

Panel to Translate Research Into Policy Proposals for 12th Grade Preparedness

By [Caralee Adams](#) on May 20, 2010 8:07 AM | [No comments](#) | [No recommendations](#)

To be ready for college or job training after high school, what should a high school graduate know? This month, a special commission was formed to look at just what skills students should have mastered once they leave high school. The hope is that the initiative will increase awareness of the need for high school grads to be academically prepared to compete in today's economy.

The new group—the National Assessment of Educational Progress High School Achievement Commission—will be led by former Mississippi Gov. Ronnie Musgrove and composed of public officials, educators, and business leaders. It was created by the [National Assessment Governing Board](#), the independent bipartisan body that sets NAEP policy.

To come up with its recommendation, the commission will review the results of ["the nation's report card"](#) and other research, reach out to the public through hearings, and survey higher education officials. NAEP is uniquely positioned to provide research on 12th grade preparedness and currently has 17 research projects that will give the commission a tremendous amount of data to review, says Musgrove.

"The goal of the commission will be to effectively and clearly communicate the data to decisionmakers, policymakers, and educators to determine what policies should be put into place to make sure that all 12th graders will be academically prepared," says Musgrove. "There has been this missing link for some time. Especially when the U.S. faces high unemployment and lack of skilled workers, no issue is more important than for our 12th graders to be prepared."

So, how is this different from the [Common Core Standards Initiative](#)? While common core is based on K-12 curriculum, this effort will focus on data. The commission will look at the definition of preparedness by reviewing the NAEP research and translate that into education policy recommendations.

The draft of the common-core standards has drawn praise and criticism and stirred debate as states and education groups review them (see [Curriculum Matters blog](#) for more). It will be interesting to see how this commission's suggestions are received. Stay tuned for the release of some results this fall, although its work may span three years, says Musgrove.