



Accelerating the College and Career Readiness of Nebraska's Students

IN TODAY'S ECONOMY, ALL STUDENTS MUST GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL READY TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE AND THEIR CAREERS

Percentage of Students Graduating from High School Class of 2007¹

	Nebraska	Nation
All Students	74%	69%
White	82%	76%
Hispanic	48%	55%
Black	43%	51%
Asian	+	79%
American Indian	+	50%

+Insufficient or no data provided

MORE STUDENTS NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR SUCCESS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Percentage of ACT-Tested High School Graduates Ready For College-Level Course Work in 2010²

	Nebraska	Nation
All Four Core Subjects	29%	24%
English	76%	66%
Math	50%	43%
Reading	60%	52%
Science	35%	29%

NEBRASKA AND THE NATION NEED MORE COLLEGE GRADUATES

Nebraska's College Graduation Rates Versus National Average³

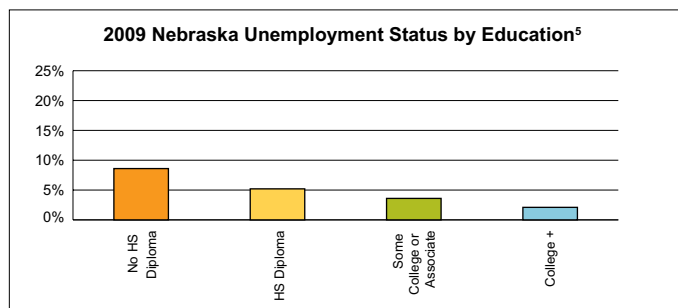
	Four-Year Institution*	National Average*	Two-Year Institution**	National Average**
All Students	54%	56%	37%	31%
White	56%	59%	39%	32%
Hispanic	44%	46%	24%	29%
Black	25%	39%	31%	26%
Asian	59%	66%	30%	33%
American Indian	37%	38%	12%	27%

*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2002–2008)

**Graduation within three years of entrance (Cohort from 2005–2008)

Students in Nebraska who began college but did not return for a second year received a cumulative **\$9.4 million** in federal grants and a cumulative **\$57.7 million** in state expenditures.⁴

HIGHER LEVELS OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS EQUALS HIGHER EMPLOYMENT



Bolster economic vitality: Nearly **6,300** students did not graduate from Nebraska's high schools in 2010; the lost lifetime earnings in Nebraska for that class of dropouts total **\$1.6 billion**.⁶

TO ACCELERATE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS, NEBRASKA TEACHERS SEE THE NEED FOR FEWER, CLEARER, AND BETTER STANDARDS

Impact of Improving Standards on Academic Achievement from Nebraska's Teachers View⁷

	Clearer Academic Standards	Common Standards Across All States	Tougher Academic Standards	Fewer Academic Standards
Strong or Very Strong Effect	74%	45%	55%	32%
Moderate Effect	25%	42%	39%	45%
No Effect	2%	13%	5%	22%

THE VAST MAJORITY OF STATES HAVE DECIDED TO IMPROVE THEIR STANDARDS TO SUPPORT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

- Forty-eight states participated in the creation of the common core state standards, which build on the best state standards and go further by internationally benchmarking and back-mapping them for grades K–12. **Nebraska was one of those states.**
- As of April 2011, forty-four states have adopted the common core state standards in mathematics and English language arts. **Nebraska is not one of those states.**

TO HAVE A CLEAR MEASURE OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS, STATE ASSESSMENTS MUST ACCURATELY REFLECT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; CURRENT TESTS DO NOT

Nebraska's Eighth-Grade Proficiency as Measured by Nebraska State Tests and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)⁸

	State	NAEP
Reading	95%	35%
Math	92%	35%

- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **reading** scores is **41** percentage points. Nebraska's gap is **60** percentage points.
- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **math** scores is **32** percentage points. Nebraska's gap is **57** percentage points.

FORTY-FIVE STATES ARE WORKING TO CREATE COMMON ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS ALIGNED TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Two groups of states have formed to develop these next-generation assessment systems, scheduled to be available during the 2014–15 school year. **Nebraska is not participating in either consortia.**

CONSISTENT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS MAKE COMMON AND ECONOMIC SENSE

- Ease transition for students who move from state to state.** In 2009, about **6,625** school-aged children moved **to** Nebraska from another state; about **6,527** students moved **from** Nebraska to another state.⁹
- Help states realize economies of scale and improve test quality by working together.** Currently, states spend a combined **\$1.3 billion annually** to develop, publish, administer, score, and report on their own state tests.¹⁰
- Reduce the need for remediation in college.** The need for remediation among students entering Nebraska's postsecondary institutions unprepared for postsecondary work cost the state over **\$25 million** during the 2007–08 school year.¹¹

1. Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *Diplomas Count*, 2010.

2. ACT, "College Readiness by State," 2010.

3. Analysis of data from NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2010.

4. M. Schneider, *Finishing the First Lap: The Cost of First-Year Student Attrition in America's Four-Year Colleges and Universities* (American Institute for Research: Washington, DC: 2010).

5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010.

6. Alliance for Excellent Education, "The High Cost of High School Dropouts," unpublished.

7. Scholastic, 2010.

8. NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Reading 2009*; NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Math 2009*; U.S. Department of Education, "EDFacts State Profiles," 2010.

9. U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey," 2009.

10. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, 2010.

11. Alliance for Excellent Education, "Saving Now and Saving Later" (Washington, DC: Author, 2011).