



Accelerating the College and Career Readiness of North Carolina's Students

North Carolina is in the process of transitioning to new English language arts and mathematics standards that will better prepare students to be successful in college and their careers. Time, effort, and resources must be dedicated to effective implementation in order to realize the promise of these new common core state standards.

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

	North Carolina	Nation
All Students	58%	69%
White	64%	76%
Hispanic	44%	55%
Black	50%	51%
Asian	76%	79%
American Indian	51%	50%

NORTH CAROLINA AND THE NATION NEED MORE COLLEGE GRADUATES

By 2018, the nation will need to increase the number of postsecondary degrees conferred by about 10 percent annually in order to meet workforce demands.²

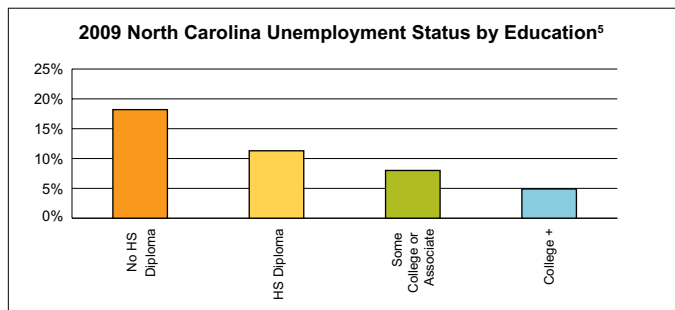
North Carolina's College Graduation Rates Versus National Average³

	Four-Year Institution*	National Average*	Two-Year Institution**	National Average**
All Students	58%	56%	24%	31%
White	63%	59%	26%	32%
Hispanic	59%	46%	27%	29%
Black	44%	39%	18%	26%
Asian	71%	66%	24%	33%
American Indian	48%	38%	18%	27%

*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2002–2008)
 **Graduation within three years of entrance (Cohort from 2005–2008)

Students in North Carolina who began college but did not return for a second year received a cumulative **\$56.7 million** in federal grants and a cumulative **\$315.2 million** in state expenditures.⁴

HIGHER LEVELS OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS EQUALS HIGHER EMPLOYMENT



Bolster economic vitality: Over **53,800** students did not graduate from North Carolina's high schools in 2010; the lost lifetime earnings in North Carolina for that class of dropouts total **\$14 billion**.⁶

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

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

	Clearer Academic Standards	Common Standards Across All States	Tougher Academic Standards	Fewer Academic Standards
Strong or Very Strong Effect	78%	66%	46%	35%
Moderate Effect	19%	28%	40%	38%
No Effect	3%	6%	13%	26%

NORTH CAROLINA DECIDED TO IMPROVE ITS STANDARDS TO SUPPORT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AND IS WORKING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- North Carolina was one of forty-eight states that 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.
- As of April 2011, North Carolina was one of forty-four states to have adopted the common core state standards in mathematics and English language arts.

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

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

	State	NAEP
Reading	67%	29%
Math	81%	36%

- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported reading scores is **41** percentage points. North Carolina's gap is **38** percentage points.
- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported math scores is **32** percentage points. North Carolina's gap is **45** percentage points.

NORTH CAROLINA IS ONE OF FORTY-FIVE STATES 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. **North Carolina is participating in Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.** For more information, visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/smarter/>.

CONSISTENT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS MAKE COMMON AND ECONOMIC SENSE

- Ease transition for students who move from state to state.** In 2009, about **38,432** school-aged children moved **to** North Carolina from another state; about **31,875** students moved **from** North Carolina 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 North Carolina's postsecondary institutions unprepared for postsecondary work cost the state over **\$113 million** during the 2007–08 school year.¹¹

1. Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *Diplomas Count*, 2010.
 2. A. Carnevale, N. Smith, and J. Strohl, *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Economic Requirements Through 2018* (Washington, DC: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 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).