

## **Nevada Common Core State Standards Communications Tool Kit**

*This communications tool kit is provided by the Nevada System of Higher Education and the Nevada Department of Education to help you share and talk about our transition to higher learning standards. While this transition is occurring in K-12 schools, it involves educators from primary school to graduate school, the public, the business community, and policymakers. This tool kit will help all of us communicate clearly and consistently about this new direction for The Silver State.*

### **Nevada Common Core State Standards Elevator Speech**

#### **Nevadans work hard, but we must work smarter.**

By adopting the Common Core State Standards, Nevada is moving in that direction by raising the bar statewide for learning in math and English language arts in order to prepare all students for college and the workforce.

#### **The move to new standards is a K-12 and college issue that is critical to Nevada's progress.**

Colleges and universities will collaborate with K-12 educators to better prepare teachers, make sure high school students are ready for college, and help students who aren't ready. The standards also have implications for how high school and first-year college courses are aligned as well policies governing student placement in remedial courses.

#### **We can't afford to wait.**

If we do this right, Nevada will graduate more high school students ready for college-level work. Fewer students will need remediation and more students will finish higher education with certificates or degrees. If we don't do it right, Nevada will fail to meet its critical workforce goals.

#### **Nevadans are coming together to build a more educated workforce and better future.**

Educators at all levels—from primary school to graduate school—will collaborate to implement the standards and provide new support to help students move successfully from high school to college and careers.

### **By the Numbers: Education Statistics that Matter for Nevadans**

- 59.2% of Nevada public high school students graduate with a diploma, compared to the national average of 73.4%. (Editorial Projects in Education, Quality Counts, January 10, 2013)
- 30.1% of adults (ages 25–64) in Nevada have a two- or four-year degree, compared to a national average of 38.8%. (Editorial Projects in Education, Quality Counts, January 10, 2013)
- 29.1% of students entering a four-year college in Nevada require remediation. Of those, only 36.8% graduate within six years. ([CompleteCollege.org](http://CompleteCollege.org))
- 41.6 % of students entering a two-year college in Nevada require remediation. Of those, only 9.7% graduate within three years. ([CompleteCollege.org](http://CompleteCollege.org))
- 35.8% percent of bachelor's candidates in Nevada graduate within six years, ranking 49th in the nation. ([NCHEMS Higherinfo.org](http://NCHEMS Higherinfo.org))
- 43.1% of young adults in Nevada (ages 18–24) are enrolled in postsecondary education or have a degree. That is well below the national average of 55.6%. (Editorial Projects in Education, Quality Counts, January 10, 2013)
- 58% of jobs in Nevada will require a career certificate or college degree by 2020, but only 28% of Nevada adults have an associate degree or higher. ([CompleteCollege.org](http://CompleteCollege.org))

## General Talking Points

**Nevadans work hard, but we must work smarter. By adopting the Common Core State Standards, Nevada is moving in that direction by raising the bar statewide for learning in math and English language arts in order to prepare all students for college and the workforce.**

- ***THE NUMBERS: 59.2% of Nevada public high school students graduate with a diploma, compared to the national average of 73.4%.***
- Nevada adopted the new standards in October 2010 to ensure that our teaching and learning is relevant in today's world while reflecting the knowledge and skills our young people need to succeed in college and the workplace.
- Too many Nevada students fail to finish high school, need remediation when they reach college, or have limited job skills after high school.
- Nevada students must be better prepared if we are to continue making progress toward our goal to increase the number of students who graduate from college or earn professional certificates by 1,064 each year through 2020.
- Our population is changing and our education system must change as well. In particular, Hispanic youths are the fastest growing population and their success is critical to the state's success.
- We must stay the course even when the news is bad. As students take new tests as part of the new standards, we expect to see lower percentages of students scoring at proficient or college-ready levels – just as these scores have declined in other states that are ahead of us.
- By providing new and higher learning goals, the Common Core State Standards will guide our higher education and K-12 systems to more effectively help **all** students use their knowledge of literacy and mathematics in real-world settings to be successful in college and careers.
- Nevada's higher education community is readying for the impact of the new standards, which will include changing how it prepares new teachers, supports veteran teachers, organizes first-year courses and remediation, and collaborates with the K-12 community to prepare students for college.
- Nevada is playing a national role in the move to the new standards. Nevada is a leader in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, a state-led consortium that is developing high-quality assessments that will better identify the needs and strengths of each student.
- Education is the key to strengthening and diversifying Nevada's economy. Higher standards and new assessments will give Nevada students and our state the skills and knowledge needed in today's global economy.

**The move to new standards is a K-12 and college issue that is critical to Nevada's progress. Colleges and universities will collaborate with K-12 educators to better prepare teachers, make sure high school students are ready for college, and help students who aren't ready. The standards also have implications for how high school and first-year college courses are aligned as well policies governing student placement in remedial courses.**

- ***THE NUMBERS: 43.1% of young adults in Nevada (ages 18–24) are enrolled in postsecondary education or have a degree. That is well below the national average of 55.6%.***
- Nevada's higher education system has served Nevadans well, but must work more closely than ever with K-12 educators to prepare for the next-generation education our students need to succeed in a more competitive economy.

- While the Common Core State Standards were started as a K-12 initiative, they will bring about significant changes for both K-12 and higher education. Nevada’s higher education and K-12 communities will share critical leadership roles in the effective and smooth transition.
- Teacher preparation programs will work with K-12 educators to help prepare new teachers and support experienced teachers to succeed in classrooms that will ask more of students.
- College faculty in the arts and sciences will have to adjust how they teach entry-level courses to consider the knowledge and skills that will be expected of incoming students as part of the new standards.
- Higher education administrators must ensure that faculty members are aware of the new standards, understand the implications on campus and in local schools, and receive adequate support.
- The Common Core State Standards were developed by teachers, postsecondary faculty, principals, parents, and education experts to be relevant to the real world and reflect the academic knowledge and skills our students need to succeed in college and careers.

**We can’t afford to wait. If we do this right, Nevada will graduate more high school students ready for college-level work. Fewer students will need remediation and more students will finish higher education with certificates or degrees. If we *don’t* do it right, Nevada will fail to meet its critical workforce goals.**

- ✓ ***THE NUMBERS: 29.1% of students entering a four-year college in Nevada enroll in remediation. Of those, only 36.8% graduate within six years.***
- Nevada’s college remediation rates are too high and our college graduation rates are too low.
- The effective transition to new standards will provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn so that higher education, K-12 schools, and parents know what they need to do to help students better prepare for college and the workforce.
- Better high school students mean better college students. Over the long term, you will see students who are prepared differently and better—and need less remediation.
- With less remediation needed, college students and their instructors will spend more time on higher-level material and students will be more likely to graduate and at lower costs to them and their institutions.
- The new standards will give K-12 teachers more time to go in depth in their subjects, provide clear and consistent learning targets, and help ensure that students don’t fall behind when they change schools.
- The new learning goals will be accompanied by new student assessments. Nevada is changing over to new assessments that are geared toward college and career-training and will better assess and measure essential skills such as critical thinking, communications, and problem solving.
- While the assessments will be given at each grade level from 3 through 8, and 11, the 11th-grade assessment will help schools determine whether students have mastered the skills and content to begin college or careers and how best to support them as they transition through 12th grade.
- By adopting research-based, globally competitive curriculum standards and new high-quality assessments, Nevada will ensure that its students are college and career ready.

**Nevadans are coming together to build a more educated workforce and better future. Educators at all levels—from primary school to graduate school—will collaborate to implement the standards and provide new support to help students move successfully from high school to college and careers.**

- ✓ ***THE NUMBERS: 35.8 % percent of bachelor's candidates in Nevada graduate within six years, ranking 49th in the nation.***
- Nevadans must have the education and skills necessary to fill high-quality jobs of today and tomorrow. By implementing the new standards, assessments, and college support programs, Nevada is undertaking its most comprehensive school improvement effort ever.
- The new standards and assessments are a critical part of Nevada's goal to increase the number of college graduates and certificate completers by more than 1,000 per year through 2020.
- Nevada's public colleges and universities will work with the K-12 system to understand the new standards, prepare teachers to teach them, and coordinate with local K-12 schools to give teacher candidates and veteran teachers the necessary preparation and training.
- As Nevada asks more of its students and schools, it will do more to support them. School districts and institutions of higher learning will work together to make sure that Silver State students get the additional help and support they need before entering college or the workforce.
- Our new standards and assessments will promote meaningful conversations and collaboration across Nevada's education community about preparing students for college and careers.

### **Messages for the Higher Education Community**

Nevada's higher education community – from the Board of Regents to department heads and adjunct faculty – must take steps to understand what will be demanded by statewide adoption of the Common Core State standards and the leadership roles higher education will play.

The Common Core State Standards will bring about significant changes for both K-12 and higher education. Higher education must not only collaborate with its K-12 colleagues, but must take a joint leadership role in making sure the transition is smooth and effective in K-12 schools and on higher education campuses.

Progress is being made. The Nevada System of Higher Education System, its institutions and the Nevada Department of Education and local school districts are collaborating on many fronts. For one, they are developing a plan to identify high school juniors who are not ready for college-level work and give them added support as seniors. The plan will build on lessons from existing higher education and K-12 partnerships already doing this work in Nevada.

If we do this right, Nevada will be stronger. Our remediation rates will be lower, our completion rates will be higher while instructors and students alike can spend more time on higher-level material.

The new standards and companion assessments will give us a roadmap that is unprecedented in its potential to help all of us, from K-college, guide more students from all backgrounds to enroll in higher education and graduate with degrees or professional certificates.

Support for an effective transition to the new standards must begin at the top. Higher education administrators must be familiar with the new standards while ensuring that faculty members understand them, see the implications on campus and in local K-12 schools, and receive adequate support in their work.

Teacher preparation programs have a major role in readying new K-12 educators for the demands of the standards and creating professional development opportunities to help experienced teachers succeed in classrooms where math and English language arts must be taught differently.

College faculty in a number of disciplines, particularly in the arts and sciences, will have to consider adjusting how they teach entry-level course, taking into account the knowledge and skills that will be expected of incoming students as part of the new standards.

Nevada's higher education system has served Nevadans well, but now must work more closely than ever with K-12 educators to prepare for the next-generation education our students need to succeed in a more competitive economy.

**Actions:**

- Assess what colleges and universities do – both in colleges of education and in their schools of arts and sciences – to prepare teachers to be effective.
- Develop partnerships with K–12 schools and teachers to understand what the standards mean in the classroom and how to support teacher preparation and professional development.
- Host educator-to-educator dialogues between K–12 and higher education about what the new standards mean for entry-level college courses.
- Bring higher education and K–12 together for planning and presentations about the CCSS. For example, campus leaders and faculty should take stock of existing collaboration between their institutions and local school districts.
- Keep higher education leadership at all levels informed about CCSS changes and needs.

**Resources:**

Nevada Dept. of Education: <https://bighorn.doe.nv.gov/sites/CommonCore/default.aspx>

American Council on Education: [www.acenet.edu/higher-education/topics/Pages/Common-Core.aspx](http://www.acenet.edu/higher-education/topics/Pages/Common-Core.aspx)

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: [www.wiche.edu/info/publications/PI-CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf](http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/PI-CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf)

Common Core State Standards: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

ASCD: [www.ascd.org/common-core-state-standards/common-core.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/common-core-state-standards/common-core.aspx)

Common Core Resources: [www.teachthought.com/teaching/50-common-core-resources-for-teachers/](http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/50-common-core-resources-for-teachers/)

Smarter Balanced Assessment Coalition: [www.smarterbalanced.org/k-12-education/common-core-state-standards-tools-resources/](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/k-12-education/common-core-state-standards-tools-resources/)

### **Messages for the K-12 Education Community**

Nevada adopted the Common Core State Standards so that our students will benefit from a common set of set of clear, internationally competitive learning goals within Nevada as well as across state lines.

The state's adoption of the standards in 2010 was an important first step in making sure our students ready to succeed in college or careers.

The Common Core State Standards will bring about significant changes for both K-12 and higher education. In addition to meeting the challenges within their own communities, K-12 and higher education leaders will work together to identify and address areas of mutual concern.

Higher education and K-12 leaders are already collaborating to implement the standards, identify training and professional development needs, and create a plan to meet the needs of high school students who need more academic help to make the transition to college and careers

The standards were developed by teachers, principals, parents, postsecondary faculty, and education experts. While the standards will clarify what K-12 students need to know, they will not dictate how or what teachers teach.

Nevada's new standards will give teachers more time to go in depth in their subjects, provide clear and consistent learning targets, and help ensure that students don't fall behind when they change schools.

As part of the new standards, Nevada is joining 22 other states in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to develop high-quality assessments that will better identify the needs and strengths of each student. The new assessments will be geared toward college and career training readiness and will assess and measure essential skills such as critical thinking, communications, and problem solving.

The assessments will be given at each grade level from 3 through 8, and 11. The 11th-grade assessment will help schools determine whether students have mastered the skills and content to begin college or careers and how best to support them as they transition through 12th grade.

The standards will change what is taught in high school math and English and how these subjects are taught. Higher education faculty are already partnering with K-12 educators to convene and hold workshops about how to adjust and teach entry-level college courses.

Our new standards and assessments will promote new and meaningful conversations and collaboration across Nevada's education community about preparing students for college and careers.

**Actions:**

- Communicate with K–12 teachers on all new developments and opportunities to learn more.
- Host educator-to-educator dialogues between K–12 and higher education about changes in K–12 curriculum, how teachers are responding, and what changes mean for entry-level college courses.
- Bring higher education and K–12 together for planning and presentations about the CCSS.
- Keep up to date on the CCSS, review resources, and share with your colleagues.

**Resources:**

Nevada Dept. of Education: <https://bighorn.doe.nv.gov/sites/CommonCore/default.aspx>

ASCD: [www.ascd.org/common-core-state-standards/common-core.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/common-core-state-standards/common-core.aspx)

Common Core Resources: [www.teachthought.com/teaching/50-common-core-resources-for-teachers/](http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/50-common-core-resources-for-teachers/)

English Teachers: [www.ncte.org/standards/commoncore](http://www.ncte.org/standards/commoncore)

Math Teachers: <http://educationnorthwest.org/resource/1334>

Higher Education: [www.wiche.edu/info/publications/PI-CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf](http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/PI-CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf)

Smarter Balanced Assessment Coalition: [www.smarterbalanced.org/k-12-education/common-core-state-standards-tools-resources/](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/k-12-education/common-core-state-standards-tools-resources/)

Common Core State Standards: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

## **Messages for Policymakers**

The transition to new standards is a K–college issue that will demand changes in both the K-12 and higher education communities. Higher education must play a leadership role to address implications for teacher preparation and credentialing, design of college courses, and placement and remediation for entering college students.

Nevada educators at all levels, including our two- and four-year institutions of higher learning, will collaborate to train teachers, design instructional material, share ideas, and promote greater understanding of the new standards.

Along with these research-based, globally competitive standards, Nevada is partnering with other states to develop new high-quality assessments that will better identify the needs and strengths of each student to help ensure that all Nevada students are college and career ready.

The assessments will be given at each grade level from 3 through 8, and 11. The 11th-grade assessment will help schools determine whether students have mastered the skills and content to begin college or careers and how best to support them as they transition through 12th grade.

As Nevada asks more of its students and schools, it will do more to support them. School districts and institutions of higher learning will collaborate to build on existing partnerships to create a transition plan that will give Silver State students the additional help and support to move from high school to college or the workforce.

Nevada’s Common Core State Standards will strengthen the state’s workforce and economy. The new standards and transition plan will mean less remediation in college, more resources for other needs, and more students graduating from high school and college with the skills needed to succeed in a new economy.

By implementing the new standards, assessments, and transition plan, Nevada is launching one of its most comprehensive school improvement and economic development efforts ever.

### **Actions:**

- ✓ Talk with K–12 and higher education leaders to learn more about the CCSS and how Nevada is preparing.
- ✓ Ask for updates on progress across the state and in your communities.
- ✓ Ask state leaders and educators in K–12 and higher education what is needed to support the CCSS.
- ✓ Speak out publicly to support K–12 and higher education efforts to implement the new standards.

### **Resources:**

Nevada Dept. of Education: <https://bighorn.doe.nv.gov/sites/CommonCore/default.aspx>

Common Core State Standards Initiative: [www.corestandards.org/](http://www.corestandards.org/)

National Conference of State Legislatures: <https://sites.google.com/site/ncslccssupdate/>

Education Commission of the States: [www.ecs-commoncore.org/](http://www.ecs-commoncore.org/)

Achieve: [www.achieve.org/achieving-common-core](http://www.achieve.org/achieving-common-core)

## Messages for the Business Community

Nevada adopted the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts to help make sure the next generations of Nevada graduates have the education and skills necessary to fill high-quality jobs of today and tomorrow while strengthening the state's economic base.

Too many Nevada students fail to finish high school, need remediation when they reach college, or have limited job skills after high school. The standards respond directly to concerns from business leaders that our graduates need to be better prepared.

The new standards will provide new and higher learning goals for all students, regardless of where they live, allowing schools to more effectively help all students succeed and prepare for college and careers.

The new standards will help students learn more and place greater focus on teaching them to think critically, solve problems, and communicate clearly.

Nevada's college and universities will be working with K-12 educators to prepare and train teachers, evaluate entry-level college courses, and review remedial programs to ensure an effective transition.

The Nevada System of Higher Education, its institutions, local school districts, and the Nevada Department of Education are partnering to guide implementation of the new standards and are creating a plan to help make sure high school seniors get the academic help they need to transition to college or the workforce.

The new standards, combined with more support during the transition from high school, will mean less remediation in college, more resources for other needs, and more students graduating from high school and college with the skills needed to succeed in tomorrow's economy.

Education is at the center of Nevada's future prospects and growth. By giving Nevada students the skills and knowledge needed in today's job market, our young people will have greater opportunity, while communities and our state will be stronger and more competitive.

### **Actions:**

- Invite K–12 and higher education leaders to brief local and statewide business groups on implementation of the new standards.
- Express your support for higher standards to state leaders.
- Work with schools to find ways to help students understand the demands of the modern workplace and how they relate to the new standards.
- Encourage your civic groups to learn more about the work now underway in schools.
- Speak up publicly—at civic groups, through letters to your local newspaper, and other ways.

### **Resources:**

U.S. Chamber of Commerce: <http://icw.uschamber.com/policy/common-core-state-standards-initiative>

Common Core State Standards Initiative: [www.corestandards.org/](http://www.corestandards.org/)

Kentucky Chamber of Commerce: [www.kychamber.com/standards](http://www.kychamber.com/standards)

Arizona Chamber of Commerce: [www.azchamber.com/news/view\\_article.cfm?ID=870](http://www.azchamber.com/news/view_article.cfm?ID=870)

Nevada Dept. of Education: <https://bighorn.doe.nv.gov/sites/CommonCore/default.aspx>

## Message for Parents and Families

Nevada adopted the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts in 2010 as a major step toward giving all our students a world-class education.

The standards form the basis of what will be used in all Nevada schools to give students the education they need and deserve to prepare them for what is next, whether that is college or career training.

The standards will provide new and higher learning goals for all students, regardless of where they live, allowing schools to more effectively help all students get to and graduate from college or career training.

Nevada's higher education system is working closely with K-12 educators to use the new standards as a guide to preparing for the next-generation education our students need to succeed in a more competitive economy.

Nevada also will use new assessments that measure critical thinking, communications skills, and ability to solve problems. The assessments will be given at each grade level from 3 through 8, and 11. The 11th-grade assessment will help gauge student readiness to begin college or enter the workforce, but it will not be used in college admissions.

Your children are not the only ones who will be doing more. Nevada is stepping up to help. The Nevada System of Higher Education, its institutions, local school districts, and the Nevada Department of Education are collaborating to create a plan that will identify high school juniors who are not ready for college-level work and give them the academic support they need to make a smooth transition to college.

The time is right for Nevada to raise our standards, improve assessments, and provide more support to students in the transition from high school to college and careers as a way to increase the number of graduates earning college degrees and certificates by 1,064 a year through 2020.

By working within Nevada's K-college system, the Common Core State Standards put students, parents, and educators on the same page so they can work together toward shared goals and ensure that students make the necessary progress to graduate from high school ready to succeed.

You will be hearing more soon from your schools and school districts about the Nevada Common Core Standards and what they mean for your children.

### **Actions:**

- Look for information from your schools and in the media about new standards and assessments.
- Talk to teachers and principals about what the standards will mean for your children.
- Help prepare your children by encouraging them to read, monitoring their homework, and making sure they are in school.
- Talk to high school counselors about what your child needs for college, monitor your child's progress, and get information on the supports in place locally to help your child.

### **Resources:**

Education Northwest: <http://educationnorthwest.org/resource/1547>

National PTA: <http://pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583>

Nevada Dept. of Education: <https://bighorn.doe.nv.gov/sites/CommonCore/default.aspx>