

BUILDING A COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY MASSACHUSETTS

WHY STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS MATTER TO BUSINESS

Schools across Massachusetts are actively implementing learning goals (standards) adopted in 2010 that better prepare students for college and job training programs by focusing on the critical thinking, communications and problem-solving skills they will need to succeed in the real world.

Over the next year, districts across the state are piloting the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment system that is aligned with these standards and designed to indicate college and career readiness. PARCC requires students to demonstrate that they can apply knowledge to solve real world problems, rather than simply recall information by filling in bubbles.

WHAT MASSACHUSETTS EMPLOYERS ARE SAYING ABOUT EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE



69% ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY HIRING employees with the right skills for the positions they have available



TOO MUCH TIME IS BEING SPENT ON current standardized tests that do not promote critical thinking

Source: Survey conducted by MassINC Polling Group for MBAE, AIM, and the Massachusetts Business Roundtable

As the demands of the workforce evolve and grow, so too must our expectations of what students need to know and be able to do in order to succeed in life.

72%

By 2020, 72% of jobs in Massachusetts will require a career certificate or college degree

Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce

37%

Yet, 37% of students entering Massachusetts public colleges and universities are unprepared for college level work

Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

36,000

In STEM disciplines alone, 36,000 fewer associate and baccalaureate degrees will be granted than the Massachusetts workforce will need by 2020

Source: MA Department of Higher Education

WHY BUSINESS SHOULD SUPPORT NEW ASSESSMENTS!

High quality assessments gauge whether students are on track for success after high school by **measuring critical thinking, communication, and problem solving capabilities** that employers lament are lacking.

New assessments designed to indicate college and career readiness will help enable students to avoid being sidetracked into costly remediation and enter college programs in STEM fields.

Assessments that give teachers, students and families information about whether students are on track and how to help get or keep them there are **tests worth teaching to and valuable exercises for students.**

WHAT CAN BUSINESS DO TO HELP?

- ⇒ Add your voice to your community's conversation about education. Explain why education is critical to you as an employer and why it matters to your community.
- ⇒ Speak up about your support for the current college and career ready standards and the need for new assessments aligned to these.
- ⇒ Speak up when you hear misinformation about the standards and assessments.
- ⇒ Talk to teachers and visit a classroom in your community.
- ⇒ Get the facts and share these with your neighbors, colleagues and in letters to your newspaper.
- ⇒ Connect with other business leaders that support great schools through the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education.