

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

BACKGROUND

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is being led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors' Association (NGA) to promote state adoptions of common core standards in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). In spring 2009, 48 states, two territories and the District of Columbia committed to "developing a common core of state standards in English-language arts and mathematics for grades K-12."¹

Although commonly referred to as "national" standards, the federal government is not leading the effort, and states will adopt the standards voluntarily. States that adopt common standards by August 2, 2010 will receive additional points as part of their federal Race to the Top (RTTT) application that was due June 1, 2010. In addition, Washington's application as a lead state with the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia (that consists of 31 states including Washington) in competing to receive RTTT Assessment funds (up to \$350 million for state consortia to develop a comprehensive assessment system) has adoption of the common core standards at its foundation.

Washington has had several opportunities to review and provide feedback on initial drafts of the common core standards. The draft K-12 standards were released March 10, 2010 for public comment. Feedback was due by April 2, 2010². The final standards were made public on June 2, 2010.

As of June 2010, approximately 12 states have formally adopted the common core English language arts and mathematics standards. Four states have publically announced their intention to not adopt the standards: Virginia, Minnesota, Texas, and Alaska.

States must adopt 100 percent of the common core standards. The common core standards may represent 85 percent of the state's total standards, as states may add 15 percent more to customize the "package" of state standards. (Note: States cannot adopt only 85 percent of the common core standards.) As of June 2010, most states are still undecided about whether to add 15 percent additional content to the standards. Two states (Kansas and Arkansas) intend to add additional content to the standards as part of their adoption processes.

In Washington, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) has authority to adopt standards. However following the 2010 session, as outlined in section 600 of the state's Education Reform Plan ([Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6696](#)), the Superintendent was given authority to "provisionally adopt" the common core standards. Per the legislation, SPI is required to deliver a detailed report on the common core standards in January 2011 to the state Legislature. The report will include a comparison of common core and state learning standards, and an estimated timeline and costs to the state and districts to implement them.

¹ <http://www.corestandards.org/>

² www.corestandards.org

In order to provide the most current information to the Board, OSPI staff will bring additional information about the provisional adoption, initial alignment between the common core standards and Washington's current standards, and more details about how other states are navigating this initiative.

The State Board of Education (SBE) may elect to comment on the adoption of the common core standards, but has no direct authority for the adoption.

EXPECTED ACTION

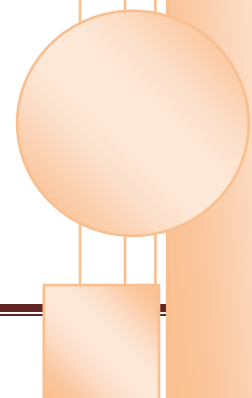
None. Information only.

REPORT OF THE NASBE WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Common Core Standards

Attachment A

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2/2/2010



REPORT OF THE NASBE WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Common Core Standards

Eleven states and one territory from the NASBE Western Region participated in a conference focused on the initiative led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors' Association (NGA) to promote state adoptions of common core standards in mathematics and English language arts (ELA). In the majority of states, the state board of education is the entity responsible for the adoption of standards, thus the conference played a critical role in providing board members with an opportunity to clarify the process for developing and adopting common core standards and for raising and discussing issues that boards might encounter once the standards are finalized and the adoption process has been completed.

Speakers for the conference covered a wide range of topics including the process used to develop the standards and the vetting process by content experts. Additional speakers addressed why this topic is pertinent and so galvanizing among and across sectors; the timeline for adoption within states; and the importance of aligning communication, adoption and implementation actions. One of the most useful aspects of the conference was the work session among participants exploring and discussing challenges, resources that will be required for a transparent and straightforward adoption and implementation process, remaining questions and additional support that NASBE could provide as states move forward. A synopsis of those issues follow:

Anticipated Challenges

- Push back from various interest groups
- Teacher development
- Setting cut scores
- Impact on states' current adoption processes and standards
- Impact on current assessments
- Standards fatigue
- How best to communicate and roll out
- Establishing a meaningful vetting process to address the concerns with partners to include the fiscal impact of adopting new standards outside of the normal cycle
- General process alignment with current standards adoption practices and other policies

Required Resources for the Adoption of Common Core Standards

- Money
- Staff time and availability for review a review of the standards
- Time for public engagement
- Funds for professional development and release time for teachers
- Funds for policy alignment and assessments development
- Funds for curriculum resources
- Overall Expertise
- Sufficient teachers

How NASBE Can Support States in the Adoption and Implementation of Common Core

- Share information across states
- Provide guidance on how to move forward
- Conduct a common core standards session at the NASBE Annual Conference
- Promote the role and importance of state boards of education in the adoption process
- Assist with communication strategies including multi-media access for all constituencies
- Provide speaking points on key common core issues
- Advocate for the concerns of the stakeholders
- Host more regional meetings

What Further Information on the Common Core Standards Process is Needed

- Career and college ready – what do we really want for all high school seniors; including non-college bound and how will they be affected by the common core
- How will common core standards be used with special needs students
- How will states approach the alignment of instructional materials and how it will evolve
- How will states calculate the cost of new common core standards
- What will the impact of common core standards be on Career and Technical Education
- How will the differences in state timelines affect the process
- How will the process address the lack of common definitions across states for the elements of standards; for example, not all states use the term English Language Arts
- What is the criteria for measuring the additional 15% above the common core
- What happens if a state doesn't adopt the common core if they have been selected to receive RTT funds
- How will the federal role expand in this arena
- How will international benchmarking be used
- What are the procedures for modifying the standards in the future
- What instructional materials will be developed for the common core standards

Additional Questions on the Common Core

- How will the common core standards affect other disciplines
- How to provide support and resources to make the common core meaningful
- How will schools be better because of common core standards
- What does higher, clearer, fewer really mean and how will this be interpreted by parents
- What impact, if any, will the November elections have on the common core movement
- Is 15% above the common core sufficient for math and science
- How will common core standards affect other federal programs
- How will the standards affect states' policy review cycles

Anticipated Adoption Timeframe

- Utah – immediately –if resources are available
- Colorado – August if alignment with the current standards is possible
- Washington – 6 months (provisional), a standards cross walk is required by the legislature for the 2011 sessions

- Wyoming TBD
- Montana – 6 months to a year and a half
- Guam – in the process of adopting standards; must determine if the common core can be integrated into what is happening
- Alaska – not likely in immediate future, but will examine the alignment issues
- Idaho - TBD
- California -2010-11; it will be an overall 4 year process
- Hawaii – this year, once the standards are released
- Oregon – end of 2010

A copy of the conference agenda is attached.