

## John King - Back to School Message for Educators Transcript

As we think about the launch of the new school year, we have a set of opportunities that we can together seize. Ultimately, we have the opportunity to raise student achievement for the sake of our state's economy and the future of our democracy. More students graduating from high school college- and career-ready is the best way, the only way to a better future for our state. And so we join arms together in that work. For teachers and principals there is the work ahead of implementing the new Common Core Standards to ensure that students graduate from high school career- and college-ready. There is the opportunity to use data-driven instruction to look closely at student work; to ask, "What can I learn from this work that will help my students achieve at higher level?" There is the opportunity to think carefully about practice, to observe teachers in classrooms and principals in their schools and ask, "What do I see that is working? How do I do more of that? What do I see that isn't working? How do we ensure that we develop ourselves as educators to improve our practice?" We've made our website, [www.engageny.org](http://www.engageny.org), available as a resource to support that work.

All adults in school districts and schools must constantly be asking themselves, "Who is proficient. How do I know and how do I increase those levels of proficiency?" From the district superintendent, to the superintendent, to the principal, to the teacher, to the office staff, to the central office administrators – everyone has to be continuously asking themselves, "Where are we? Where are we in terms of our goals? Where are we in terms of our students' college and career readiness? And how do we continuously get better?" The work on the Common Core, the work on data-driven instruction, the work on evidence-based observation are inextricably linked to that level of clarity about goals and measurement. We have an opportunity to use our new college- and career-ready standards to drive student achievement forward. We have the opportunity to look closely at student work, at student performance and ask, "How can we make our teaching better? How can we help students learn even more, to achieve at even higher levels? The "ask" of you is very straightforward. Just start. Just start the work that we need to do together to bring our results to an even higher level for our students. Again we know that there are districts and schools around the state that had excellent performance but it could still be better. And we know there are others that are struggling and there is an opportunity for growth. That's the work ahead of us.

It is an honor to work alongside you. Thank you and good luck with this school year.