

December 18, 2014

Dear Higher Ed for Higher Standards,

As higher education leaders, we know the vital role high-quality college- and career-ready standards must play in reaching national attainment goals and preparing students to successfully participate in today's global economy.

That is why the undersigned organizations strongly support the collaborative and effective implementation of rigorous K-12 state academic standards, including but not limited to the Common Core State Standards, which are designed to ensure that students graduate high school with the reading and mathematics skills and critical thinking ability needed to competently perform college-level work or succeed in their chosen career.

Our colleges and universities—representing the diverse landscape of higher education—are working hard to increase the number of Americans who earn a college degree or credential.

Many elements, of course, must play a role in achieving this goal, and there is no single solution. But there also is no question that raising academic standards before students matriculate and begin college work should be a top priority. Evidence clearly shows that retention and completion rates are lower for students who must take remedial courses upon entering college.

Several of our organizations already have commented on the importance of these efforts, noting there is no one-size-fits-all method of reaching our common goals.

For instance, the National Association of System Heads has stated its enthusiastic support for efforts by the K-12 community to align standards with high expectations students face in college and careers and its respect for different state approaches.

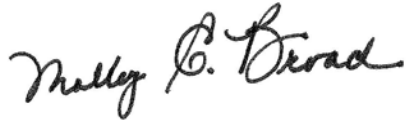
The American Association of State Colleges and Universities notes that a lack of student preparedness threatens our future national success and prosperity, and says that college- and career-readiness advances will come through initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards or equally rigorous state standards. And the Association of American Colleges & Universities stresses the importance of standards that focus on higher-level critical thinking and problem solving rather than just knowledge acquisition.

Helping ensure more students are ready to succeed in college was the rationale for the American Council on Education's joint venture with Pearson in 2011 that created the

GED® Testing Service. The new GED test has a GED Score with Honors performance level that signifies a student can tackle credit-bearing college courses.

We look forward to working with you to expand the pipeline of students well prepared to meet 21st century college and career challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly C. Broad". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Molly Corbett Broad
President

On behalf of:

ACT, Inc.
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
APPA, "Leadership in Educational Facilities"
Association of American Colleges & Universities
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
EDUCAUSE
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators