

## **COMMON CORE UPDATE**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) has the authority to adopt standards, and adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provisionally in 2010 with the understanding that the 2011 Legislature would have the opportunity to review the decision. As of this writing, there is currently no legislation that would impact the SPI's intent to finalize adoption of the CCSS. SBE has expressed its support for the CCSS.

Attached to this memo is an OSPI summary of the CCSS, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, reasons to adopt the CCSS, and the primary concerns. A map of the states' adoption of the CCSS is also attached.

OSPI staff will brief SBE on the bias and fairness review of the CCSS, as well as the plans and timetables for moving forward.

### **EXPECTED ACTION**

No action; for information purposes only.



## Common Core Standards Initiative Background February 9, 2011

### Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

- Volunteer effort of states to agree on a common set of core K–12 academic standards for English language arts and mathematics.
- Developed by educators and curriculum experts (K–12 and higher education), and led by Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA).
- Washington educators had significant input into the formation of the standards by analyzing and responding to drafts, and suggesting improvements.
- Final standards issued on June 2, 2010.
- CCSS have been formally adopted by 41 states and two territories (as of February 1, 2011) with two states having provisionally adopted the CCSS (Washington state and Maine).
- Based on international standards commonly used in high performing countries.

### Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)

- Consortium of 31 states that won a \$176M grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop a comprehensive assessment system that includes formative and summative assessments linked to CCSS (one of two national consortia).
- Membership is limited to states that formally adopt the CCSS by December 31, 2011.
- Washington is the fiscal agent and will realize approximately \$250,000 of indirect cost reimbursements over the four year life of the grant.
- SBAC will produce a summative test that will measure CCSS standards from Grades 3–11 by 2014–15. The exam will use adaptive technology in the construction of the exam, meaning that a positive answer to a particular question will generate a more difficult next question (and the reverse for a wrong answer). This technology allows test length to be reduced over traditional tests.
- SBAC also will produce formative exams and resources that will be available for teachers throughout the year. These exams will inform instruction by giving teachers diagnostic information about the extent students have mastered concepts and developed necessary skills. Professional development resources will also be available through this effort.
- Washington will receive approximately \$250–\$300K over the four years to support implementation activities focused on the CCSS.

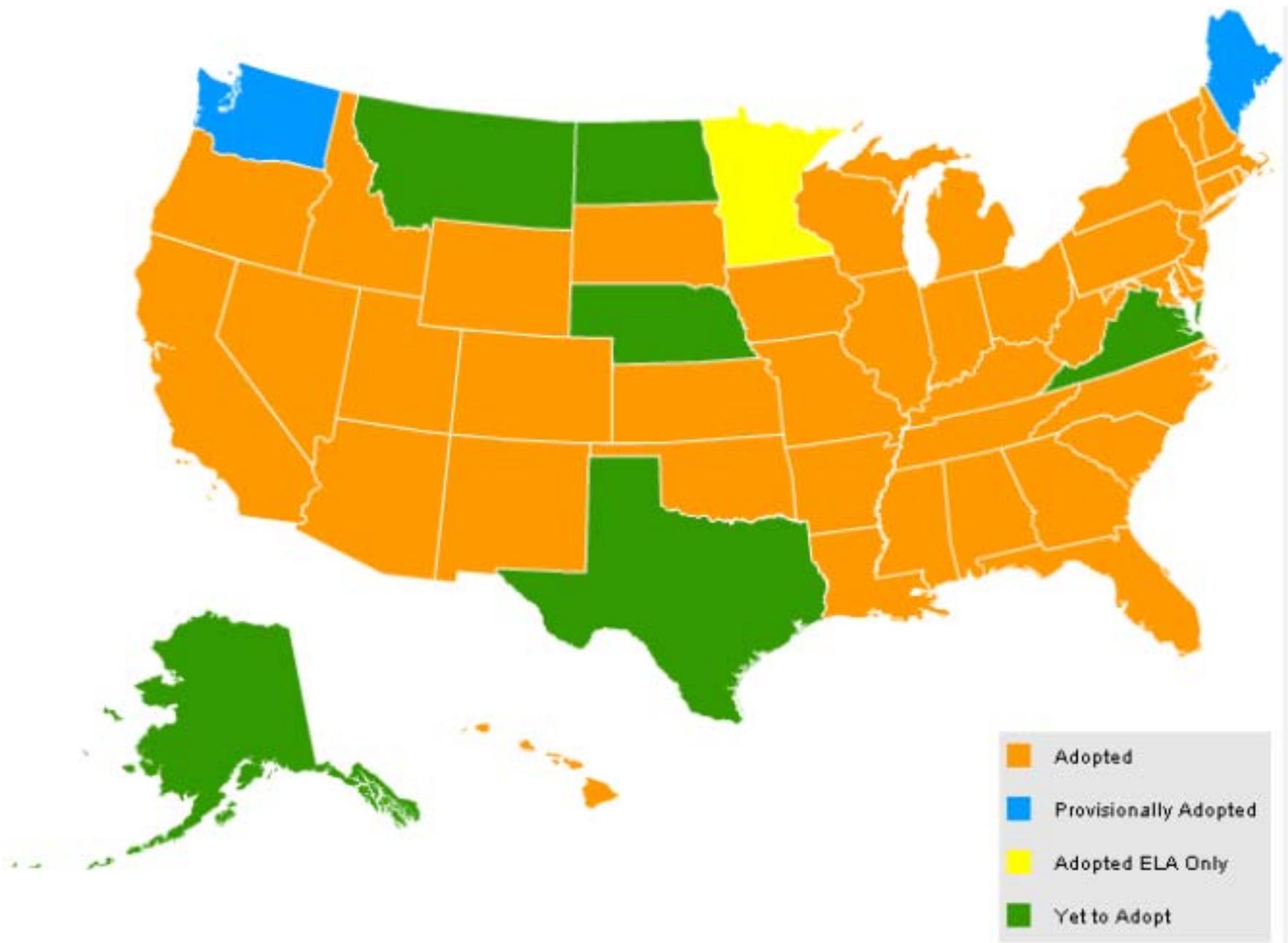
### Reasons to Adopt the Common Core

- Used work of national experts in standard development. Implementation plans will also be informed by national expertise.
- Better accommodates student and teacher mobility. Out-of-state transfer students are likely to be on the same track as in-state students. (Each year approximately 24,000 students move in or out of Washington).
- Takes advantage of economies of scale in developing test item banks.
- Will allow districts to take advantage of textbook publishers and open educational resource developers who have already begun to develop materials aligned to CCSS.
- Will reduce or eliminate the current practice of districts purchasing textbooks and then having to find supplementary materials to assure coverage of state standards.
- Reduces costs of state-wide assessments (now \$43/student/year; under SBAC up to \$26/student/year).
- Washington's 2008 math standards are similar to the CCSS; therefore, the implementation of CCSS will be easier to accomplish than if the standards had been very different.

- All high performing countries have standards, curriculum, and assessment aligned. CCSS and SBAC aim to the same for USA.

### **Concerns about CCCS Adoption**

- Concerns from the field over changing standards, particularly in math where Washington adopted new standards in 2008. (Current reading and writing standards were adopted in 2005 and do not include grades 11 and 12 standards.)
- Limited resources are available for purchasing new instructional materials.
- Will require more coordination among fund sources at state, regional, and local levels to support transition effort



**As of February 1, 2011, 41 states and DC have fully adopted the Common Core State Standards; 2 states have provisionally adopted the standards; and 1 state has adopted the ELA standards only.**

