Strengthening business through
effective investments in children and youth

ReadyNation

KEEPING NEW YORK COMPETITIVE

The Common Core State Standards and Aligned Assessments are Crucial to Our State's Economic Success

Efforts to boost New York State's economy must focus on our most important asset—our future workforce. Yet, there are signs of trouble in this arena. Only 35 percent of high school graduates in New York State are considered college- and career-ready.[1] By 2020, 350,000 positions in New York that require mid-level skills will be unfilled, because we will not have workers with the right skills to fill them.[2]



The CCSS reflect businesses' needs for highly skilled workers who are able to think critically, solve complex problems and communicate effectively.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a rigorous set of educational standards for English language arts and mathematics for K-12 education that reflect businesses' needs for a highly skilled workforce that has mastered core academic content, and is able to think critically, solve complex problems and communicate effectively. The CCSS establish the content and skills that children must learn at each grade level. The CCSS were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, and have been voluntarily adopted by 43 states.[3]

What the Common Core State Standards are **NOT**:

- The CCSS are *not another test* – Common Core-aligned questions have been incorporated into existing tests to make those tests more reflective of students' ability. The New York State Education Department has capped state testing to less than one percent of school time every year;
- The CCSS are *not a curriculum* – The State Education Department has made sample curricula available to support teachers and help them plan lessons. But the CCSS do not specify a curriculum or tell teachers how to teach; these important decisions remain under teacher, local or state control.

CCSS-aligned assessments are designed to provide better measures of proficiency in the knowledge and skills that children need to succeed in college, careers, and civic life. Standards must be accompanied by assessments that are based on the standards. The data from these assessments will help educators identify and share educational practices that work with other schools and districts.

ReadyNation Recommendations

The CCSS for English and mathematics and the aligned assessments will not magically turn things around overnight. But having high standards and accountability through assessments are the first steps towards developing the skilled workforce our businesses need today and into the future.

ReadyNation therefore supports New York's continued implementation of the Common Core State Standards and assessments, with adequate resources to execute ongoing implementation.

- **More immediate access to assessment results in order to adjust instruction appropriately and provide feedback in real time.**
- **Fewer local pre- and post-tests.**
- **Greater transparency related to test questions and answers.**

Endnotes

1. New York State Office of Information and Reporting Services.
2. ReadyNation (2014, August). Closing the job skills gap with New York workers. Washington, DC: Author.
3. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers (2010). Common Core State Standards. Washington, DC: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. See: http://www.corestandards.org/

ReadyNation is a membership organization of business leaders that operates under the umbrella of the non-profit Council For A Strong America.

Add your voice.

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