares them for college and careers. CCR graduation requirements are also a critical lever for addressing the longstanding inequities in which low-income students and students of color are systematically given a less challenging set of requirements.

What are CCR graduation requirements?

Achieve considers states' mathematics and English language arts/literacy high school graduation requirements to be at the CCR level if students are required to complete a course of study aligned with state-adopted CCR standards. Of course, readiness for college and careers depends on more than the mastery of English language arts/literacy and mathematics content and skills, but these two content areas serve as a foundation for the study of other academic disciplines and contextualized learning. States with CCR requirements for all students in English language arts/literacy and mathematics also require students to complete a broad and comprehensive course of study in science, history, the arts, foreign language, career and technical education, etc.

In states that have adopted the CCSS, students must take at least three years of rigorous mathematics to learn the content in the standards (see sidebar on page 14). The CCSS also presume that students will take four years of English (which is a nearly universal requirement) and that English courses will be aligned with the CCSS. States and districts will need to integrate the literacy standards across all other disciplines including history/social studies, science and technical courses.

RETHINKING THE ALGEBRA II DEBATE IN A CCSS/CCR ENVIRONMENT

At a minimum, all students need to take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards. **For states that have adopted the CCSS, students will need to take at least two years of algebra and one year of geometry (or the equivalent integrated courses) to reach the "college- and career-ready line" identified in the standards.**

Achieve, in partnership with the CCSS mathematics writing team, convened a group of experts to develop Model Course Pathways in Mathematics based on the CCSS. Four model course pathways were created: a traditional approach, with two algebra courses and a geometry course that each include data; an integrated approach, with three courses that each include number, algebra, geometry and data; and a "compacted" version of each pathway that begins in grade 7 and allows students to study calculus or other college-level courses in high school.[5] States, districts and schools need to examine their courses (no matter what they title them) to ensure that students take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards.

The research is clear on the benefit of students engaging in mathematics throughout all four years of high school — but that does not mean all students need to, or should, take precalculus or calculus while in high school.[6] Rather, states, districts and schools need to ensure that they are offering courses that include rich and meaningful mathematics — whether in traditional mathematics courses, capstone experiences or applied/technical courses with rigorous (and identified) embedded mathematics — particularly for students who complete CCSS-aligned coursework in 10th or 11th grade. A number of states have positioned themselves to do this, especially states that already require students to take a CCR course of study to earn a diploma and require that students take either a fourth unit of mathematics or take mathematics in their senior year of high school. In **Arkansas,** the Smart Core Diploma requires that students take Algebra II and one course beyond Algebra II. **Tennessee** requires students to take Algebra II, a fourth higher-level mathematics course and a mathematics course each school year.

Similarly, the 81 Career Cluster Pathway Plans of Study — developed by secondary, postsecondary, business, industry and government leaders to serve as a guide for career and technical education students' educational and career goals in a wide range of fields (e.g., health care, manufacturing, finance) — recommend that students take a rigorous set of mathematics requirements at the secondary and postsecondary levels. At a minimum, every plan of study recommends that students complete Algebra II and one additional higher-level mathematics course, such as statistics or precalculus.[7]

States have taken a number of different approaches to establishing a required CCR course of study:

1. **Mandatory:** graduation requirements that specify a CCR course of study that all students must complete. This approach does not offer "opt-out" provisions that allow students to receive a diploma without having met requirements that reach the CCR level.
2. **Default with minimum diploma opt-out:** graduation requirements that specify a CCR course of study into which all students are automatically enrolled in the 9th grade but allow students with parents' permission to pursue a different state-defined diploma with a less demanding set of requirements, such as the minimum diploma.
3. **Default with personal curriculum opt-out:** graduation requirements that specify a CCR course of study into which all students are automatically enrolled in the 9th grade but allow students with parents' permission to modify (i.e., lessen) the requirements — typically in mathematics or science — on an individual basis and still earn the same diploma as those who complete the CCR course of study.

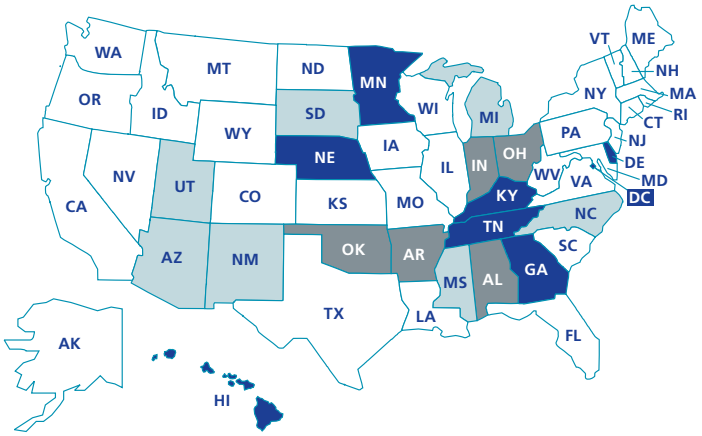
Adoption of CCR graduation requirements

A total of **19 states** and the **District of Columbia** have adopted CCR graduation requirements.

Seven states and the **District of Columbia** have or will have mandatory diplomas that require all students to take the content through the level of the CCSS/CCR standards by 2016.

Five states default 9th graders into a CCR course of study but offer a separate and distinct minimum diploma (or specific curriculum sequence) for students who opt out of the "default" CCR curriculum.

CCR Graduation Requirements by Type of Requirements



Seven states default 9th graders into a CCR course of study and allow students to opt out of individual courses — typically advanced-level mathematics courses — but award students the same diploma as those who complete the full set of CCR graduation requirements.

An additional **seven states (California, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, Texas** and **Virginia)** offer other diplomas or courses of study that are at the CCR level, but students must *opt into* them; these states' default graduation course requirements are below the CCR level. While it is commendable for these states to offer these options, the fact that students must opt into them likely means that fewer will, and it may be more challenging for all schools to offer courses the state does not require for all students. At a minimum, states should track and make publicly available the participation rates for each of their diplomas, being sure to include data on minority and low-income students. "Opt-in" CCR diploma policies can provide a good stepping stone to mandatory or default diplomas.

Recent data have shown higher percentages of students earning a CCR diploma when states have adopted and implemented it as a default than when students had to opt into the CCR-level diploma.

For example, the **Texas** Recommended High School Program, established as the default CCR diploma option for all students in 2003, first affected the class of 2008.[8] In 2009, 82.5 percent of graduates met the requirements for this default CCR diploma, compared to 68.4 percent of graduates in 2004 when the requirements were optional.[9]

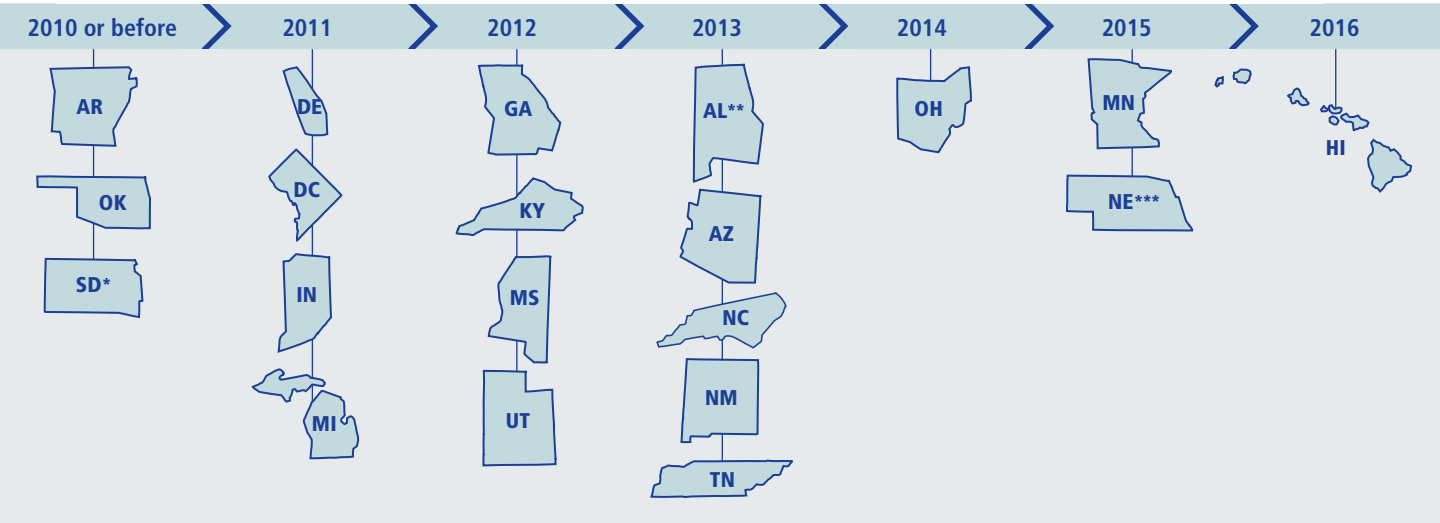
Graduating Class	Texas Recommended High School Program or Higher
2009	82.5
2007	77.9
2005	72.3
2004	68.4
2003	63.7

Similarly, **Indiana's** Core 40 diploma, established as the default CCR diploma option for all students in 2005, first affected the class of 2011. In 2012, 81.9 percent of graduates met the requirements for this default CCR diploma, compared to 72.3 percent of graduates in 2007.[10]

Graduating Class	Indiana Core 40 or Higher
2012	81.9
2010	77.6
2008	73.8
2007	72.3

Timeline of State Implementation of CCR Graduation Requirements

In most states, new graduation requirements take effect several years after policy adoption of the new requirements. As a general practice, most states provide one or two years before an entering 9th grade class is held to a new set of requirements to ensure that students and parents have adequate notification and to give schools and districts time to make adjustments in course offerings, teacher assignments, etc.



* *South Dakota adopted CCR graduation requirements in 2005 (that took effect in 2010), creating two pathways — the default CCR curriculum with a minimum opt-out to a standard curriculum. The state revised its requirements in 2009 (taking effect in 2013), creating a single pathway with a personal modification in which students can opt out of specific mathematics and science courses. The state is developing the capacity to follow a student's curricular pathway via its longitudinal data system and a new statewide common course numbering system.*

** *In 2008, Alabama adopted default CCR graduation requirements with a minimum diploma opt-out; these requirements first took effect for the class of 2013. Alabama revised its graduation course requirements in 2013, creating a single diploma but allowing students multiple pathways to the same diploma. The revised graduation requirements will take effect for the class of 2017.*

*** *In 2009, Nebraska mandated that all high schools in the state raise their graduation requirements to the CCR level. Starting with the class of 2015, the local requirements must ensure that to earn a diploma, students have to meet Nebraska's new CCR standards — standards that Achieve has verified as CCR expectations. Through the annual reviews of district assurance statements and periodic on-site reviews, the state department of education will confirm that the local graduation requirements are truly aligned to the state's rigorous standards.*

Whether or not a student completes a CCR course of study has implications beyond high school. Students opting out of, or not opting into, CCR requirements may not be eligible for state-sponsored scholarships or may not take the right courses to meet the minimum requirements for admission into their state's postsecondary system. States should signal and be transparent about these potential disconnects should a student pursue a diploma that is not at the CCR level.

Adoption of a CCR graduation requirements policy is only the first step; states should continue to make the case for these requirements (along with aligned standards, assessments and accountability systems) and use data to show the benefits of a CCR system to students and to the state as a whole. Since last year's report, the total number of states with CCR graduation requirements has declined to **19** and the **District of Columbia. Florida, Iowa, Texas** and **Washington** will no longer require all students to take a CCR course of study to graduate; most of the states that changed course had yet to see students graduate under their more rigorous requirements.

High school graduation requirements were a topic of interest in many states this year. One particular point of challenge was in managing the interaction between graduation requirements and components of the education system (e.g., high school assessments and the attached stakes). States that adopt CCR graduation requirements must examine other pieces of their education systems to craft policies that work together coherently and support preparing all students for college and careers.

This year's survey data indicate that most states without CCR course requirements are not considering proposals to raise their minimum high school graduation course requirements to the CCR level, resulting in a misalignment between the states' high school graduation requirements and their CCR standards.

MOVING TOWARD COMPETENCY

Although states most often organize courses of study into course requirements, these may be satisfied in a variety of ways including through demonstration of competency. **Thirty-seven states** have used different methods to allow students to earn a diploma through competency-based methods rather than seat time or Carnegie units. These methods include setting competency-based graduation requirements or guidelines, adopting credit advancement or credit-by-examination policies, defining credits based on knowledge and skills rather than on seat time, and offering seat-time waivers.

Although policies in these states often offer wide flexibility to local districts to allow students to advance toward a diploma through demonstrations of mastery of content, few states take the next step to encourage districts to use the flexibility. However, **Maine** requires that all diplomas offered after January 1, 2018, be based on proficiency with state standards and has developed a groundbreaking technical assistance website at www.maine.gov/doe/proficiency. **Colorado** has issued competency-based graduation guidelines to districts. A few other states have taken other actions to require, encourage or support districts in using the flexibility. For example:

- **Arizona** requires that districts offer competency-based credits upon the request of a student.
- **Iowa** provides a state consultant to assist districts in establishing competency-based graduation requirements.
- **North Carolina** will be providing guidelines for districts for implementing the state's new Credit by Demonstrated Mastery program, first available to students in grades 6–8 in the 2013–14 school year.

Implementation of CCR graduation requirements

Elements of Effective Implementation

- Ensure the rigor and consistency of courses or competency-based requirements through one or more mechanisms.
- Monitor the numbers of students completing a CCR course of study, opting out of CCR course sequences and modifying a course of study.
- Report the numbers and percentages of students completing a CCR course of study, opting out of CCR course sequences and modifying a course of study.
- Provide necessary supports to struggling students.

Ensure Rigor and Consistency: States should support districts and schools in implementing the required courses in a manner most appropriate to the state's individual role and context. Course titles may vary across the state, but the rigor and consistency of course or competency-based requirements should not. **Thirty-eight states** reported having at least one mechanism in place to monitor the rigor and consistency of the courses — and the standards covered by the courses — that students are required to complete.

- The most common mechanism states employ is end-of-course assessments: **27 states** reported using this lever to ensure consistency and rigor statewide. However, these end-of-course assessments range in levels of rigor and often stop short of higher-level English and advanced algebra.
- **Seven states** audit district or school curricular or instructional materials in required courses/content. **Kentucky** is working to annually audit course syllabi and course codes to ensure alignment with the standards. According to Kentucky

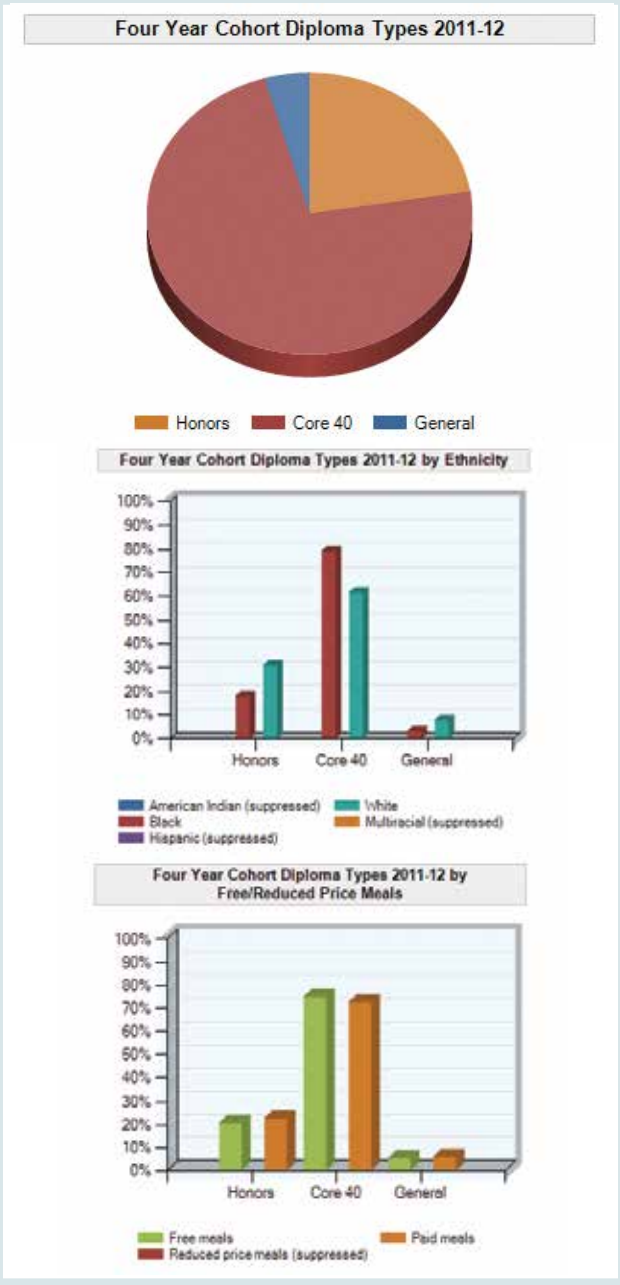
Administration Regulation, local districts and schools must employ the uniform codes described in the state's Academic Course Code List to classify all courses offered in each school. The Academic Course Code List contains a listing of course descriptions and parameters along with certifications that fit the parameters for a given course, and the content listed for a course cannot be changed.[11] Audits of instructional materials and other reviews of course content and rigor need not be conducted by the state education agency. Postsecondary institutions and their faculty or content experts in school districts throughout the state can conduct the necessary reviews and audits, emphasizing rigor and alignment as a professional responsibility rather than a compliance-oriented action.

- **Fourteen states** have approval processes to review courses to make sure they are covering the state's standards in a progression that ensures college and career readiness for all. In **Utah,** schools can petition the Department of Education to add a course to the state course listings to ensure alignment to the standards. Details of the proposed course must be provided, including an overview of the course, the syllabus and an explanation of the need for the course; a statement of how the course will benefit students; an explanation of how the course aligns to the standards, including attaching a standards alignment map; how student achievement will be determined; and anticipated participation and implementation.[12] These course approval processes can also be carried out by groups that are external to state education agencies, such as a state's postsecondary system.
- **Twenty-five states** have clear standards for required courses. In **Alabama,** the Department of Education, in consultation with educators and business and community leaders, created *Courses of Study* to organize the standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics, as well as other subjects. These *Courses of Study* define classroom expectations and minimum required content for courses.[13]

Monitor Student Course-Taking Patterns: States with default CCR diplomas should track which students opt out of the default diploma or receive a personal modification. Without monitoring this information, states do not know which students in which schools are graduating having completed a CCR course of study. States that track students' course-taking patterns are better positioned to study and understand the relationships among high school course enrollment, grades and assessments of college readiness as well as identify the types and series of courses that best prepare students for college success. To date, of the **12 states** with default CCR diplomas, only **four — Arkansas, Indiana, Michigan** and **Oklahoma** — keep track of the numbers of students who opt out or modify the default CCR requirements.

Report Student Course-Taking Patterns: States with default CCR diplomas should report the percentages of students who opt out of the default diploma or receive a personal modification by student subgroup at the school level. Without disclosing this information, states are not giving parents and policymakers any sense of whether students in their schools are graduating with a CCR course of study. Of the **12 states** with default CCR diplomas, only **Indiana** reports this information at the school level (see samples from reports below).

Samples from Indiana Reports of Graduates by Diploma Type



Source: Indiana Department of Education Compass Reports. Available at http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/graduates.aspx?type=state.

California, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, Texas and **Virginia** offer CCR-level courses of study that students must opt into. Six of these seven states report the percentages of graduates earning their opt-in CCR-level diploma or completing the CCR course of study at the school level (see page 28). **Five of these states — California, Massachusetts, New York, Texas** and **Virginia** — take the additional step to report these data by subgroups of students, a critical piece of public reporting and transparency.

Provide Necessary Supports to Struggling Students: As more students take challenging courses in high school, states and districts will need more creative and effective ways to support students who struggle to meet those challenges. States with CCR graduation requirements are expecting more of their students and need to be willing and able to provide the supports and incentives necessary to ensure that all students are able to excel under the new requirements. Such supports may include accelerated learning options, extended learning time and afterschool programs, data-driven dropout prevention and credit recovery programs, virtual learning opportunities that expand access, and efforts to create personalized learning environments.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

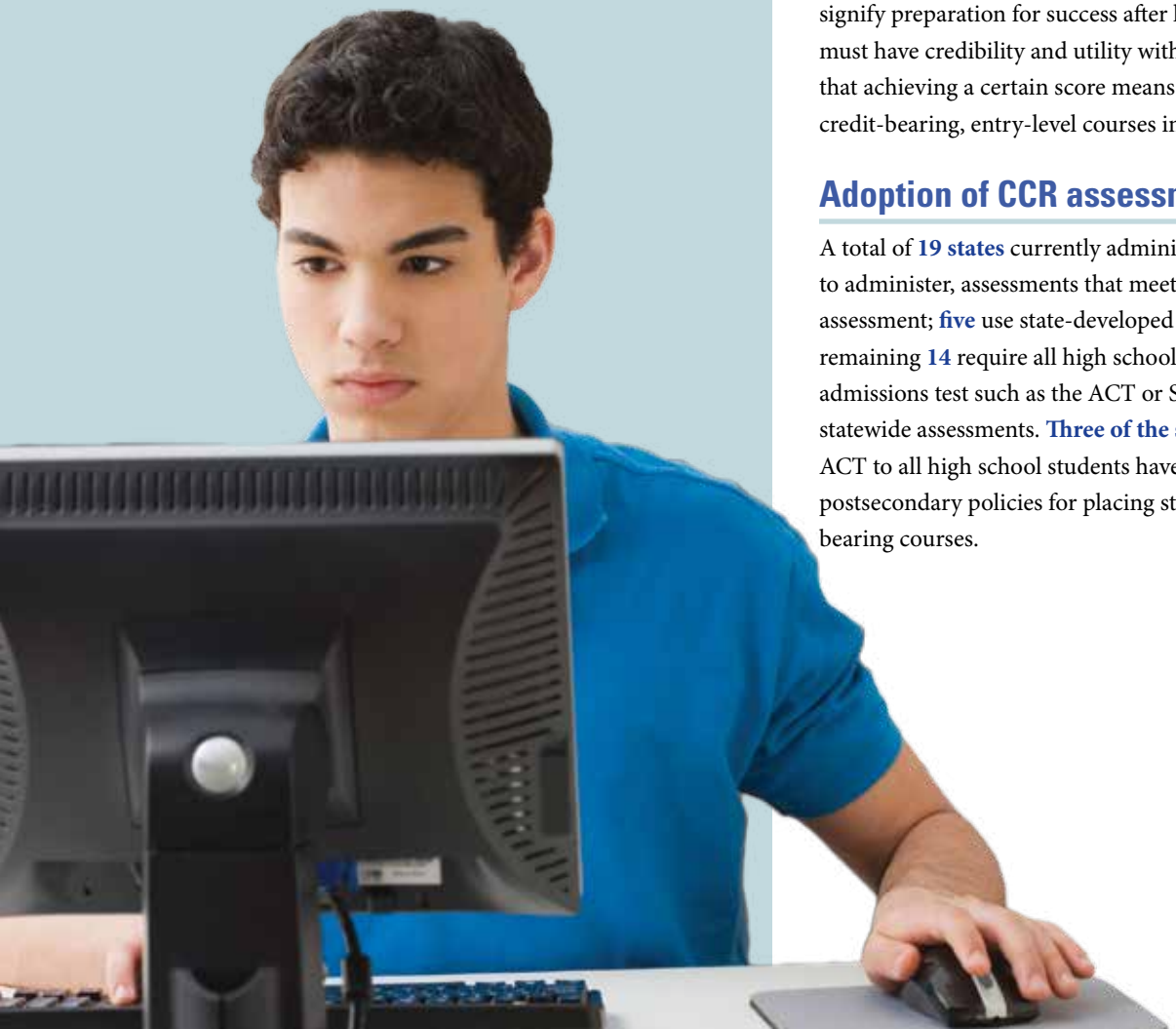
It will be critical for all states to review the alignment among their graduation requirements, CCSS/CCR standards and high school assessments. If states are serious about meeting the promise of the CCSS/CCR standards, they will take steps to ensure that students take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards, particularly as states transition to CCR assessments, including the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments that are being implemented in 2014–15. States that do not currently require all students to take courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards will need to make progress on policy changes to do so, and states that do require all students to follow a CCR course of study to graduate should support the effective implementation of this policy through efforts to evaluate (and strengthen) the alignment and rigor of the content to which students are exposed.

Recommendations

- States should ensure that all students take courses that deliver the CCSS or other CCR standards, putting into place appropriate supports to help students master the standards.
- States should report on the number and percentage of high school graduates who successfully complete a CCR course of study, at a minimum in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. States that default all students into a CCR diploma but allow students the flexibility to opt out of the default CCR course of study should report to the public the numbers and percentages of students who complete the CCR diploma, who do so using a personal modification and/or who opt out to a minimum diploma.
- States should take steps to make certain that graduation requirements are rigorous and consistently delivered to all students across the state through conducting audits of instructional materials used, building in review processes and clear standards for courses (if the state's graduation requirements are course based), and/or using end-of-course assessments to encourage and evaluate alignment and rigor.

Assessments

State adoption of standards aligned to CCR expectations will have little impact without aligned, high-quality summative assessments that can measure how well students are learning those standards and provide useful information to educators to improve instruction and student support. There is a particular need for high school assessments aligned to CCR expectations to provide information that can be useful in preparing students for successful postsecondary transitions. This information can help schools identify and fill student learning gaps before students graduate, reducing the need for costly remediation and increasing the likelihood that students will complete postsecondary education and/or workforce training.



What are CCR assessments?

CCR assessments measure students on CCR content in English language arts/literacy and mathematics and produce scores that signify preparation for success after high school. The assessments must have credibility and utility with postsecondary institutions so that achieving a certain score means that students are eligible to take credit-bearing, entry-level courses in postsecondary institutions.

Adoption of CCR assessments

A total of **19 states** currently administer, or have adopted policies to administer, assessments that meet Achieve's criteria for a CCR assessment; **five** use state-developed CCR assessments while the remaining **14** require all high school students to take a college admissions test such as the ACT or SAT in addition to other statewide assessments. **Three of the states** that administer the ACT to all high school students have also established *statewide* postsecondary policies for placing students into first-year, credit-bearing courses.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FOR ALL

Assessing English language learners and students with disabilities on CCR standards

In addition to the PARCC and Smarter Balanced consortia, which are developing assessments that will include accommodations and supports for many students, four other consortia are developing alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities and English language proficiency assessments.

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment Consortium (DLM) and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) received grants to develop a new generation of alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The assessments are aligned to the CCSS and are expected to fit cohesively with the PARCC and Smarter Balanced assessment systems. The DLM and NCSC assessments should be ready for use by the 2014–15 school year as well. Currently, **14 states** are participating in DLM, and **18** core state partners and **10** Tier II affiliated states are participating in NCSC.

The English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) Consortium and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium received grants to develop new assessments of English language proficiency. The assessment system being developed by WIDA, in collaboration with the **Wisconsin** Department of Education, is called Assessment Services Supporting English Learners through Technology Systems (ASSETS). ASSETS is expected to be ready for use in the 2015–16 school year. The ELPA21 assessment system, a partnership of **11 states,** Stanford University and the Council of Chief State School Officers, is expected to be ready for use in the 2016–17 school year.

Postsecondary Use of CCR Assessments

State	Assessment	Postsecondary Policy
Alabama[14]	ACT (2014)/WorkKeys (2015)	Institutional
California	California Standards Test (CST)/ Early Assessment Program (EAP)	Statewide
Colorado	ACT	Institutional
Delaware	SAT	Institutional
Florida	FCAT 2.0 Reading	Statewide
Georgia[15]	Georgia High School Graduation Test (ELA)	Statewide
Hawaii	ACT	Statewide
Illinois	ACT/WorkKeys	Institutional
Kentucky	ACT	Statewide
Louisiana	ACT	Statewide
Maine	SAT	Institutional
Michigan	ACT/WorkKeys	Institutional
New York	Regents End-of-Course Exams	Statewide
North Carolina	ACT	Institutional
Oregon[16]	Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS)	Statewide
Tennessee	ACT	Institutional
Utah	ACT	Institutional
Wisconsin[17]	ACT (2015)	Institutional
Wyoming	ACT	Institutional

Forty-two states and the **District of Columbia,** which are involved in PARCC and Smarter Balanced, are working to develop tests in grades 3–8 and high school that will be aligned to the CCSS. Each of the consortia is engaging with postsecondary education in a variety of ways to ensure that the tests will be validated and used as an indicator of college readiness. These states will be able to compare student performance and progress with other states administering assessments of the same standards. This comparability will allow policymakers, taxpayers and educators to better evaluate the relative effectiveness of education reforms and learn best from the strategies and practices in other states.

Some states administer the ACT or SAT to all students (typically in the 11th grade) and use student scores as measures of college readiness. While these tests have credibility in postsecondary education as a college-ready indicator, particularly for admissions, they are of unknown alignment to the CCSS. The College Board has announced that it is overhauling both the SAT and PSAT to align with the CCSS.

All assessments should be evaluated using the Council of Chief State School Officers assessment quality criteria on pages 21–22. Postsecondary systems should insist on, and help generate, evidence that the tests can be used as an indicator of readiness to enter into and succeed in first-year, credit-bearing courses.

ASSESSMENT ALIGNMENT AND QUALITY

Achieve's criteria for a CCR assessment have traditionally emphasized credibility and use by postsecondary institutions and/or employers. This emphasis on the alignment of end of high school assessments to a CCR level — thus ensuring a seamless transition for students — is increasingly possible with the widespread adoption of the CCSS and other CCR standards across the states. Assessments being developed by the PARCC and Smarter Balanced consortia, among others, that are grounded in assessing the full range and depth of the CCSS and are fully committed to alignment make this possible.

Whatever assessments states give, they should have a strong and commonly understood definition of alignment and quality to guide their decisions. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has provided an important service to this effort by facilitating states and experts in the development and release of principles for high-quality summative assessments in English language arts/literacy and mathematics that align to CCR standards.[18] All states should secure independent reviews from external experts to evaluate state assessments for alignment to the standards and quality (according to the CCSSO criteria below) and make the results of these reviews public.

States' Commitment to High-Quality Assessments Aligned to College and Career Readiness

Introduction

CCSSO, on behalf of the states, hereby commits to further states' proactive leadership in promoting college and career readiness for all students by establishing or adopting high-quality systems of assessments, including both formative and summative assessments, based on college- and career-ready (CCR) standards. These assessments will **align** to CCR standards, **report** annually on each student's progress toward readiness, adhere to best **test administration** practices and be **accessible** to all students. Many states are already demonstrating leadership in moving in this direction by developing higher-quality CCR assessments through participation in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium; other states are also developing new CCR assessments. Our intent is to ensure that CCR-aligned assessments support an education that prepares all students for success in college and careers. As part of states' comprehensive assessment systems, states are moving toward systems that improve upon traditional assessments so that students' in-depth knowledge can be measured. These assessment systems will: assess higher-order cognitive skills; assess critical abilities with high fidelity; be internationally benchmarked; be instructionally sensitive and educationally valuable; and be valid, reliable and fair.[i] States' ability to implement systems of assessment that meet these criteria is evolving, along with the technology that is used as part of instructional practice to teach and assess these types of college and career skills and knowledge.

High-Quality Summative Assessment Principles for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments Aligned to College and Career Readiness Standards[ii]

To ensure that all students have access to an education that prepares them for college and careers, summative assessments in grades 3–8 and high school should:

1. ALIGN to CCR standards by

— in ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY ASSESSMENTS:

A. Assessing Student Reading and Writing Achievement in Both English Language Arts and Literacy: The assessments are English language arts and literacy tests that are based on an aligned balance of literary and informational texts.

B. Focusing on Complexity of Texts: The assessments require appropriate levels of text complexity; they raise the bar for text complexity each year so students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Multiple forms of text are assessed, including written, audio, visual and graphic as technology permits.

C. Requiring Students To Read Closely and Use Evidence from Texts: The assessments consist of reading and writing test questions, tasks and/or prompts, as appropriate, that demand that students read carefully and deeply and use specific evidence from increasingly complex texts to obtain and defend correct responses.

---

[i] *These criteria are taken from the June 2013 report* Criteria for High-Quality Assessment, *written by Linda Darling-Hammond, Joan Herman, James Pellegrino, Jamal Abedi, J. Lawrence Aber, Eva Baker, Randy Bennett, Edmund Gordon, Edward Haertel, Kenji Hakuta, Andrew Ho, Robert Lee Linn, P. David Pearson, James Popham, Lauren Resnick, Alan H. Schoenfeld, Richard Shavelson, Lorrie A. Shepard, Lee Shulman and Claude M. Steele.*

[ii] *Federal review of assessments should remain limited solely to summative assessments. While the principles set forth herein should apply to all assessments, including formative, the principles are intended to provide guidance to the U.S. Department of Education on its peer review process for summative assessments only.*

(CONTINUED)

D. Requiring a Range of Cognitive Demand: The assessments require students to demonstrate a range of higher-order, analytical thinking and performance skills in reading, writing and research based on the depth and complexity of CCR standards, allowing robust information to be gathered for students with varied levels of achievement. Assessments should have a significant portion of total score points come from items that demonstrate a deeper level of knowledge (i.e., represent the high complexity levels designated by taxonomies of cognitive demand).

E. Emphasizing Writing That Demonstrates Proficiency in the Use of Language, Including Vocabulary and Conventions: The assessments require students to demonstrate CCR abilities in writing, vocabulary knowledge and tools, and the use of language and its conventions.

F. Assessing Research and Inquiry: The assessments require students to demonstrate research and inquiry skills, demonstrated by the ability to find, process, synthesize, organize and use information from sources.

G. Assessing Speaking and Listening: Over time, and as assessment advances allow, the assessments measure the speaking and listening communication skills students need for college and career readiness.

— in MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENTS:

H. Focusing Strongly on the Content Most Needed for Success in Later Mathematics: The assessments help educators keep students on track to readiness by focusing strongly on the content most needed in each grade or course to pave the way for later mathematics. In a CCR-aligned assessment system, the elementary grades focus strongly on arithmetic; the middle grades focus strongly on ratio, proportional relationships, prealgebra and algebra; and high school focuses on widely applicable prerequisites for careers and postsecondary education.

I. Assessing a Balance of Concepts, Procedures and Applications: The assessments measure conceptual understanding, fluency and procedural skill, and application of mathematics, as set out in CCR standards.

J. Connecting Practices to Content: The assessments include brief questions and also longer questions that connect the most important mathematical content of the grade or course to mathematical practices, such as reasoning and modeling.

K. Requiring a Range of Cognitive Demand: The assessments require students to demonstrate a range of performance based on the depth and complexity of CCR standards, allowing robust information to be gathered for students with varied levels of achievement. Assessments include questions, tasks and/or prompts, as appropriate, about the basic content of the grade or course as well as questions that reflect the complex challenge of CCR standards. Assessments should have a significant portion of total score points come from items that demonstrate a deeper level of knowledge (i.e., represent the high complexity levels designated by taxonomies of cognitive demand).

2. Yield valuable REPORTS ON STUDENT PROGRESS by:

A. Focusing on Progress to Readiness: Score reports illustrate a student's progress on the continuum toward college and career readiness, grade by grade and course by course. Reports stress the most important content, skills and processes and show how the assessment focuses on them.

B. Providing Timely Data That Inform Instruction: Reports are instructionally valuable; are easy to understand by all audiences; and are delivered in time to provide useful, actionable data to students, parents and teachers.

3. Adhere to best practices in TEST ADMINISTRATION by:

A. Maintaining Necessary Standardization and Ensuring Test Security: In order to ensure the validity, fairness and integrity of state test results, the assessment systems maintain the security of the items and tests as well as the answer documents and related ancillary materials that result from test administrations.

4. Provide ACCESSIBILITY to all students by:

A. Following the Principles of Universal Design: The assessments are developed in accordance with the principles of universal design and sound testing practice so that the testing interface, whether paper or technology based, does not impede student performance.

B. Offering Appropriate Accommodations and Modifications: Allowable accommodations that maintain the constructs being assessed are offered where feasible and appropriate. Decisions about accessibility are based on individual student needs.

Implementation of CCR assessments

Elements of Effective Implementation

- Smooth the transition to new assessments by building signals about the rigor of new CCR assessments into current state assessments.
- Provide tools for educators, parents and students to understand the level of rigor, item types, scoring rubrics, etc. in the new CCR assessments.
- Once the assessments are operational, provide educators, parents and students with transparent, detailed information about test items and examples of responses at different scoring levels.
- Engage in ongoing collaboration with higher education and employers to ensure that the assessments have utility for student placement and workforce training purposes.

Smooth the Transition: Many states are taking actions to smooth the transition to CCR assessments by making changes to current assessments. These actions are critical for reinforcing implementation of standards along the state's timeline (see page 39) and for helping teachers understand the level of rigor demanded by the standards. They also help the state communicate more broadly about the assessment transition leading up to 2014–15 and the expected lower scores for students in most states.

States such as **Kentucky, Minnesota, New York** and **Virginia,** which have already implemented assessments aligned to the CCSS or other CCR standards, have seen decreases in the percentage of students scoring at a "proficient" or CCR/on-track-to-CCR level. State leaders and external supporters were crucial in informing educators, policymakers, parents and the public about the coming changes and in framing the results not as a decline in student performance but as a change to raise the bar or establish a new baseline for improvement in line with the real-world expectations of higher education and employers.

States took the following steps to smooth the assessment transition in 2012–13 or will do so in 2013–14:

- Added new items to state assessments that align to the CCSS/CCR standards **(18 states);**
- Removed items from state assessments that do not align to the CCSS/CCR standards **(19 states);**
- Expanded or created more constructed-response or performance-based assessments **(nine states);** and
- Raised the standard for "proficiency" on state assessments **(six states).**

A total of **10 states** did not plan any changes for these two years but plan on transitioning to one of the consortia assessments in 2014–15.

In addition, a number of states administered "bridge" or "transitional" assessments aligned to the CCSS. Among these, **Kentucky** was first out of the starting gate with fully aligned assessments in 2011–12. **New York** made a significant change by administering new assessments in grades 3–8 for both English language arts/literacy and mathematics in 2012–13 and will administer CCSS-aligned Algebra I and English language arts/literacy high school assessments in 2013–14. **North Carolina** also administered a transitional assessment in 2012–13, and **Minnesota** did so the same year in English language arts/literacy. **Alabama** and **Illinois** plan to do so in 2013–14. In addition, several "early adopter" states in Smarter Balanced **— Idaho, Montana** and **South Dakota —** will administer the Smarter Balanced assessment as a field test to all students.

See the table on page 43 for a state-by-state breakdown of assessment transition actions.

Provide Tools: States are helping ease the transition to the new assessments by providing tools for educators to better understand the level of rigor and types of items that students will see. Many states are working together through the assessment consortia to do so. For example, both Smarter Balanced and PARCC have developed sample test items for educators. Smarter Balanced has also released a practice test. PARCC is working with cadres of educators in each state to help them better understand the assessments and spread their knowledge to other educators.

Some states are also focusing on helping teachers understand how the new assessments compare with prior or current assessments. For example, **Delaware** has published *Common Core Assessment Comparisons* in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (see sample comparison on page 24). These comparisons show CCSS standards, how they would have been assessed on the state's current assessment and how they would be assessed in a next generation assessment. These examples show that the new assessments will require students to demonstrate far greater conceptual understanding of the content.

Increase Transparency: States should also be planning now for how they will make available test items, scoring rubrics, examples of responses at differing scoring levels, etc. to help educators — as well as parents and students — understand the demands of the assessments and particular areas of need for improvement.

Collaborate across K–12 and Postsecondary: Effective implementation of new CCR assessments also depends on the extent to which the assessments have utility in informing college readiness determinations for individual students. PARCC and Smarter Balanced are working with postsecondary institutions to set policies for CCR determinations for students, largely using the last assessments that students will take in high school (around 11th grade). Students who score below a CCR threshold can then

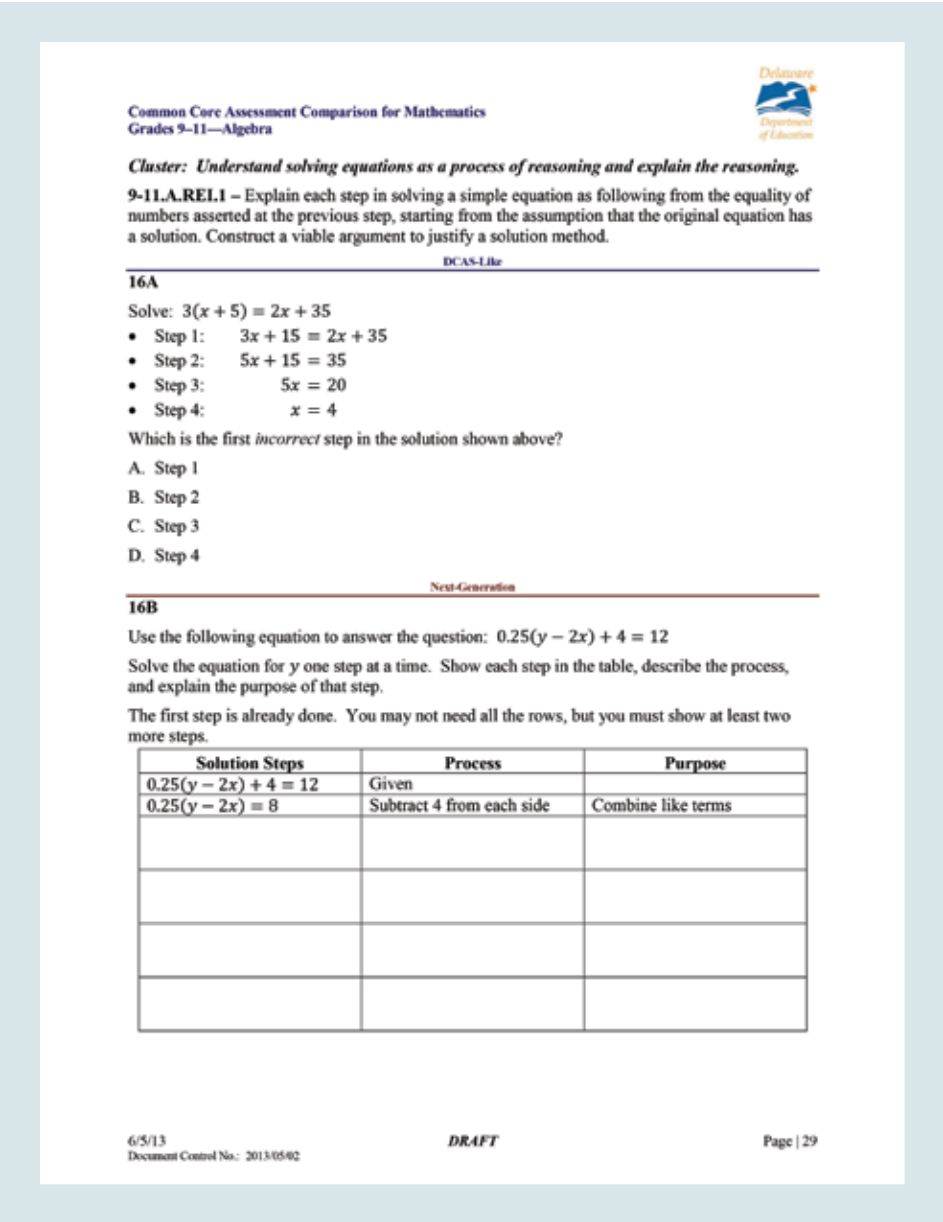
be identified for opportunities to address the knowledge and skills that they still need to master during 12th grade — for example, **Kentucky** offers a series of bridge courses. Students who do reach the threshold can be exempt from placement tests for entry-level, credit-bearing courses. It will be critical for chief state school officers and higher education system heads to exercise leadership across K–12 and postsecondary education to ensure that the assessments are valued by students and postsecondary institutions — including ensuring that postsecondary faculty and leaders are involved in critical milestones for assessment development, such as establishing cut scores.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

States will be making a number of policy decisions about how the PARCC, Smarter Balanced or other CCR assessments will be used once they are operational in 2014–15 and beyond — namely, in high-stakes uses for students such as graduation determinations and measures of college and career readiness. As well, many states will need to address gaps between graduation requirements and the content measured on the assessments.

Stakes for Students: Among the **24 states** that reported administering assessments for high-stakes graduation decisions, this year's survey data indicated that the vast majority **(16)** will continue administering current state assessments or begin transitioning to PARCC/Smarter Balanced assessments for high-stakes graduation decisions in the future. Another **two states** will administer PARCC/

Sample Delaware Common Core Assessment Comparison



Common Core Assessment Comparison for Mathematics
Grades 9–11—Algebra

Cluster: Understand solving equations as a process of reasoning and explain the reasoning.

9-11.A.REI.1 – Explain each step in solving a simple equation as following from the equality of numbers asserted at the previous step, starting from the assumption that the original equation has a solution. Construct a viable argument to justify a solution method.

DCAS-Like

16A

Solve: $3(x + 5) = 2x + 35$

- Step 1: $3x + 15 = 2x + 35$
- Step 2: $5x + 15 = 35$
- Step 3: $5x = 20$
- Step 4: $x = 4$

Which is the first *incorrect* step in the solution shown above?

A. Step 1
B. Step 2
C. Step 3
D. Step 4

Next-Generation

16B

Use the following equation to answer the question: $0.25(y - 2x) + 4 = 12$

Solve the equation for y one step at a time. Show each step in the table, describe the process, and explain the purpose of that step.

The first step is already done. You may not need all the rows, but you must show at least two more steps.

Solution Steps	Process	Purpose
$0.25(y - 2x) + 4 = 12$	Given	
$0.25(y - 2x) = 8$	Subtract 4 from each side	Combine like terms

6/5/13
Document Control No.: 2013/05/02

DRAFT

Page | 29

Smarter Balanced assessments but remove or change the nature of the student stakes. Finally, **six states** have not yet determined how they will proceed.

States that plan to begin transitioning to PARCC/Smarter Balanced assessments for high-stakes graduation decisions will have significant choices to make about the threshold of performance needed for graduation. States should seriously consider whether they still need a test to set a floor for high school graduation when the goal is for a much higher level of performance.

Measures of College and Career Readiness: One of the most critical purposes of the consortia and other CCR assessments is to signal whether students have the level of knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy and mathematics to be prepared for entry-level, credit-bearing courses in these subjects. This serves as a critical signal to K–12 educators, parents and students about the level of academic preparation needed for success. It is also an important way to identify students who need extra support during their 12th grade year to reach this level of preparation.

Statewide assessments have not typically been able to serve these purposes in the past, and they require a whole new level of collaboration across K–12 and higher education. This year's survey responses from state education agencies showed that in many cases, states are in the midst of continuing discussions and planning for analysis of cut scores and other issues before making decisions about how the assessments will be used as measures of college and career readiness — although **a little more than half of the states** in one of the two consortia reported that that they anticipate using the results for such purposes.

Gaps with State Graduation Requirements: Both PARCC and Smarter Balanced will measure the CCSS, which include advanced algebra through an Algebra II/Integrated Math III sequence. If students are not required to take advanced algebra, they are less likely to be well prepared for credit-bearing mathematics courses in postsecondary, which will be evident on the assessments. This situation will be further compounded in PARCC states, where students who do not take Algebra II will not likely be able to take the Algebra II assessment. These students will neither have the opportunity to learn nor the opportunity to be assessed on college-ready mathematics.

Recommendations

- States should have plans in place to transition to new assessments that are fully aligned to the CCSS or other CCR standards and exemplify high-quality assessments.
- State leaders and coalitions should widely communicate the value of these assessments to support aligned and rigorous instruction through the high school grades — and in turn, how such instruction translates into more students being ready for college and careers by graduation.
- States should detail and communicate widely how these new assessments will be used — and why — including in high-stakes decisions for students and as measures of students' college and career readiness.
- If states factor the results of these assessments into high-stakes graduation decisions for students, they will need to proceed carefully both to ensure that they have a clear rationale for how doing so will promote college and career readiness and to determine appropriate cut scores (below the CCR level) that make meaningful claims about student preparation and opportunity. Requiring students to meet a CCR level of performance on these assessments for graduation in the near term is not fair, realistic or advisable. These students have not been exposed to the CCSS/CCR standards for any appreciable length of time, and most students likely will not meet CCR benchmarks in the near future. Over the coming years, as more students are exposed to the CCSS or other CCR standards, states can raise their requirements toward a CCR level of performance.
- States, working with local districts, should redouble their efforts to provide the professional development, tools and support teachers need to effectively implement the standards in the classroom. This support must extend well beyond the initial implementation of new CCSS-aligned state assessments. States should ensure that all educators have access to tools that help them understand the rigor and demands of the new assessments and adjust their instruction accordingly to boost student success.
- States should consider what role they play in helping districts and schools provide effective supports for students to succeed on CCR assessments, including how they can help provide "bridge courses" or other opportunities for students in 12th grade who need support to reach CCR performance by the time they enroll in postsecondary education or training.

Accountability, Data and Public Reporting Systems

Most states' accountability systems, heavily influenced by minimum "floors" set in federal policy, have focused on getting students to a minimum level of proficiency. However, a coherent CCR accountability strategy centers on the need for states to make *ambitious but achievable* progress in student performance at a *much higher* level than minimum proficiency — one tightly linked to readiness for college and careers. Thus, states should incorporate indicators that measure students' college and career readiness and use them in multiple ways to orient the system toward postsecondary success.

States should think more broadly about accountability — not just as a formula to identify schools and districts for sanctions. A CCR accountability strategy incorporates student data reporting that puts data into the hands of the right people at the right time, sets ambitious but achievable student performance goals to rally support for reform and monitor progress, and establishes positive incentives for districts and schools to work toward. Such a strategy can pull all elements of a state's work to improve college and career readiness into sharp focus at the district and school levels and turn policies and practices into results for students.

What is a CCR accountability system?

A CCR accountability system includes a set of indicators that measure college and career readiness and are used in several ways. The indicators should also reflect a continuum of performance including toward, meeting and exceeding readiness.

Indicators: The following indicators, while not exhaustive, are evidence that the state's accountability system values college and career readiness:

- **CCR Diploma:** The percentage of students who graduate having completed the requirements for a CCR diploma (as defined on page 36).
- **CCR Assessment:** The percentage of students who score at the CCR level on a high school assessment given to all eligible students (as defined on page 36).
- **Earning College Credit while in High School:** The percentage of students who earn college credit while still enrolled in high school through Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and/or dual enrollment.
- **Postsecondary Remediation:** The percentage of high school graduates who, upon entrance to a postsecondary institution, are placed into a remedial course in reading, writing or mathematics (a course that does not count as English or mathematics credit).

Uses: The following accountability uses, while not exhaustive, are evidence that the state's accountability system values college and career readiness:

- **Public Reporting:** Reporting to the public the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the CCR indicators at the school level.
- **Performance Goals:** Setting and publicly communicating statewide performance goals that include a date for increasing the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the CCR indicators.
- **Incentives:** Establishing incentives to reward schools and districts for increasing the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the CCR indicators.
- **Accountability Formula:** Factoring the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of each CCR indicator into the high school accountability formula.

Adoption of an accountability system that values college and career readiness

No state has all of the criteria for a CCR accountability system. **Four states (Florida, Indiana, Kentucky** and **Texas)** have achieved partial credit by using at least two of the CCR indicators in at least two ways, which signals that their accountability systems are incorporating multiple measures and using them in different ways to encourage improvement.

- **Florida's** A–F accountability model for high schools includes an index that gives strong weight to CCR indicators, including assessment performance and earning college credit in high school (AP, IB, industry certification, dual enrollment).
- **Indiana** provides a strong example of coherence and alignment across uses. The state has a clear statewide performance goal of 25 percent or more students graduating with college credit, reports this indicator at the school level, has incentives built around the goal, and has included it within its accountability formula.
- **Kentucky** has set a statewide goal for increasing the percentage of students who graduate ready for college and careers from 34 percent in 2009 to 67 percent in 2015. To support this goal, the state has secured from all districts a "Commonwealth Commitment" to move 50 percent of their high school graduates who are not at the CCR level to the CCR level. If each district meets its individual goal, the state will meet its goal in the aggregate.
- **Texas** provides robust reporting on the percentage of students who earn credit through AP/IB or through advanced/dual enrollment and includes these indicators in its accountability formula.

A FULL CCR ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

If they are serious about helping students become academically prepared for life after high school, states need to make college and career readiness the central focus of their accountability systems, not an afterthought. Accountability systems that incorporate indicators that reflect students' CCR course of study, achievement and attainment value college and career readiness. These systems will incorporate indicators such as these into multiple uses to ensure that the right information and signals reach the right people at the right time.

For indicators: The state includes the **CCR diploma** and a **CCR assessment** and uses either **earning college credit while in high school** or **postsecondary remediation** indicators in its reporting and accountability system.

For uses: For each CCR indicator, the state **publicly reports** and **sets a statewide performance goal** and either **provides incentives for improvement** or **factors improvement into its accountability formula.**

- **Earning a CCR diploma:** The percentage of students who graduate from high school with a CCR diploma. States need to know which students — and which groups of students — are leaving high school with this valuable credential.

State	Annual School-Level Public Reporting	Statewide Performance Goals	School-Level Incentives	Accountability Formula[19]
Alabama	✔			
California	✔			
Delaware	✔	✔		✔
District of Columbia	✔	✔		✔
Florida	✔			
Georgia	✔	✔		✔
Hawaii	✔	✔		
Indiana	✔	✔	✔	
Kentucky	✔	✔		✔
Louisiana				✔
Massachusetts	✔	✔		
Minnesota		✔		
New York	✔			
Tennessee	✔	✔		✔
Texas	✔	✔		✔
Virginia	✔	✔	✔	
TOTAL	**14**	**11**	**2**	**7**

- **Scoring college ready on a high school assessment:** The percentage of students who score at the college-ready level on high school assessments anchored to CCR standards. Such assessments will signal which students are prepared for postsecondary success and which will require additional support before leaving high school.

State	Annual School-Level Public Reporting	Statewide Performance Goals	School-Level Incentives	Accountability Formula
Alabama		✔		
California	✔			
Florida	✔	✔	✔	✔
Illinois	✔			
Kentucky	✔			✔
Louisiana		✔		
Maine	✔			
Michigan	✔			
Minnesota		✔		
New York	✔			
North Carolina	✔			✔
Oklahoma	✔			
Texas	✔			
Wisconsin	✔			✔
TOTAL	**11**	**4**	**1**	**4**

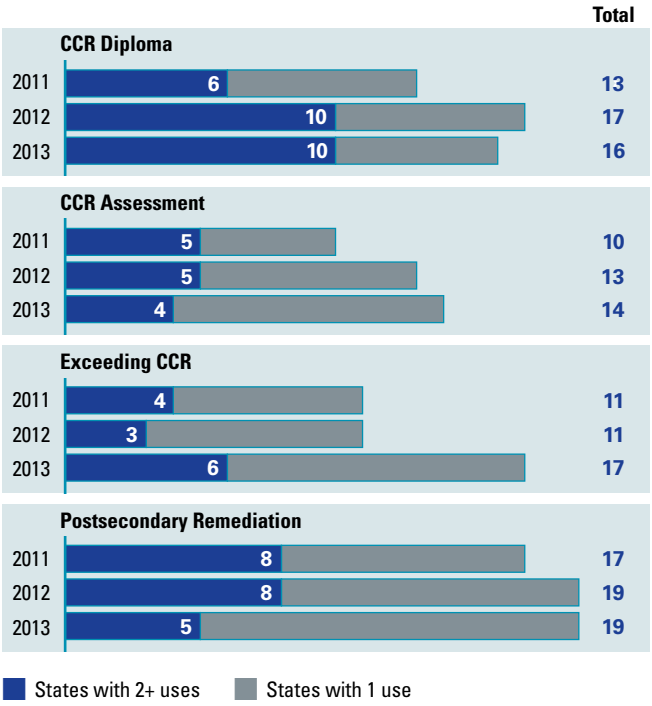
- **Earning college credit while in high school:** The percentage of high school students earning college credit through AP, IB and/or dual enrollment. Just as states must know whether students are progressing toward and reaching certain CCR benchmarks, they also need to know whether high school students are exceeding those goals by taking the advanced courses that further solidify their transition to college and put them a step ahead once they arrive.

State	Annual School-Level Public Reporting	Statewide Performance Goals	School-Level Incentives	Accountability Formula
Alabama		✔		
Florida	✔	✔	✔	✔
Georgia				✔
Hawaii	✔			
Indiana	✔	✔	✔	✔
Louisiana	✔	✔		✔
Maryland				✔
Massachusetts	✔			
Minnesota		✔		
Missouri				✔
Nevada	✔			✔
New Mexico				✔
Pennsylvania	✔			✔
Texas	✔			✔
Utah	✔			
Virginia	✔			
Wisconsin		✔		
TOTAL	**10**	**6**	**2**	**10**

- **Requiring remedial courses in college:** The percentage of high school graduates who — upon entrance to a postsecondary institution — are placed into a remedial course in reading, writing and/or mathematics. With the vast majority of high school students intending to pursue postsecondary education or training, too many of these same students enter two- and four-year colleges unprepared for college-level work. Students that must take remedial classes are less likely to achieve their goals, including earning a diploma.

State	Annual School-Level Public Reporting	Statewide Performance Goals	School-Level Incentives	Accountability Formula
Alabama	✔	✔		
Colorado	✔			
Florida	✔	✔		
Georgia				✔
Hawaii	✔			
Indiana	✔	✔		
Kentucky		✔		
Maine	✔			
Maryland		✔		
Massachusetts	✔			
Missouri	✔	✔		
Montana	✔			
Nevada	✔			✔
North Carolina		✔		
Ohio	✔			
Oklahoma	✔			
Washington	✔			
West Virginia	✔			
Wyoming	✔			
TOTAL	**15**	**7**	**0**	**2**

Use of CCR Indicators over Time



In the last two years, states have made little progress in adding indicators and uses, even as they adopt new accountability systems under Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility waivers.

With states working to implement the CCSS/CCR standards and the transition to CCR assessments around the corner, it is absolutely critical that states' accountability systems align and reinforce the goals of the standards and use of the assessments. It is not enough to have standards and assessments, and even graduation requirements, if the state's broader accountability system does not send a clear message to every school and district leader, educator, parent, and community member that improving student CCR outcomes is their mission every day. Although accountability for student results is one of the most powerful levers available to states to influence districts and schools, in too many cases it is underutilized as a strategy to improve student performance — and in some cases merely serves as a compliance function. This must change — a strong, coherent accountability strategy that ties together CCR standards, graduation course requirements and assessments can be part of a larger set of strategies to make dramatic progress in students' readiness for college and careers.

Implementation of an accountability system that values college and career readiness

Elements of Effective Implementation

- Develop a transition plan that includes thoughtful phase-in approaches where needed to support data quality, understanding and use.
- Include a mechanism for ongoing, deep engagement of stakeholders in design and implementation to ensure buy-in and improve the effectiveness of the system.
- Incorporate feedback loops to uncover whether and how accountability uses such as public reporting, goals, incentives and formulas are influencing the actions of leaders and educators.

Develop a Transition Plan: To ultimately arrive at an effective, coherent and aligned CCR accountability strategy that harnesses an array of compelling CCR indicators and uses them in a variety of meaningful ways, states should plan for several phases of transition to reorient the system along the way — including involving stakeholders in every step of the process. This approach has the advantages of not only infusing CCR components and indicators into the system as soon as they are ready but also giving time for those who affect and are affected by the strategies to focus on a manageable set of changes at any given time.

It also reinforces a new expectation that the accountability strategy will be continuously improved to increase its effectiveness at driving toward college and career readiness — so even when the phases of transition are complete, everyone understands that the strategies will continue to be adjusted to better meet their aims. There are several ways states can use a gradual slope of change to implement a CCR accountability strategy, giving time for the system to adjust and for data quality and use to improve.

As states begin to use CCR indicators in accountability formulas, several techniques can be used to smooth the transition over time:

- **Publicly report the data by district and school.** If the state does not already report a CCR indicator by district and school, building in one or two years during which the data are reported to the public without additional uses will help improve data quality, build understanding of the indicators themselves, and begin to show patterns of performance and trends over time.
- **Increase weighting of indicators over time.** For example, **Indiana** will increase the weight of the College and Career Readiness Indicator in its A–F accountability model by five percentage points each year.

- **Use to assign bonus points.** For states that use an index model for their accountability formulas, building in bonus points for progress on CCR indicators sends a clear signal that these results matter.
- **Determine schools and districts that qualify for incentives, rewards or recognition.** For example, **New York** requires that the percentage of students who graduate with a CCR-aligned Advanced Designation on the Regents diploma exceed the state average, among other criteria, for a school to attain Reward status.
- **Suggest specific supports and interventions available to schools or districts that fall in certain classification categories.** For example, if a high school falls in Priority status under a state's accountability system, examining the number of students taking and succeeding in AP courses and exams can suggest whether the school needs to focus on building rigor into the curriculum.
- **Differentiate performance and classify schools and districts for supports and interventions.** Ultimately, district and school progress according to CCR indicators should be a primary determinant in how their performance is differentiated and how incentives, supports and interventions are assigned.

Include a Mechanism for Stakeholder Engagement: There is no way to overstate the importance of states' engaging educators, policymakers, parents and the public in their plans to transition to CCR accountability strategies. It is vitally important for the integrity of the strategies themselves — involving all critical actors in their development will ensure that the strategies are seen as a positive force for improving student outcomes, one that everyone buys into, supports and trusts to signal the right things. Stakeholders will realize that the results reflect "truth in advertising," helping to build deep understanding of student performance. This involvement will also make the strategies better. Often states have developed these strategies in isolation from those they affect the most — and the result can be that they lack the coherence and clarity to make any real impact.

Incorporate Feedback Loops: Ongoing engagement and communication throughout the implementation and continuous improvement phases allow states to build and strengthen public will for CCR accountability. They also are vital to construct and maintain feedback loops to suggest course adjustments needed for the strategies to ultimately succeed in driving the kind of robust improvement in college and career readiness that is necessary across states.

For example, **Louisiana** engages its critical stakeholders in accountability decisions through its School and District Accountability Commission. Established in 1997, the commission is responsible for recommending accountability policy to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, including school and student goals, communication to schools and the public, recognition of schools for growth in student achievement, and focus on the schools that need the most assistance in improving student outcomes.

Looking ahead to 2014–15

States should recognize that the federal ESEA requirements set a minimum floor for accountability and that they should act — individually and collectively — to go above these minimum requirements to meaningfully incentivize college and career readiness within their accountability systems. As most states are expected to transition to CCR assessments through PARCC, Smarter Balanced or other tests by 2014–15, states will face important decisions about how — and whether — to build more coherent CCR accountability systems. And despite the operationalization of the new assessments, it is not automatic that all states will administer to all students aligned, high-quality assessments that measure the full range of the standards, such as Smarter Balanced's 11th grade assessment and PARCC's Algebra II/Integrated Math III and English III assessments.

States will need to determine the extent to which they are willing to design new accountability formulas, public reporting systems, performance goals or school-level incentive programs that reflect results on their new assessments. These states will have more flexibility to incorporate CCR assessment performance as well as other important CCR indicators or to improve the way that they do so now. Other states may be less willing to make big changes but will adjust their current performance targets or indexes as necessary to account for new baseline levels of performance.

In this year's survey, more states **(25)** indicated that they plan to continue to use their current formulas, making the necessary adjustments, rather than adopt a new formula **(nine).** Other states were not certain. States will also have to make decisions about how to incorporate the new CCR assessments into other accountability uses. A small number of states indicated that they would adopt new statewide performance goals **(eight)** or adjust or add new school-level incentive programs **(eight),** while a total of **20 states** indicated that they would develop new or adjust current school report cards or other public reporting tools.

Recommendations

- States should develop new performance goals, using new baseline data, for a certain percentage of students to meet CCR benchmarks on the new assessments by a certain year. States should make these goals public and use them to rally support among the public, parents and policymakers. States should also develop CCR goals on other indicators, such as CCR diplomas, earning college credit while in high school, etc.
- States should make CCR and on-track-to-CCR levels of performance on the new assessments a centerpiece of their accountability formulas that differentiate and classify student performance. In index-type systems, these performance levels should carry the greatest weight. To support this use, states must administer high school assessments to all students.
- States should develop new incentive programs, outside of their accountability formulas, to reward and recognize schools that *improve* rates of students meeting CCR benchmarks on the new assessments, as well as other CCR indicators. Building programs that are not intertwined with the formula itself allows the state more influence and freedom to reward and recognize schools in ways that can have great impact and allows all schools the opportunity to be rewarded or recognized if they make sufficient progress on CCR indicators.
- States should have plans in place to transition to new, robust systems of public reporting to illuminate CCR outcomes on the new assessments and drive understanding and use among parents, policymakers and the public.

Conclusion

In the eight years that Achieve has been surveying the states on their commitment to CCR for all students, it has been state leadership that has begun to transform the promise of all students graduating from high school prepared for postsecondary success into action. State and local leaders have laid a foundation upon which transformational change can occur — both in policy and practice — but only if leaders have the courage to stay the course and do the hard work of implementing the policies, including supporting educators and students in the transition to higher expectations.

All states have adopted academic standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics aligned to postsecondary expectations. But for these standards to be realized in classrooms, they must be implemented with fidelity. Ensuring access to high-quality aligned instructional materials and supporting training and professional learning opportunities for teachers and principals are critical — as is deploying strong performance metrics to monitor implementation progress.

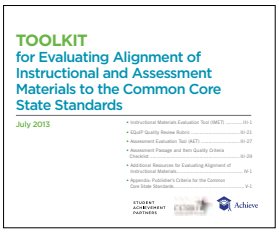
Another key leadership test for states is to adopt, implement and sustain requirements for all students to take courses that deliver the state's CCSS/CCR standards to graduate. **Nineteen states** and the **District of Columbia** have established CCR graduation requirements that are aligned to the CCSS/CCR standards. However, more than half of the states that have adopted the CCSS/CCR standards have not raised their graduation requirements. This misalignment means that students may graduate unprepared for college and careers since they will not have taken courses that deliver the CCSS/CCR standards or demonstrated their mastery of the CCSS/CCR standards through competency-based methods. Further, states that fail to monitor and report which high school graduates successfully complete a CCR course of study are ignoring valuable data and a deeper understanding of the relationships among high school course enrollment and college readiness.

Nineteen states administer, or have adopted policies to administer, a CCR assessment capable of generating a score used for placement into postsecondary first-year, credit-bearing courses, and most states are collaborating to develop common assessments aligned to the CCSS through PARCC and Smarter Balanced. These states will face many key decisions in the months and years ahead, including how these next generation assessments can support aligned and rigorous instruction, how to transition to technology-based assessments, and how and whether to factor the results of new assessments into high-stakes graduation decisions for students.

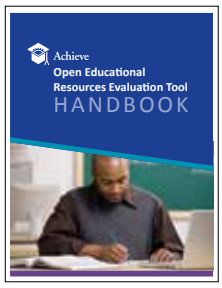
Even with all that states have taken on, they must not think of CCR accountability measures as an afterthought. To date, progress in creating accountability systems anchored in CCR has been slow in many states — and stalled in others — even with the adoption of new accountability systems under ESEA flexibility waivers. By putting data into the hands of the right people at the right time, setting ambitious but achievable student performance goals, and establishing positive incentives for districts and schools to work toward, state leaders can orient their education systems toward readiness for all.

Appendix A: Achieve Resources

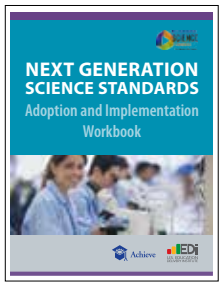
In the past eight years, Achieve has released a number of hallmark reports on the state of the nation's standards, graduation requirements, assessments and accountability systems, as well as many materials that serve to inform and assist stakeholders as they work to improve America's high schools. The following are available at **www.achieve.org.**



Common Core State Standards Instructional Materials Alignment resources include the **Toolkit for Evaluating Alignment of Instructional and Assessment Materials to the CCSS,** developed in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers and Student Achievement Partners, and **EQuIP (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products).** The toolkit offers a set of interrelated, freely available instruments for evaluating alignment to the CCSS. EQuIP provides eLearning modules, a student work protocol, and exemplary lessons and units to support the identification and development of high-quality materials aligned to the CCSS. [2013] *www.achieve.org/toolkit* and *www.achieve.org/equip*

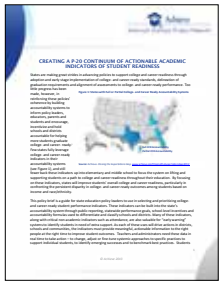


Open Educational Resources (OER) guidance includes **Key Findings from Achieve's OER Institute** that details seven states' efforts to advance OER in their respective states and an **Evaluation Tool Handbook** designed to help educators use and learn more about the Achieve OER rubrics and Evaluation Tool. [2013] *www.achieve.org/oer-rubrics* and *www.achieve.org/files/AchieveOEREvaluationToolHandbookFINAL_0.pdf*



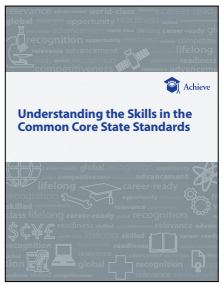
Advancing Competency-Based Pathways to College and Career Readiness is a state policy framework, focused on graduation requirements, assessment and accountability, that is designed to assist states in building a policy structure that contributes to statewide adoption and implementation of competency-based pathways that support all students in reaching college and career readiness. [2013] *www.achieve.org/publications/advancing-competency-based-pathways-college-and-career-readiness*

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Adoption and Implementation Workbook contains guidance, exercises and templates for all states to use as they work through the critical steps for adoption and implementation of the NGSS, developed in a partnership of Achieve and the U.S. Education Delivery Institute. [2013] *www.achieve.org/publications/ngss-adoption-and-implementation-workbook*



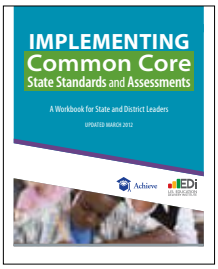
Common Core State Standards Tool for Legislators is a resource for state legislators to help them understand the CCSS and their role in supporting the implementation of the CCSS and related policies, developed by Achieve, Education First Consulting, the Aspen Institute and the Insight Education Group. [2013] *www.achieve.org/publications/common-core-state-standards-tool-legislators*

Accountability, Data and Public Reporting guidance for states, including **Transforming Public Reporting to Ensure College and Career Readiness for ALL,** focuses on the use of transparent public reporting as a foundation for CCR reform efforts and a strategic driver toward goals. **Creating a P-20 Continuum of Actionable Academic Indicators of Student Readiness** outlines guidance for state education policy leaders to use in selecting and prioritizing academic performance indicators that illuminate student readiness for college and careers across the P–20 spectrum. [2012] *www.achieve.org/policy-brief-transforming-public-reporting-ensure-college-and-career-readiness-all* and *www.achieve.org/Student-Readiness-Indicators*

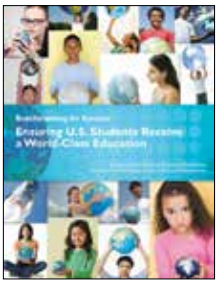


Understanding the Skills in the Common Core State Standards identifies the types and ranges of CCR skills reflected in the CCSS, using two sets of skills statements as benchmarks — the Deeper Learning Standards and the Career Cluster Essential Knowledge and Skills Statements. [2012] *www.achieve.org/Skills-CCSS*

Perspective is Achieve's e-newsletter that provides news and links to timely reports. It is e-mailed to anyone interested in helping prepare students for success. Stay informed and receive the next issue by signing up on our website. [ongoing] *www.achieve.org/Perspective*



Implementing Common Core State Standards and Assessments Workbook, developed by Achieve and the U.S. Education Delivery Institute, uses a proven performance management methodology known as "delivery" to lay out clear action steps for states and districts. The workbook provides relevant information, case stories of good practice, key questions and hands-on exercises for leadership teams. [2012] *www.achieve.org/ImplementingCommonCore*



Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World-Class Education provides states with a roadmap for benchmarking their K–12 education systems against those of top-performing nations. The report, released by Achieve, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, explains the urgent need for action and outlines what states and the federal government must do to ensure U.S. students receive a world-class education. [2008] *www.achieve.org/BenchmarkingforSuccess*

The Building Blocks of Success: Higher Level Math for All Students explores the intellectual and practical benefits to all students of taking higher-level mathematics courses in high school, focusing on college access and success, workplace and career readiness, and personal and U.S. competitiveness. [2008] *www.achieve.org/BuildingBlocksofSuccess*

Measures that Matter is a joint effort by Achieve and The Education Trust to provide strategic and technical assistance to states in creating CCR assessment and accountability systems. [2008] *www.achieve.org/MeasuresthatMatter*

Out of Many, One: Toward Rigorous Common Core Standards from the Ground Up presents an analysis of the CCR standards for English in 12 states and mathematics in 16 states. Achieve found that a critical mass of states has arrived at a common core of standards in English and mathematics. [2008] *www.achieve.org/outofmanyone*

Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma That Counts found a convergence in the expectations of business and postsecondary leaders; established the American Diploma Project (ADP) benchmarks; and laid out a rigorous policy agenda, which has since become the agenda of the ADP Network. [2004] *www.achieve.org/ReadyorNot*

Many additional national and state reports as well as policy briefs, surveys and white papers that focus on preparing all students for college and careers are available on the Achieve website: www.achieve.org/publications

Achieve also has developed Web-based resources to provide information and tools needed to ensure that our schools prepare students for college and careers:

Achieving the Common Core: www.achieve.org/achieving-common-core

Business Center for a College- and Career-Ready America: www.businessandeducation.org

EQuIP: www.achieve.org/equip

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers: www.parcconline.org

Next Generation Science Standards: www.nextgenscience.org

Math Works Advocacy Kit: www.achieve.org/math-works

Appendix B: Methodology

Achieve's Eighth Annual Survey of Policies

As in past years, Achieve's 2013 50-state survey of high school policies focused on aligned standards, graduation requirements, assessments, and accountability and data systems. This process included a survey states completed this summer. **Forty-nine states** and the **District of Columbia** participated in this year's survey.[20] Throughout the summer and fall, Achieve staff followed up with states by phone or e-mail to discuss their responses — either to clarify an answer or to address state questions. Finally, Achieve sent an individual confirmation form to each state indicating how its information would appear in this report.

Beyond evaluating every policy states reported as already in place or recently adopted, Achieve asked states about their implementation of adopted policies. Achieve also evaluated reported plans, asking questions about where states are in the planning or development process and when they anticipate reaching final adoption. The only plans counted in the report are those that could be verified (i.e., those that are documented and consistent with the minimum criteria for the particular policy area). Achieve applied this approach to all reported accountability indicators and their uses; only verified indicators that met the criteria were included in this report.

It is worth noting that in a small number of cases, responses reported this year differ from those in last year's report as a result of further refinements to Achieve's criteria for analysis and/or states' new interpretations of the questions. In nearly all cases, however, the differences from last year to this year reflect recent developments in the states.

Accountability Criteria

The Indicators

CCR Diploma: The percentage of students who graduate having completed the requirements for a CCR diploma.

Minimum criteria:

- The state has set a CCR diploma as the mandatory/default option for all students or as an honors diploma (at an equivalent CCR level) that any student can pursue. For any use of this indicator, the denominator should include all students in a graduating cohort (using a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as defined by either the **U.S. Department of Education** or the **National Governors Association Compact**).

CCR Assessment: The percentage of students who score at the CCR level on a high school assessment given to all eligible students.

Minimum criteria:

- The state administers a CCR test to all *eligible* students, either a state-developed test(s) or a national college admissions test (such as the ACT/SAT). Eligible students include those who are enrolled in Algebra II statewide or all 11th grade students.
- The state has adopted or recognized a minimum performance level (cut score) that indicates college readiness.
- Postsecondary institutions factor at least the minimum college readiness cut score into their admissions or placement decisions.

Earning College Credit while in High School: The percentage of students who earn college credit while still enrolled in high school through AP, IB and/or dual enrollment.

Minimum criteria:

- The denominator includes all students in a high school graduation cohort.
- The numerator includes the number of students *earning credit* for their CCR performance in AP, IB or dual enrollment.

Postsecondary Remediation: The percentage of high school graduates who, upon entrance to a postsecondary institution, are placed into a remedial course in reading, writing or mathematics (courses that do not count as English or mathematics credit).

Minimum criteria:

- The denominator is the postsecondary enrollment number.
- The numerator includes the number of students enrolled in remedial coursework during their first year of postsecondary education, reported by subject area (e.g., percentage in remedial reading, percentage in mathematics and percentage in writing), or if unavailable, it also would be acceptable to define remedial course-taking as "enrollment in remedial reading, writing and/or mathematics" (i.e., not disaggregated by subject). Achieve does *not* count "any remedial" coursework as an appropriate definition for this indicator.

The Uses

Public Reporting: The state publicly reports at the school level the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the indicators.

Minimum criteria:

- The denominator for any indicator is "all eligible students."
- The data are reported annually and are no more than two years old. *(NOTE: Current data are judged by whether they are reported year to year or by cohort.)*
- The data are reported at the state and school levels.
- K–12 reports its data (e.g., CCR diploma and testing), and higher education reports its data (e.g., remediation and enrollment rates for high school graduation cohorts) — unless the state uses a joint reporting system/data repository.

Goals: The state has publicly set statewide performance goals and defines a date for increasing the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the indicators.

Minimum criteria:

- The state has established a numerical goal or goal for percentage improved by a certain date.
- The state has established baseline data for that goal.

Incentives: The state has established incentives to reward schools and districts for increasing the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the indicators.

Minimum criteria:

- The state has established a clear definition of the incentive (e.g., financial reward, public recognition, specific flexibility from regulation, etc.).
- The state has established a clear threshold for earning the incentive (e.g., meeting and/or exceeding specific benchmark[s] on specific indicators).

Accountability Formula: The state factors the percentage of students who satisfy the requirements of the indicators into its state accountability formula.

Minimum criteria:

- Performance/improvement on these indicators factors into ratings, leading to any consequences, rewards, interventions or supports — beyond public reporting — for districts and/or schools.

Appendix C: State-by-State Tables

Overview of Key Survey Results for Each State

State	Standards	Graduation Requirements	Assessments		Accountability
			State Developed	College Admissions (ACT, SAT)	
Alabama	✔	✔		✔	
Alaska	✔				
Arizona	✔	✔			
Arkansas	✔	✔			
California	✔		✔		
Colorado	✔			✔	
Connecticut	✔				
Delaware	✔	✔		✔	
District of Columbia	✔	✔			
Florida	✔		✔		Partial
Georgia	✔	✔	✔		
Hawaii	✔	✔		✔	
Idaho	✔				
Illinois	✔			✔	
Indiana	✔	✔			Partial
Iowa	✔				
Kansas	✔				
Kentucky	✔	✔		✔	Partial
Louisiana	✔			✔	
Maine	✔			✔	
Maryland	✔				
Massachusetts	✔				
Michigan	✔	✔		✔	
Minnesota	✔	✔			
Mississippi	✔	✔			
Missouri	✔				
Montana	✔				
Nebraska	✔	✔			
Nevada	✔				
New Hampshire	✔				
New Jersey	✔				
New Mexico	✔	✔			
New York	✔		✔		
North Carolina	✔	✔		✔	
North Dakota	✔				
Ohio	✔	✔			
Oklahoma	✔	✔			
Oregon	✔		✔		
Pennsylvania	✔				
Rhode Island	✔				
South Carolina	✔				
South Dakota	✔	✔			
Tennessee	✔	✔		✔	
Texas	✔				Partial
Utah	✔	✔		✔	
Vermont	✔				
Virginia	✔				
Washington	✔				
West Virginia	✔				
Wisconsin	✔			✔	
Wyoming	✔			✔	

CCSS/CCR Standards Implementation Timeline

The following table captures states' timelines for classroom implementation of and transition to English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics standards aligned to the CCSS/CCR expectations.

State	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
Alabama		Math: K–12	ELA: K–12	
Alaska				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Arizona	ELA: K Math: K	ELA: K–3, 8–9 Math: K–2	ELA: K–12 Math K–12	
Arkansas	ELA: K–2 Math: K–2	ELA: K–8 Math: K–8	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
California				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Colorado			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Connecticut			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Delaware		ELA: K–12 Math: K–12		
District of Columbia	ELA: K–12 Math: K–2	Math: K–12		
Florida	ELA: K Math: K	ELA: K–1 Math: K–1	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Georgia		ELA: K–12 Math: K–9	Math: K–10	Math: K–12
Hawaii		ELA: K–2, 11–12 Math: K–2, 11–12	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Idaho			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Illinois			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Indiana	ELA: K Math: K	ELA: K–2 Math: K–2	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Iowa		ELA: 9–12 Math: 9–12		ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Kansas			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Kentucky	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12			
Louisiana		ELA: K–1 Math: K–1	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Maine		ELA: K–12 Math: K–12		
Maryland			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Massachusetts			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Michigan		ELA: K–12 Math: K–12		
Minnesota[i]	Math: K–12	ELA: K–12		
Mississippi	ELA: K–2 Math: K–2	ELA: K–8 Math: K–8	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Missouri				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Montana			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Nebraska			ELA: K–12	Math: K–12
Nevada	ELA: K–8 Math: K–8	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12		
New Hampshire[ii]				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
New Jersey	Math: K–2	ELA: K–12 Math: K–5, 9–12	Math: K–12	
New Mexico		ELA: K–3 Math: K–3	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
New York			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
North Carolina		ELA: K–12 Math: K–12		
North Dakota			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Ohio			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Oklahoma				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Oregon				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Pennsylvania			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Rhode Island			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
South Carolina			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
South Dakota				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Tennessee	ELA: K–2 Math: K–2	ELA: K–8 Math: K–8	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Texas[iii]	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12			
Utah			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Vermont			ELA: K–12 Math: K–12	
Virginia	Math: K–12	ELA: K–12		
Washington				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
West Virginia	ELA: K Math: K	ELA: K–1 Math: K–1	ELA: K–2 Math: K–2	ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Wisconsin				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12
Wyoming				ELA: K–12 Math: K–12

[i] *Minnesota's CCR math standards were implemented in 2010–11.*

[ii] *The New Hampshire Department of Education cannot require local districts to adopt the New Hampshire College- and Career-Ready Standards. However, the statewide assessments will be aligned to these standards.*

[iii] *Texas' College and Career Readiness Standards were incorporated into the English Language Arts and Math Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) assessments for implementation in 2009. The Math TEKS were recently revised and will be implemented in 2013–14 for K–8 and 2014–15 for high school.*

State Efforts To Support Access to High-Quality Instructional Materials

State	Require Use of Materials	Developed Materials for Voluntary Use	Approved/Certified List of Materials	Provide Processes, Protocols and Exemplars
Alabama	✔	✔	✔	✔
Alaska		✔		✔
Arizona				✔
Arkansas			✔	✔
California		✔	✔	✔
Colorado		✔		✔
Connecticut		✔	✔	✔
Delaware	✔	✔		✔
District of Columbia				✔
Florida			✔	
Georgia		✔	✔	✔
Hawaii	✔	✔	✔	
Idaho			✔	
Illinois		✔		✔
Iowa		✔		✔
Kansas				✔
Kentucky		✔	✔	✔
Louisiana		✔		✔
Maine				✔
Maryland		✔		✔
Massachusetts		✔		✔
Michigan				✔
Minnesota				✔
Mississippi			✔	✔
Missouri		✔		✔
Nebraska	✔	✔		
New Hampshire				✔
New Jersey		✔		✔
New Mexico		✔	✔	✔
New York		✔	✔	✔
North Carolina		✔		✔
North Dakota		✔		✔
Ohio		✔		✔
Oklahoma				✔
Oregon			✔	✔
Pennsylvania		✔		✔
Rhode Island		✔		✔
South Carolina			✔	
South Dakota				✔
Tennessee		✔		✔
Texas			✔	
Utah	✔	✔	✔	✔
Vermont				✔
Virginia		✔	✔	✔
Washington				✔
West Virginia		✔		
Wisconsin		✔		✔
Wyoming		✔		✔
TOTAL	**5**	**30**	**17**	**41**

Types of efforts listed in this table are not mutually exclusive. A number of states provided examples of efforts to support implementation of aligned curricular and instructional materials outside the scope of the categories identified in the survey. Only states that reported responses to the actions specified in the table are represented in the table.

State-Provided Training and Support To Ensure Teachers and Principals Are Equipped To Transition to the CCSS/CCR Standards

State	Developed Coordinated Agencywide Plan and Calendar for Training and Support	Directed Regional Centers To Provide Training and Support	Audited Existing Training Offerings and Support Services	Identified High-Quality or Promising Providers for Districts/ Schools To Access
Alabama	✔	✔	✔	✔
Arizona	✔	✔		✔
Arkansas	✔	✔	✔	
California	✔	✔		
Connecticut	✔	✔	✔	✔
Delaware	✔			
District of Columbia	✔	✔	✔	✔
Florida	✔	✔		✔
Georgia	✔	✔	✔	✔
Hawaii	✔	✔		
Idaho	✔	✔		
Illinois	✔	✔		
Indiana		✔		
Iowa		✔		
Kansas	✔	✔		✔
Kentucky	✔	✔	✔	
Louisiana	✔	✔	✔	
Maine	✔		✔	
Maryland	✔			
Massachusetts	✔	✔		
Minnesota	✔	✔		
Mississippi	✔			
Missouri	✔	✔		
Nevada		✔		
New Hampshire				✔
New Jersey	✔	✔		
New Mexico	✔	✔		✔
New York	✔	✔		
North Carolina	✔			
North Dakota				✔
Ohio	✔	✔		
Oklahoma	✔			
Oregon	✔			
Pennsylvania		✔		
Rhode Island	✔			✔
South Dakota	✔			
Tennessee	✔	✔		
Texas	✔	✔		
Utah	✔			✔
Vermont	✔			✔
Virginia	✔			✔
Washington	✔	✔		
West Virginia		✔		✔
Wisconsin	✔	✔		✔
Wyoming	✔			
Total	**38**	**30**	**8**	**16**

A number of states provided examples of state-provided training and support changing to ensure that teachers and principals are equipped to transition to the CCSS/CCR standards that are outside the scope of the categories identified in the survey. Only states that reported responses to the actions specified in the table are represented in the table. It should also be noted that not all states have regional centers.

State Support for Teacher and Principal Access to Effective Professional Learning Opportunities

State	Facilitates Statewide Professional Learning Communities or Other Structures	Facilitates Regional or Local Professional Learning Communities or Other Structures	Facilitates Regional Centers in Providing Training and Support	Provides Guidance or Criteria for Use of Federal Funds To Support High-Quality Professional Learning	Changed Definitions of Effective/High-Quality Professional Learning To Reflect CCSS/CCR Expectations
Alabama		✔			✔
Alaska	✔				
Arizona			✔	✔	
Arkansas		✔	✔	✔	
California	✔				
Colorado	✔	✔	✔		
Connecticut	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Delaware	✔	✔		✔	✔
District of Columbia	✔		✔	✔	
Florida	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Georgia	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Hawaii	✔		✔	✔	
Idaho		✔	✔	✔	
Illinois	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Indiana	✔		✔		
Iowa	✔		✔		
Kansas	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Kentucky	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Louisiana	✔	✔	✔		
Maine		✔		✔	
Maryland	✔			✔	
Massachusetts	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Michigan				✔	✔
Minnesota	✔	✔	✔		
Mississippi				✔	
Missouri		✔	✔	✔	
Nebraska		✔		✔	
Nevada				✔	
New Hampshire	✔	✔	✔	✔	
New Jersey	✔	✔	✔		
New Mexico	✔		✔		
New York	✔	✔	✔	✔	
North Carolina		✔	✔		
North Dakota		✔		✔	
Ohio		✔		✔	
Oklahoma		✔			
Oregon	✔	✔			
Pennsylvania	✔		✔		
Rhode Island	✔				✔
South Carolina		✔			
Tennessee	✔	✔	✔		✔
Texas	✔	✔	✔		
Utah	✔			✔	
Vermont	✔			✔	
Virginia	✔	✔			
Washington	✔	✔	✔	✔	
West Virginia		✔			
Wisconsin	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Wyoming	✔	✔			
Total	**33**	**33**	**28**	**28**	**11**

A number of states provided examples of state-provided training and support to ensure that teachers and principals are equipped to transition to the CCSS/CCR standards that are outside the scope of the categories identified in the survey. Only states that reported responses to the actions specified in the table are represented in the table. It should also be noted that not all states have regional centers.

State Assessment Transition Actions in 2013

State	Added New Items	Removed Items	Expanded or Created Constructed-Response or Performance-Based Assessments	Raised Standard for Proficiency	No Changes Planned
Alabama	State reports that it will administer a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 in 2013–14.				
Alaska	✔				
Arizona	✔				
Arkansas					✔
California					✔
Colorado		✔			
Connecticut					✔
Delaware	✔	✔			
District of Columbia	State reports administering a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 and high school in 2012–13.				
Florida	✔			✔	
Georgia	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Hawaii		✔			
Idaho	State is a Smarter Balanced Early Adopter and will be administering the field test/transitional assessment statewide in 2013–14.				
Illinois	State reports that it will administer a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 in 2013–14.				
Indiana[i]					
Iowa					✔
Kansas	✔	✔	✔		
Kentucky	State reports administering a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 and high school in 2011–12.				
Louisiana	✔	✔	✔		
Maine		✔			
Maryland					✔
Massachusetts	✔	✔			
Michigan		✔		✔	
Minnesota	State reports administering a CCR-aligned mathematics assessment in grades 3–8 in 2010–11 and a CCSS-aligned reading assessment in grades 3–8 and grade 10 in 2012–13; state reports it will administer a grade 11 CCR-aligned mathematics assessment in 2013–14.				
Mississippi					✔
Missouri					✔
Montana	State is a Smarter Balanced Early Adopter and will be administering the field test/transitional assessment statewide in 2013–14.				
Nebraska				✔	
Nevada	✔	✔			
New Hampshire		✔			
New Jersey	✔	✔			
New Mexico	✔		✔		
New York	State reports administering a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 in 2012–13 and will administer a CCSS-aligned Algebra I assessment and CCSS-aligned English language arts/literacy assessment in 2013–14.				
North Carolina	State reports administering a CCSS-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 and high school in 2012–13.				
North Dakota	✔	✔	✔		
Ohio		✔			
Oklahoma	✔		✔		
Oregon					✔
Pennsylvania	✔	✔			
Rhode Island					✔
South Carolina		✔			
South Dakota	State is a Smarter Balanced Early Adopter and will be administering the field test/transitional assessment statewide in 2013–14.				
Tennessee		✔	✔		
Texas	✔		✔	✔	
Utah	✔	✔			
Vermont					✔
Virginia	State reports administering a CCR-aligned assessment in grades 3–8 and high school in 2012–13.				
Washington	✔				
West Virginia			✔		
Wisconsin				✔	
Wyoming	✔	✔			

These actions are not mutually exclusive, with the exception of "No Changes Planned." For most states, the transition actions apply to both English language arts/literacy and mathematics for grades 3–8 and high school. However, in a few cases, states made changes to one subject or grade band. Also, a number of states have plans to raise proficiency standards on their transition assessments after the 2013–14 school year; these plans are not reflected in the above table.

[i] *On hold per HB 1427.*

Endnotes

[1] *OECD Skills Outlook 2013: First Results from the Survey of Adult Skills.* Available at http://skills.oecd.org/documents/OECD_Skills_Outlook_2013.pdf.

[2] *U.S. States in a Global Context: Results from the 2011 NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study.* Available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2013460.

[3] Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation — North Carolina. Available at http://cerenc.org/rttt-evaluation/professional-development/.

[4] Horn, L., and Nuñez, A.M. (2000). *Mapping the Road to College: First-Generation Students' Math Track, Planning Strategies, and Context of Support.* U.S. Department of Education; Adelman, C. (2006). *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School through College.* U.S. Department of Education.

[5] See www.achieve.org/mathpathways for more information.

[6] Achieve. (2008). *Math Works: The Value of the Fourth Year of Mathematics.* Available at www.achieve.org/files/MathWorks-FourthYearMath.pdf.

[7] See www.careertech.org for more information on the states' Career Clusters.

[8] In 2013, the Texas Legislature passed HB 5, which replaces the CCR-level Recommended High School Program (RHSP) with the Foundation High School Program as the default course of study. Beginning in 2014–15, students entering grade 9 will be defaulted into the courses to complete the curriculum requirements for the Foundation High School Program and at least one "endorsement." The Foundation High School Program mathematics requirements include Algebra I, Geometry and one advanced mathematics course yet to be determined by the Texas State Board of Education. The State Board of Education also has decisionmaking authority over what the curriculum requirements will be for five different types of endorsements, but these had not been determined as of November 2013. To earn any one of the five endorsements, a student will be required to complete a fourth mathematics credit and a fourth science credit, and the courses that will satisfy each of these credits are yet to be determined by the Texas State Board of Education. Each school district must offer courses that allow a student to complete the curriculum requirements for at least one endorsement. Students in the classes of 2015, 2016 and 2017 will be given the option of continuing with one of the current graduation programs or switching to the new program.

[9] Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System Reports. Available at http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/.

[10] Indiana Department of Education Compass Reports. Available at http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/graduates.aspx?type=state.

[11] Kentucky Uniform Academic Course Codes. 704 KAR 3:540. Available at http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/docs/pages/kentucky-uniform-academic-course-codes.aspx.

[12] Utah State Office of Education Course Codes and Approval Process. Available at www.schools.utah.gov/CURR/main/Course-Codes-and-Approval.aspx.

[13] Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX) Course of Study. Available at http://alex.state.al.us/browseStand.php.

[14] Alabama has adopted a policy to administer the ACT to all 11th graders beginning in 2013–14. The ACT is already recognized by postsecondary institutions in the state.

[15] Georgia's postsecondary policy allowing the college-ready cut score for the English language arts/literacy version of the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) will remain in effect through the 2013–14 school year for the class of 2014, after which the GHSGT will no longer be administered. The state is transitioning to end-of-course assessments; the Georgia Department of Education is currently working with the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia to establish college-ready cut scores for end-of-course tests beginning with the 2014–15 school year.

[16] The Oregon University System (OUS) established cut scores on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) for the OUS Automatic Admission policy in February 2011. Effective for the class applying for admission to the OUS in fall 2012, students who reach the OUS cut scores on all three OAKS exams (reading, writing and mathematics) and meet a minimum high school grade point average will be granted automatic admission to an OUS university; students scoring below the cut scores may be eligible for standard admission.

[17] Wisconsin has adopted a policy to administer the ACT to all 11th graders beginning in 2014–15. The ACT is already recognized by postsecondary institutions in the state.

[18] Council of Chief State School Officers. (2013). *High-Quality Summative Assessment Principles for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments Aligned to College- and Career-Readiness Standards.* Available at www.ccsso.org/Documents/2013/CCSSO%20Assessment%20Quality%20Principles%2010-1-13%20FINAL.pdf.

[19] States that have adopted *mandatory* CCR course requirements for all students will by default be factoring a CCR diploma graduation rate into their school accountability formulas once the requirements take effect. These include Delaware (2011), the District of Columbia (2011), Georgia (2012), Kentucky (2012), Tennessee (2013), Minnesota (2015), Nebraska (2015) and Hawaii (2016).

[20] Montana was the only state that chose not to participate in Achieve's survey this year. This report includes data points for Montana that have been verified in years past.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Achieve would like to thank the individuals and organizations who contributed to this report.

This report would not have been possible without the cooperation and assistance of the state education chiefs and their agency staff who responded to Achieve's survey, provided thorough responses and gave freely of their time in follow-up conversations.

We would like to thank the following members of the Achieve staff for their hard work on this report: Cory Curl (senior fellow, assessment and accountability) and Marie O'Hara (associate director) led the research and writing of the report; Jenny Taylor (policy associate) managed the survey process and data analysis; Alissa Peltzman (vice president of state policy and implementation support) provided essential guidance on the focus of the survey and report; and Sandy Boyd (chief operating officer and senior vice president of strategic initiatives) provided leadership and guidance in shaping the overall vision of the report. Additional thanks to Hans Voss and Cristina Marks for their contributions.

Achieve also would like to thank Kathy Ames, Emily Smith, Ken Moore and the team at KSA-Plus Communications, Inc., for their editorial and design contributions.

Finally, Achieve would like to express gratitude to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for providing generous funding for this report.

Michael Cohen

President
Achieve

1400 16th Street, NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 419-1540
www.achieve.org