



**Common Core State Standards
Systems Implementation**

Communications Toolkit for California

September 2012

California Department of Education



Innovate

Collaborate

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September 14, 2012

Dear Fellow Educator,

While considerable time and effort already have gone into preparing our state to implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the school year ahead is crucial to our success, and to our state's future.

Earlier this year, the State Board of Education and I jointly approved a plan to implement the CCSS, allowing us to work closely with you as we bring these new standards to life in California's schools.

This communications tool kit is designed to help you with the important task of informing and engaging your school communities about what the CCSS will mean for them.

A few key points are essential in communicating the benefits of implementing these standards:

- The CCSS provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world—by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for college and career.
- Despite the state's budget problems, California must move forward now so that all children—no matter where they come from or where they live—receive a world-class education that's consistent from school to school, and graduate ready to contribute to the future of our state and our country.
- California is putting these standards to work, using them as the foundation for remodeling our education system. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace outdated ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.
- Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. These standards provide every part of our education system the same sheet music, with the clear goals of college and career readiness for all. And we all have a part to play.

Please, share this information – and the materials included in this toolkit – with your district staff, your teachers, and your community. They will help you tell the story of the work you have undertaken and its importance for the future of our state.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Tom Torlakson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

TT:ph

Introduction and How to Use this Toolkit

California adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010 and many districts are engaged in implementing the curricular and instructional changes during this transition to new standards and assessments. One critical factor in successful implementation of any new educational initiative is to deliver clear and consistent messages about what these changes mean within the local district and school context.

A clear structure for communicating the ongoing benefit of the CCSS is an essential strategy for implementation. This toolkit provides suggestions for engaging key stakeholders in support of implementation. However, since implementation processes will vary from district to district, each district should consider the local context when customizing the resources in the toolkit to continue to advocate for the standards and expected changes while sharing consistent messages.

We recommend that you coordinate district and school messages around implementation of the CCSS in order to be intentional and strategic about communications coming from school board trustees, district and site leadership, teachers, support staff, and parent and community leaders.

A good source for information on CCSS implementation is the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>. These Web resources provide the most current information and are continuously updated. The CCSS Systems Implementation – Significant Milestones Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/tl/index.asp> provides a timeline highlighting the major activities related to implementation and links more detailed information to the milestones.

This toolkit includes a variety of talking points and messaging for key audiences, CDE-posted resources, and media and communications outreach tips. It is not meant to be a list of rigid requirements, but rather a menu that allows districts to pick which options will be most effective with your unique target audiences. It is meant to be a communications guide that can be adapted to support and bolster individual district and school efforts.

Strategic Communications and Audience Mapping

Successful communication should include an assessment that identifies your key audiences and gauges their awareness of and support for your identified goals and efforts. This is especially important for a successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Consider your outreach priorities:

- Need to be clear about what audiences you are trying to reach and/or mobilize and where they stand on college and career readiness, higher standards, and more rigor for students.
- Need information that will help you prioritize strategies and limited resources.
- Need to create two-way communication and engagement strategies to anticipate issues and answer important questions for multiple audiences.

Audience mapping is ongoing but initially you want to represent the views of the district governance team and leadership to the most critical audiences for your implementation success. Consider the following audiences in creating your communication and messaging strategies and opportunities.

The chart on the next page provides a graphic for discussion among your leadership team. Consider your local context for strategic communications and use the chart to identify six to eight key audiences for your communication messages. In the message column, list the three most important ideas/messages for the specific audience. These may be the same across varied audiences or they may need to be more specifically tailored messages for your district or organizational priorities.

Once your team has considered and identified key messages for multiple audiences, use the remaining sections of the toolkit to design specific online and/or print materials for your communication goals related to CCSS implementation. The third column provides space to identify existing and future events and opportunities (ongoing meetings, community events, professional learning options, etc.) where your messages can be shared.

Audience Map

Audience	Messages	Opportunities and Events
State Policymakers		
California State Board of Education		
State Superintendent of Public Instruction		
Legislators		
K-12 Audiences		
Local Board Members		
District Office/County Staff		
Principals		
Teachers		
Parents, Students		
Business and Community Audiences		
Parents		
Community Organizations		
Civil Rights Organizations		
Philanthropic Organizations (e.g., Rotary)		
Business leaders/Executives		
Local Business Coalitions		
Chambers		
Military Families		
Faith-based Organizations		
Higher Education Audiences		
CA Higher Education System Leaders		
Local College Leadership		
Faculty		
Media		
Mainstream and Ethnic		
Web-based		
Other		

Purpose of Key Messages

Key messages are the three or four most important ideas or statements about where your district is now and what the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) means for your students, parents and guardians, and community constituents. Key messages communicate key facts, motives and reasons for the changes you are implementing related to new curricular and instructional priorities, connections to career and college readiness, assessment development, educational technology initiatives, and professional learning opportunities to support the changes.

Messages can be tailored to the specific plans and implementation goals identified in the CCSS *Systems Implementation Plan for California* yet are tailored to your district's needs and priorities. While the plan provides a pathway for activities related to implementation, it is not designed to be an exhaustive task list. The plan provides districts with information and timelines on the CCSS alignment work of statewide programs and includes information on many specific resources that may be of interest and useful in crafting communication and messaging materials. The plan may be accessed on the CDE CCSS Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>.

Depending on district progress and implementation goals, it may be important to repeat some key messages over a longer period of time and to introduce new messages as your priorities evolve. In considering messages over the course of the next few years of educational policy changes, you may wish to consider making the case for change, identifying expected benefits to students and families, outlining district timelines and expectations, and defining measures of progress along the way. Notice an example of the use of the following key messages in the attached letter from State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson.

SAMPLE Key Messages

1. We are preparing children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – we want them to learn step-by-step the real-world skills they need for college and career.
2. Despite the state's budget problems, California must move forward now so that all children – no matter where they come from or where they live – receive a world-class education.
3. These standards are the foundation for remodeling our education system, keeping the best of what we have and replacing outdated ways of learning.
4. Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. We all have a part to play.

Quick Tips for Messaging

DO

- ✓ Identify your key audience(s)
- ✓ Anticipate your audience's questions and concerns before they are raised
- ✓ Develop messages rooted in shared values such as pragmatism
- ✓ Stick to a few (3–4) key messages
- ✓ Acknowledge feelings such as frustration and weariness
- ✓ Be clear – avoid jargon and break messages down into plain terms
- ✓ Maintain a sincere tone and be authentic
- ✓ Create a central repository of consistent messages
- ✓ Practice message discipline – speak with one voice
- ✓ Develop sub-messages for each key message that provide greater detail
- ✓ Use personal stories to illustrate a point
- ✓ Cite credible third party sources

DON'T

- ✗ Be defensive or negative
- ✗ Repeat a false negative or false information
- ✗ Use words like “no,” “not,” “never,” “nothing,” and “none”
- ✗ Rely on slogans and catch phrases

Suggestions for Working with the News Media

Have a goal for every interview or media opportunity. What key information will help readers and listeners best understand your point of view? Think about the quote you would like to see in print.

Boil it down to three key points. News stories are getting shorter all the time. Reporters usually speak to several sources for each story – so a lot gets left out. The shorter your message is, the more likely it is to be used.

Guide the conversation. Answer the question, but don't be afraid to steer the reporter back to your key points.

Watch out for complexity. Be aware of how much – or how little – knowledge of the topic a typical reporter has. Avoid jargon and acronyms.

If you don't know an answer, offer to get the information. Follow up with the reporter when you do. In the meantime, circle back to your key points.

When you have answered the question, stop. Avoid the temptation to keep talking just to fill the silence. Give your answer and wait for the next question.

Correct errors on the spot. If you misstate something, point it out to the reporter right away. Reporters want their stories to be accurate – and they're unlikely to hold it against you if you set the record straight.

Off-the-record comments. Reporters may look for ways to confirm what you've told them from another source – and then put it on the air or in print.

Track your results. Be sure to monitor the coverage you receive. Did you get your message out? Think about how to improve for your next interview. Repetition is the name of the game.

CCSS Audience Specific Message Brochures

The following documents are intended to enhance and guide your district's communication efforts about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with different constituents and stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, school board trustees, parents and guardians, business and community leaders, higher education partners, and legislators.

For each identified audience, relevant content is described in a useable two-page format. The information explains what the CCSS may mean to each identified constituent group and how each group can get involved in the district's efforts. The identified resources section provides links to Web resources that are continuously updated and include a range of helpful implementation information for inclusion in communications.

These materials are designed to be customized, shortened, or modified as needed. You may want to insert district specific information related to new curricula, instructional materials, assessments or other specific CCSS-related activities that are in process and best meet your communication priorities.

The sample front-to-back customizable brochure on the next page is an example of another way to use the audience specific content in a simplified format.

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children and youth for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for college and career.

California is putting these standards to work, using them as the **foundation for remodeling our education system**. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace outdated ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.

Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. These standards **provide every part of our education system the same sheet music** – with the clear goals of career and college readiness for all. And we all have a part to play.

Our district is focused on:

Ensuring our programs and curricula are **relevant to the real world**, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in both college and work.

Working together for shared goals, so we can help ensure that students make progress each year and **graduate from school prepared to succeed** and build a strong future for themselves and the country.

Strengthening teachers' expertise and success.

Preparing Students for Career and College

Goal – all students graduating from our public school system as life-long learners and have the skills and knowledge necessary to assume their positions in the 21st century global economy.



For college, academic preparedness refers to the reading and mathematics knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for placement into entry-level college credit courses that without the need for remedial coursework.

For the workplace, academic preparedness refers to the reading and mathematics knowledge and skills needed to qualify for job training, and identified industry sector expectations as appropriate.

Transitioning: What Business and Community Leaders Can Do Now

The standards will be fully implemented in California by the 2014–15 school year. Business leaders can help lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards, by:

- **Becoming educated** on the standards and closely following the implementation process as the work unfolds.
- **Advocating** for the CCSS with California legislators and urging them and the governor to fully support implementation as the economic picture improves.
- **Talking to local principals** and superintendents about forming partnerships with the business community to help students become better prepared for careers.
- **Building on local partnerships** that bring the entire community together in support of student success and advocacy.

What about New Assessments?

California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), one of two federally funded consortia developing new assessments aligned to the CCSS. To help students show progress toward the standards, SBAC is working with educators and parents to develop assessments that will replace current state assessments in English language arts/literacy and mathematics in the 2014-15 school year. The SBAC assessment system will provide teachers with new tools to monitor student progress and resources to meet each student's unique needs.



State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, is consulting with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the authorization of the current statewide pupil assessment system, which includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments.

Resources for Business and Community Leaders

California Department of Education CCSS and Community Partners Web Page:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/communitypartners.asp>
Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>
Common Core Implementation Video Series
<http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/DigitalResources/CommonCoreImplementationVideoSeries.html>
(Produced by the Hunt Institute and the Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], explains the standards in greater depth)



Brochure developed by the
California Department of Education
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/documents/commstoolkit.doc>
Communications Toolkit



Common Core State Standards and Business and Community Leaders

[District Logo]

[District/School Name]
[Address]
[Phone]
[Web site]

The Common Core State Standards and Administrators

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college.

Despite the state’s budget problems, California must move forward now so that all children – no matter where they come from or where they live – receive a world-class education that’s consistent from school to school, and graduate ready to contribute to the future of our state and our country.

California is putting these standards to work, using them as the foundation for remodeling our education system. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace outdated ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.

Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. These standards provide every part of our education system the same sheet music – with the clear goals of career and college readiness for all. And we all have a part to play.

A Shift in Teaching and Learning

Shifts in English Language Arts (ELA)

These apply to content area (social studies, science, and technical subject) teachers as well as to English teachers.

- 1) Building knowledge through **content-rich nonfiction** and **informational texts** in addition to literature
- 2) Reading and writing grounded in **evidence from the text**
- 3) Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic vocabulary** (words like commit and synthesize)

Shifts in Mathematics

- 1) **Focus:** 2–4 critical areas focused on deeply in each grade
- 2) **Coherence:** Concepts logically connected from one grade to the next and linked to other major topics within the grade
- 3) **Rigor:** Fluency with arithmetic, application of knowledge to real world situations, and deep understanding of mathematical concepts

What About New Assessments?

California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), one of two federally funded consortia developing new assessments aligned to the CCSS. You may learn more about California’s participation in the SBAC and subscribe to the California Department of Education SBAC listserv at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>. Additionally, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, is consulting with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system, which includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments.

California’s Common Core Implementation Plan

The *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California* is a living document approved by the State Board of Education in March 2012. The plan, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>, identifies the major phases and activities involved in implementing

the CCSS and serves as the blueprint for remodeling the education system to support student success in career and college. The document includes several appendices, including a template organized around the significant milestones of CCSS systems implementation that local educational agencies may use as a starting point for developing their own local plans. In addition, the plan includes information from various professional organizations and stakeholder groups regarding how these organizations can assist local educational agencies in implementing the CCSS.

Transitioning to the CCSS: What Administrators Can Do Now

Although CCSS-aligned summative assessments will not be fully operational until the 2014–15 school year, we can start to make changes to instruction that will prepare students for the CCSS while helping them succeed on current state assessments. In order to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards, administrators can:

- **Inform teachers, school board members, and parents** of the new standards in ELA and math
- Begin to **review instructional materials and curriculum** for alignment to the CCSS
- Assess **professional development needs** and begin to provide opportunities for teachers
- In English language arts (ELA):
 - Help teachers incorporate into instruction more **text-dependent questions** that require students to read a text closely to determine what it says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it
 - Start to integrate more **non-fiction** and **complex texts** into classroom instruction
 - Focus writing instruction substantially on **writing to inform and structure an argument**, not only writing stories
- In mathematics:
 - Focus instruction more on the **few key topics** emphasized in each grade in the standards
 - Emphasize **problem-solving** and **real-world application**
- Connect with faculty at the local community colleges and/or universities regarding the expectations for entry-level college courses to see if your district's expectations align with what students need after graduation

Resources for Administrators

The following Web resources provide the most current information from the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site and are continuously updated. The first reference is the main CDE CCSS Web Page, which includes the *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California*, the Significant Milestones Timeline, and a Learn More section that provides additional links to audience specific information.

California Department of Education CCSS Web Page:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Resources for Educators:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/educators.asp#administratorresources>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

The Common Core State Standards and Teachers

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college.

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A Shift in Teaching and Learning

Shifts in English Language Arts (ELA)

These apply to content area (social studies, science, and technical subject) teachers as well as to English teachers.

- 1) Building knowledge through **content-rich nonfiction** and **informational texts** in addition to literature
- 2) Reading and writing grounded in **evidence from the text**
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Shifts in Mathematics

- 1) **Focus:** 2–4 critical areas focused on deeply in each grade
- 2) **Coherence:** Concepts logically connected from one grade to the next and linked to other major topics within the grade
- 3) **Rigor:** Fluency with arithmetic, application of knowledge to real world situations, and deep understanding of mathematical concepts

What About New Assessments?

California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) one of two federally funded consortia developing new assessments aligned to the CCSS. There are opportunities for teachers to be involved in the development of the new assessments. You may learn more about the new assessments and subscribe to the California Department of Education SBAC listserv at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>. Additionally, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, is consulting with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system, which includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments.

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Transitioning to the CCSS: What Teachers Can Do Now

Although CCSS-aligned summative assessments will not be fully operational until the 2014–15 school year, we can begin to make changes to instruction that will prepare students for the CCSS while helping them succeed on current state assessments. In order to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards, teachers can:

- **Review and understand** how the new standards are similar to and different from California’s 1997 content standards
- Immediate considerations for English language arts (ELA) instruction:
 - Clarify with colleagues the implications for teaching **more informational text** and determine common strategies for implementation across the grade levels
 - Incorporate into instruction more **text-dependent questions** that require students to read a text closely to determine what it says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it
 - Have students read more **non-fiction** and **complex texts**
 - Focus writing instruction substantially on **writing to inform and structure an argument**, not only writing stories
- In mathematics:
 - Discuss the **mathematical practices** with colleagues and discuss what evidence of student demonstrations of these practices might inform your instructional designs and activities
 - Focus instruction more on the **few key topics** emphasized in each grade in the standards
 - Emphasize **problem-solving** and **real-world application**
- **Inform colleagues and parents** that there are new standards in ELA and math
- **Meet with your grade levels, departments, and school leadership team** to discuss how your district and school is transitioning to the CCSS
- **Begin to review CURRENT instructional materials and curriculum** for alignment to the CCSS
- Assess your **professional learning needs** and seek out and participate in activities that will support your professional learning

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various professional organizations and stakeholder groups regarding how these organizations can assist local educational agencies in implementing the CCSS.

Transitioning to the CCSS: What School Boards Can Do Now

- Set aside time for the board to review CCSS and their implications, prepare key district messages about where the district is now and where it is going with implementation.
- Recognize the emerging nature of the CCSS implementation timelines, communicate how implementing the CCSS strengthens and extends existing district efforts to prepare students for successful futures. Acknowledge concerns related to resources, increased expectations for all students, and what changes students and teachers might experience.
- Consider what strategic-driven policies the Board needs to adopt or revise to guide the district's actions related to implementation of the CCSS system changes.
- Consider actions around the Board's five governance responsibilities and/or any other actions deemed appropriate.
 - **Setting Direction** – Identify present strengths and future needs of the district and generate enthusiasm about the new standards. Promote the reason we adopted the standards: we want all students to graduate from high school with the core academic knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, careers and life.
 - **Establishing Structures** – Develop and adopt policies to accomplish goals for transitioning to the new CCSS system. Establish budget priorities as possible to assist in the transition to CCSS, with aligned curriculum and appropriate instructional materials, and professional development.
 - **Providing Support** – Establish a climate in the district that supports, empowers and excites staff about possibilities to accomplish the transition goals and embrace educational innovations that increase student success. Be knowledgeable about the district's goals related to the CCSS to explain them to the public.
 - **Ensuring Accountability** – Understand the timelines in place for CCSS transition and monitor district plans and progress toward successful implementation of the new standards. Evaluate the effectiveness of board policies and other operational efforts to achieve strategic goals and success indicators related to CCSS implementation priorities.
 - **Demonstrating Community Leadership** – Involve all stakeholders in the setting directions processes and continually communicate district progress toward the implementation goals and priorities. Identify key messages related to CCSS implementation, speak with a common voice to the community, involve school and community leaders in building momentum and support for goals, and keep the community informed and focused on the district's efforts. Advocate for necessary resources at the local, state and national levels. Gather feedback on what parents want to know more about and try to provide answers to “hard” questions.

Resources for School Boards

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California School Boards Association: <http://www.csba.org/>

National School Boards Association: <http://www.nsba.org/>

The Common Core State Standards and Parents and Guardians

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Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. These standards provide every part of our education system the same sheet music – with the clear goals of career and college readiness for all. And we all have a part to play.

Preparing Students for Career and College

Goal – all students graduating from our public school system as life- long learners will have the skills and knowledge necessary to assume their positions in the 21st century global economy.

- The new standards are designed to be relevant in the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills students need for success in both higher education and career.
- Our communities will be stronger if students graduate with the skills and knowledge needed in today’s job market.

Will There Be New Tests for the New Standards?

Yes, California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The consortium is developing new tests that will measure student progress toward career and college readiness. You may learn more about the new tests and California’s participation in the SBAC at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>.

California’s CCSS Implementation Plan

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Transitioning to the CCSS: What Parents and Guardians Can Do Now

Parents and guardians are crucial partners in laying the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards. Parents and guardians can:

- Learn about the CCSS and the district's transition plan.
- Talk to the principal about the school's plans for the transition to learn what will be different about these new standards and what will remain the same for children.
- Attend a board and/or community meeting to discuss district goals and timelines.
- Meet with your child's teacher to discuss what your child will be learning over the coming year and how classroom instruction will shift to align to the CCSS.
- Play an active role in your child's education at home. If you notice your child is struggling in a certain area, consult with his or her teacher to identify strategies and resources that might be helpful.
- Educate other parents about the transition to the CCSS.
- Explore opportunities to become actively involved in the Common Core transition through your state and local Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

Resources for Parents and Guardians

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California Department of Education CCSS Web Page: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Resources for Students, Parents and Guardians

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/stpagu.asp>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

K-8 California's Common Core Standards Parent Handbook:

http://www.ccsesa.org/sysadmin/documents/CCSParentHandbook_020411.doc

This handbook, created by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) in consultation with the California State PTA, gives parents an introduction to California's CCSS and a summary of what students are expected to learn as they advance from kindergarten through grade eight.

The Common Core State Standards and Business and Community Leaders

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college.

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- Rigorous standards will enable businesses in California to draw from local talent to meet the needs of the continuously evolving workplace

What About New Assessments?

California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), one of two federally funded consortia developing new assessments aligned to the CCSS. You may learn more about California’s participation in the SBAC at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>. Additionally, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, is consulting with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system, which includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments.

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Transitioning to the CCSS: What Business and Community Leaders Can Do Now

Business leaders can help lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards in the following ways:

- Learn more about the standards and follow the implementation process as the work unfolds.
- Advocate for the CCSS with California legislators and urge them and the governor to fully support implementation as the economic picture improves.
- Talk to local principals and superintendents about forming partnerships with the business community to help students become better prepared for careers.
- Build on local partnerships that bring the entire community together in support of student success and advocacy.

Resources for Business and Community Leaders

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California Department of Education CCSS Web Page: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Resources for Community Partners

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/communitypartners.asp>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tq/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

The Common Core State Standards and Higher Education

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A Shift in Teaching and Learning Shifts in English Language Arts (ELA)

These apply to content area (social studies, science, and technical subject) teachers as well as to English teachers.

- 1) Building knowledge through **content-rich nonfiction** and **informational texts** in addition to literature
- 2) Reading and writing grounded in **evidence from the text**
- 3) Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic vocabulary** (words like commit and synthesize)

Shifts in Mathematics

- 1) **Focus:** 2–4 critical areas focused on deeply in each grade
- 2) **Coherence:** Concepts logically connected from one grade to the next and linked to other major topics within the grade
- 3) **Rigor:** Fluency with arithmetic, application of knowledge to real world situations, and deep understanding of mathematical concepts

What About New Assessments?

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Transitioning to the CCSS: What the Higher Education Community Can Do Now

The higher education community can help lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards in the following ways:

- Participate in local P–21 collaboratives to better understand the shifts in instruction expected by the CCSS and discuss implications for higher education arts and science faculty and teacher preparation programs.
- Build on existing local K–12/University partnerships to strengthen programs and offer students multiple pathways to increased success.
- Align higher education curriculum with the CCSS (by revising placement policies and curricula of first year courses that act as bridges between K–12 and college majors)
- Represent the voice of higher education in the development of CCSS-aligned assessments.
- Prepare and educate teachers, both prospective and practicing, by revising curriculum in disciplinary departments to prepare teachers to teach the CCSS, revising professional preparation coursework and experiences, and working in partnerships with professional development programs.
- Conduct research on issues of teaching and learning the CCSS, teacher quality, and the implementation of the CCSS.

Resources for Higher Education

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California Department of Education CCSS Web Page: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Resources for Educators

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/educators.asp#higheredresources>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

The Common Core State Standards and Legislators

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What About New Assessments?

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Additionally, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, is consulting with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system, which includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments. The SSPI will report the recommendations to the fiscal and appropriate policy committees of both houses of the Legislature in the fall of 2012.

California's CCSS Implementation

- The need for remediation among students entering California's postsecondary institutions unprepared for postsecondary work cost the state nearly \$490 million during the 2007–08 school year. The CCSS aim to ensure that students graduate high school prepared to succeed in credit-bearing college courses without the need for remediation. Over time, lower remediation rates and higher rates of college completion will save the state money.
- Teaching the CCSS will boost California's long-term economic stability because students will graduate high school better prepared for college and career.
- The CCSS will cut costs over time by enabling states to share best practices and streamline efforts in related areas, such as assessment development, which otherwise would require a much greater investment in time and resources from each individual state.
- The Department of Education and districts may require initial funding to support the transition to the standards, particularly in the areas of technology for new assessments, professional development for teachers, and raising awareness of the standards among parents, districts, school leaders and teachers.
- The *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California* is a living document approved by the State Board of Education and presented to the Legislature and Governor in March 2012. The plan, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>, identifies the major phases and activities involved in implementing the CCSS and serves as the blueprint for remodeling the education system to support student success in career and college.

Transitioning to the CCSS: What Legislators Can Do Now

Legislators are crucial partners in laying the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards. Legislators can:

- Understand how the new standards fit within the state's existing education framework, such as its assessment system and instructional programs, when proposing new legislation
- Engage in an ongoing dialogue with the California Department of Education (CDE), districts, and education leaders about how the legislature can best support the transition process
- Raise awareness about the new standards among your constituents at town hall meetings and other events in your district

Resources for Legislators

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