

FACT SHEET

Colorado Common Core: Advancing Student Achievement

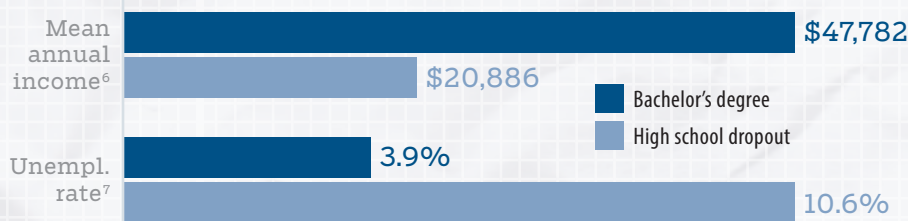
Across the country, too many of today's high school graduates are not ready for college or the workforce. According to a recent study, one out of four high school graduates require remedial education to enroll in college courses. The Common Core State Standards will help prepare students throughout the nation for success in college and careers.

Colorado's students deserve a high-quality and robust education

Today, nearly every high-paying job requires some postsecondary education or training. In order to compete for 21st century jobs, Colorado's students need a strong academic base that prepares them for success in the knowledge-based economy.

But currently, the system in Colorado is failing to help all students achieve their full potential. Colorado's high school graduation rate lags 16 percent behind America's highest-performing state.¹ And even more alarmingly, 16,000 Colorado students between the ages of 16 and 19 dropped out of high school in 2011.²

In Colorado, adults with a bachelor's degree earn more than twice as much as high school dropouts.

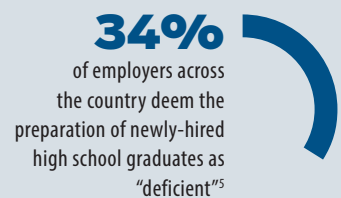
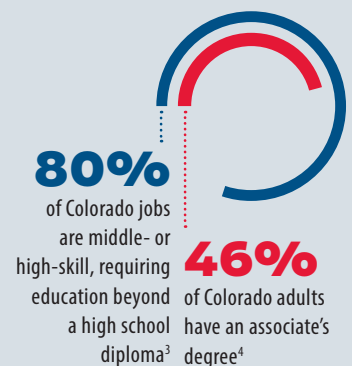


If we want Colorado's students to achieve, we need to expect more

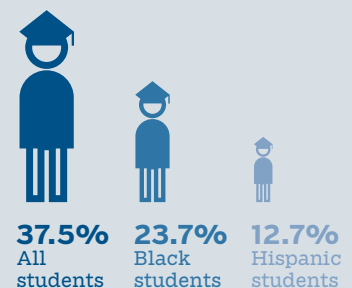
The Common Core State Standards, or CCSS, provide a new path for teachers to develop a more rigorous curriculum and raise the bar for students to become active learners and independent thinkers.

Recognizing the dire need to advance student achievement, Colorado's leaders worked with education officials from across the county to draft a new set of standards to promote critical thinking and problem solving. Colorado initially adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010 and joined 44 other states and the District of Columbia in raising the bar for student achievement in math and reading.⁹ By raising expectations and providing support to help students reach them, children in Colorado will be better prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to prosper in higher education and future careers.

Colorado's students are not prepared for future high-skilled jobs

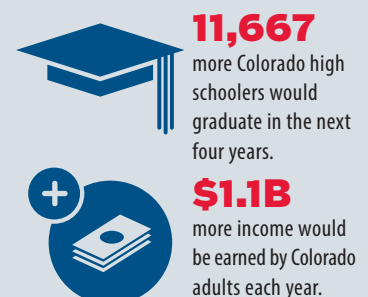


College graduation rates among Colorado adults⁸



Low standards are costing Colorado

If Colorado's high school graduation rate matched the national average:¹⁰



Next-generation assessments are needed for a next-generation workforce

Better preparation and K-12 assessments are critical for student success in college and a career. Currently in Colorado, gaps between state- and nationally reported reading and math scores make it near impossible for teachers and parents to know how students are performing in comparison to their peers in other states and across the globe.

Example: How the Common Core can create a higher standard for student achievement



3RD GRADE: OLD COLORADO TEST¹⁵

Study the prices of the four toys shown below. Which three total \$10.00? In the space below, show your work.

Truck: \$4.25 Bear: \$3.75
Ball: \$3.50 Paints: \$2.25



3RD GRADE: COMMON CORE¹⁶

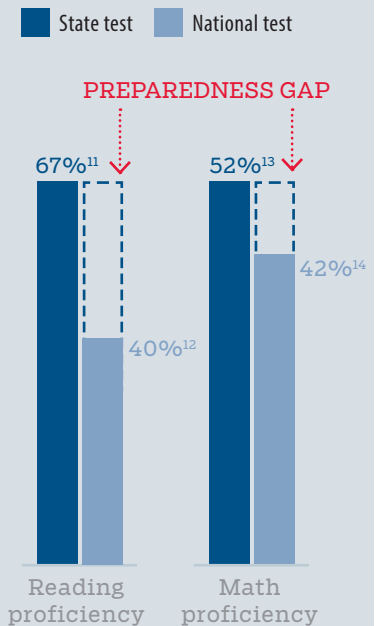
Click on all the equations that are true.

- $8 \times 9 = 81$
- $54 \div 9 = 24 \div 6$
- $7 \times 5 = 25$
- $8 \times 3 = 4 \times 6$
- $49 \div 7 = 56 \div 8$

American students score well below their peers in other countries, and are not expected to know critical math and reading skills as early as their global counterparts. Common Core will help ensure our students are receiving the world-class education they deserve.

The preparedness gap in Colorado

While a majority of students are deemed proficient on state exams, performance on national exams tells a different story.



There is broad support for Common Core in Colorado and across the country

69% OF TEACHERS

in Colorado believe the Common Core standards will improve students' ability to think critically and use reasoning skills.¹⁷

Let's talk about what the Common Core is not. It is not a common curriculum or an effort to nationalize education. It's a way of ensuring that the nation's school districts are aiming for the same level of proficiency on an agreed-upon menu of things that kids should know. How you get there is your choice. We think it's long overdue.

THE DENVER POST EDITORIAL BOARD¹⁸

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.

THE CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT¹⁹

As I work to implement the Common Core this year, I have had many opportunities to collaborate. I have worked with my peers, both in-building and across the country through virtual networks, such as the Center for Teaching Quality's Collaboratory.

JESSICA KEIGAN, ENGLISH TEACHER AT HORIZON HIGH SCHOOL IN THORNTON²⁰

Endnotes

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- Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.
- National Skills Coalition, "Middle-Skill Jobs State-by-State: Colorado," available at http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-fact-sheets/middle-skill/nsc_middleskills_colorado.pdf.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- Civic Enterprises and Corporate Voices for Working Families, "Across the Great Divide: Perspectives of CEOs and College Presidents on America's Higher Education and Skills Gap" (2011), available at http://www.civicenterprises.net/MediaLibrary/Docs/across_the_great_divide.pdf.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID B20004.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID B23006.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- "Forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core State Standards," available at <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>.
- Center for American Progress projections based on U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates" and Department of Education high school graduation data.
- U.S. Department of Education, "Consolidated State Performance Reports," available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html>.
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- Editorial Board, "Common Core education standards long overdue," The Denver Post, August 22, 2013, available at http://www.denverpost.com/editorials/ci_23921081/common-core-education-standards-long-overdue#ixzz2jebhxDR.
- "Colorado Academic Standards and the Common Core," available at <http://www.cherrycreekschools.org/CurricDev/CommonCore/Pages/default.aspx>.
- Jessica Keigan, "Voices: Common Core – friend or foe?," Ed News Colorado, April 3, 2013, available at <http://www.ednews-colorado.org/voices/voices-common-core-friend-or-foe>.