



U.S. High Schools in Eight States to Implement World-Class Instructional Systems and Examinations

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17 /PRNewswire/ -- Eight states will join with the [National Center on Education and the Economy](#) (NCEE) to use the world's best instructional systems and examinations to dramatically increase the number of students who leave high school ready to succeed in college. Students who show they are ready to do college level work will be able to get their diploma and enroll in college as early as the end of their sophomore year in high school.

In today's announcement from Washington, NCEE President Marc Tucker announced that Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont will work with NCEE through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to improve the performance of high school students in these eight states by adopting powerful instructional systems that actually set the international standards.

"By introducing these Board Examination Systems in pilot high schools in these states as early as the 2011-2012 school year, we will begin a process that will ultimately prepare dramatically more students for college success and greatly reduce the high number of students who now take remedial courses in college," said Tucker.

NCEE has a long track record of analyzing and benchmarking the highest performing education systems around the world. Over the years, it has found that in countries where the majority of students perform at high levels, two factors stand out. One is that teachers are recruited from the top-third of college students, and the other is that Board Examination Systems are used to drive learning to high levels.

The five Board Examination programs already identified by NCEE include ACT's QualityCore, the Cambridge International Examination's International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and their AICE program, the College Board's Advanced Placement program, the International Baccalaureate Diploma program, and Pearson/Edexcel's IGCSE and A-level programs.

NCEE first introduced the Board Examination idea in its groundbreaking report, [Tough Choices or Tough Times](#), in late 2006. The report received wide acclaim, and was the cover feature of TIME magazine and praised broadly by educators and the media.

In addition to the eight states being announced today, in 2009, the nation's largest teachers union, the National Education Association, and two leading business groups, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers got behind the recommendations made in the *Tough Choices* report.

"The NCEE Board Examination Proposal can be the very foundation of transforming our high schools

into successful places for all of our students," John Wilson, executive director of the National Education Association. "The National Education Association will support any of our state affiliates who wish to collaborate and partner with their state education agencies in assuring these pilots programs provide all students a pathway to college and a career."

For more information, visit <http://www.skillscommission.org/>.

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