



NEW JERSEY

Association of State Colleges and Universities

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**Assembly Higher Education Committee
October 2, 2014
Assembly Bill No. 2800**

We support efforts to improve and assess college readiness, but this bill raises several concerns.

Our primary concern is that using scores from college entrance exams like the SAT and ACT to determine whether a student is ready for college-level course work overlooks important noncognitive skills like persistence and perseverance, and what some researchers simply call “grit,” that are equally important characteristics that help students succeed in college courses.

Also along these lines, the bill could prevent colleges and universities from identifying students who would be well served by advanced learning experiences that assume a skill set beyond “college readiness” as defined in the bill.

In Section 1 of the bill, we respectfully suggest replacing references to the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) with the new assessment test being prepared by the Department of Education and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which is a group of states working together to develop a set of assessments that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers. More information about New Jersey’s efforts with PARCC can be found here: <https://www.parcconline.org/new-jersey>

Finally, the state colleges and universities oppose Section 2.c., which would prohibit colleges and universities from requiring a student who successfully completes a transition course from taking a college placement test upon enrollment. The complete prohibition against college placement tests for students who successfully complete a transition course might be too restrictive in some circumstances.

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