needs to be fixed to keep it relevant in the future. "It’s 2014. It’s not as if electronic services are suddenly going to disappear," he told LJ.

Among the figures that stood out to Manjarrez is the steady increase of attendance at library programs, a trend that holds across libraries large and small, urban and rural. Since 2004, the survey shows that attendance at programs has increased more than 30 percent nationwide, with libraries reporting a total of 89 million attendees at 3.8 million programs in 2011. While e-resources may help people skip a trip to the library, programs can be a reason for them to make one. "I think it signals a real transition...in terms of engaging learners in different ways," Manjarrez said of the new prevalence of programming.—Ian Chant

### Academic

Higher Ed Administrators Weigh in on Common Core

College officials hope to stem the backlash

The Common Core is set to change the way that K–12 education is administered across the United States. Or at least it was, until a backlash from educators and politicians put the new set of education standards on hold in some states and rolled them back entirely in others. Now, higher education officials, who had previously been largely absent from the debate, are speaking up in favor of the standards and working to remind educators and parents why these stricter guidelines were agreed upon by 45 states in the first place.

The Common Core standards were developed in collaboration among educators, parents, and state and local governments, with the National Governors Alliance and Council of Chief State School Officers leading the development. The goal, according to the Common Core website, was to create "a set of clear expectations to ensure that all students have the skills and knowledge..."
necessary to succeed in college, career, and life upon graduation from high school, regardless of where they live.” That makes the standards important to higher ed professionals as well.

Most recently, college and university administrators across the country have formed the group Higher Ed for Higher Standards (HEHS) in response to attacks on Common Core. At press time, more than 200 higher education officials from across the country had signed on to show their support.

“At the heart of Common Core, it’s intended to ensure that larger proportions of high school grads are ready to do college-level work. At present that’s not the case,” University of Maryland chancellor Brit Karwin told LJ. “As a result, too many students come to higher education needing to do remedial work that is very expensive and can be an impediment to getting a college degree.”

Karwin, who has signed on as a supporter of HEHS, is among a number of higher education leaders who have spoken up about the need for states to embrace Common Core, which he said will result in high school grads who are more prepared for college and spend less time and money taking remedial classes when they get there. A mass departure from those standards, he said, “would be a calamity.”

As it becomes clear how difficult some of the standards may be to meet, though, some educators are crying foul or asking for more time to implement Common Core. Meanwhile, some state politicians are experiencing cold feet about the program and pulling out altogether. The growing charge away from Common Core began in Indiana, which had, ironically, been an early supporter.

These departures, which strike many observers as being driven by politics rather than policy, are bad news for American education, Karwin told LJ.

When Indiana backed out of Common Core, Gov. Mike Pence suggested that the state’s exit could provide a model for other state governments. “I believe when we reach the end of this process there are going to be many other states around the country that will take a hard look at the way Indiana has taken a step back, designed our own standards,” Pence told reporters at a March 24 signing ceremony for the bill that eliminated Common Core standards in his state.

In the months since, other states have indeed followed its lead, with South Carolina governor Nikki Haley signing a bill on May 30 rolling back Common Core requirements in that state, and Oklahoma governor Mary Fallin following suit on June 5. And those rollbacks are emboldening Common Core opponents in state legislatures nationwide.

To Karwin, that sounds like a worst-case scenario and one that could have grave impacts for America’s educational system and beyond.

“We face a great social issue in our country tied to the undereducation of the American public. It threatens national economic competitiveness,” Karwin said.—Ian Chant