



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY



THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES



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August 29, 2014

Mike Kirst, President  
California State Board of Education  
1430 N Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Dr. Kirst and Board members:

With the new school year underway, we want to express the support of California's higher education segments for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. We believe California's implementation of the Common Core standards and aligned assessments has the potential to dramatically improve college readiness and help close the preparation gap that exists for California students. Moreover, we are optimistic for the transforming promise of these new standards when more students graduate having mastered grade level standards and when teachers, students and parents are given clear and consistent messages about readiness for success in higher education and the workforce.

The Common Core standards provide teachers and districts a roadmap to developing courses that cultivate the deep understandings required for college preparation. In concert with this transition, the a-g requirements for CSU and UC admission, specifically areas 'b' (English) and 'c' (Mathematics), have been updated to align with the Common Core standards and the message is being transmitted to schools, parents and students.

The partnership California has built over the last 10 years to implement the Early Assessment Program has helped to define the national effort to measure college and career readiness in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and it places California in an optimal position to successfully transition to the new system of standards and assessments. Appointed faculty from the three public segments are participants in teams working on the performance standards for the Smarter Balanced 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessment and many more faculty will have the opportunity to participate in an online second level review process.

Our collaborative efforts will help ensure that the tests measure standards that our K-12 and higher education systems all agree address appropriate expectations for the preparation of high school graduates who are ready to succeed. It is critical that students arrive at college better

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Dr. Mike Kirst and Board members

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prepared for the kind of inquiry based learning and collaborative problem-solving that defines twenty-first century learning. These assessments align with our commitment to new learning outcomes to ensure our graduates are ready to succeed in an increasingly complex global environment.

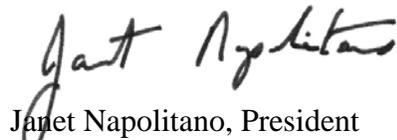
The link between K-12 and higher education starts with teacher preparation. As such, it is important to note that the higher education systems are aligning teacher preparation programs and content with the Common Core standards. In addition, higher education is providing professional development, teacher and administrator leadership academies and ongoing teacher support aligned to the Common Core standards.

We are pleased with the progress we have made to ensure a comprehensive, coordinated approach for supporting Common Core implementation on an ongoing basis. We will continue to keep you informed as we expand our outreach and initiatives to support all of our schools and students.

Sincerely,



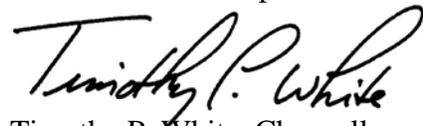
Brice W. Harris, Chancellor  
California Community Colleges



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