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LEARNING FIRST ALLIANCE SUPPORTS COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS, BUT CAUTIONS SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Fifteen members of the Learning First Alliance, a partnership of national education organizations representing more than ten million parents, educators and policymakers, have agreed on the following statement sent to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan:

The Learning First Alliance believes that the *Common Core State Standards* have the potential to transform teaching and learning and provide all children with knowledge and skills necessary for success in the global community.

To meet this potential, teachers, administrators, parents and communities are working together to align the standards with curriculum, instruction and assessment. Their work – which includes providing the pre-service and professional learning opportunities educators need to effectively teach the standards, making necessary adaptations to implementation plans as work progresses and field-testing efforts to ensure proper alignment – will take time.

Rushing to make high-stakes decisions such as student advancement or graduation, teacher evaluation, school performance designation, or state funding awards based on assessments of the Common Core standards before the standards have been fully and properly implemented is unwise. We suggest a transition period of at least one year after the original deadline in which results from assessments of these standards are used only to guide instruction and attention to curriculum development, technology infrastructure, professional learning and other resources needed to ensure that schools have the supports needed to help all students achieve under the Common Core. Removing high-stakes consequences for a short time will ensure that educators have adequate time to adjust their instruction, students focus on learning, and parents and communities focus on supporting children.

During this time, we urge a continued commitment to accountability. We recommend that states and districts continue to hold educators and schools to a high standard as determined by the components of their accountability systems that are not solely based on standardized tests, including other evidence of student learning, peer evaluations, school climate data and more.

We have seen growing opposition to the Common Core as officials move too quickly to use assessments of the Common Core State Standards in high-stakes accountability decisions. Such actions have the

potential to undermine the Common Core – and thus our opportunity to improve education for all students. We must take the necessary time to ensure we succeed in this endeavor.

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About PDK International

Founded in 1906, PDK International is a global association for professional educators. The organization's mission is to support education, particularly public education, as the cornerstone of democracy. More information is online at www.pdkintl.org.

About The Learning First Alliance

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of 16 leading education associations with more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Alliance members include:

American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE)
American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA)
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council)
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
National Education Association (NEA)
National School Boards Association (NSBA)
National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)
Phi Delta Kappa International (PDK)
National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

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