



In Support of the Common Core and the PARCC Assessments

A Joint Statement from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Historically, first-time freshmen matriculating directly from high school to Illinois two-year and four-year colleges and universities lack the readiness for college-level work expected by Illinois higher education. This lack of aligned expectations — between what students are typically expected to know at the end of high school and the content skills necessary for success in entry-level, credit-bearing classes — is illustrated by the high remediation rates at Illinois public colleges and universities, with the statewide remedial rates approaching 50%.

The Common Core State Standards represent a benchmark of what students should know and be able to do to be successful in entry-level, credit-bearing courses. The Common Core State Standards were developed collaboratively by K-12 and college and university faculty and English/literacy and mathematics content experts (including experts from Illinois) to address this misalignment between K-12 preparation and expectations of colleges and universities.

The PARCC assessments are aligned with the Common Core State Standards for each grade and are designed to provide students and teachers with accurate and consistent information about whether students are on track for college, to ensure that students are accurately identified as ready for college level work and are able to take advantage of all early college credit opportunities afforded them. In addition, the PARCC assessments will assist school administrators in identifying the appropriate intervention services that will prepare students for college-level work well before they enter their first college-level course. The benefits of using this aligned assessment system include:

- **Better and earlier information** about the preparation of incoming students
- **Increased alignment** across the K-16 spectrum
- **Improved partnerships** between higher education and K-12 institutions
- **Improved preparation** of incoming students
- **Increased academic rigor** in entry-level, credit-bearing courses
- **Reduced remediation** rates
- **Increased degree** attainment rates and reduced college costs by shortening the time to degree
- **Increased capacity** – colleges can admit more students
- **Better options for academic interventions** to ensure students remain on-track to college readiness
- **A more useful 12th grade**
- **Improved productivity for state spending** on student financial aid and institutional support

While Illinois' three higher education state agencies understand there are many barriers yet to overcome, the three agencies fully support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in Illinois K-12 public schools and the PARCC assessment that is intended to measure the readiness of Illinois students being instructed through these standards.

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Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson
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Dr. Jim Applegate
Executive Director, IBHE

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