

## FACT SHEET

# Illinois Common Core: Advancing Student Achievement

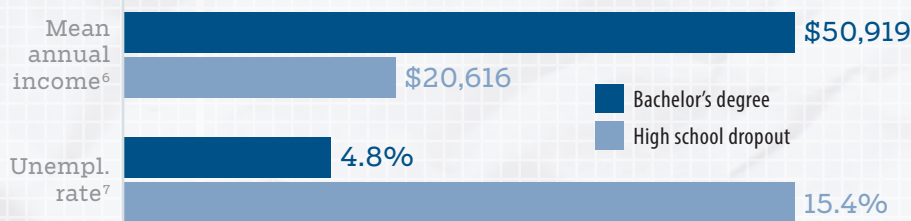
Across the country, too many of today's high school graduates are not ready for college or the workforce. According to a recent study, one out of four high school graduates require remedial education to enroll in college courses. The Common Core State Standards will help prepare students throughout the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

## Illinois' 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, Illinois' students need a strong academic base that prepares them for success in the knowledge-based economy.

But currently, the system in Illinois is failing to help all students achieve their full potential. 36,000 Illinois students between the ages of 16 and 19 dropped out of high school in 2011.<sup>1</sup> And even more alarmingly, Illinois' college graduation rate among adults lags 20 percent behind America's highest-performing state.<sup>2</sup>

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

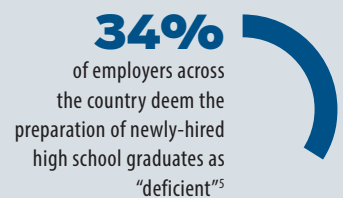
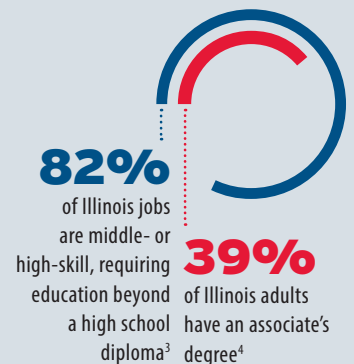


## If we want Illinois' students to achieve, we need to expect more

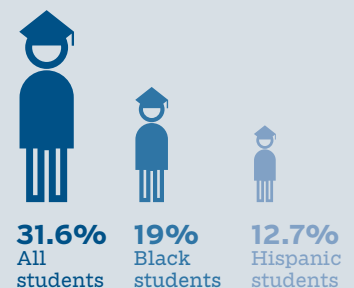
The Common Core State Standards, or CCSS, provide a new path for teachers to develop a more rigorous curriculum and raise the bar for students to become active learners and independent thinkers.

Recognizing the dire need to advance student achievement, Illinois' leaders worked with education officials from across the county to draft a new set of standards to promote critical thinking and problem solving. Illinois 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.<sup>9</sup> By raising expectations and providing support to help students reach them, children in Illinois will be better prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to prosper in higher education and future careers.

**Illinois' students are not prepared for future high-skilled jobs**

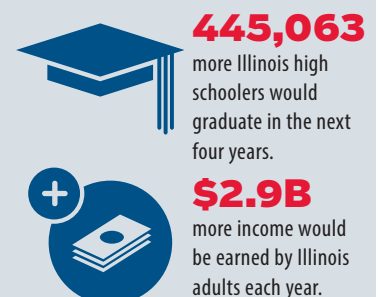


**College graduation rates among Illinois adults<sup>8</sup>**



**Low standards are costing Illinois**

If Illinois's high school graduation rate matched the best performing state:<sup>10</sup>



## 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 Illinois, 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 ILLINOIS TEST<sup>15</sup>

Samantha wants to estimate the sum of 155 and 188 to the nearest 100's. What is her estimated sum? Mark your answer.

- A) 500      C) 400  
B) 300      D) 600



#### 3RD GRADE: COMMON CORE<sup>16</sup>

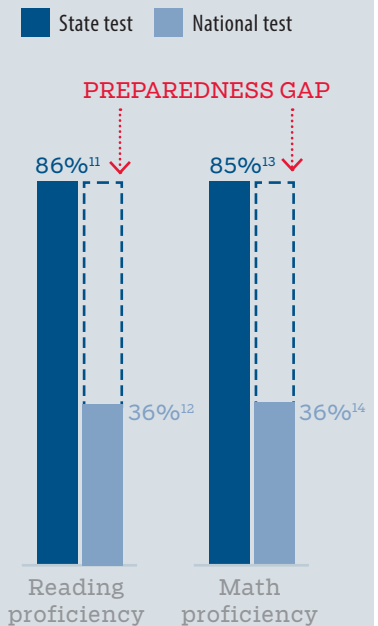
Click on all the equations that are true.

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

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 Illinois

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 Illinois and across the country

## 79% OF TEACHERS

in Illinois believe the Common Core standards will improve students' ability to think critically and use reasoning skills.<sup>17</sup>

The new standards raise the bar on education and have the potential to produce a generation of competitive, well-prepared graduates who know how to collaborate, communicate and think more deeply.

THE SPRINGFIELD STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER EDITORIAL BOARD<sup>18</sup>

Before, we used to be satisfied for you to memorize your times tables. Now, we want you to apply your times tables, and solve problems.

ILLINOIS BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIRMAN GERY CHICO<sup>19</sup>

What Common Core is about is teaching students to think, not to have canned or memorized answers but to take what they know to figure out what they don't know. It simulates life.

ANNETTE GURLEY, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS<sup>20</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- 3 "Middle-Skill Jobs State-By-State: Illinois," available at [http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-fact-sheets/middle-skill/nsc\\_middleskills\\_illinois.pdf](http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-fact-sheets/middle-skill/nsc_middleskills_illinois.pdf)
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- 5 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](http://www.civicenterprises.net/MediaLibrary/Docs/across_the_great_divide.pdf).
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID B20004.
- 7 U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID B23006.
- 8 U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- 9 "Illinois State Board of Education adopts new, more rigorous learning standards to better prepare students for college and the workforce," June 24, 2010, available at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/news/2010/june24.htm>
- 10 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.
- 11 U.S. Department of Education, "Consolidated State Performance Reports," available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html>.
- 12 National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2013 Reading Assessment, generated using the NAEP Data Explorer, available at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>.
- 13 U.S. Department of Education, "Consolidated State Performance Reports," available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html>.
- 14 National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2013 Reading Assessment, generated using the NAEP Data Explorer, available at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>.
- 15 Math Slice, "Online Mathematics Practice (Mock) Test for Grades 3 through 5," available at <http://www.mathslice.com/mathmocktest.php>. (Math Slice mock test questions are based in part off of the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). The Illinois State Board of Education has no previous ISAT questions publicly available at this time.)
- 16 "PARCC Grade 3 Mathematics (Fluency)," available at <http://parconline.org/samples/mathematics/grade-3-mathematics-fluency> (last accessed November 2013).
- 17 Scholastic, "Primary Sources 2013 Preview: Illinois," available at <http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/2013preview/state-illinois.htm>.
- 18 Editorial Board, "Our Opinion: Common Core deserves a chance," The State Journal-Register, November 3, 2013, available at <http://www.sj-r.com/editorials/x450316129/Our-Opinion-Common-Core-deserves-a-chance#ixzz2jroelYf>.
- 19 Tom Butala, comment on "State Board of Ed chair defends Common Core standards," The Daily Whale Blog, comment posted October 29, 2013, available at <http://www.dailywhale.com/blog/state-board-ed-chair-defends-common-core-standards>.
- 20 Editorial, "Common Core learning standards: Thinking beats memorizing any day," Chicago Sun-Times, October 27, 2013, available at <http://www.suntimes.com/opinions/23345965-474/common-core-could-transform-american-education-if-implemented-well.html>.