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Outline Reform Efforts

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Governor Corzine, NJ High School Redesign Steering Committee Outline Reform Efforts  
TRENTON - Governor Jon S. Corzine and members of the New Jersey High School Redesign Steering Committee, a public-private partnership, today outlined reform efforts to better prepare students to succeed in a global economy. The efforts are designed to teach the necessary skills to both students who go on to college and those entering the workplace within the first three years out of high school. Members of the higher education and business communities joining Governor Corzine at a Statehouse press conference announced their endorsement of the American Diploma Project (ADP) benchmarks, which are standards for what high school graduates ought to know as they enter either the workplace or go on to higher education.

"Going to college is important and I strongly encourage all **New Jersey's students** to pursue higher education," said Governor Corzine. "But no matter what our high school students plan to do after their graduation, we have a moral obligation and vested economic interest in equipping students with the tools to build successful lives."

Also speaking at the event were Acting Education Commissioner Lucille Davy; Prudential Financial Chairman and CEO Arthur F. Ryan; Susan A. Cole, president of Montclair State University; and Ken Ender, president, Cumberland County College.

Davy said the Department of Education will begin work to ensure that high school courses in New Jersey meet the ADP standards, with some adjustments to meet the state's core curriculum content standards. She said the state plans to raise awareness about these changes, particularly with parents, about the need to implement a more rigorous high school education.

"I'd like to thank the higher education and business communities for all of their work to align student's educational experiences with the needs of a rapidly changing world economy," said Davy. "By working together, this diverse group of stakeholders will help ensure that all **New Jersey students** are prepared with the skills they need to be

Summit on High Schools, completed a review of high school courses and created a plan to align curriculums with the needs of businesses and higher education.

"Years ago, a strong back and a willing heart were enough to allow a person to make a decent living," said Ryan, a committee co-chair. "Today, a person's ability to use his brain will determine his success. What's more, it has been determined by extensive educational research that **students**, whether going on to college or directly into the workforce, need the same skills to succeed."

Although New Jersey leads the nation in high school graduation rates, only 25% of these graduates go on to earn a college diploma. Citing alarming rates of remedial education and training needed after high school for many **students**, leaders from New Jersey's higher education and business communities endorsed the ADP benchmarks. These benchmarks outline specific content and skills in English and mathematics that graduates must master by the time they leave high school in order to succeed in postsecondary education or high-performance, high-growth jobs.

New Jersey is a member of the ADP Network, a coalition of 23 states dedicated to aligning K-12 curriculum, standards, assessments, and accountability policies with the demands of college and work.

"We should not waste time debating whether or not to set challenging standards for **students**," said Cole. "We should spend our time doing what is necessary to prepare **students** to meet their challenging futures."

"We need to align our expectations for a high school diploma with our expectations for entry-level, family-sustaining jobs," said Ender. "Students pursuing post-secondary education also need a rigorous high school experience to meet the expectations of the higher education community."

The Governor also serves as co-chair of the Steering Committee, which plans a statewide conversation on high school improvement through two series of meetings across New Jersey. The first set of meetings will take place in early October for teachers and educational administrators. A second set of open-to-the-public meetings for parents, students, community members, and other educational stakeholders will take place in early December. To register to attend a meeting, visit the Committee's official website at

[www.njhighschoolsummit.org](http://www.njhighschoolsummit.org). Members of the Committee include the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the Business Coalition for Educational Excellence (BCEE) at the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, New Jersey United for Higher School Standards (NJU), New Jersey Presidents' Council, and Montclair State University. The Committee supports the work begun at the National Education Summit on High Schools held in Washington, DC in February 2005.

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Office of the Governor