

## FACT SHEET

# Tennessee Common Core: Advancing Student Achievement

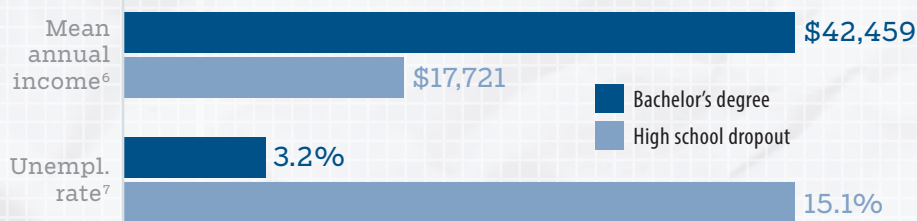
Across the country, too many of today's high school graduates are not ready for college or the workforce. According to a recent study, one out of four high school graduates require remedial education to enroll in college courses. The Common Core State Standards will help prepare students throughout the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

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

But currently, the system in Tennessee is failing to help all students achieve their full potential. 13,000 Tennessee students between the ages of 16 and 19 dropped out of high school in 2011.<sup>1</sup> And even more alarmingly, Tennessee's college graduation rate among adults lags 16 percent behind the national average.<sup>2</sup>

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

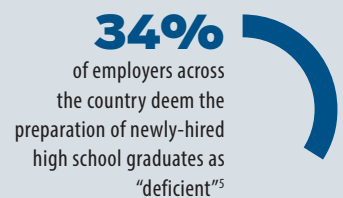
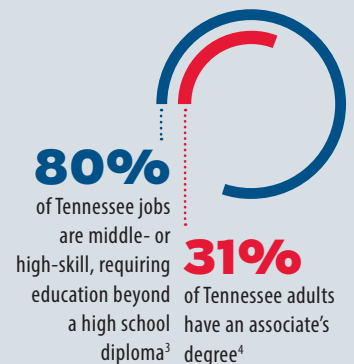


If we want Tennessee's students to achieve, we need to expect more.

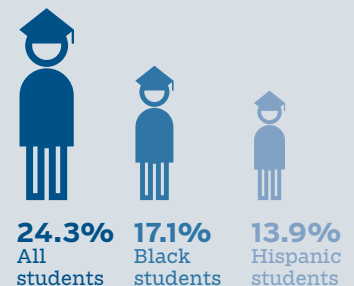
The Common Core State Standards, or CCSS, provide a new path for teachers to develop a more rigorous curriculum and raise the bar for students to become active learners and independent thinkers.

Recognizing the dire need to advance student achievement, Tennessee's leaders worked with education officials from across the county to draft a new set of standards to promote critical thinking and problem solving. Tennessee 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 Tennessee will be better prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to prosper in higher education and future careers.

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

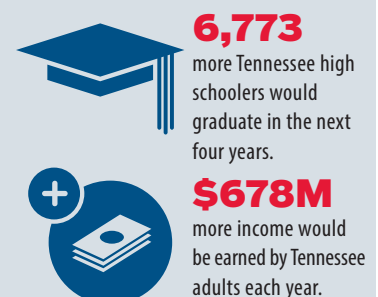


**College graduation rates among Tennessee adults<sup>8</sup>**



**Low standards are costing Tennessee**

If Tennessee'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 Tennessee, 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 TENNESSEE TEST<sup>15</sup>

Divide:  $20/4 = \underline{\quad}$

- F) 16
- G) 10
- H) 5
- J) 4



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

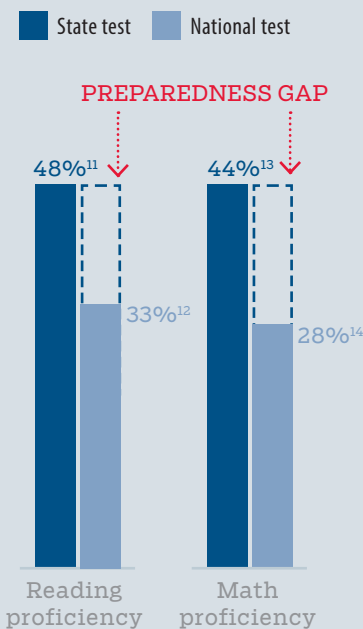
Click on all the equations that are true.

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

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 Tennessee

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 Tennessee and across the country

### 79% OF TEACHERS

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

We feel very strongly that Common Core is important to continue the progress we're making in Tennessee. ... I think Common Core is about helping everybody understand: Here's what a 5th grader should know in math skills or here's what an 8th grader should know in reading comprehension.

GOV. BILL HASLAM (R-TN)<sup>18</sup>

Community colleges developed elaborate remedial education programs because the K-12 system does not adequately prepare students for college. More than half of the students I accept into the program each year have spent at least a year taking remedial classes.

R. DAVID JOHNSON, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, RESPIRATORY CARE, COLUMBIA STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE<sup>19</sup>

We have to move from standards that ask students 'what?' to standards that push our children to answer 'why?' and 'how?' Tennessee's Common Core State Standards do exactly that.

JARED T. BIGHAM, ED.D., IS DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS FOR TENNESSEE SCORE<sup>20</sup>

## Endnotes

- Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," Census ID S15101.
- National Skills Coalition, "Middle-Skill Jobs State-by-State: Tennessee," available at [http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-fact-sheets/middle-skill/nsc\\_middleskills\\_tennessee.pdf](http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-fact-sheets/middle-skill/nsc_middleskills_tennessee.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](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>.
- 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/>.
- U.S. Department of Education, "Consolidated State Performance Reports," available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html>.
- 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/>.
- Pearson, "Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program," (2012), available at [http://www.tn.gov/education/assessment/doc/ACH\\_2009\\_PracticeTest\\_Gr3.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/education/assessment/doc/ACH_2009_PracticeTest_Gr3.pdf).
- PARCC, "Grade 3 Mathematics (Fluency)," available at <http://parcconline.org/samples/mathematics/grade-3-mathematics-fluency> (last accessed November 2013).
- Scholastic, "Primary Sources 2013 Preview: Tennessee," available at <http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/2013-preview/state-tennessee.htm>.
- Richard Locker, "Gov. Haslam supports Common Core standards for Tennessee," The Commercial Appeal, September 18, 2013, available at <http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2013/sep/18/gov-haslam-supports-common-core-standards-for/>.
- R. David Johnson, "Common Core moves education in right direction for students: Letter to the Editor," The Tennessean, October 12, 2013, available at [http://www.tennessean.com/apps/bcs.dll/article?AID=201310120108&nclink\\_check=1](http://www.tennessean.com/apps/bcs.dll/article?AID=201310120108&nclink_check=1).
- Jared Bigham, "Common Core goal to better prepare students," jacksonsun.com, October 25, 2013, available at <http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20131027/OPINION/310270001/Bigham-column-Common-Core-goal-better-prepare-students>.