

Suggested questions for panel discussion

1. Do standards-based tests in high school like CSAP give colleges a quality picture of whether or not a student is prepared for college?
2. Why do most colleges prefer non-standards-based tests like ACT or SAT to determine whether students are ready for college?
3. Do Accuplacer and ACT align with state standards?
4. If not, has a state combined ACT and state assessments into one test?
5. Does the new NCLB waiver allow states to waive CSAP in high school and use ACT or Accuplacer?
6. Could Colorado eliminate CSAP or TCAP in high school?
7. What measures are currently in progress to align the expectations between high school and postsecondary education and ensure students make a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education without needing remediation?
8. What are the barriers to completing this alignment?
9. How do you foresee this alignment impacting students, schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education?
10. What additional measures are needed to ensure a student graduates without requiring remediation to continue on the student's chosen postsecondary education path?
11. Are there any barriers that would prevent the ICAP from moving with the student from high school to postsecondary education and continuing to be a useful tool for the student and his or her counselors in planning for and achieving college completion? If there are, how do we address them?

Summary of waiver package

According to information released today, a state may request flexibility through waivers of several specific proposals of NCLB, including:

- **Flexibility regarding the 2013-2014 timeline for all students achieving 100% proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics.**
- **Flexibility regarding district and school improvement and accountability requirements.**
- **Flexibility regarding the use of federal education funds.**

In exchange, states will have to have a plan for addressing three critical areas: improving educational outcomes for all children, closing achievement gaps and increasing equity, and improving the quality of instruction. Specifically, states will have to show that they are:

- **Transitioning to college-and career ready standards and assessments.** To get a waiver states must have already adopted college-and career-ready standards in reading/language arts and mathematics designed to raise achievement for all students. States will not be required to adopt Common Core Standards. There are two options that would allow them to demonstrate that they have adopted college-and career-ready standards: working with higher education institutions in their states to verify that academic standards ensure graduates are ready for college work, and working with other states to set research-based standards.
- **Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability and support.** States seeking waivers will establish a system that gives credit for progress towards college-and-career readiness. States will recognize and reward the highest achieving schools that serve low-income students and show the greatest student progress as “Reward Schools.” For a state’s lowest-performing schools—those in the bottom five percent, “Priority Schools”—the district must implement rigorous interventions (i.e. the four turnaround strategies under the School Improvement Grant program). For an additional 10 percent of a state’s schools—“Focus Schools,” identified as such by low graduation rates, large achievement gaps, or low student subgroup performance—the district will implement strategies designed to focus on students with the greatest needs.
- **Evaluating and Supporting Teacher and Principal Effectiveness.** To get a waiver, a state will have to set basic guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. Such systems are to be developed with teacher and principal input to assess their performance using multiple valid measures, including student progress over time and multiple measures of professional practice, and will use these systems to provide clear feedback to teachers on how to improve instruction.