



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Common Core District Leads
FROM: Dr. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell, Chief Academic Officer
RE: April Newsletter: Common Core State Standards Implementation
DATE: April 5, 2013

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Thank you to those who have submitted your district's Memorandum of Collaboration (MOC). More than 130 districts responded and are now engaged in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to ramp-up Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation efforts and prepare for the next generation of assessments. As part of this collaboration, the CSDE Academic Office will send a monthly newsletter as well as other important communications to Common Core District Leads to ensure you are informed.

Featured in this newsletter:

- **CSDE Common Core State Standards Website**
- **Videos about the Common Core for Community Members in English and Spanish**
- **Grade-by-Grade Parent Guides to the Common Core in English and Spanish**
- **Professional Development Videos on ELA/Literacy and Mathematics**
- **Smarter Balanced Voluntary Pilot Test**

CSDE Common Core State Standards Website

The CSDE has recently updated the Common Core State Standards [website](#). New information has been added and old information has been removed to support district implementation efforts. Two new areas of interest on the website are the “K-12 Publishers’ Criteria for Common State Standards in English language arts and mathematics” as well as the “K-12 Tri-State Rubric for Common Core State Standards in English language arts and Mathematics.” The CSDE has recently joined the Council of Chief State School Officers *Movement for Excellence* by endorsing the Common Core Publishers’ Criteria.

Districts may consider using the Publishers’ Criteria in order to judge alignment of published resources such as textbooks and core programs.

- [Grades K-2 ELA](#) [PDF]
- [Grades 3-12 ELA](#) [PDF]
- [Grades K-8 Math](#) [PDF]

Districts may consider using the Tri-State Rubric documents in order to judge alignment of classroom lessons and units.

- [Tri-State Rubric ELA Guidance](#) [PDF]
- [Tri-State Rubric ELA](#) [PDF]
- [Tri-State Rubric Math Guidance](#) [PDF]
- [Tri-State Rubric Math](#) [PDF]

Videos about the Common Core for Community Members in English and Spanish

The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) developed [two 30-second Public Service Announcements](#) (PSAs) to quickly tell the story of the Common Core State Standards to the public. In addition, CGCS also developed [two three-minute videos](#) that explain the Common Core in a slightly longer form that explains how the Common Core will help students achieve at high levels and help them learn what they need to know to get to graduation and beyond. The PSAs are available in both English and Spanish.

Grade-by-Grade Parent Guides to the Common Core in English and Spanish

The Council of the Great City Schools has developed content and grade-specific **parent roadmaps** that provide detailed information for parents about the expectations of the Common Core in English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics. These roadmaps include examples of grade-level focus in the content area using parent-friendly language, sample progressions of learning across three grade levels in the Common Core, and tips to parents on communicating with teachers about their child's work and how to support student learning at home. CGCS completed the high school-level guides in February 2013, completing the set of guides from K-12 in English language arts and mathematics. More translations will follow throughout the school year.

K-12 Parent Guides: ELA/Literacy

- [English](#)
- [Spanish](#)

K-12 Parent Guides: Mathematics:

- [English](#)
- [Spanish](#)

Professional Development Videos on ELA/Literacy and Mathematics

The Council of the Great City Schools also released a 45-minute professional development video, "[From the Page to the Classroom: Implementing the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy](#)" for central office and school-based staff and teachers on the shifts in the Common Core in English language arts and literacy. The video provides background on the Common Core and the three shifts inherent in the standards. The video features David Coleman, Lily Wong-Fillmore, and footage from a classroom showing how Kindergarten students who are English language learners are engaged in reading and discussing ideas from complex text in English. The video can be stopped and restarted at various spots to allow for discussion.

CGCS also released a corresponding 45-minute professional development video on the shifts in the Common Core for mathematics, "[From the Page to the Classroom: Implementing the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics](#)." This video emphasizes the three shifts inherent in the standards for mathematics education and features Jasonimba. Like the ELA/Literacy video, this video has start and stop points to allow for discussion to build a shared understanding of the shifts. These videos can be used as part of a professional learning session or faculty meeting to support your school or district implementation of Common Core State Standards.

Smarter Balanced Voluntary Pilot Test

Due to the overwhelming demand for access to the Volunteer Pilot assessment from principals, teachers, parents and the public, the Smarter Balanced Executive Committee has decided to release a more complete and more broadly available "practice test" in lieu of the Volunteer Pilot assessment. The change from a Volunteer Pilot to Practice Test *does not* impact current testing in support of the Scientific Pilot; all schools signed up for the Scientific Pilot are still expected to test as scheduled. Like the planned Volunteer Pilot, the Practice Test will allow students to experience items that look and function like those found on the Scientific Pilot. Please contact Gail Pagano at Gail.Pagano@ct.gov or 860.713.6821 if you have any questions regarding the Smarter Balanced Scientific Pilot Test or the Smarter Balanced Practice Test.

Please note that the Smarter Balanced Practice Test is different than the CSDE Common Core aligned "Practice Assessment." If you have already submitted your district's MOC, nothing has changed with regards to your district's participation in the CSDE practice assessment this spring. However, in light of this new information from Smarter Balanced, districts that have already submitted their MOCs with a commitment to participate in the CSDE practice assessment may choose to have more schools and/or students participate. Please contact Emily Byrne at Emily.Byrne@ct.gov or 860.713.6546 if your district is interested in increasing participation in the CSDE Common Core aligned "Practice Assessment."