

The Completion Shortfall

Americans can take pride in the great progress made in ensuring access to college: More than 70% of our young people start some kind of advanced training or education within two years of receiving their high school diplomas.

Yet for too many, the journey ends long before graduation day. They become college dropouts.

Just over half of students who start 4-year bachelor's degree programs full-time finish – in six years.

Fewer than three out of ten students who start at community colleges full-time graduate with an associate degree in three years.

As a result, America is slipping: behind our global competitors – and, even more alarming, *between generations*.

Source: Lumina Foundation (collegeproductivity.org)

Four Steps to Finishing First

1. **PERFORMANCE FUNDING:** Targeted Incentives for Colleges and Universities to Graduate More Students with Quality Degrees and Credentials.
2. **STUDENT INCENTIVES:** Strategic Use of Tuition and Financial Aid to Incentivize Course and Program Completion.
3. **NEW MODELS:** Lower-Cost, High-Quality Approaches Substituted for Traditional Academic Delivery Whenever Possible to Increase Capacity for Serving Students.
4. **BUSINESS EFFICIENCIES:** Business Practices that Produce Savings to Graduate More Students.

WICHE: Implications of the Common Core State Standards for Higher Education in the West

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) seek to better prepare students across the country for college and careers, raising both expectations and achievement in every state that chooses to adopt them.

A new WICHE Policy Insights brief -- “The Common Core State Standards: Implications for Higher Education in the West” (<http://wiche.edu/info/publications/PI-CommonCoreStateStandards.pdf>) -- summarizes the history and philosophy behind the CCSS and highlights the progress states have made in implementing them, with a focus on postsecondary impacts.

Principles for Effective System Leadership

- ❖ Providing a collective and unified voice;
- ❖ Building interdependent support;
- ❖ Balancing central authority with institutional differentiation, autonomy, and creativity;
- ❖ Strategic planning and direction; and
- ❖ Performance assessment.

Source: “The Leadership Dynamic in Public College and University Systems”, A Joint Paper of the National Association of System Heads, American Association of State Colleges and Universities , Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, May 2009