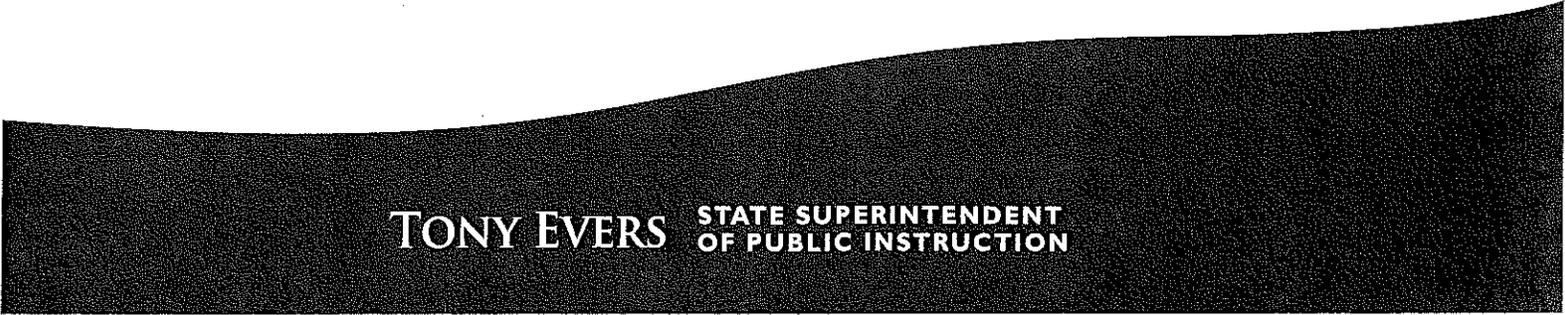


WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC
INSTRUCTION



TONY EVERS STATE SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Supporting the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The widespread adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) presents an unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the United States. The Common Core State Standards offer a foundation for the development of more rigorous, focused, and coherent mathematics curricula, instruction, and assessments that promote conceptual understanding and reasoning as well as skill fluency. This foundation will help to ensure that all students are ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school and that they are prepared to take their place as productive, full participants in society.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) is committed to helping educators interpret and understand the Common Core State Standards. The Council supports educators' efforts to develop and put in place the associated comprehensive and coherent school, district, and state systems of instruction and assessment. Instruction and assessment that are aligned with these standards must be rooted in and promote principles of access and equity. When properly implemented, the Common State Standards will support all students' access to, and success in, high-quality mathematics programs. Such programs lead to knowledge of mathematics content and reasoning skills that enable students to apply mathematics effectively in a myriad of careers and in everyday life.

The Common Core State Standards are a significant component of systemic improvement in mathematics learning, but on their own they are not sufficient to produce the mathematics achievement that our country needs to be competitive in the global economy of the 21st century. Other factors are critical to realizing the potential of the Common Core:

- *Substantial opportunities for ongoing professional development* to ensure that all teachers understand and are prepared to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and that all administrators and policymakers understand teachers' needs
- *Accommodations in teacher evaluation systems* to allow time for the profession and institutions to adjust and adapt to the Common Core State Standards before evaluation systems include accountability for student achievement as one element of a valid, multifaceted teacher evaluation
- *Ample funding for education*, including funding for preschool education, to ensure that all students enter kindergarten with basic knowledge essential for school success
- *Funding for research and implementation of Common Core assessments* to ensure that these assessments meet the goal of measuring conceptual understanding and reasoning, as well as procedural fluency
- *Adequate state funding* to ensure that all students have access to Common Core assessments in formats that allow them to demonstrate their proficiency in all aspects of mathematics

Most important, all stakeholders must acknowledge that systemic improvement takes a number of years, and a long-term commitment to supporting the Common Core State Standards is necessary, even if initial assessment results do not show substantial improvements in student achievement.

Finally, for the Common Core State Standards to have long-term, positive effects on mathematics education, they must be dynamic. They must be updated periodically to reflect both emerging research on students' learning and practitioners' experiences with the current standards. NCTM is committed to working with other stakeholders to develop and implement a transparent, research-based process and realistic timetable for CCSSM's improvement over short, medium, and long terms to best support high levels of mathematics learning by all students.



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*Using Data
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Myth Busters: Getting the Facts Straight about Education Data

The education data agenda is experiencing unprecedented backlash, including the propagation of data myths, especially regarding Common Core, FERPA, and vendors. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) seeks to make the case for education data while ensuring state policymakers meet their moral and legal responsibilities to safeguard this information and ensure its appropriate and ethical use. This document dispels the most common myths with concise talking points and related resources, and DQC will continually update this resource as additional myths arise. Any information about the number of states reporting an activity is based on *Data for Action 2012: DQC's State Analysis*.

MYTH: The federal government collects academic and other information about individual students.

Facts:

- The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Education Reform Sciences Act of 2002, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) prohibit the creation of a federal database with students' personally identifiable information (i.e. information such as SSN).
 - Section 113 of HEOA: "Except as described in subsection (b) [relating to systems necessary for operations of specified Higher Education Act programs and previously in use by the Department], nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the development, implementation, or maintenance of a Federal database of personally identifiable information on individuals receiving assistance under this Act, attending institutions receiving assistance under this Act, or otherwise involved in any studies or other collections of data under this Act, including a student unit record system, an education bar code system, or any other system that tracks individual students over time."
 - Section 9531 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: "Nothing in this Act (other than section 1308(b) [relating to a migrant record system] shall be construed to authorize the development of a nationwide database of personally identifiable information on individuals involved in studies or other collections of data under this Act."
 - Section 182 of the Education Sciences Reform Act: "NATIONAL DATABASE- Nothing in this title may be construed to authorize the establishment of a nationwide database of individually identifiable information on individuals involved in studies or other collections of data under this title."
 - Section 616 of IDEA: "(ii) Rule of construction.--Nothing in this title shall be construed to authorize the development of a nationwide database of personally identifiable information on individuals involved in studies or other collections of data under this part."
- The federal government is authorized to publicly report specific *aggregate-level data only*.
- Federal law prohibits the reporting of aggregate data that could allow individuals to be identified.
- The federal government **does not** have access to the student-level information housed in state data systems.



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- Common Core **is not** a mechanism for federal data collection, nor does state implementation of Common Core and its related assessments require any data collection beyond the aggregate data authorized by No Child Left Behind.
- Common Core (and related assessment consortia) **does not** authorize the sharing of student data between states.

MYTH: The federal government is using grants such as The Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant program, The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and Race to the Top as a way to drive a national/federal collection of student information into a single database.

Facts:

- States that receive grants from the federal government **are forbidden** to report any student-level data to the federal government in return (see *HEOA, NCLB, SLDS, and IDEA language above describing this prohibition*).
- States were building data systems and collecting the necessary information to improve education within each state years before the federal government introduced grants to support this work.
- As a condition of receiving any ARRA funding, states committed to building their SLDS with elements described in the America COMPETES Act (ACA); the 12 elements in the ACA align with DQC's 10 Essential Elements.
- The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) under ARRA **did not** encourage or require the use of SFSF funds for the development of these data systems. However, operationalizing the 12 ACA elements was a requirement of receiving funding.
- States have been building student-level data systems for over a decade to inform policy and practice; the average state reported meeting five of the DQC's 10 Essential Elements prior to the first federal grant awards to states for this purpose. The systems provide educators with the information (e.g. cohort graduation rates, growth measures, early warning systems) needed to inform their practice.
- As of 2012, 36 states are providing state funding for their P20/workforce SLDS.

MYTH: The National Education Data Model (NEDM) is a federally driven collection of hundreds of pieces of sensitive individual student information.

Facts:

- The NEDM **is not** a data collection and **does not** contain any data; no state or district is submitting data to the federal government based on this model.
- The NEDM is a technical resource that was developed at the national level; its use **is not** required as a condition of any funding or collection.
- The NEDM is a framework describing the types of data that individual districts and states *may choose to use* to answer their own questions about policy and practice.

Working Draft: Last updated on July 25, 2013

Contact Rachel Anderson (Rachel@DataQualityCampaign.org) for more information



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- The NEDM was funded by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), managed by the NCES Forum (comprised of state and district representatives from every state), and received technical assistance from the Council of Chief State School Officers.
- A data model is a representation that shows how unstructured data in a database could be organized or connected.

MYTH: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has been weakened by the current administration.

Facts:

- The 2008 and 2011 regulations were direct responses to state requests for clarification of FERPA regarding the role of the state in using student data while maintaining privacy protections around personally identifiable information.
- The US Department of Education clarified FERPA's application to state longitudinal data systems through a public process in response to conversations between states, education stakeholders, and public stakeholders over several years and across two administrations.
- The 2008 and 2011 clarifications aligned FERPA with other federal laws requiring states to link data systems and use student data for evaluation and school and district accountability.
- Prior to these clarifications, states were unclear about basic, permissible activities including whether postsecondary institutions can share data with state and local education agencies for the purpose of high school feedback reports, whether state-level data could be used for research to improve instruction, and whether the state can transfer student academic records to a receiving district when a student moves.
- These changes were accompanied by provisions designed to tighten privacy protections and provide for fuller FERPA enforcement.
- When the US Department of Education issued FERPA clarifications, they also took steps to build capacity within the ED to provide technical assistance around privacy protections; these steps included hiring a Chief Privacy Officer, establishing the Privacy Technical Assistance Center, and issuing technical briefs providing guidance and best practices on protecting personally identifiable information.

MYTH: FERPA is the only law protecting student privacy, and states are not addressing this issue.

Facts:

- While FERPA sets limits on how personally identifiable data can be accessed and shared, states also have their own policies and practices, and many have state laws that parallel FERPA designed to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of data. Virtually all states also have laws that address data security and security breaches.
- Nearly all states education agencies (46) have established governance bodies charged with managing the collection and use of data, including how those data will be kept secure and confidential.

Working Draft: Last updated on July 25, 2013

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- Nearly all states (43) have established policies that determine what type of data is available to select stakeholders – like teachers and principals – who will use it to improve instruction.
- Nearly all states (41) make their data privacy policies publically available.
- States are responsible for developing policies that determine *how* student data will be protected from inappropriate sharing or use.

MYTH: Efforts to centralize the collection and storage of student information are increasing the risk of inappropriate access and use of this information.

Facts:

- Districts currently contract with a variety of vendors to provide data storage, management, and utilization services. Most districts lack the technical/legal expertise and oversight capacity to develop and manage comprehensive security protocols, so keeping data in multiple fragmented district-level systems increases the chance that student data will be mismanaged or inappropriately accessed.
- District-level vendor contracts can be costly, can create redundancy across the state, and are often limited by lack of district resources and technical expertise. If a state chooses a statewide vendor, it can reduce costs for districts, ensure that privacy measures are implemented consistently and effectively across the state, and relieve districts of management and security burdens.
- Centralized systems, such as statewide longitudinal data systems, ensure that data collection, storage, and access meet a uniform set of protections that limit the risk of inappropriate access and use.

MYTH: States are selling student-level data to vendors and corporations who will use it to develop new products to market to students.

Facts:

- States and districts **cannot** and **do not** sell student information, and the limited information that states and districts do collect is used for the purpose of informing policy, practice, and research to improve education and delivering educational services to students (*as prescribed in FERPA; see above for reference*).
- In response to external research and transparency requests, some states charge fees to assemble data sets to cover labor costs associated with responding to these data requests. (*DQC's 2013 survey will collect more information on this topic*).
- FERPA ensures that any individual or entity that a state or district authorizes to access its data must (1) use student data only for authorized purposes; (2) protect the data from further disclosure or other uses; and (3) destroy the data when no longer needed for the authorized purpose.
- Out of necessity, states and districts have always contracted with for-profit and non-profit partners to transform their data into actionable information.

MYTH: States are collecting and sharing an inappropriate amount of student level data.

Working Draft: Last updated on July 25, 2013

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Facts:

- States **do not** have access to the full array of data collected and maintained by schools and districts.
- States collect a limited amount of student-level information that is commensurate with state-level responsibilities. State data can provide a rich set of contextual information to supplement district-level data and guide local improvement efforts.

MYTH: As a recent federal report states, Common Core and a brain mapping initiative recently announced by President Obama are being used to collect biometric data about children.

Facts:

- Common Core does **not** collect or require the collection of any biometric data (or any data at all).
- Common Core is **not** related to the BRAIN (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies) Initiative, a recently-proposed scientific endeavor to map the brain. The BRAIN Initiative is **not** collecting any data from or about students and is **not** related to any education initiative or program.
- A recently released research report (Promoting Grit, Tenacity and Perseverance: Critical Factors for Success in the 21st Century) prepared by SRI International on behalf of the US Department of Education is an overview of potential measurement methods of skills like perseverance and tenacity and is **not** related in any way to Common Core standards or assessments or any data collection.
- The US Department of Education's report on promoting grit and tenacity does **not** guide or reflect Common Core in any way. This report does address Common Core's standard of "making sense of problems and persevering in solving them" to demonstrate the relevance of nonacademic skills.

Common Core State Standards Initiative Validation Committee Announced

NGA Center, CCSSO Release List of Validation Committee Members

September 24, 2009

WASHINGTON—The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) today released the names of the members of the Validation Committee for the Common Core State Standards Initiative. This committee will immediately be tasked with reviewing and verifying the standards development process and the resulting evidence-based college- and career-readiness standards. The standards are intended to be research and evidence-based, aligned with college and workforce training program expectations, reflective of rigorous content and skills, and internationally benchmarked.

For the college- and career-readiness standards, the Validation Committee will:

- Review the process used to develop the college- and career-readiness standards and recommend improvements in that process. These recommendations will be used to inform the K-12 development process.
- Validate the sufficiency of the evidence supporting each college- and career-readiness standard. Each member is asked to determine whether each standard has sufficient evidence to warrant its inclusion.
- Add any standard that is not now included in the common core state standards that they feel should be included and provide the following evidence to support its inclusion: 1) evidence that the standard is essential to college and career success; and 2) evidence that the standard is internationally comparable.

Members of the validation committee were nominated by states and national organizations, with a group of six governors and six chief state school officers in the participating states selecting the final committee membership. The six governors were **Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter; Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell; Delaware Gov. Jack Markell; Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue; Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas;** and **West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin.** The chief state school officers were: **Maine Chief and CCSSO Board President Susan Gendron; Michigan Chief Michael Flanagan; Pennsylvania Chief Gerald Zahorchak; South Carolina Chief Jim Rex;** and **West Virginia Chief Steve Paine.** After the college- and career-readiness standards and process have been validated by the committee, the NGA Center and CCSSO will begin the process of developing the K-12 standards.

The members of the Validation Committee are:

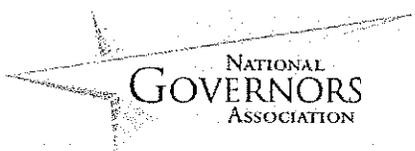
- **Bryan Albrecht**, President, Gateway Technical College, Kenosha, Wisconsin
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- **Sarah Baird**, 2009 Arizona Teacher of the Year, K-5 Math Coach, Kyrene School District
- **Jere Confrey**, Joseph D. Moore Distinguished University Professor, William and Ida Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, College of Education, North Carolina State University

- **David T. Conley**, Professor, College of Education, University of Oregon CEO, Educational Policy Improvement Center (**Co-Chair**)
- **Linda Darling-Hammond**, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education, Stanford University
- **Alfinio Flores**, Hollowell Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Delaware
- **Brian Gong**, Executive Director, Center for Assessment (**Co-Chair**)
- **Kenji Hakuta**, Lee L. Jacks Professor of Education, Stanford University
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- **Mary Ann Jordan**, Teacher, New York City Dept of Education, AFT
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- **Dylan William**, Deputy Director, Institute of Education, University of London

Please [click here](#) for biographical information on each of the Validation Committee members. Also, for more information on the Common Core State Standards Initiative and to comment on the draft college- and career-readiness standards, please visit www.corestandards.org.



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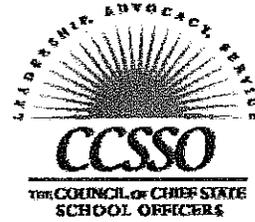
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K-12 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

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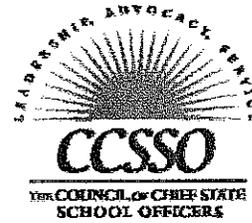
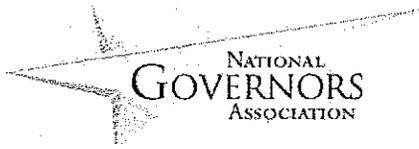
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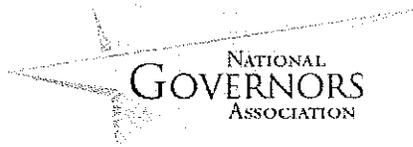
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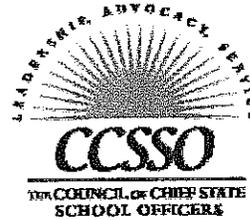
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COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE
K-12 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

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Advisory Committees

Smarter Balanced works with teams of national experts to develop a balanced assessment system accurately measures student progress and growth toward college and career readiness.

Advisory Committees

Technical Advisory Committee

English Language Learners Advisory Committee

Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provides guidance on technical assessment matters pertaining to validity and reliability, accuracy, and fairness. Members of the TAC are highly regarded national experts who have been widely published in their fields. Areas of expertise include: assessment design; computer adaptive testing (CAT); assessment accommodations; uses of tests; mathematics, and English language arts/literacy.

Jamal Abedi, Ph.D.

Randy Bennett, Ph.D.

Derek C. Briggs, Ph.D.

Gregory J. Cizek, Ph.D.

David T. Conley, Ph.D.

Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D.

Brian Gong, Ph.D.

Edward Haertel, Ph.D.

Joan Herman, Ph.D.

G. Gage Kingsbury, Ph.D.

James W. Pellegrino, Ph.D.

W. James Popham, Ph.D.

Joseph Ryan, Ph.D.

Martha Thurlow, Ph.D.

Jamal Abedi, Ph.D.

Jamal Abedi is a professor in the School of Education at the University of California, Davis and a research partner at the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). He also currently serves as the advisor to the UK national assessment department, Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation. In 2003, Abedi received the National Professional Service Award from the American Educational Research Association. He is also the recipient of the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award by the California Educational Research Association. Abedi received his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University.

Randy Bennett, Ph.D.

Randy Bennett is the Norman O. Frederiksen Chair in Assessment Innovation for the Research & Development Division of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey.

From 1999 through 2005, Bennett directed the NAEP Technology Based Assessment project, which explored the use of computerized testing for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). He received the ETS Senior Scientist Award in 1996 and the ETS Career Achievement Award in 2005. Bennett is a graduate of the doctoral program at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Derek C. Briggs, Ph.D.

Derek Briggs is associate professor, Research and Evaluation Methodology, in the School of Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Briggs received the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Division D Mary Catherine Ellwein Outstanding Dissertation Award. He serves on the Editorial Board for Educational Assessment. Briggs received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley.

Gregory J. Cizek, Ph.D.

Gregory Cizek is professor of Educational Measurement and Evaluation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He is the recipient of the 2006 AERA Division D award for Significant Contribution to Educational Measurement and Research Methodology and the 2007 recipient of the National Council on Measurement in Education award for Outstanding Dissemination of Educational Measurement Concepts. He served from 2007–2009 as an appointed member of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which oversees the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Cizek received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

David T. Conley, Ph.D.

David Conley is Professor of Educational Policy and Leadership in the College of Education, University of Oregon. He is the founder and director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon, and founder and chief executive officer of the Educational Policy Improvement Center.

Since 2008, Conley has served as Special Consultant to the Chief Operating Officer of the College Board, New York. He has also served as Special Advisor to the College Board. Conley received his doctoral degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D.

Linda Darling-Hammond is Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at the Stanford University School of Education. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Wallace Foundation, the Education Leadership Advisory Council for the Stuart Foundation, and the Executive Board for the National Academy of Education.

Darling-Hammond has received the McGraw Hill Prize for Innovation in Education, the Friend of the NEA Award from National Education Association, and the Outstanding Teaching Award from the Stanford University School of Education.

She is a past president of the American Educational Research Association. Darling-Hammond received her Ed.D. from Temple University.

Brian Gong, Ph.D.

Brian Gong is the executive director of the non-profit National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc. (Center for Assessment).

He served as co-chair of the Validation Committee for the Common Core State Standards published by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. By invitation from the U.S. Department of Education, Gong was a part of the team that wrote the No Child Left Behind Peer Review Guidance for Accountability Systems and the Growth Model Pilot. Gong received his Ph.D. from Stanford University.

Edward Haertel, Ph.D.

Edward Haertel is the Jacks Family Professor of Education at the Stanford University School of Education.

Haertel has served as president of the National Council on Measurement in Education, chairs the Technical Advisory Committee concerned with California's school accountability system, chairs the National Research Council's Board on Testing and Assessment (BOTA), and from 2000 to 2003 chaired the Committee on Standards, Design, and Methodology of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB). Haertel received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Joan Herman, Ph.D.

Joan Herman is the Director of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST).

Herman served on the National Academy's Committee on the Design of Science Assessment. She is currently the editor of Educational Assessment. Herman received her Ed.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles.

G. Gage Kingsbury, Ph.D.

Gage Kingsbury is a private psychometric consultant providing advice and development work in the application of technology to practical assessment situations.

Kingsbury designed the first adaptive tests used in educational settings, and helped to design adaptive tests that are currently administered to K-12 students in every state. He also served as a developer of the ACE standards for computerized adaptive testing and the ATP guidelines for computerized test development and use. Kingsbury currently serves as the president of the International Association for Computerized Adaptive Testing. He is also an associate editor for the Journal of Computerized Adaptive Testing. He serves as a research fellow for the Hong Kong Institute of Education and has received the Award for Outstanding Contributions to Educational Assessment from National Association of Test Directors. He founded the Center for Research on Academic Growth at NWEA (since renamed the Kingsbury Center). Kingsbury holds a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Minnesota.

James W. Pellegrino, Ph.D.

James Pellegrino is Liberal Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor and Distinguished Professor of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

He is a Fellow of AERA, a lifetime National Associate of the National Academy of Sciences and a past member of the Board on Testing and Assessment of the National Research Council. In 2007 he was elected to lifetime membership in the National Academy of Education. Pellegrino received his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

W. James Popham, Ph.D.

W. James Popham is Professor Emeritus, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Popham is a past president and fellow of AERA. He was also the founding editor of Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, a quarterly journal published by AERA. At UCLA he won several distinguished teaching awards. In January 2000, he was recognized by UCLA Today as one of UCLA's top 20 professors of the 20th Century. In 2002, the National Council on Measurement in Education presented him with its Award for Career Contributions to Educational Measurement. In 2009, he was appointed to the National Assessment Governing Board. Popham received his Ed.D. from Indiana University.

Joseph Ryan, Ph.D.

Joseph Ryan is Professor Emeritus of Arizona State University and head of Educational Measurement Systems.

Ryan has been named an Inaugural Fellow by the American Educational Research Association. Ryan received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Martha Thurlow, Ph.D.

Martha Thurlow is the director for the National Center on Educational Outcomes and Senior Research Associate, Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota.

She served on the CCSSO-NGA Common Core State Standards Initiative Validation Committee. Thurlow received her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.

English Language Learners Advisory Committee

The English Language Learners Advisory Committee is comprised of national experts in ELL assessment, bilingual education, and language acquisition. This committee will provide feedback to Smarter Balanced staff, work groups, and contractors to ensure that the assessments provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of achievement and growth for English learners.

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Jamal Abedi is a professor in the School of Education at University of California at Davis and a research partner at the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). He serves as the advisor to the UK's Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation, an independent agency responsible for the integrity of national assessment systems. Abedi received the 2003 National Professional Service Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA). He is also the recipient of the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the California

*Assembly Select Committee on Common Core Standards
Senate Select Committee for Review of the Common Core Standards Initiative
October 23, 2013*

**Department of Public Instruction
Testimony in Support of the Common Core State Standards**

Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Sheila Briggs, and I am the Assistant State Superintendent of the Division for Academic Excellence at the Department of Public Instruction. I am the Division Administrator who is responsible for overseeing content area standards, including the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. With me today is Diana Kasbaum, DPI's Mathematics Consultant. Diana will be talking with you today about the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, and I'll be providing additional information and context to the committee after she concludes.

[Testimony of Diana Kasbaum]

As Dr. Briggs mentioned, my name is Diana Kasbaum, and I am the Mathematics Consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. I am an educator and mathematics leader whose professional career in education began in the early '70s. Prior to coming to the department, I was a classroom teacher and a district mathematics coordinator. I was honored with the 1999 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching at the national level, the 2001 Nemece Distinguished Elementary Education Alumni Award from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the 2006 Distinguished Mathematics Educator Award from the Wisconsin Mathematics Council.

I have been a state and national mathematics leader since the mid '90s, serving as coordinator of the Wisconsin Mathematics Leadership Council and President of the Wisconsin Mathematics Council. I am currently the President of the Association of State Supervisors of Mathematics where I sit on two national committees: the Advisory Board of the Illustrative Mathematics Project and the Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences which consists of the mathematics and statistical societies from across the country. The first document on the left side of your folder is a statement by the Presidents of the Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences. This message of support states:

"If properly implemented, these rigorous new standards hold the promise of elevating the mathematical knowledge and skill of every young American to levels competitive with the best in the world, of preparing our college entrants to undertake advanced work in the mathematical sciences, and of readying the next generation for the jobs that their world will demand."

This afternoon I would like to use my brief testimony to correct some of the factual errors about mathematics I have identified in the first two hearings.

First, this committee has erroneously heard that experts from Wisconsin's colleges and universities were not part of the Common Core adoption and review process. This is false.

Professional educators and mathematics leaders from Wisconsin were involved in review and feedback of drafts of the Common Core for mathematics. Page 23 of the "Wisconsin's Approach to Mathematics" document in your folder lists the members of the Standards Leadership Team who are from school districts, the technical colleges, and universities from across Wisconsin, including mathematicians and mathematics educators Dr. Billie Earl Sparks, Dr. Kevin McLeod, Dr. Henry Kepner, Dr. DeAnn Huinker, and Dr. Jennifer Kosiak. Wisconsin higher education was well-represented on the Standards Team. In fact, I'd like to take the opportunity to quote directly from Dr. Sparks' testimony which he submitted to all committee members in absentia:

"During the writing of the Common Core we reviewed about 8 drafts of these Standards, providing suggestions at each stage, seeing that many of the Wisconsin suggestions were listened to, and moving the process to a point of belief that the final document met the criteria of focus, coherence, and rigor. The development process was very open with two drafts being provided for public input across the country with thousands of suggestions and being provided and several other drafts being reviewed by state level review committees like Wisconsin's."

In addition, the Mathematics Common Competencies Committee reviewed and affirmed that adoption of the Common Core for Mathematics was right for Wisconsin. The Committee was formed in 2009 to examine the transition from Wisconsin's high schools to colleges and universities. As you can see from the list of committee members provided to you in this report, in Attachment B, page 15, this committee included representatives from the UW-System, WI Technical Colleges, WI independent/private colleges, and Wisconsin high schools. Among the final findings of this group are:

- *The Wisconsin state standards for mathematics, adopted from the Common Core State Standards Initiative, represent the necessary competencies for success in college. Demonstrated proficiency in these standards will place students into credit-bearing courses and avoid placement into non-credit bearing remedial classes at any of Wisconsin's post-secondary institutions.*
- *Students who wish to receive a degree in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) major in a timely fashion should take additional mathematics in high school. (including those Common Core for Mathematics standards listed as '+' standards)*

Second, committee members have heard testimony that Wisconsin "jumped on the Common Core bandwagon and did not have a voice at the table." This is false.

Wisconsin was at the table in review and adoption of the Common Core for Mathematics. The Wisconsin Standards Mathematics Leadership Team was convened prior to the Common Core.

We were in the process of examining and rewriting the 1998 WI Model Academic Standards. Several things were clear to this broad-based team, including:

- The Wisconsin mathematics standards needed to be grade-specific and build a strong foundation at the elementary and middle school levels, setting the stage for success at high school.
- Preparation for success in college and career needed to be the target.

When the Common Core initiative was announced in the spring of 2009, the Wisconsin Mathematics Standards Leadership Team looked carefully at the work at the national level to determine if it was consistent with the direction that Wisconsin was headed. Indeed, it was, so our work in late 2009 and the first half of 2010 was to both monitor the work at the national level and provide feedback in an effort to influence the final Common Core document.

At the time, Dr. Henry Kepner from UW-Milwaukee was President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and I served on the Board of Directors of the Association of State Supervisors of Mathematics. This provided opportunities for our Mathematics Leadership Team to review iterations of the Common Core prior to the release of the first public draft. Additionally, the Wisconsin Mathematics Council, as well as mathematics educators from across the state provided feedback to the Common Core for Mathematics writing team. Finally, internationally respected mathematician, UW-Madison Emeritus Professor Dr. Richard Askey, extensively influenced the final version of the Common Core. According to one lead writer of the Common Core, Bill McCallum,

“Dick Askey was on the Feedback Group, and was extremely active. His feedback had a major influence on the standards.”

Dr. Bryan Albrecht, President of Gateway Technical College, who is here to testify in support today, and Dr. Norm Webb from UW-Madison were on the validation committee for the standards and supported them, as well.

Third, we have heard erroneous testimony that the Common Core for Mathematics do not address basic skills, prepare students for algebra, and put a ceiling on our students. These claims are false.

The standards still teach basic skills – Wisconsin students will still learn basic facts and efficient computational procedures.

The Common Core for Mathematics provide a strong foundation for Algebra. As teachers and curriculum committees throughout Wisconsin high schools have reviewed the new standards, they recognize that much of what has been typically found in a freshman Algebra I course is now completed by the end of middle school, causing our high schools to rethink their curriculum.

The Common Core for Mathematics do not prescribe a ceiling. Wisconsin’s mathematically talented students will soar, as they always have. Students who intend to pursue careers in STEM fields will be fully prepared by attaining the skills and knowledge found in the ‘+’ standards, as well as the additional coursework that local school districts implement.

Finally, we have heard misguided suggestions that Wisconsin should just adopt the old standards from California or Massachusetts, or the current Minnesota math standards. This is the wrong choice for Wisconsin.

As a part of my role at the DPI, I regularly speak with mathematics colleagues from other states. In speaking with the California Department of Education I was informed that while at the initial adoption of the Common Core, it was thought that there needed to be additions to the standards, after a more in-depth examination of the Common Core, California has not augmented those standards. California has adopted the Common Core for Mathematics with no additions.

I have spoken with both Dr. Anne Collins and Dr. Life LeGeros, formerly from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Both were involved with the adoption and implementation of the Massachusetts Standards for Mathematics. I asked Dr. Collins her opinion on the 'secret' to the Massachusetts success. She unequivocally stated that it was setting a high bar and aligning standards, curriculum, and instruction. However, most importantly, it was staying the course and providing sustained professional development – ongoing learning for teachers and leaders. The state, as well as private foundations, have made this a financial priority. Dr. LeGeros noted that the standards committee was already looking at revisions to the state standards and was in agreement that adoption of the Common Core for Mathematics were the right direction for Massachusetts. Massachusetts has adopted the Common Core for Mathematics with few additions for clarification.

I have spoken with a colleague from Minnesota who said that the state did not adopt the Common Core for Mathematics for one simple reason: the state mathematics standards had just been revised and adopted, and they were in the throes of implementation. According to the Minnesota Department of Education's website, the next scheduled mathematics review is in 2015, when they will take a close look at all available options, including the Common Core for Mathematics.

Thank you for the opportunity to correct several factual errors relative to the process and content of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. In closing, basic proficiency in mathematics is not an option. We owe it to the children of our state to be well-prepared for their future. Wisconsin's students must leave our doors competent and confident in mathematics. In my professional opinion, the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics helps Wisconsin schools move in that direction.

[Testimony of Dr. Sheila Briggs]

As Diana's comments reflect, we have listened with great interest to all of the testimony that has been provided at the last two hearings, and we greatly appreciate the time that students, parents, grandparents, teachers, principals, school board members, and citizens have taken to testify and provide written comments. This Committee has heard from a litany of supporters who have provided you with commentary and evidence in support of the Common Core in their schools, their districts, and their homes. For those individuals who have raised concerns, we take their questions and concerns seriously, and want to take this opportunity to clarify some important facts. To follow Diana's lead, I will focus on the numbers.

In 2006, **seven** years ago, we began the work of revising the old Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Our 1998 standards, which themselves took several years to write, were **eight** years old, and already outdated.

In **2007**, we partnered with Competitive Wisconsin and leadership from the UW System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to host a Business Summit on 21st Century Skills. There, we gathered feedback from **more than 200 leaders** of business, economic development, and chambers of commerce to define what they wanted Wisconsin graduates to know and be able to do when they entered college or started a career. Using this feedback, in **2008**, a Wisconsin leadership team developed a blueprint for what we wanted in new standards—our home grown effort. Those teams consisted of teachers, principals, literacy and math coaches, curriculum specialists and 13 higher education faculty members.

In **2009**, the Common Core State Standards Initiative began. When the previous Governor and State Superintendent publicly announced their intent to participate with the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School officers, Wisconsin had already been working on new standards for **three years**. As Diana outlined, we had already done the hard work of working with our K-12 educators, higher education faculty, and others to figure out what we wanted for Wisconsin, and were well positioned for this voluntary, state-led effort.

Last week, this Committee heard testimony alleging that there were no higher education faculty, no content specialists, and even no K-12 educators involved in writing the Common Core. I have the list right here, and this is simply not true. In addition to the facts that Diana gave you, here are some of the titles of the members of the mathematics team for example: Dean of the School of Education, Professor of Mathematics, Mathematics Teacher, Teacher, Professor, Distinguished Professor, Associate Principal, Faculty Emerita, Mathematics Instructor, Professor, Professor of Mathematics, STEM director, Professor of Mathematics, National Board Certified Teacher....I could go on. The English Language Arts list is of similar caliber.

The Committee also heard testimony that there were only two content experts on the validation committee, both of whom refused to sign off. Well, again, I have the list right here, and it is stacked with professors, curriculum specialists, and K-12 educators. It includes Brian Albrecht, President of Gateway Technical College in Kenosha, who is here to testify today. Other individuals include: Distinguished Professor of Education, Mathematics Specialist, Teacher, Nationally Board Certified Teacher, Professor of Mathematics Education, Professor of Education, Associate Professor in the Mathematics Department, Principal, Regents Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus Professor, Dean, Principal, Superintendent, Distinguished Research Fellow, Senior Research Scientist. We've included copies of the list of validation committee members in your folder so you can look and judge for yourself.

In **2010**, Wisconsin leadership teams reviewed the draft standards and provided extensive feedback. Diana outlined the extent of this work in mathematics, and you've heard previous testimony DPI partnered with over **10** Wisconsin professional education associations including higher education, school boards, administrators, teachers, and parents for a day long feedback session. We've also heard testimony that many of our districts and CESAs held similar

informational meetings in their local school districts and regions. Wisconsin submitted **6 pages** of detailed feedback to the final draft of the standards.

When standards were released in June **2010**, we had been reviewing, holding meetings about, and providing feedback on multiple drafts for a **full year**. As the state education agency and a member of the effort, we received an embargoed final copy of the standards before they were published. To say we adopted them before we saw them is ridiculous. This process has been public, transparent, and thorough. To say otherwise is to ignore the facts.

We've heard concerns that these standards are not high enough. Our previous Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in English Language Art were given a D by the Fordham Institute. The Common Core for English Language Arts were given a B+. Our old Wisconsin mathematics standards were rated an F, while the Common Core for Mathematics were given an A-. Moving forward from our old standards to the Common Core has been one of the largest jumps that any state in the country has made in terms of quality and content. This has been and continues to be a monumental effort to raise the bar and set a new minimum for what every child needs to know to prepare for success in college and career.

Yet we've heard suggestions that we should "cut our losses" and start over by writing our own standards with our own Wisconsin higher education faculty and our own Wisconsin teachers. As I just outlined, we did that —for **3 years**. When the Common Core came along in the middle of our own state process, we were more prepared than possibly any other state to say that they were aligned with what Wisconsin stakeholders wanted to see.

As a result, Wisconsin schools have now spent **3 ½ years** learning about these standards, attending professional development sessions, writing curriculum, and purchasing new materials. They are now deeply embedded into classrooms across Wisconsin's **424** school districts. Leaders from school districts across Wisconsin have personally come to testify before this committee in support of the Common Core and to highlight the positive impact they are having and the gains their students are making as a result. In addition to our districts, all **12** CESAs are strongly in support.

How about our teachers? The Wisconsin Teacher of the Year Council submitted testimony in support of the Common Core. Organizations that represent teachers, like the Wisconsin State Reading Association, the Wisconsin Reading Coalition, the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English, the Wisconsin Mathematics Council, and the Wisconsin Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, all have provided you with their support for the Common Core.

And Higher Education? The UW System, the Technical College System, content area faculty, education faculty, including the Wisconsin Association of Colleges for Teacher Education—all support the Common Core.

Business leaders? Here in Wisconsin, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce submitted testimony strongly endorsing the Common Core, and GE has invested millions to support Common Core implementation in the Milwaukee Public Schools. Nationwide, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has been an enthusiastic supporter. The Business Roundtable, consisting

of 200 Chief Executive Officers, including several Wisconsin-based CEOs, has said "We cannot turn back on this tremendous state-led effort, for if we fail to prepare all students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world, they and our economy will suffer."

As we wrap up today, let me leave you with a few more numbers to address other concerns that have been raised so far during these hearings:

Equipment purchased (or planned to be purchased) in the state of Wisconsin to collect any type of medical, political, religious or biometric information because of the Common Core—**ZERO**.

Amount of new data collection that is required by the Common Core—**ZERO**

Number of books on a required Common Core reading list—**ZERO**

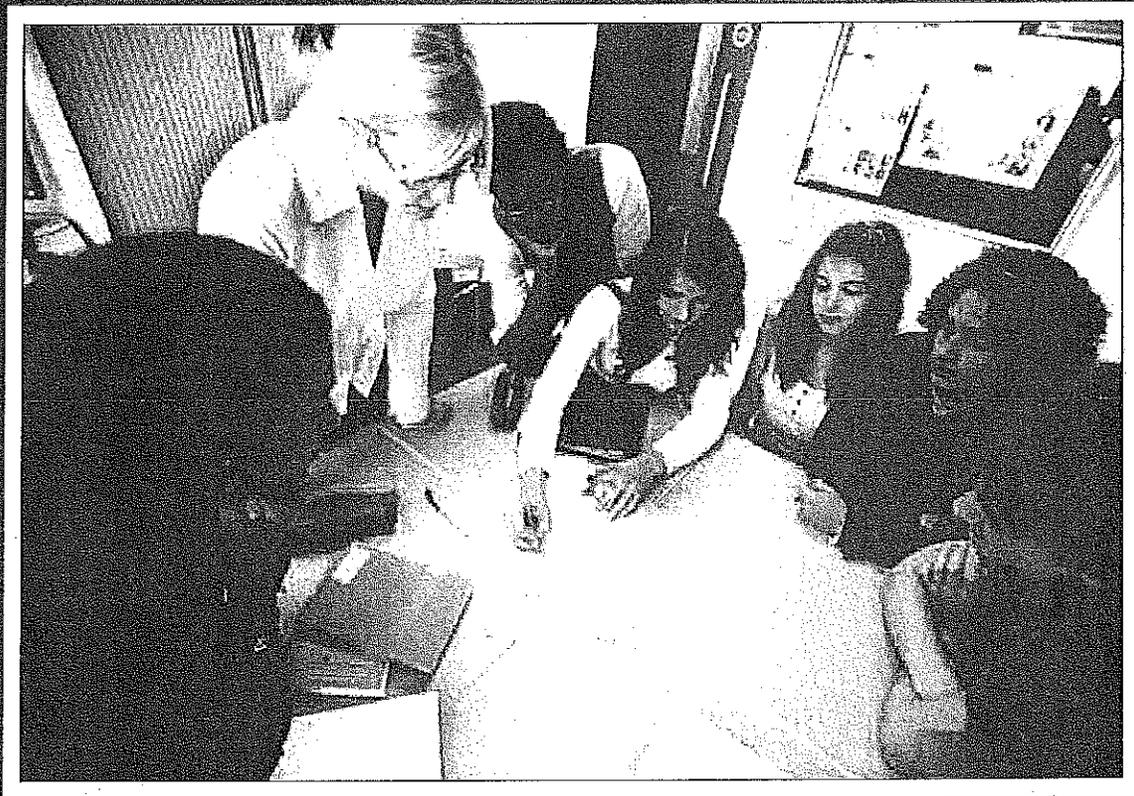
Number of states that have dropped the Common Core—**ZERO**.

Amount of money that Wisconsin has received for adopting the Common Core—**ZERO**

Financial implications of changing course now - **\$81 million** in base level expenditures for curriculum review and replacement cycles that would be wasted and have to be re-spent, as estimated by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

The Common Core State Standards were selected by Wisconsin, for Wisconsin, after a rigorous and thorough process. It would be a travesty to undo the incredible work that has been done. I implore you to filter out the misinformation. The numbers are overwhelmingly in favor of the Common Core. Thank you.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS for
Mathematics



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



SECTION 2

**Wisconsin's Approach
to Mathematics**



Acknowledgements

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Wisconsin Foundations for Mathematics

Wisconsin's Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning provide important guidance for the mathematics classroom. Within the discipline of mathematics, each of the six principles has specific implications for equity, pedagogy, instruction, and assessment. Mathematics educators should consider how the six guiding principles influence their teaching.

The following foundations provide direction for the teaching and learning of mathematics in Wisconsin.

Every student must have access to and engage in meaningful, challenging, and rigorous mathematics.

Equity in mathematics education requires recognition that the standards must be kept consistent while being flexible in instructional approach and methods of assessment to accommodate the strengths and weaknesses of all students. In order to optimize student learning, the high bar that is set for all should not be moved for some students; instead, the delivery system must be varied to allow access for all. Schools and classrooms need to be organized to convey the message that all students can learn mathematics and should be expected to achieve. Effective mathematics classroom practice involves assessing students' prior knowledge, designing tasks that allow flexibility of approach, and orchestrating classroom discussions that allow every student to successfully access and learn important mathematics.

Mathematics should be experienced as coherent, connected, intrinsically interesting, and relevant.

The PK-12 curriculum should integrate and sequence important mathematical ideas so that students can make sense of mathematics and develop a thorough understanding of concepts. The curriculum should build from grade to grade and topic to topic so that students have experiences that are coherent. The connections of mathematical ideas in a well-designed curriculum allow students to see mathematics as important in its own right, as well as a useful subject that has relevant applications to the real world and to other disciplines.

Problem solving, understanding, reasoning, and sense-making are at the heart of mathematics teaching and learning and are central to mathematical proficiency.

Using problem solving as a vehicle for teaching mathematics not only develops knowledge and skills, but also helps students understand and make sense of mathematics. By infusing reasoning and sense-making in daily mathematics instruction, students are able to see how new concepts connect with existing knowledge and they are able to solidify their understanding. Students who are mathematically proficient see that mathematics makes sense and show a willingness to persevere. They possess both understanding of mathematical concepts and fluency with procedural skills.

Effective mathematics classroom practices include the use of collaboration, discourse, and reflection to engage students in the study of important mathematics.

Collaboration and classroom discourse can significantly deepen student understanding of mathematical concepts. In addition to teacher-student dialogue, peer collaboration and individual reflection must also be emphasized. Representing, thinking, discussing, agreeing, and disagreeing are central to what students learn about mathematics. Posing questions and tasks that elicit, engage, and challenge students' thinking, as well as asking students to clarify their thinking and justify solutions and solution paths should be evident in all mathematics classrooms.

When today's students become adults, they will face new demands for mathematical proficiency that school mathematics should attempt to anticipate. Moreover, mathematics is a realm no longer restricted to a select few. All young Americans must learn to think mathematically, and they must think mathematically to learn.

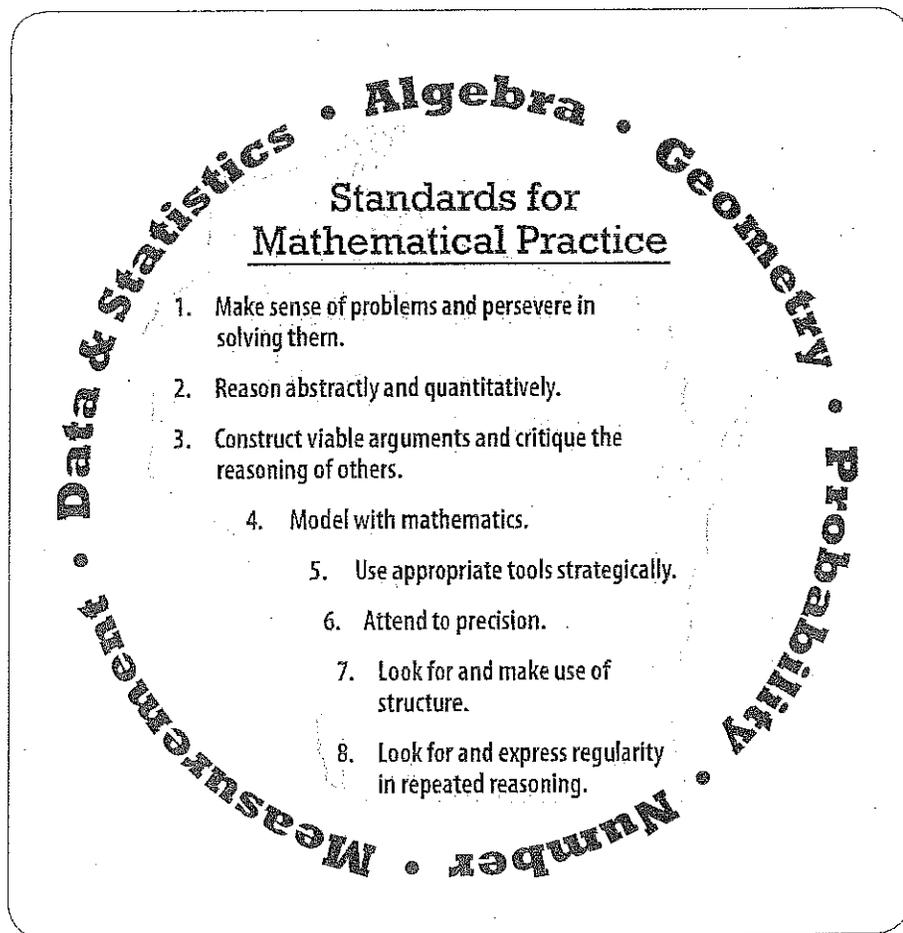
(Adding It Up, National Research Council, 2001).



Standards for Mathematical Practice

The *Standards for Mathematical Practice* are central to the teaching and learning of mathematics. These practices describe the behaviors and habits of mind that are exhibited by students who are mathematically proficient. Mathematical understanding is the intersection of these practices and mathematics content. It is critical that the *Standards for Mathematical Practice* are embedded in daily mathematics instruction.

The graphic below shows the central focus on the *Standards for Mathematical Practice* within the familiar content areas of mathematics. Some of the behaviors and dispositions exhibited by students who are mathematically proficient are elaborated in the *Characteristics of Mathematically Proficient Students* (see pages 29-30 of this guide).





Standards for Mathematical Content

The *Standards for Mathematical Content* describe the sequence of important mathematics content that students learn. They are a combination of procedures and understandings. These content standards are organized around domains and clusters which are specified by grade level, kindergarten through grade 8, and by conceptual category at high school. The domains at all levels are based on research-based learning progressions detailing what is known about students' mathematical knowledge, skill, and understanding. The progressions build from grade to grade and topic to topic, providing K-12 focus and coherence. Other important cross-grade themes that should be noted and investigated are concepts such as the role of units and unitizing; the properties of operations across arithmetic and algebra, operations and the problems they solve, transformational geometry, reasoning and sense-making, and modeling of and with mathematics.

The **narratives at each K-8 grade level** specify 2-4 key areas that are identified as the primary focus of instruction. These are referred to as **critical areas**. At the high school level, the narratives describe the **focus** for each conceptual category, as well as the connections to other categories and domains.

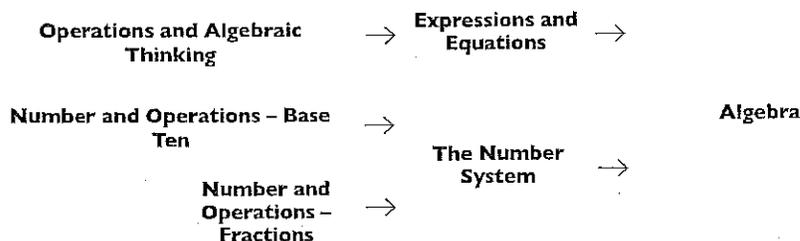
Learning mathematics with understanding is a focus of the CCSSM. Many of the *Standards for Mathematical Content* begin with the verb "understand" and are crucial for mathematical proficiency. It is generally agreed that students understand a concept in mathematics if they can use mathematical reasoning with a variety of representations and connections to explain the concept to someone else or apply the concept to another situation. This is how 'understand' should be interpreted when implementing the CCSSM.

One hallmark of mathematical understanding is the ability to justify, in a way appropriate to the student's mathematical maturity, why a particular mathematical statement is true or where a mathematical rule comes from... Mathematical understanding and procedural skill are equally important, and both are assessable using mathematical tasks of sufficient richness (CCSSM p. 4).

While the *Standards for Mathematical Practice* should be addressed with all of the *Standards for Mathematical Content*, the content standards that begin with the verb "understand" are a natural intersection between the two.

K-12 Coherence and Convergence

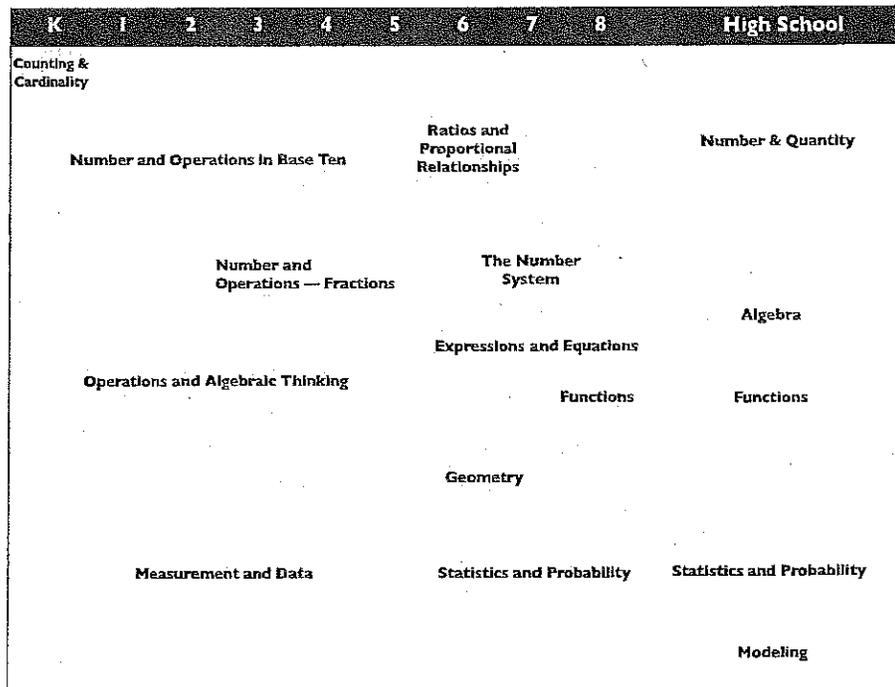
The *Standards for Mathematical Content* are built upon **coherence**, one of the design principles of the CCSSM. The intentional progression and sequencing of topics lays the foundation for the mathematics that is developed from kindergarten through high school. The diagram below depicts how domains at the elementary and middle school levels converge toward algebra at the high school. It is important that educators are knowledgeable about these progressions so that students learn mathematics with understanding and so that new content can build on prior learning





Focus and Organization of the Standards for Mathematical Content

The mathematics content of the CCSSM builds across grades and provides important underpinnings for the mathematics to be learned at subsequent levels. The coherence of the CCSSM lies in those connections, both within and across grade levels and topics. The graphic below illustrates the second design principle of the CCSSM – **focus**.



At the early elementary grades, the focus is largely on the areas of number and operations in base ten and algebraic thinking. This expands to a focus on fractions later in elementary school. The K-5 mathematics content provides the groundwork for the study of ratios, proportional reasoning, the number system, expressions and equations, and functions at the middle school level. By providing a focused mathematics experience in elementary and middle school, a strong foundation is developed for the content to be learned at the high school level.



Mathematical Proficiency

Mathematical proficiency is necessary for every student; therefore, understanding concepts and being fluent with procedural skills are both important. This means that educators must intentionally engage students at all levels so they are readily able to understand important concepts, use skills effectively, and apply mathematics to make sense of their changing world.

Adding it Up (National Research Council, 2001), a major research report that informed the development of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, emphasizes the five strands of mathematical proficiency: conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, and productive disposition. These strands are not sequential, but intertwined and form the basis for the *Standards for Mathematical Content* and the *Standards for Mathematical Practice*. Together, these two sets of mathematics standards define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of K-12 mathematics.

Standards for Mathematical Practice	Characteristics of Mathematically Proficient Students*
Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.	Mathematically proficient students can: Explain the meaning of a problem and restate it in their words. Analyze given information to develop possible strategies for solving the problem. Identify and execute appropriate strategies to solve the problem. Evaluate progress toward the solution and make revisions if necessary. Explain the connections among various representations of a problem or concept. Check for accuracy and reasonableness of work, strategy and solution. Understand and connect strategies used by others to solve problems.
Reason abstractly and quantitatively.	Mathematically proficient students can: Translate given information to create a mathematical representation for a concept. Manipulate the mathematical representation by showing the process considering the meaning of the quantities involved. Recognize the relationships between numbers/quantities within the process to evaluate a problem. Review the process for reasonableness within the original context.
Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.	Mathematically proficient students can: Use observations and prior knowledge (stated assumptions, definitions, and previous established results) to make conjectures and construct arguments. Compare and contrast logical arguments and identify which one makes the most sense. Justify (orally and in written form) the approach used, including how it fits in the context from which the data arose. Listen, understand, analyze, and respond to the arguments of others. Identify and explain both correct and flawed logic. Recognize and use counterexamples to refine assumptions or definitions and dispute or disprove an argument.



Standards for Mathematical Practice	Characteristics of Mathematically Proficient Students*
Model with mathematics.	<p>Mathematically proficient students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a variety of methods to model, represent, and solve real-world problems. Simplify a complicated problem by making assumptions and approximations. Interpret results in the context of the problem and revise the model if necessary. Choose a model that is both appropriate and efficient to arrive at one or more desired solutions.
Use appropriate tools strategically.	<p>Mathematically proficient students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify mathematical tools and recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Select and use appropriate tools to best model/solve problems. Use estimation to predict reasonable solutions and/or detect errors. Identify and successfully use external mathematical resources to pose or solve problems. Use a variety of technologies, including digital content, to explore, confirm, and deepen conceptual understanding.
Attend to precision.	<p>Mathematically proficient students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand symbols and use them consistently within the context of a problem. Calculate answers efficiently and accurately and label them appropriately. Formulate precise explanations (orally and in written form) using both mathematical representations and words. Communicate using clear mathematical definitions, vocabulary, and symbols.
Look for and make use of structure.	<p>Mathematically proficient students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for, identify, and accept patterns or structure within relationships. Use patterns or structure to make sense of mathematics and connect prior knowledge to similar situations and extend to novel situations. Analyze a complex problem by breaking it down into smaller parts. Reflect on the problem as a whole and shift perspective as needed.
Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.	<p>Mathematically proficient students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize similarities and patterns in repeated trials with a process. Generalize the process to create a shortcut which may lead to developing rules or creating a formula. Evaluate the reasonableness of results throughout the mathematical process while attending to the details.
<p><i>* Collaborative project with Cedarburg, Franklin, Fox Point-Bayside, Grafton, Greendale, Kettle Moraine, Menomonee Falls, Oconomowoc, Pewaukee, Waukesha, and Whitefish Bay School Districts and CESA 1.</i></p>	



Design Features of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The design of the CCSSM has several specific features. Additional resources to support the CCSSM are available online at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/standards/stds.html>

- The *Standards for Mathematical Practice* must be addressed at all levels and intertwined with the *Standards for Mathematical Content*.
- K-8 grade level content standards illustrate a **coherent and rigorous curriculum** to be completed in each of these grades.
- The high school *Standards for Mathematical Content* are not by grade or course, rather they are grouped in **conceptual categories** and can be clustered in multiple ways to design courses and programs of study.
- The CCSSM are designed to provide **focus**, by identifying two to four critical areas at each K-8 grade level. These are found in the short narrative section of grades K-8, immediately before each grade level's content standards. They present the areas that should be the primary focus for instruction in that grade. Critical areas for each of the high school conceptual categories are described in the narratives.
- The CCSSM were designed to provide **coherence**, through connections and progressions both within and across grade levels. The authors of the CCSSM have developed *Progressions* documents that provide in-depth discussion of the domain progressions across grades, highlight connections across domains, elaborate on the learning expectations for students, and provide instructional suggestions.
- The CCSSM were designed to be **rigorous**, which is provided by a focus on College and Career Readiness and by emphasizing the *Standards for Mathematical Practice* across K-12. The high school CCSSM also specify additional mathematics (+ standards) that students pursuing mathematics-intensive STEM careers should accomplish.





How to use Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The *CCSSM Standards for Mathematical Content* are organized by grade level in grades K-8. A similar organization was not possible for the high school content standards, since schools and curricula do not all introduce high school content in the same order. The high school content standards are therefore organized by conceptual categories, leaving open the question of how the required content is to be distributed among high school courses. There are two commonly-used approaches: traditional/non-integrated U.S. curriculum in which content is typically divided into courses named Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; and the integrated approach, more commonly used in other countries, in which the strands of mathematics are interwoven in courses which might simply be named Mathematics I, Mathematics II, and Mathematics III. The CCSSM should be fully acquired through either course sequences.

CCSSM Appendix A, *Designing High School Mathematics Courses Based on the Common Core State Standards*, provides four suggested pathways as to how this distribution might be accomplished (http://corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_Mathematics_Appendix_A.pdf). In considering this appendix, it is important to keep in mind comments from the CCSSM authors:

*The **pathways and courses are models, not mandates.** They illustrate possible approaches to organizing the content of the CCSS into coherent and rigorous courses that lead to college and career readiness. States and districts are not expected to adopt these courses as is; rather, they are encouraged to use these pathways and courses as a starting point for developing their own (CCSSM, Appendix A, p.2).*

**Final Report of the Mathematics Common Competencies Committee
July 9, 2010**

**Prepared by Henry Kranendonk
Facilitator of the Committee**

Introduction

This report is designed to outline the vision, history, and the recommendations of the Common Competencies Committee. The challenge in putting this report together, however, is that its final recommendations are in the midst of a state and national movement that has continually guided *and* complicated the goals of the Common Competencies Committee during our tenure as a committee. The impetus for this project was the revision of Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards in mathematics undertaken by the Department of Public Instruction. In June 2009, the Department signed the memorandum of understanding to participate in the Common Core State Standards Initiative. As this national effort grew in importance, this committee reviewed the direction of these Common Core Standards as part of our own vision to better prepare students for post-secondary education.

The national movement in many respects echoes the vision and purpose of our committee. The questions and challenges facing our committee were in many ways similar to the questions and challenges writers of the Common Core Standards faced in their efforts to design K-12 standards with support from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governor's Association. Although it was not possible to coordinate our efforts with the national writers, our work continues to follow the national development of the common core standards as it is still evolving. It is significant, however, that the goal to articulate our vision and recommendations in many ways parallels the national movement addressing inadequate preparation by our students for postsecondary education.

The original focus of the Common Competencies Committee was simply to guide secondary teachers, counselors, parents, and ultimately students with precise, clear descriptions of the mathematics that all students should master upon graduation from high school in order to appropriately place into college credit-bearing, meaningful mathematics or other quantitative courses (i.e., statistics). The committee was not naïve in thinking that simply articulating these skills and understandings would correct the situation faced by the staggering number of Wisconsin high school graduates requiring remedial mathematics courses. The members of this committee indicated that a growing percentage of incoming students at postsecondary institutions across the State of Wisconsin are placed into remedial or non-credit courses due to their inadequate preparation in mathematics. Colleges simply do not have the resources to address the needs of students who are essentially redoing high school (or even middle school) mathematics. It was hoped, however, that the articulation of these skills and understandings by this committee would generate discussions across the state that would

result in recommendations and initiatives to assist high school teachers as they prepare students for postsecondary learning.

The poor preparation of many students entering postsecondary institutions is not necessarily a result of not teaching college preparatory mathematics. Challenges facing teenagers in and out of the classroom have complicated the ability of our high school teachers to reach students without larger support from the community. Our committee clearly articulated how important it is for the community of secondary and postsecondary professionals to work together on addressing this problem.

Phase 1: Articulating the Purpose of the Committee Work

The first range of discussions was under the facilitation of Jennifer Thayer. **Attachment A** summarizes formation of the committee and the initial discussions. The committee was composed of mathematics faculty from Wisconsin's universities, colleges, and high schools, representing the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. The high school representatives had served on Wisconsin's mathematics standards revision work group. **Attachment B** details the Common Competencies Committee make-up.

The first meetings (and summarized in **Attachment A**) focused on defining the purpose, vision and final product or outcomes of this project. Again, our committee articulated its goals as identifying the mathematics skills and understandings that students graduating from high school need to master to be ready to enter and be successful in the first level of college credit-bearing coursework

We reviewed the Wisconsin model academic standards in mathematics and several iterations of revisions proposed for the Wisconsin state standards. The discussion generated several questions and concerns. Questions that were continually raised and not easily answered during the discussions at several meetings include the following:

- (1) What are the mathematics skills and understandings all students should master before leaving high school?
- (2) What are the obstacles that high school students face in mastering the mathematics necessary to compete in the post-secondary institutions?
- (3) What are the challenges faced by high school teachers in providing the mastery of mathematics that is expected? Do educators have access to the appropriate assessment tools as well as ongoing professional development on teaching to all learning styles and including examples from current and future careers in their teaching?
- (4) What represents the most reliable indicator of students' preparation? (ACT? SAT? College entrance exam? Grades in advanced mathematics?)
- (5) What course at the college level represents the first credit-bearing course that should be used as a guide for in-coming post-secondary students?

At the first meeting, each of the postsecondary sectors (public universities, private institutions, and technical colleges) independently identified virtually the same benchmarks in the proposed revisions to Wisconsin's standards to outline what students need in order to enter the first credit-bearing course. The committee had a general sense of agreement on the level of mathematics needed to enter postsecondary credit-bearing courses, the first question in the list above. The summary of the meetings indicates that there was not agreement, however, on the other questions. Developing a specific summary from the committee of skills and understandings, however, was decided as not a productive way for the committee to address the problem and communicate an appropriate plan of action. From the outset, the committee sensed that the standards captured an appropriate level of preparation for all students for high school graduation.

The committee generated specific guidelines that would guide its work in the next phases of its discussions. The focus on preparing students so that they would be successful in a college or university algebra course was generally considered the standard. However, this particular course represents a minimal level preparation, and represents a weak placement for students pursuing many of the STEM related paths in college. The committee expressed the need for a differentiated statement of preparation that would match students' career paths.

Phase Two: August 2009 to present.

In August 2009, Henry Kranendonk was selected to facilitate the Committee. Jennifer Thayer had been selected by State Superintendent Tony Evers to be part of his administration in the Department of Public Instruction, making Jennifer ineligible to serve as facilitator. The Committee was very appreciative of Jennifer's leadership as it moved to this next phase of its work.

Phase Two included at least two formal meetings of the committee. Several conference calls and small group work was also conducted during this time. **Attachment C** summarizes the August 2009 meeting, and **Attachment D** includes the summary of the November 2009 meeting. The primary focus of each of these meetings was to articulate the important mathematics for high school graduates, and ultimately how to coordinate PK-16 efforts that will contribute to students' mastering college-ready mathematics.

Two standards efforts had significant influence on the committee's discussions and recommendations during Phase Two. The first was the mathematics continuum developed as part of the revision of the Wisconsin state standards in mathematics. Kevin McLeod, Diana Kasbaum, and Henry Kranendonk are writers and facilitators of the initiative to revise Wisconsin's standards in mathematics. As they are also members of the Common Competencies Committee, they were able to provide input to the committee of the challenges facing the development of state and national standards. Several recommendations from our committee resulted in revisions and refinements of proposed revised Wisconsin State Standards.

The second significant contribution was the release from the CCSSO of the College and Career Ready Standards as part of the Common Core State Standards initiative. The

College and Career Ready Standards in essence addressed the same challenge of our committee, namely, what is the mathematics that students need to master in order to be successful in college or careers? The first draft of this document from CCSSO provided many comments, concerns, and recommendations from members of the Wisconsin committee. In general, the committee found the recommendations from the national level to be ambitious and meaningful. However, the Committee felt that its own work remained relevant and could ultimately provide support to the national initiative. This link became even more important as Wisconsin moved toward adoption of the Common Core State Standards.

The above two contributions indicated that developing another list of skills and understandings would be counterproductive. The committee sensed that such a list, given the national effort, would be lost in any meaningful discussion. In addition, the committee felt that the proposed revisions to Wisconsin's state standards provided an excellent delineation of the important mathematics for high school graduates to achieve. Rather than provide a distinct list of another set of skills or understandings, the committee was behind a strong statement of support to implement the revised Wisconsin state standards, and to particularly emphasize that mastery of the Algebraic Reasoning track as proposed in the revisions was necessary for students to be successful in the first credit-bearing course in a college, university, or technical college.

A statement was drafted and approved by the committee to indicate the support needed by the educational community for these initiatives.

The committee also supported the concept of identifying advanced content beyond what is expected of all students in the proposed revisions to the Wisconsin state standards. Committee members were particularly supportive of the emerging skills and understandings that were intentionally placed as a next step in a continuum that would continue a student's learning in mathematics. The continuum provided an articulation of possible starting points when addressing a standard, as well as description of how students progress within the content of the standard throughout high school and continuing on into the early years of college, university, or technical college programs. The committee urges the Department of Public Instruction to provide resources that emphasize the continuity of mathematics instruction across grade levels and connections among courses, to maintain students' continuous learning.

Now that State Superintendent Evers has adopted the Common Core State Standards in mathematics as Wisconsin's state standards, the committee affirms its consensus that achieving the skills and understandings identified in the Common Core Standards will provide the preparation needed for students to enter college credit-bearing coursework in any of Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions. The committee addresses in its specific recommendations the means to effectively implement the new standards, addressing course taking, assessment measures, preparation for placement tests, and ongoing communication linking PK-12 and postsecondary educators. The strategies for implementation of the new Wisconsin standards from the Common Core initiative are critical to successfully achieving the charge of this committee.

Summaries and Recommendations

The Committee developed the following statement:

Common Competencies Statement (Draft)

The Wisconsin state standards for mathematics, adopted from the Common Core State Standards Initiative, represent the necessary competencies for success in college. Demonstrated proficiency in these standards will place students into credit-bearing courses and avoid placement into non-credit bearing remedial classes at any of Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions.

Non-credit-bearing mathematics courses in college generally cover basic middle and high school topics in algebra, geometry, and data analysis, with the greatest emphasis being placed on algebra. Students who test poorly on a placement test in mathematics are often required to take these courses for no credit toward their degree. Therefore a strong foundation in all three of these areas, with a strong understanding of **algebra content**, is important to avoid remediation. Since most colleges do not have entry-level courses in geometry, it is also essential that students gain a good understanding of geometry by the end of high school. Algebra is important throughout college work, as it is the language in which qualitative relationships are expressed and analyzed. Geometry allows us to visualize mathematical concepts and to understand them more deeply and instinctively. A sound understanding of data is necessary for activities ranging from making sense of poll results in a newspaper to writing college papers (in any subject) that involve the use of real-world data. Understanding of data analysis is a prerequisite for almost any college statistics course.

Students who wish to receive a degree in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics) major in a timely fashion should take additional mathematics in high school. The Wisconsin state standards include much of the additional math content they will need for these majors, labeled in the document as "additional mathematics that students should learn in order to take advanced courses."

The above statement articulates the Committee's belief that the newly-adopted Wisconsin state standards for mathematics represent a set of common competencies that will prepare high school students for credit-bearing postsecondary mathematics courses whether they attend a college, university, or technical college. The committee supports the work of the Department of Public Instruction and the Common Core initiative, and emphasizes those areas that are most important in avoiding remediation, which still must be addressed.

In addition, the Committee would like to continue to provide support for implementation of these goals. In particular, the following two statements provide a summary of the committee's work:

Recommendations: Maintaining and Demonstrating Competencies

College readiness is a national and state education priority. Therefore, the main purpose of the common set of mathematical competencies outlined above is to prepare **all** students for success in college-level math courses, thereby reducing the number of students who take remedial courses when they begin their postsecondary education. A goal of these mathematics competencies is to reduce the *expectancy gap*; the lack of alignment between what high school teachers expect students to know and do and the expectations of college faculty (American Diploma Project, 2009). As such, these competencies are designed to move toward a coherent PK-16 system of mathematics.

In order for students to maintain and demonstrate the mathematics competencies addressed above, the committee has outlined several recommendations focused on alignment and assessment practices.

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that teachers and parents encourage all students to study mathematics each year of high school through specific coursework and applications.

Discussion: The *Final Report from the National Mathematics Advisory Panel* (2008) outlined that a strong foundation in high school mathematics up to and beyond Algebra II correlates to access to college and graduation from college. Therefore, this committee encourages all students to successfully complete at least one mathematics course in each of their four years of high school. Taking mathematics every year of high school reinforces the competencies above and reduces the need for remedial mathematics coursework.

Data has shown a positive relationship between the number and type of high school mathematics courses students take and college readiness (ACT, 2006). Therefore, the committee recommends that informational materials be available to students and parents in order for them to understand the above competencies that are prerequisite skills for college-level mathematics.

Recommendation 2: In order to provide feedback on student progress towards college readiness, it is recommended that high school teachers utilize multiple formative and summative assessment measures with students throughout the high school mathematics curriculum.

Discussion: These assessment measures should be aligned with the common mathematical competencies outlined above. These measures should also provide critical feedback to students regarding their progress toward attaining the prerequisite knowledge and skills necessary for success in a college-level mathematics coursework. In order to

identify well-aligned assessment items, the committee recommends a taskforce be created to develop sample mathematical items that will provide evidence that a student has mastered and maintained this set of knowledge and skills as related to the common competencies.

One such assessment tool is the *Early Mathematics Placement Tool* (EMPT). A collaborative project with the Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the UW-System, the EMPT is an on-line formative assessment tool designed to provide high school students with information on their preparation for college level mathematics. This testing tool is aligned with the UW Mathematics Placement Test and, when taken early enough, will provide teachers, students, and parents with feedback to help identify what additional math coursework is necessary in high school. Information on the EMPT is available at <https://testing.exams.wisc.edu/empt/home>.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that students have resources to prepare for their college mathematics placement test.

Discussion: Placement tests such as the UW System Mathematics Placement Test, ACCUPLACER or the COMPASS Assessment are designed to place students in the most appropriate college level mathematics course. During the admissions process, incoming college students are typically required to take such a placement test in order to evaluate their readiness in mathematics for specific college coursework within the mathematics sequence or within another discipline. . With appropriate placement, student success in the specified course will be maximized.

The above mathematics placement tests are often comprised of two or more sections. These sections include Basic Mathematics (arithmetic and pre-algebra) and College Mathematics (algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, and/or trigonometry). Student who do not demonstrate proficiency in the Basic Mathematics section are often placed in a remedial mathematics course. The committee recognizes that the best way to prepare students for the placement tests is for school districts to offer a mathematics curriculum that encourages students to take four years of mathematics. In addition, by providing students with information and resources to prepare for the content on these placement tests may increase their access to college-level coursework.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that communication between PK-12 educators and postsecondary educators should be ongoing.

Discussion:

Continued collaboration between the higher education community and the PK-12 education community will ensure the alignment of mathematics competencies with curriculum and assessment practices, increasing the number of students who enter the state's universities prepared for success. In order to help guide efforts for improving students' college preparedness, continued collaboration among all stakeholders should focus on the following:

- Aligning and articulating high school and college-level mathematics expectations
- Ensuring the alignment between high school mathematics expectations and college placement tests.
- Identifying and sharing mathematics performance data to determine preparation for and success in college-level mathematics coursework.

The Next Steps

The Committee's support for and interest in implementation requires a strong network of secondary and postsecondary leaders. As a result, the Common Competencies Committee, or a committee very similar to it, should be continued. The next steps in our work should be focused on the area of assessments. The following statements were developed and endorsed at the final meeting of the committee:

Assessments

Any articulation of the expectations being placed on secondary students (and their teachers) must be tied to assessment.

Assessment serves several purposes:

- Ongoing (and frequent) formative assessments allow teachers to focus their time and energy on those areas in which the students demonstrate insufficient understanding.
- Students who are given frequent assessments are more likely to have an understanding of where they need to focus their own time and energy.
- Assessments should be used to guide high school students' placement into courses that match their level of preparation, provide relevant and challenging content, and lead to successful fulfillment of any post-graduation goals. Students should be made aware that the assessments are meant to do more than contribute to their grade in a particular course.
- There should be an assessment representing end-of-high-school expectations prior to the last year of high school that indicates to students and their teachers the breadth and depth to which concepts and skills have been learned and retained. If such an assessment indicates insufficient retention of mathematics content, then the teaching methods and/or timing of the last high school mathematics course should be adjusted appropriately.

Students and teachers should be able to point to assessment results that document the competencies attained and retained. Mere exposure to a broad range of items cannot be allowed to substitute for an appropriately deep understanding of the concepts and an appropriate facility with the skills.

It should be a goal of local districts and statewide institutions like the DPI to provide teachers and students with assessment materials that

- help clarify the content of the standards.
- help teachers to understand student learning and to refine their teaching strategies.
- help students understand their own location on the continuum of mastery of the set of common competencies.
- evaluate the degree of mastery (in breadth and depth) of the standards.

The following assessment tools serve the following objectives:

- To assure that students have the prerequisite mathematical skills needed for the course
- To assure that students have the prerequisite mathematical skills needed for the current lesson.
- To assure that students have mastered routine skills taught in the present course
- To help ensure that students will not be placed in a remedial course upon entering a college or a university

Pretesting:

Teachers should give students a pretest before each lesson to verify that prerequisite skills have been retained from previous courses and that the students are meeting the basic knowledge and skill level required to learn the new material.

Take-home skill sheets:

It should be routine for teachers to give students a take-home skill sheet that covers the new skills needed for a new lesson. Students should be expected to learn, use, and recall these skills as needed.

Skill quizzes:

Teachers should test students on skills to make sure that a particular collection of skills has actually been learned and these assessments should be a part of the grade so that students are more serious about learning such skills. These quizzes should include new skills as well as skills that students have previously been tested on. Students must learn to see skills as long-term acquisitions rather than things to be learned and quickly forgotten.

Continued next steps: Assessments Models

The Committee concluded its November meeting with a very meaningful activity that we feel should inform the next level of work of this Committee. We examined example

problems and assessments that supported the Common Core or the proposed revised state standards. In small groups, the members of the Committee articulated the connections of the problems to either the revised state standards or to the Common Core (specifically the Career and College Readiness Standards). As we examined various problems, we realized the importance of communicating through problems what any set of standards mean. Since a network of this type will be even more important now that a set of standards has been adopted for Wisconsin, the Committee would like to remain a viable entity in making sure all postsecondary institutions are linked to an appropriate implementation of the standards.

Rather than provide these examples, the committee feels that its work has just started in this area, and encourages efforts to continue to provide opportunities for this committee to meet, explore problems of this type, and provide explanations and evaluations of effective and meaningful problems and formative assessments in conjunction with its support of the new Wisconsin standards from the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

Submitted by Henry Kranendonk

July 9, 2010

Attachments

Attachment A: Developing Common Competencies for Entry into Postsecondary Credit-Bearing Coursework in Mathematics

Attachment B: Committee Roster

Attachment C: Summary of August 2009 meeting

Attachment D: Summary of November 2009 meeting

Attachment A:**Developing Common Competencies for Entry into
Postsecondary Credit-Bearing Coursework in Mathematics****The Challenge:**

Too many high school students are currently admitted into Wisconsin public and private colleges and universities and end up having to take remedial coursework. Students who have taken the courses required for admission may not have the knowledge and skill needed to be successful in credit-bearing coursework. Admission is based on credit for seat time (Carnegie unit) rather than on outcomes or competencies. The moment of truth comes when students receive the results of a placement exam.

The challenge is to identify what students need to know and be able to do in order to enter credit-bearing coursework at the postsecondary level and then to accurately assess their achievement of these competencies. Developing a common set of expectations and a timely feedback system will help students know their progress toward being ready to enter postsecondary study, teachers identify the focus for their instruction; and schools or systems identify the preparation of their students for a next level of study. Such a proactive approach will directly address the large percentage of students currently requiring some remedial coursework.

Already Accomplished:

1. The UW System's Competency-Based Admissions Project (1998) identified competencies in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages on which students would be evaluated for postsecondary admission (<http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/cba/index.htm>)
2. Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction used resources of the American Diploma Project and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills to revise Wisconsin's K-12 model academic standards in mathematics and English language arts, to reflect rigorous and relevant high school standards designed to represent adequate preparation for entry into postsecondary study and work
3. The Wisconsin Technical College System has taken the following steps:
 - a. Standardized systemwide requirements for degrees
 - b. Established 52 general education courses to be consistent across all campuses
 - c. Began the Prepared Learner Initiative by identifying competencies required for admission to entry-level credit-bearing written communications, mathematics, and other subject area courses
4. The UW System currently is piloting more extensively the Early Math Placement Test in grade 11, and providing follow up to check on students' placements at Wisconsin Technical College and University of Wisconsin campuses
5. Wisconsin Technical College System's Tech Prep initiative provides a way to focus teachers' discussions PK-16 on the common elements of their curriculum

What is Needed Now:

Charge: Identify a common set of expectations across Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions for entry into postsecondary credit-bearing coursework. Form the basis for the development of an agreement that students demonstrating this knowledge and skill will enter credit-bearing courses. The initial target will be to identify these expectations for mathematics.

Process:

1. Examine documents already in place
 - Wisconsin Model Academic Standards – identify the expectations in the high school standards; discuss with the ADP/P21 mathematics writing team how these expectations for entering college credit-bearing coursework correlate with high school graduation standards
 - Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) – examine the course competencies listed in the entry-level course sequences
 - UW System Competency-Based Admission – use the mathematics competencies established for admission purposes, representing the 3-year admission requirement
 - Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) – collect representative samples of syllabi from the first credit-bearing courses in mathematics
2. Examine the content of the beginning entry-level mathematics courses at WTCS, UW, and WAICU institutions
3. Examine existing measures for assessing students' preparation to enter college credit-bearing coursework, to inform the setting of the common expectations
 - Examine various assessment measures to help inform the common competencies, including the UW System placement exam, ACT or SAT scores
 - Also examine related measures, such as the UW Early Math Placement Test, ACT's Compass and College Board's Accuplacer, Test of Adult Basic Education, and Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (Grade 10 mathematics assessment)
4. Develop draft set of common competencies for entering postsecondary mathematics courses
5. Revise with feedback from the PK-16 Leadership Council and PK-16 faculty

Task Force:

Four representatives for the UW System, representation from 2- and 4-year campuses
 Four representatives for WTCS
 Four representatives for WAICU institutions
 Two representatives from high schools
 Convener: Department of Public Instruction (to provide a link with the ADP/P21 Mathematics Writing Team, to bring high school standards and college expectations to closer alignment)

Original Timeline:

February 2009: Name the task force

March 2009: First meeting of task force (documents ready to share; identify tasks)

March through June 2009: Monthly meetings

July 2009: Present final report

Attachment B

Math Competencies Task Force

Committee Members

WAICU Representatives

Carl Mueller
Cardinal Stritch University

*Abdelnaser Al-Hasan
Milwaukee School of Engineering

Timothy Hess
Ripon College

Michael Wodzak
Viterbo University

WAICU liaison: Paul Nelson

UW System Representatives

Jennifer Kosiak
UW-La Crosse

*Kevin McLeod
UW-Milwaukee

Dale Rohm
UW-Stevens Point

Fe Evangelista
UW-Whitewater

UW System liaison: Larry Rubin

WTCS Representatives

John Korth
Mid-State Technical College

Al Gomez
Gateway Technical College

*Kellie Knox
Southwest Technical College

David Ruszkiewicz
Milwaukee Technical College

WTCS liaison: MJ Best

K-12 System Representatives

*Wanda Bussey

Pam Plamann

Henry Kranendonk, facilitator

Diana Kasbaum

K-12 liaison: Paul Sandrock

Attachment C

Common Competencies Committee

Notes for meeting held on August 17, 2009

The Common Competencies Committee met on Monday, August 17th in Madison. The following members of the committee were in attendance:

Fe Evangelista, Dale Rohm, Naser Al-Hasan, Diana Kasbaum, Carl Mueller, Kevin McLeod, Tim Hess, Jennifer Thayer, Kellie Knox, John Korth, Wanda Bussey, and Henry Kranendonk.

Henry Kranendonk introduced himself and his new role as facilitator of this committee. Henry thanked Jennifer Thayer for her hard work to start the goals of the committee as the previous facilitator, and congratulated her on her appointment as an Assistant Superintendent for the Department of Public Instruction. The committee is clearly ready to continue the work she started, and to complete our mission to articulate the common competencies.

Henry presented an agenda to guide the discussions. A copy of that agenda is attached with these notes. The primary goal of the meeting was stated as:

- (1) Define and articulate what we mean by "common competencies," and
- (2) Determine what are the next steps of this committee.

At the first meeting, the committee was provided a draft of the revised Wisconsin State Standards for mathematics and the new design of these standards around a Learning Continuum. The purpose of that meeting was to receive input from the committee as possible changes in the format were still possible. The committee also responded at that first meeting that the Learning Continuum represented one way for this committee to articulate the common competencies. From that meeting, it was agreed that the expectations in mathematics for success in the credit-bearing courses is articulated in these standards (especially in stages 2 and 3 of the Continuum), and that support for the standards was important from this committee.

This second meeting, however, had an added "twist" as the national movement to ultimately develop common standards is in high gear. A joint effort by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has resulted in a draft of the *Common Core Standards for College and Career Readiness*. This document was presented by Henry, and summarized from his perspective relative to two recent meetings in Washington, DC with the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) and a special feedback session arranged by Hank Kepner, President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and the CCSSO. From Henry's perspective, the "common core" as developed by this joint effort is generally well written and will be a good fit for completing the development of Wisconsin's revised standards. It was especially noted that the common core is not simply another checklist of mathematics skills. It is written in such a way that core concepts and understandings are also articulated. Although the draft of the common core does not represent the final document, it is anticipated that this will be a good forerunner of the standards and the expectations for all high school graduates.

The committee examined a printed copy of the common core as posted at the time of our meeting on the Website corestandards.org. There was clearly not enough time to read and comment on the core standards as part of our current work. However, it was pointed out by Henry that it will in short time be very important for this committee to study these statements as they will be a major part of the revisions necessary in the revised Wisconsin State Standards. Wisconsin is one of the states that has "signed on" regarding this initiative, and will develop its standards to incorporate the common core. The above initiatives clearly pose some challenges for this committee. Henry suggested the following possibilities for this committee to develop:

- (1) a document that articulates a separate set of common competencies from the revised State Standards; or
- (2) a statement of support of the revised State Standards as the common competencies of our committee; or
- (3) a combination of the above documents, essentially a statement of support and a highlight of a subset of competencies or additional competencies for success in credit bearing courses.

The primary challenge in developing a separate statement of common competencies for the first credit-bearing course is whether or not this accurately addresses the intent of this committee's mission. The first credit-bearing course in most of the institutions present is an algebra or algebra foundations course. If the committee articulated simply the competencies (the skills and topics necessary to be ready for that course), they would in effect nullify the geometric and data-driven reasoning expectations that are articulated in the grades 9-12 standards for all students. In addition, these minimal statements that articulate the readiness for a college algebra course would not convey the critical expectations for students in courses after that algebra course (in mathematics, the sciences, or any other discipline that expects students to have mathematical ability), or the expectations for students aiming for a higher entry credit-bearing course such as pre-calculus or calculus.

The committee drafted a draft statement that Henry will continue to develop to communicate the following general ideas:

- (1) The committee will provide a strong statement of support for the revised Wisconsin State Standards and use these standards to articulate common competencies.
- (2) The committee will indicate that at several colleges, universities, and technical schools, the first on-target credit-bearing course is a college algebra or algebra foundations course; therefore, the algebraic reasoning standards represent the common competencies high school students need to be successful in a course of that type.
- (3) The committee will communicate that the next level of competencies as defined by the geometric and data-driven reasoning standards represent the competencies that will prepare a student for the more on-track courses involving pre-calculus, calculus, and statistics.

The committee did not feel a separate list of competencies would be productive. Many in the committee indicated that such a separate list would actually confuse and complicate these issues.

It was also my interpretation that the committee wants to remain active in supporting the next steps of standards development. The members of the committee expressed some concern over the range of topics addressed in the standards, and suggested the standards writing group consider placing some of the topics (especially some of the topics in the data-driven reasoning section) in gray cells. Although it was acknowledged by the committee that it is the K12 community that must address these standards, it was also felt that the range of the topics outlined would discourage teachers from taking this work seriously. As there were members of the writing committee also in attendance, we encouraged the competencies committee to provide feedback through the DPI website, and that we would convey to the other members of the writing committee these concerns.

The next steps of the committee will be to review and revise the statements that articulate the agreed upon ideas, and to identify sample problems or assessments described by the Wisconsin Standards. Henry indicated that a possible resource for finding problems or assessments would be the NAEP Website, or:
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/>

Henry will hold some discussions with the steering committee members soon and will communicate with the committee their recommendations for continuing our work. Henry will emphasize that the committee recommends that the next meeting be focused on assessments and possibly an outline of our “final report.” Henry will also indicate, however, that a committee that links the K12 (and especially the grades 9-12) to the higher education community should continue and be an active part of making the standards meaningful. More details on that later.

Additional notes for developing our report/statement:

- (1) The unshaded cells of the revised State Standards represent the competencies (recommended, necessary) for success in college and sufficient to avoid remedial course work.
- (2) Recommend that the state standards include the core concepts of the national common core standards.
- (3) Recommend that the state include the Standards for Mathematical Practices from the draft Common Core State Standards for mathematics.
- (4) Most college and universities offer a 1st course in algebra. Important for inclusion in that course are the Algebraic Reasoning standards as developed in the revised State Standards. Although reasoning involved in the geometry and data standards is not addressed in these algebra foundations courses, it is nonetheless important for entry into more on-target courses for specific career options.
- (5) Endorse all of the standards.

(6) For most STEM careers, proficiency in the unshaded and shaded cells is important in order to complete in a timely fashion the mathematics requirements in a student's college or university study.

(7) For our definitions, use the following:

Non-credit bearing courses are essentially middle/high school algebra topics.

Therefore, a strong foundation in algebra is important to avoid taking courses that are essentially offered to remediate students' mathematics knowledge and understanding.

(8) Provide a positive intro statement for outlining the geometry and stat standards. For example, success in other areas of study is enhanced by geometry and statistics.

Stay tuned for updates. Henry will attempt to craft the statements referred to in these notes, and submit them for your review within the next few weeks.

Thank you for a great second meeting, and keep in mind, we will schedule a third meeting as soon as the details are worked out with the steering committee.

Submitted by Henry Kranendonk.
August 25, 2009

Attachment D

Nature of the Final Report
Meeting: November 13, 2009

Outline of report from the Common Competencies Committee Draft 1.0 by Henry Kranendonk

The final report this committee will develop and hopefully endorse is tied to our mission of developing/defining the common competencies among the institutions represented by this committee that will result in better preparation for mathematics at the institution. A primary measure of the success of these efforts would be students needing less remedial course work.

I am proposing an outline of the report for discussion by the committee, and discussed more in-depth on-line and at our third meeting in the fall. (More information of a meeting and follow-up activities will be given after the steering committee reviews our progress.)

1.0 Introduction

- Define our mission and purpose.
- Summarize the institutions and individuals involved in the committee.
- Direct the report to high school teachers and students, guidance counselors, and administrators for discussion with parents and community leaders of mathematics education.

2.0 Common competencies

Outline a definition and a statement that reflections the following (from our notes of the second meeting):

Statement from the Common Competencies Committee (Draft!!!)

1. The un-shaded cells of the Wisconsin state standards for mathematics **represent the minimum sufficient [necessary? recommended?] competencies** for success in college and to avoid remedial coursework.
2. Non-credit courses in college generally cover basic middle and high school algebra topics. Therefore, a strong foundation in algebra is important to avoid remediation. Algebra is also important throughout college work as the language in which qualitative relationships are compactly expressed and analyzed.
3. The study of geometry allows us to visualize mathematical concepts—to “see” the mathematics—and thus to understand them more deeply and instinctively.
4. A sound understanding of data is necessary for activities ranging from making sense of poll results in a newspaper to writing college papers (in any subject) that

involve use of real-world data. A basic knowledge of statistics is also a prerequisite for almost any college statistics course.

5. Students who wish to complete a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics) major in a timely fashion will need to take additional mathematics in high school including, but not necessarily limited to, the shaded portions of the Wisconsin state standards.

(The above summaries were drafted from our notes by Kevin McLeod.)

3.0 Statement of endorsement of the revised State Standards as a statement of the competencies

4.0 Assessment statement

How do our students know if they have achieved an understanding of the standards/competencies?

Provide sample problems (please see the NAEP examples)

Provide a statement of assessments that will help students understand their preparation for college mathematics courses. Include in this statement assessments such as the ACT, the SAT, the early placement test (?), others?

5.0 Conclusion

General restatement of the introduction and the importance of this work.

Additional sections:

Discussion Topics:

- (a) "The Placement Test - What is it and how it should be used?"
- (b) "How can a student understand and improve his or her readiness for post-secondary education?" (ACT, early placement)



Alignment of Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

with

Common Core State Standards for
English Language Arts and Mathematics

and

Common Core Essential Elements



Wisconsin Model
Early Learning
Standards

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

Wisconsin's adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provides an excellent opportunity for Wisconsin school districts and communities to define expectations from birth through preparation for college and work. By aligning the existing Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) with the CCSS, expectations can be set from birth through high school completion.

Since 2003, the WMELS have influenced all programs serving children under mandatory school age to identify what children from birth through entrance to first grade should know and be able to do. Schools across the state have worked with childcare, Head Start, and other community programs to incorporate the WMELS into their early childhood special education, four-year-old kindergarten, and five-year-old kindergarten programs. The adoption of CCSS provides opportunity for alignment between the WMELS and the CCSS in the areas of English language arts and mathematics. The WMELS provide developmental expectations for young children from **birth through entrance to first grade** that are foundational to the CCSS for **kindergarten through grade 12**.

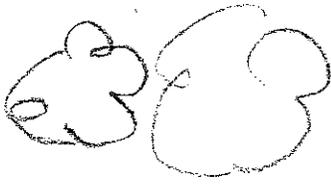
Overview of WMELS

The development of the WMELS was guided by research in the field of early education and supported by content experts from institutions of higher education in the state. The WMELS provide a framework for families, professionals, and policymakers to:

- Share a common language and responsibility for the well-being of children from birth to first grade;
- Know and understand developmental expectations of young children; and
- Understand the connection of early childhood with K-12 educational experiences and lifelong learning.

The WMELS specify developmental expectations for children birth through entrance to first grade and address all the domains of a child's learning and development including: Health and Physical Development; Social and Emotional Development; Language Development and Communication; Approaches to Learning; and Cognition and General Knowledge. The developmental domains are highly interrelated. Knowledge and skills developed in one area of development impact the acquisition of knowledge and skills in other areas of development. Each domain is divided into sub-domains, which include developmental expectations, program standards, performance standards, and a developmental continuum, along with samples of children's behavior and adult strategies.





The WMELS are intended to:

- Improve the quality of all early learning environments;
- Guide professional development activities and investments;
- Inform educators and caregivers in their decisions regarding approaches to curriculum development across all early learning environments; and
- Guide communities as they determine local benchmarks at the district level. The local benchmarks assist to make decisions regarding curriculum and assessment that will determine instruction, interactions, and activities.

Overview of the CCSS

Teachers, content experts, parents, and community leaders collaborated to review the CCSS for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Literacy in All Subjects, and these standards have been adopted by 45 states. Wisconsin adopted the CCSS as Wisconsin's standards in 2010. The CCSS focus on core conceptual understandings and procedures starting in the early grades, enabling teachers to take the time needed to teach core concepts and procedures well—and to give students the opportunity to master them. With students, parents, and teachers working together for shared goals, we can ensure that students make progress each year and graduate from school prepared to succeed in college and in a 21st Century workforce.

Wisconsin's Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning inform the instructional design and implementation of all academic standards. All educational initiatives are guided and impacted by important and often unstated attitudes or principles for teaching and learning. For information about Wisconsin's Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning: see http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/stn_guiding-principles.

Wisconsin Foundations for English Language Arts

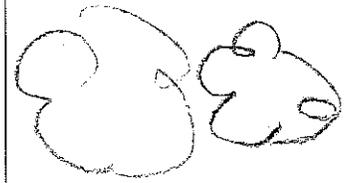
- English language arts is an integrated discipline.
- English language arts instruction builds an understanding of the human experience.
- Literacy is an evolving concept, and becoming literate is a lifelong learning process.
- Critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity (the 4 C's) are aspects of effective English education and skills of Wisconsin graduates.
- Literacy, language, and meaning are socially constructed and are enhanced by multiple perspectives.

Wisconsin Foundations for Mathematics

- Every student must have access to and engage in meaningful, challenging, and rigorous mathematics.
- Mathematics should be experienced as coherent, connected, intrinsically interesting, and relevant.
- Problem solving, understanding, reasoning, and sense-making are at the heart of mathematics teaching and learning and are central to mathematical proficiency.
- Effective mathematics classroom practices include the use of collaboration, discourse, and reflection to engage students in the study of important mathematics.

Connection between WMELS and CCSS

The WMELS address expectations for young children from **birth through entrance to first grade**. The CCSS address what students should know and be able to do from **kindergarten through grade 12**. Since the WMELS and the CCSS both address the five-year-old kindergarten level, school districts are encouraged to use both the WMELS and the CCSS as they move forward with their standards work in early childhood four-year-old kindergarten, five-year-old kindergarten programs, and the primary school years.



Overview of Common Core Essential Elements

Except under rare circumstances, students with disabilities will access the general education curriculum through the CCSS.

However, some students with significant cognitive disabilities cannot meet the general education standards, even with accommodations and modifications. These students are instructed using alternate academic achievement standards, called the Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE). The CCEE are descriptions of what students with significant cognitive disabilities are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12. When considering the CCEE, it is important to note that they are based on the CCSS and align with the WMELS.

It is important to practice caution when making determinations about which set of standards a student will access. Except for the very few students with significant cognitive disabilities, kindergarten students with disabilities will access the general education curriculum through the CCSS. The decision to use the CCEE should be made only after careful consideration of potential long-term impacts such as limiting a student's opportunity to learn and reducing the access to general education curriculum.

For more information on:

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS) contact Connie Ellingson at: connie.ellingson@dpi.wi.gov
- Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE) contact Erin Faasumalie at: erin.faasumalie@dpi.wi.gov
- Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) contact Jill Haglund at: jill.haglund@dpi.wi.gov

For more information about the WMELS:

<http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-documents.php>

For more information regarding Wisconsin's academic standards:

http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/stn_home

For more information about teaching and learning English language arts in Wisconsin and to download and print the Wisconsin CCSS for English Language Arts:

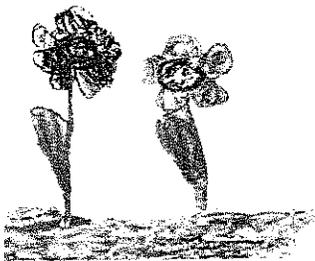
http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/stn_ela-tchingandlrng

For more information about teaching and learning mathematics in Wisconsin and to download and print the Wisconsin CCSS for Mathematics:

<http://dpi.wi.gov/standards/math-tchingandlrng.html>

The CCEE webpage:

http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_assmt-ccee



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Comparison with Mathematics Strands of Wisconsin Common Core State Standards (Grade K Overview)

Common Core State Standards: Mathematics Domains					
	Counting and Cardinality	Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Number and Operations in Base Ten	Measurement and Data	Geometry
Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Developmental Domain: V. Cognition and General Knowledge Sub-Domain: B. Mathematical Thinking	Performance Standard B.EL.1 Demonstrates understanding of numbers and counting	Performance Standard B.EL.2 Understands number operations and relationships	Performance Standard B.EL.2 Understands number operations and relationships	Performance Standard B.EL.5 Understands the concept of measurement Performance Standard B.EL.6 Collects, describes and records information using all senses	Performance Standard B.EL.3 Explores, recognizes, and describes shapes and spatial relationships

Standards for Mathematical Practice

<http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/files/cal/pdf/stds-math-practice.pdf>

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

For a summary of some of the characteristics exhibited by mathematically proficient students

<http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/files/cal/pdf/mathprof.pdf>

**Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards
Comparison with English Language Arts Strands
of Wisconsin Common Core State Standards
(Kindergarten)**

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Strands				
	Reading: Literature	Reading: Informational Text	Reading: Foundational Skills	Writing
Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Developmental Domain: III. Language Development and Communication Sub-Domain: C. Early Literacy	Performance Standard C.EL.3 Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works	Performance Standard C.EL.3 Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works	Performance Standard C.EL.1 Develops ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze auditory parts of spoken language Performance Standard C.EL.2 Understands concept that the alphabet represents the sounds of spoken language and letters of written language Performance Standard C.EL.3 Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works	Performance Standard C.EL.4 Uses writing to represent thoughts or ideas

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Comparison with English Language Arts Strands of Wisconsin Common Core State Standards (Kindergarten)

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Strands		
	Speaking and Listening	Language
<p style="margin: 0;">Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Developmental Domain: III. Language Development and Communication Sub-Domain: A. Listening and Understanding Sub-Domain: B. Speaking and Communicating Sub-Domain: C. Early Literacy</p>	<p>Performance Standard A.EL.1 Derives meaning through listening to communication of others and sounds in the environment</p> <p>Performance Standard A.EL.2 Listens and responds to communications with others</p> <p>Performance Standard A.EL.3 Follows directions of increasing complexity</p> <p>Performance Standard B.EL.1 Uses gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate</p> <p>Performance Standard B.EL.2a Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Form-Syntax)</p> <p>Performance Standard B.EL.2b Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Content-Semantics)</p> <p>Performance Standard B.EL.2c Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Function-Pragmatics)</p>	<p>Performance Standard B.EL.2a Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Form-Syntax: rule system for combining words, phrases, and sentences, includes parts of speech, word order, and sentence structure)</p> <p>Performance Standard B.EL.2b Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Form-Semantics: rule system for establishing meaning of words, individually and in combination)</p> <p>Performance Standard C.EL.4 Uses writing to represent thoughts or ideas</p>

Portrait of a Literate Student

<http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/files/cal/pdf/portrait-literatestudent.pdf>

1. Demonstrate independence.
2. Build strong content and knowledge.
3. Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
4. Comprehend as well as critique.
5. Value evidence.
6. Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
7. Come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

For additional information, contact:

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Early Childhood Consultant
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Wisconsin Model
Early Learning
Standards 

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

Wednesday, October 23, 2013

My name is Michelle Olson, and I would like to go on record in support of the Common Core State Standards. I am a resident of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, a parent, and an educator.

As a resident of Wisconsin, I am encouraged by the prospects of creating a vibrant and skilled workforce for the state. I feel that the CCSS will help to do this.

As a parent, I want my children to have the best education to prepare them for life after high school, whatever that may be. These new rigorous standards will help them be ready for college or a career.

As an educator, I am actively implementing the new standards in my classroom. They are much deeper and more challenging than the prior Wisconsin standards. While we transition to the new standards, we are working to fill knowledge gaps due to adjusted grade level expectations. I, like my other colleagues, have spent countless hours preparing for this.

As we challenge students to reach these new rigorous expectations, there will be struggles. We must all work together to continue to breathe life into these new standards as we implement them into the classrooms across the state. We must support all teachers, administrators, and support staff in this transition. In addition, we must engage all students in ways that help them achieve these new educational goals.

Opponents say the standards tell us what to teach and decide our curriculum. CCSS are the depth that we need to take these skills. Districts still decide curriculum and teachers still use the art of instruction, creating dynamic lessons and differentiating instruction.

Please, I urge you to allow the rollout of the CCSS to continue. We are in the process of switching over and we have all invested time and money to do so. Districts have purchased new curriculum aligned to the new standards at great cost to them. Teachers and administrators are putting a lot of time and energy into professional development as well.

I would like to leave you with this analogy. Once a man had a toothache, and it needed to be fixed. The dentist said he needed a root canal to fix it. Halfway through the root canal, the police captain decided that this was a

mistake. The dentist was told to stop the root canal. He was not a dentist nor was he the patient. The patient was left with an unfinished root canal, with the root exposed. He was left trying to figure out how he was supposed to eat without pain, all because the police chief thought he knew better than the dentist.

Our old standards are that toothache. The CCSS are the root canal. We are trying to fix the problems of our students who were not as college and career ready as we thought. If the CCSS are stopped during implementation, the students will be left in the lurch. Our children deserve much better.

Michelle Olson

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Common Core State Standards Hearing
October 23, 2013

Jerry Walters, CESA 11 Agency Administrator

Good Afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to share with you my first-hand experiences with the Common Core State Standards and our school districts in Northwest Wisconsin. As the agency administrator for CESA 11, I have the privilege of serving 39 school districts from Webster to Pepin, Elk Mound to Hudson.

CESA stands for Cooperative Educational Service Agency, and the key component of our name is 'Cooperative'. Hundreds of teachers and administrators have been coming together at our agency to unpack, investigate, learn, implement and develop units based on best practice since 2010. The CCSS has been the catalyst for educators from around the state to take a serious look at the expectations and rigor of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, and then raise the bar for today's learners. It is exciting and heart-warming to see conference rooms full of Wisconsin's best educators working together, sharing ideas, developing strategies and elevating the entire district curriculum in an effort to ensure that today's learners are college and career ready. The rigor adopted in Math and English/Language Arts standards is at unprecedented levels, unlike anything any of us has experienced in our years of K-12 education. To witness the professional development that these teachers and administrators have achieved, the astronomical amount of hours that have been dedicated to the implementation of these higher standards, and the instantaneous results that we are witnessing from our districts, makes any conversation of 'starting over' unimaginable.

In my position, I have been able to hear some of the arguments being presented in opposition to the Common Core State Standards. To my dismay, most of the criticisms are either unfounded, or downright untrue. Please understand that the Common Core is a set of standards, the level that one could expect ALL students to achieve at the different educational benchmarks of their academic career. These standards have been raised to unprecedented heights, and are currently applicable to only Math and English/Language Arts. Again, they are 'STANDARDS', not an academic ceiling. The goal for all educators and students is to use these standards as a base and achieve to a higher level. Our students can achieve at very high levels, and we are already hearing of those higher levels of achievement everyday from our districts and our parents.

The Common Core State Standards are STANDARDS not CURRICULUM. Too many times we hear that the government is telling us what to teach. Materials, textbooks, teaching strategies and curriculum is still a local decision. These lofty standards will establish the goal, but it is up to the local school district to establish the curriculum, materials and teaching strategies for their communities.

The time, effort and cost that our school districts have invested in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, although tremendously beneficial to our students, has been a financial burden on already tight budgets. Much of the work requires time in addition to the typical school day and during the summer months. To arbitrarily throw away all of the work, all of the successes, and all of the academic gains, to start over with nothing, with a measureless objective of 'we could do better', is a slap in the face of educators and taxpayers throughout this state.

Wisconsin students have always scored extremely well in comparison to the other states, and are always in the top 1 or 2 in the nation in ACT scores. Yet, we have adopted the Common Core State Standards because we took that challenge of 'we can do better'. Our students deserve the very best. They deserve and demand a rigorous learning environment that prepare them for the unknown world that they will be living in. The Common Core State Standards is a bold and aggressive step to ensure that today's learners are prepared for tomorrow's colleges and careers. Let's support the work, the aggressive targets, and the successes. Let's keep the train rolling.

Thank you for your time and your work on behalf of today's and tomorrow's learners.

Respectfully,



Jerry Walters

CESA 11 Agency Administrator

Dear Senators and Representatives

As an educator and faculty member in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, I am here to give my support for the Wisconsin adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

You have entered in testimony from UW System that stated that the adoption of common standards provides the opportunity to “better define college readiness” and “redefine remedial education.” These strong statements are reflective of the beliefs of other faculty in my department who signed a document supporting the continued implementation of the CCSSM. I believe the CCSSM provides a coherent articulation of what students can and will be able to do at each grade level. The CCSSM also provides a framework for high expectations for all students and will “better align the last two years of high school with college entry courses.”

Serving on a state-wide leadership team, I have worked collaboratively with higher education faculty, K-12 teachers, and administrators to translate this framework into actionable targets for both pre-service and in-service teachers and their students. As part of the mathematics education team at UW-L, we have worked diligently to support teacher candidates as they gain the knowledge and competence to implement these high expectations into their own classroom. Through ongoing professional development with in-service teachers, we are developing Wisconsin leaders who are working within their schools to develop curriculum that focuses on developing a deep understanding of mathematics. The CCSSM serves as a framework for these teachers to collaborate across school districts and share common instructional strategies to support and extend learners. As such, Wisconsin has had a strong voice in determining how standards guide curriculum and assessment at the local level.

Over the past month, you have also heard testimony from school districts and educators who have stated that the CCSSM has allowed their schools to “raise the bar and hold every student to high exceptions” (Madison Metropolitan School District, 2013). I firmly stand by these statements in that the CCSSM calls for a robust understanding of mathematical concepts and high levels of mathematical rigor. As a mathematics educator, I have witnessed 5th grade students verifying equivalent numerical expressions used to record their calculations, 8th grade students developing an understanding of the slope of a line using similar triangles, 6th graders solving ratio and percent problems that were once in the high school curriculum, 2nd graders debating the attributes of specific shapes. These are only a few of the examples of how the CCSSM has provided a foundation to extend the cognitive rigor of the mathematics classroom.

At these hearings, I have also heard testimony on the need for rigorous standards in algebra at the middle grades. With a quick search of Algebra 1 curriculum across the state, you will see many of the same learning goals associated with the CCSSM Domains of Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Expressions and Equations, and Functions at the middle level. These topics include properties of real numbers, linear equations and inequalities, and simultaneous equations. The intent of these standards is to provide a foundation for algebra in high school --- one that builds conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. The CCSSM defines this

understanding as “the ability to justify, in a way appropriate to the student's mathematical maturity, why a particular mathematical statement is true or where a mathematical rule comes from” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010, p. 4). With a focus on real world settings, middle grade students build their adaptive reasoning, strategic competency, and productive disposition toward mathematics. These five components, referred to as the five strands for mathematical proficiency (National Research Council, 2001), are the elements of *doing mathematics*.

Finally, I want to thank you all for your dedication to education in Wisconsin.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Jennifer Kosiak
Associate Professor of Mathematics
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards (Mathematics)*. Author: Washington D.C.
National Research Council. (2001). *Adding it up: Helping children learn mathematics*. J.Kilpatrick, J. Swafford, and B.Findell (Eds.). Mathematics Learning Study Committee, Center for Education, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

October 23, 2013

My name is Leah Lechleiter-Luke. I am here today to offer testimony in support of the Common Core State Standards. I am a 22-year-veteran English and Spanish teacher and the 2010 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year. I have been involved in varying levels of conversations about the Common Core since 2010. I supported the Common Core in 2010; I have not wavered in my support over these past three years.

Before beginning, I would like to mention that being here today, to speak in support of the Common Core, will not come without repercussion. In my home district we have a few very vocal opponents of the Common Core. It's likely that a Common Core opponent will take aim at my remarks and disparage my efforts here. Regardless, I believe being here today is vastly important. Speaking up for something I believe in is what I do. Teacher input in this conversation is critical.

I am not here to offer testimony about how I have incorporated the Common Core into my classroom practice. There have been numerous teachers, during the first two hearings and probably today, who have addressed the changes that the implementation of the Common Core have had on their instructional practices and on the children they teach. My purpose today is draw the conversation back a bit, to "widen the angle" by putting on a different lens. I want to share some unique experiences I have had related to the Common Core in the capacity as 2010 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year, 2011-2012 Teaching Ambassador Fellow with the U.S. Department of Education, and as a practicing teacher who provides relevant feedback directly to the Common Core Implementation team at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. To be clear, I am here on my own accord, speaking as a master practitioner.

As the 2010 Wisconsin State Teacher of the Year, I had the opportunity, along with 54 other State and Territory Teachers of the Year, to provide feedback on the embargoed early draft of the Common Core. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), a nonpartisan nationwide organization, invited us, as teachers recognized for excellence in the classroom, to comb through the draft and provide specific, constructive feedback. That is exactly what we did. We were just one of a number of expert teacher groups who provided feedback on the draft. It is important to note that collection of feedback was not limited to those in education. Public comment, where parents, community members, and really anyone, was opened in the spring of 2010. I encouraged my Wisconsin colleagues to offer feedback--many did. Perhaps some of you in this room took the opportunity to offer feedback on the Common Core draft as well.

What I saw in the Common Core is what I continue to see now. This is an excellent educational design which began with, to use teacher-talk, "the end in mind." This nation's governors and state superintendents, through their organizations the National Governors Alliance (NGA) and CCSSO, first created the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)—which were released in 2009. Then knowing where we needed to get students by the end of their K-12 experience, the authors of the Common Core worked backwards. They broke down those standards and worked backwards from Grade 12 to Grade 11 to Grade 10 all the way down to Kindergarten. Each skill builds on the last for a succinct, tight framework that prepares all children to be college and

career ready. As a 22-year-veteran teacher, I like that design. It offers a clear framework which can be built upon at the local level to meet local needs. In the past we had redundancy and disjointed educational goals across this country. We relied on textbook companies, incidentally based quite far away from students and teachers in Wisconsin, to provide the scope and sequence of what we teach.

Let me insert two examples of pre-Common Core redundancy and inefficiency. The first is an example of redundancy of resources. Teachers of the Year receive training from the Smithsonian in how to use their online resources. In 2010, pre-Common Core, I remember opening up a Smithsonian lesson and looking at the list of standards provided. The way the website was designed, a teacher would open a lesson created by Smithsonian curriculum writers then click on his or her state to see what standards from the individual's state were met by the lesson. 50 states—50 sets of standards—one lesson. At the time it struck me as an incredibly inefficient system and frankly a waste of human resources to develop 50 separate sets of standards.

My second example speaks to the inadvertent redundancy of instruction at the student level. As a recognized teacher-leader I am sometimes drawn out of my classroom. When I return from an event, my students always ask about where I was and what I was doing. After one trip, I shared an overview of the Common Core with my students. One young lady commented, “Oh, that’s a great idea. When I moved here last year, I repeated a lot of the same stuff that I had already learned in my old district. I had to go through it all over again.” This student’s “old district” is just fifteen miles down the road. In a globally competitive world, where our students are competing with other students, not just fifteen miles down the road from Mauston, Wisconsin but 9,000 miles away in Mumbai, India, we don’t have time for inadvertent redundancy of instruction. Using the Common Core as a framework to guide instruction avoids time-wasting redundancy and inefficiency.

In closing, I support the Common Core State Standards. I have supported them from the introduction of College and Career Readiness Standards, through the K-12 draft stages, through rollout in June 2010, and now during the implementation phase. I have spoken multiple times in support of the Common Core, including on National Public Radio in 2011. At that time the criticism was that the standards were too stringent. Now I find myself addressing the new criticism that they are too easy. While the pendulum swings and opposition tries to gain traction, my resolve has not changed. The Common Core is a framework on which hardworking teachers can base instructional decisions while still catering to the needs of individual students. The Common Core allows Wisconsin to provide first-class, internationally benchmarked education to all Wisconsin students.

Leah Lechleiter-Luke
High School Spanish/English Teacher
School District of Mauston
2010 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year

October 23, 2013

My name is Amy Traynor. I have been teaching mathematics for fifteen years. I have a Master's in Education, I am a National Board Certified Teacher, and the 2013 Middle School Teacher of the Year. I feel comfortable saying that I am an expert in my field. Over the past few years I have seen a trend where professionals, from fields outside of education, feel they are qualified to speak about educational issues. Just because someone went to school doesn't make them experienced to speak on the best practices of the teaching profession. We, the educational professionals of Wisconsin, are the experts in this field. We are the ones who are in the trenches day after day. We know what to teach and how to teach it. We are the voices that should be heard when decisions regarding the classroom are made. I currently teach two 8th grade LD/EBD inclusion math classes, and three Algebra classes at DeLong Middle School in the Eau Claire Area School District. I am also a parent to three boys, grades eleven, six, and three. In my years at DeLong I have taught a diverse population of students (Title One, English Language, Learning Disabled, Emotional Behavioral Disabled, Gift, and Accelerated math learners, etc.). I have sat on many math committees both within the Eau Claire Area School District and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Most of those committees have focused a lot of time and energy on professional development around the Common Core over the past four years. Our Curriculum and Instruction team, together with math teachers, at the Eau Claire Area School District have spent many hours and a great deal of energy on training teachers how to interpret, instruct, and assess our new standards. We, as a collective group of math teachers, have been living and breathing these standards for the last three years. I support the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Math and ELA.

I would first like to state that I have not seen or heard of any opposition to the CCSS from my colleagues and believe me if you ask my administrator I am the eyes and the ears of the group.

However, I have witnessed concern from my colleagues about how they are going to teach these more rigorous standards and about how the standardized assessments may be used in teacher accountability measures. I, thankfully, work in a district that knows and understands that the ONE standardized assessment is not the be-all to end-all; that students need to show progress over time with frequent and varied assessment measures. Not every student is a test-taker, some are verbal, some can create, and others just need more time to show their clear understanding of concepts. We have and will continue to work very hard at creating and updating common assessments, to show student growth, that mesh with our curriculum. Because of these other assessment measures we, in the Eau Claire Area School District, do not teach to THE test. The Common Core State Standards guide our curriculum and our curriculum is very rigorous.

My colleagues, who I also esteem as experts in the field, and I have been *unpacking* the standards. This is a process that we use to 1) fully understand what the standard is asking students to know and be able to do and then 2) determine how are we going to teach and assess this concept/standard. Through this process we have clearly seen how rigorous these standards truly are. I have also seen this through my own children. For example, a couple weeks ago my 6th grader, Gavin, asked my husband to help him with a math assignment. As he started to help I heard my husband say, "What in the world does it mean to make a conjecture about the relationship between the numbers in the Venn diagram?". I perked up when I heard this, one, because I think it was a slight call for help, and two, because I was impressed by the use of the word conjecture and the level of reasoning that has to occur for my son to understand his homework. This is also important because I know that my eldest son, Derek, who is now an 11th grader, first started to make conjectures in math class in 8th grade. In the Common Core Era, Gavin was exposed to rich mathematical vocabulary and reasoning two years

earlier. The Common Core Math Content and Practice Standards are pushing MY kids, OUR kids, to higher level meaningful mathematics.

The Common Core initiative has also led to more collaboration between teachers, not only within my district but between districts as well. It has given us a common set of standards that are specific to each grade level instead of asking districts to figure out where things should be taught between the 4th, 8th, and 10th grade level benchmarks. Because of these specific standards the conversations are deeper and teachers can spend more time on instructional strategies to teach the standards instead of trying to put the pieces together on when concepts need to be taught. The CCSS has also given math teachers a common language and vocabulary base. This is important because common math vocabulary throughout a student's school career will lead to greater understanding of math concepts. For example, a few days ago during collaboration time my 8th grade math colleagues and I were planning our lessons for the next week. We just started a unit on linear relationships and we were discussing the idea of proportional relationships and direct variations. We went around and around about what these two vocab terms meant to finally agree that they were the same concept, just different vocabulary. This is just one of many examples of how confusing math can be to students if we are not using a common vocabulary base. The CCSS are helping teachers collaboratively create a concise, specific vocabulary that is agreed upon by those who teach it.

The Common Core shows the beauty of Mathematics. The standards introduce algebra already in elementary school and build on that knowledge every year so the foundation is strong and sturdy when they get to middle school and are ready for more abstract thinking. The same is done with fractions, a concept that is always a struggle for students. The idea of a fraction is introduced very early in elementary school and then built upon every year to form a better, conceptual understanding to take students to a higher, deeper level of understanding.

I am energized and more inspired than ever to teach math because of the Common Core Standards. My students are talking and I don't mean about the social event of the weekend. They are talking about math. In fact, they are arguing sometimes. The Math Practice Standards, which are part of the CCSS, have driven me to a new level of math instruction for my students in my classroom. You will see and hear math discussions daily in my room. Students explaining their reasoning to others, critiquing the reasoning of others, and attacking problems that I would never have guessed they could through problem solving and perseverance. These are the skills that they need to be college and career ready. They need to persevere through problem solving. They need to work together on a common task or problem and talk with each other to solve it. They don't need a list of rote, discrete skills to memorize and regurgitate.

To conclude, If you have not been in a public school classroom in the last few years I invite you to visit one before you make a decision that will impact the great public school teachers, students, and families of this state. In fact, you are welcome to come to my class any day of the week, but be ready to think and talk math!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ATD', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Amy Traynor

Eau Claire Area School District

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School District of Amery

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October 23, 2013

Good afternoon,

My name is Stephen Schiell, District Administrator for the School District of Amery. It is my pleasure to inform you that the School District of Amery embraces higher standards and expectations that the Common Core State Standards are creating for our Students! Our middle school students have the 10th best report card in our state; our school district is 128th out of 426 school districts. This is done even though our community is struggling like many other communities in our state with poverty.

The Common Core State Standards are more rigorous than the past standards that our state has used. The Common Core State Standards expect a higher level of thinking for our students. Our teachers and staff have been preparing for full implementation of the Math and Reading and Language Arts Standards for the past 3 years. The new Smarter Balance Test is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, our students, teachers and staff expect to be successful when our students are tested during the 2014-15 school year. Changing in mid-stream is not an option.

The School District of Amery has spent thousands of man hours training our teachers, thousands of dollars to prepare for the Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balance Test. Throwing out the Common Core State Standards would mean many more years of redoing what we have just done and not making a difference for our students today. From what I have learned from the concerned citizens is that their perceptions are based on inaccurate information. School Districts will have local control! Standards are not Curriculum. The Common Core State Standards do not promote anti American beliefs and values.

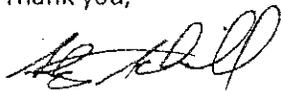
This national process, which included the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of State School Officers (CCSSO) helped to create the Common Core State Standards (I would add that Governor Walker is a member of the NGA). These educational professionals came together because there was a need to increase rigor for all students and to create additional accountability to measure how our students and schools are doing when compared to each other and to the World. The Common Core State Standards are not a national or state curriculum nor are they federally mandated. They were developed by teams of experts, educators and stakeholders in a process led by the NGA and CCSSO.

The mission of the School District of Amery is to foster academic excellence, life-long learning and citizenship.

Politicians such as you were all in on this concept. I find it ironic that three years later as a result of the "politics" in this state, we are looking at reconsidering the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. If there was a concern our Governor and our Legislature should have addressed this 3 years ago. This is the 11th hour for our students.

I know that you want the very best for our students in Wisconsin! I know that you will choose the right path for the students of Wisconsin! For the good of all students you will look away from the politics and do the right thing, you will support all of the efforts that have been done by all of the teachers, staff, and administrators and support the Common Core State Standards that are in place, being used and ready to be tested next school year.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Schiell', written in a cursive style.

Stephen Schiell
District Administrator
School District of Amery

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Home of the

Comets

*The School District of Cameron
does not discriminate on the basis
of race, color, national origin,
age, gender, or disability.*

October 23, 2013

Remarks made concerning the Common Core State Standards

Good afternoon. I am Dr. Randal Braun, district administrator of the School District of Cameron, located about 50 minutes north of here at the intersection of Highways 8 and 53. Since 2010, 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards. Each state made its local decision to adopt after opportunities to review drafts and voice feedback. The CCSS are rigorous, internationally-benchmarked English language arts and mathematics standards that are designed to ensure that students leave school with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and careers. The CCSS are NOT a national or state curriculum nor are they federally mandated. They were developed by a team of experts, educators and stakeholders in a process led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Since 2010, the CCSS have garnered support from business, professional, advocacy, and policy stakeholders, and also have the support of national parent organizations.

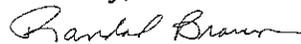
Others have spoken about the calculated attempt to misinform the public and the legislature about the content of and motivations behind the Wisconsin adoption of the Common Core Standards. I will speak about my district's implementation of the Common Core Standards. Cameron began implementation shortly after adoption of the standards. We have spent considerable time and energy and made an investment

of many thousands of dollars of taxpayer's money to do a thorough job of incorporating the Common Core into the way that we do business. Just like the major auto manufacturers have to re-design and re-tool now and then to remain competitive, so do our schools. We are once again engaged in that process; a process that promises to allow us to make great gains in the educational outcomes of our students.

Make no mistake, the Common Core is not just about what we will teach; it is mostly about how we are fundamentally changing how we teach to correspond with the research that indicates how our students best learn. No longer are we going to be covering our subjects a mile wide and an inch deep, but with the guidance and framework of the Common Core we will transform what students learn into deeply explored content that will translate into applicable skills. Skills that will allow our students to work more productively, learn more easily, and live more enriched lives.

There are those who think that somehow the Common Core is a Big Brother movement. Poppycock! Please listen to those educators, parents, and business owners who support the Common Core. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Randal Braun
District Administrator

School District of Ashland

KEITH W. HILTS, Ph. D. *Superintendent*
BONNIE L. STEGMANN, *Business Manager*

BARBARA J. O'BRIEN, *Director of Curriculum / Instruction*
KAREN K. BAKER, *Director of Pupil Services*

October 23, 2013

Testimony on Common Core State Standards

To: The Senate and Assembly Select Committees for Review of the Common Core Standards Initiative

Dear members of the Common Core Review Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to share our thoughts and experiences and hopes for the Common Core State Standards. My name is Keith Hiltz, Superintendent for the School District of Ashland, located on the southern shore of Lake Superior. I speak on behalf of the members of our school district including our school board, faculty, administration and community members who are fully supportive of the Common Core State Standards. We have been engaged in the professional work of developing curriculum, assessments and materials in support of these standards for over three years. Thousands of hours and dollars have been invested in good faith efforts to embrace the higher expectations of the CCSS. We have aligned our local district assessments to the CCSS. Much of our professional development time and budget have been invested in support of the CCSS.

Why have we focused so much effort on preparing for the CCSS?

- First, we understood it would be a requirement of our districts to implement the CCSS. We understood that the CCSS had been recommended by the Department of Public Instruction and approved by the Legislature and Governor.
- Second, we welcomed the specificity, increased rigor and expectations for higher order thinking embodied within the CCSS. We are always engaged in continuous improvement, but the CCSS sparked a renewed focus on instructional strategies to meet diverse student needs. The inclusion and emphasis on content-area literacy is particularly welcome.
- Third, we understood that the CCSS had widespread support of many respected groups including the Council of Chief School State Officers, the National Governors Association and the Thomas B. Fordham Institute among others. In fact, upon reviewing the CCSS and all other state standards, the Fordham Institute graded the CCSS at a level of B+, which was much more favorable than the previous Wisconsin standards, which received a grade of D. Further, the Fordham Institute complimented the state of Wisconsin for adopting the CCSS in June 2010. (The State of State Standards—and the Common Core—in 2010, July, 2010. Carmichael, Wilson, Porter-Magee & Martino) The institute further noted that the Common Core standards for ELA and Math are clearer and more rigorous than those in use in most states.

The Common Core standards are not perfect, no standards are. However, they give needed specificity in expectations for all students at all grade levels. They are not a ceiling, and so do not limit the potential for any student. Based on the solid research base, the support of respected groups and the significant investment of resources by school districts across the state, I ask that the committee recommend the continued implementation of the CCSS.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Keith Hilts". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Keith Hilts, Ph.D.
Superintendent,
School District of Ashland

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the Common Core State Standards, the impact these standards will have on student learning and the work of the professional staff in our district. My name is Trish Sheridan, and I serve as the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for the School District of Somerset. I have been an educator for the past 26 years working in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. I am also the parent of 3 children, two of which are attending University of Wisconsin Lacrosse.

Academic standards provide the roadmap for districts to understand what our students need to know and do. After years of reviewing, critiquing and giving feedback of the CCSS when they were in draft form, we were anxious to get our hands on these rigorous academic benchmarks and begin the work of unpacking them locally.

Educators have always looked to the state standards for guidance and direction. For the 17 years I worked as an elementary teacher and gifted education instructor in the 4th largest district in Minnesota, I aligned my lessons and assessments to the standards. This vision was not clear working with the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. These standards were written in three bands with learning benchmarked at 3 grade levels: 4th, 8th and 10th. Teachers across my district were left with trying to determine that if by grade 4, students had to "Extend the literal meaning of a text by making inferences, and evaluate the significance and validity of texts in light of prior knowledge and experience," what did that mean for our 3rd graders? Our 1st graders? Our kindergarteners?

The Common Core State Standards are simply the next generation of our previous standards. Although there is nothing simple about the implementation of these academic goals and expectations. Districts across Wisconsin have been working for the last four years to understand the rigor and the shifts the new standards bring to the classroom. In Somerset, we have been making decisions about resources, studying instructional practice, and creating assessments in order to help each of our students learn and achieve higher levels than we have seen in the past. Our teachers have been empowered, working collaboratively as professional learning communities to identify learning targets aligned to the CCSS. We have created units of study, common assessments to measure student learning, and identified systems of support for our students who need additional help.

One of the most promising parts of the CCSS is the shift that we are all responsible for helping our students become highly literate thinkers who are college and career ready. The Standards define goals not only for English language arts (ELA) but also for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. One of our community partners and business leader shared with us that his number one need for all potential employees is to have great communication skills. His future employees must be able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. These skills are clearly defined and found in the Common Core State Standards along with critical thinking and real world applications of these skills.

We need to work collaboratively, making decisions locally and drawing upon the talented professionals who directly impact the students they work with every day. The Standards do not limit us, they enrich and support our work. We are also able to draw upon the talents of others across the nation who have the same goals. We have been able to share best practices and resources with others from our state and across the country. This collective effort will have great impact on our students' learning.

Our focus for the last several years in Somerset of developing our curriculum, gathering resources, delivering rich professional development, and building assessments has come with much cost. It is good work, it is the right work, and it needs to continue if we want our students to be competitive in our future economy. The hearings, the propaganda, and the immense amount of misinformation is threatening the progress of our work. It is distracting and taking a forefront on important educational issues rather than supporting us in doing what is best for our students and the professionals who impact their learning. Please let us do what we are charged to do, prepare our students to be college and career ready.

I would like to invite you to visit the School District of Somerset to learn more about the decisions we have made as we work to implement the Standards, align our curriculum and develop authentic assessment of student learning.

Trish Sheridan

Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Somerset School District

639 Sunrise Drive, Somerset, WI 54025

(715) 247-3313 tsheridan@somerset.k12.wi.us



School District of Osceola

Mark Luebker, District Administrator
P. O. Box 128
331 Middle School Drive
Osceola, WI 54020
715-294-4140
FAX: 715-294-2428
October 23, 2013

Board of Education
Timm Johnson, President
Craig Brunclik, Vice President
Rosanne Anderson, Treasurer
Pete Kammerud, Clerk
Keri Uzpen, Director

Dear Wisconsin State Legislators,

The School District of Osceola seeks your support in maintaining Wisconsin's commitment to the Common Core State Standards. We have invested a great deal of resources into implementing these standards. If the state decides to shift to a new set of expectations, our significant local investment would be lost and we would struggle to find additional resources to reinvest to replicate this work. The Common Core is the newest component in our strong educational tradition in Osceola. Our schools need time to meet the challenge that has been set before them. We value the efforts that have been put forth by our students and our talented, dedicated staff and are excited about the possibilities in the future.

The Common Core State Standards offer us the opportunity to clearly define the knowledge and skills that will prepare our students to be college and career ready. These standards focus on rigorous proficiencies that dramatically raise the expectations of what Wisconsin students are expected to know and be able to do. It is estimated that Wisconsin experienced one of the highest jumps in rigor from old to new standards when we adopted the Common Core. These standards establish what students need to learn, but they do not dictate how teachers should teach. Our local schools and professional staff will continue to decide how best to help students meet these standards. The School District of Osceola supports the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and this new level of expected achievement.

Three years ago the Osceola Schools made the local decision to align our curriculum improvement efforts around the best practices of the day. We strongly believed that the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in isolation from our other initiatives would show minimal effects. A tremendous commitment of time, money, and human resources has gone into implementing the new standards in our schools. We embraced the framework of working as a professional learning community, revised our school calendar to provide the time needed for curriculum writing and creating common assessments, increased reading and math time in our middle school, and revamped our high school English Language Arts course offerings. We invested in professional development for our staff involving instructional strategies, assessment, and new materials. We asked our teachers to not only

Home of the
Chieftains

Osceola High School – 1111 Oak Ridge Drive – 715-294-2127
Osceola Middle School – 1029 Oak Ridge Drive – 715-294-4180
Osceola Intermediate School – 949 Education Avenue – 715-294-2800
Osceola Elementary School – 250 Tenth Avenue East – 715-294-3457
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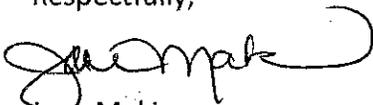
change the materials they were using but to also embrace new instructional practices and classroom management styles. We have already seen a dramatic increase in our local assessment scores. Our teachers feel confident in their abilities to bring about the necessary change that needs to happen with this reform initiative. To guarantee long-term success, school policies and practices – from professional development to the school master schedule to materials selection – must reflect the main effort of ensuring that each child is engaged, supported, and challenged to transition to this new level of expectations.

In our district, the Common Core State Standards have refocused our efforts on continuous improvement in all subjects and grade levels, not just in English language arts and math. It is essential that teachers effectively provide challenging, comprehensive curriculum across all content for college and career readiness. Following the State of Wisconsin's lead, we have focused on disciplinary literacy in grades 6-12, working to increase the rigor of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in all secondary level content areas. The Common Core's emphasis on increasing these skills has bolstered our local efforts and provided opportunities for across discipline planning and collaboration.

Districts must establish structures for professional learning that foster progress toward more effective teaching practices based on deeper understanding of the learning process. We have found that the standards have provided momentum for our professional learning communities, further engaging our educators in conversations about teaching and learning, identifying best practices through instructional rounds, and increasing opportunities for instructional coaching. This kind of collaborative environment has also helped us recognize the need for a thoughtful and balanced approach to assessment, providing reliable, developmentally appropriate information on student achievement. Data driven instruction and a renewed interest in unified grading practices continues to push our district forward.

The Common Core Standards are challenging Osceola students to learn at higher levels in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. These rigorous, internationally benchmarked standards offer the possibility of shared expectations within Wisconsin and across the nation by providing a clear, logical progression of skills as a student moves from grade level to grade level. If effectively implemented, the new standards should reduce inequalities in curriculum and content instruction from district to district. Autonomy of local schools and teachers isn't reduced with these standards – our local districts can now focus on how these standards should be implemented, enabling teachers to deepen their teaching and devising the most effective ways for helping students learn. Teachers will continue to creatively devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms. Our challenge will be in working together to bring our new standards to life in all classrooms, by supporting all teachers, and engaging all students in ways that help them achieve these new educational goals.

Respectfully,



Jane Maki

Director of Curriculum and Instruction
School District of Osceola
makij@osceola.k12.wi.us



My name is Susie Prather and I am the principal at Hudson Prairie Elementary school in Hudson, Wisconsin. I am here as a representative of the Wisconsin Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. WASCD has been a state leader in curriculum and instruction for 65 years. The organization is non-partisan with a focus on improving student achievement through quality curriculum and instruction. Members of the organization include superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, teachers, and other educational professionals.

As experts in curriculum and instruction, we are committed to supporting the use of the Common Core standards as the foundation for the instruction and assessments.

The state's previous Model Academic Standards were a patchwork of expectations only providing what students should know and be able to do at grades 4, 8, and 12. The Common Core Standards provide a clearly articulated set of expectations across each grade level.

By having a consistent set of academic expectations through Common Core Standards, districts are able to collaborate and develop greater opportunities for equity and access to key skills and concepts that are aligned with college and career expectations.

The Common Core Standards serve as a guide for local districts. The standards are not curriculum. Districts still have local control related to specific outcomes, curriculum, resources and assessments that are used. In Hudson, we have used the standards to guide our planning of instruction, use of resources,

and in developing rigorous assessments for the past three years.

Long term, the question that needs to be asked is "Do the Common Core Standards in reading and math better position our Wisconsin students to be competitive nationwide and worldwide, in college and viable careers?"

As an educator, I know the Common Core Standards will do just that and will prepare students to be successful contributors to our world.

Institutes of higher education support the Common Core Standards because it raises the bar for our students. Businesses across the state support the Common Core because students better understand and can use critical skills in math, literacy, and problem solving to be more effective employees.

WASCD, with its 700 members, goes on record as supporting the Common Core Standards as a significant component of systemic improvement in math and literacy across the state.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONDOVI

337 N. JACKSON STREET
MONDOVI, WISCONSIN 54755-1197

Our Mission: We believe that the four cornerstones of a successful life are character, work ethic, citizenship, and academic achievement. Our community, parents, staff and students will work together to foster these cornerstones.

PHONE (715) 926-3684
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CHERYL L. GULLICKSRUD
SUPERINTENDENT

Testimony before the Select Committees for Review of the Common Core Standards Initiative
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
October 23, 2013

My name is Cheryl Gullicksrud, and I am the Superintendent for the School District of Mondovi. Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

A little over 30 years ago, in April of 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released a report entitled, A Nation At Risk. That report described classroom learning in public schools as an "incoherent, outdated patchwork quilt" of watered down courses that produced high school graduates ill-prepared to compete in a global economy. Ever since A Nation At Risk was published, our nation, our state, and our local school districts have been steadily working to update and standardize our patchwork quilt of educational programs. In Wisconsin, the 1980s brought the 20 Standards and then the Wisconsin State Standards in the 1990s. In 2001 No Child Left Behind brought accountability to a new, national level. Now, high standards of achievement were to be attained by every child. There was a problem, however. Because each state had developed its own state standards and set its own proficiency levels, not all students were receiving the same level of education. Acceptable, "proficient" student performance in Alabama, Wisconsin, and Maryland was very different in each state. If, as a nation, ALL students were to achieve at high levels, it became quite apparent that the quilt of learning needed additional binding.

The National Governors Association, representing 48 states, created that binding. Working together this group studied **international** benchmarks and state standards and created the Common Core State Standards. These standards are a concise set of rigorous expectations and exemplar examples of content that set a common performance bar for all students. *No matter where the student attends school, the expectations are the same.* This equality of opportunity for all students is, as it has always been, absolutely fundamental to our success as a nation.

The Common Core State Standards have provided a floor, not a ceiling to our local goals. They are NOT the curriculum. Teachers in our district have spent the past three years reviewing the Common Core State standards and using them to elevate their curricular goals and their instructional practices. The teachers have developed their own lesson plans, they have selected their own instructional resources, and they have created their own assessments. The Common Core has also given my teachers a common framework for professional discussions with their peers not only in our school but with colleagues throughout the region, the state, and the nation about best practices in teaching,

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

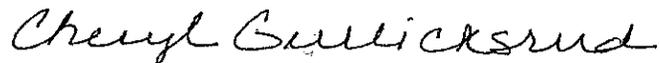
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONDOVI DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF SEX, RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, CREED, RELIGION, PREGNANCY, MARITAL OR PARENTAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, HANDICAP, OR PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL OR LEARNING DISABILITY.

assessment, and learning. This collaborative sharing has had a positive impact on the instruction provided to our students.

The Common Core State Standards have done much to update and repair the fabric of our public school educational system. Ripping out the Common Core stitches that tie the local quilt blocks of educational programming together would destroy a great deal of high quality work that has been done by many people to equalize and improve educational opportunities for all children. As the work of continuously improving education is never done, I urge the legislature to continue support of the Common Core State Standards as an integral, valuable element for sustaining a world-class educational system in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Gullicksrud".

Cheryl Gullicksrud
Superintendent
School District of Mondovi



Wisconsin School Psychologists Association, Inc.

Testimony on Common Core State Standards
October 23, 2013

Esteemed Legislators, State Superintendent Evers, Concerned Citizens, and Educators:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the Common Core State Standards. My name is John Humphries, and I am here to offer solutions that respect the many positions on the important issues facing us today. I will be sharing the views of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association, which I serve as President-Elect. I am also a former staff member of DPI, having served as the School Psychology consultant for 7 years before returning to the schools in 2011. I am a Nationally Certified and DPI-Licensed School Psychologist and Director of Special Education and Pupil Services. I currently work in that capacity in the Dodgeville, WI School District.

The primary purposes of WSPA are to serve the mental health and educational needs of all children and youth, and to facilitate and support the effective practice of school psychology. School psychologists are scientists in the field of education. We know and understand research-based practices that use student-level and system-level data to improve student outcomes. Wisconsin School Psychologists are required to hold at least an Educational Specialist level of training, with over 30 credit hours of Post-Master's Degree, supervised practice. As opposed to some states, school psychologists in Wisconsin are eligible for private practice licensure through our Department of Safety and Professional Services. There are about 1,000 licensed school psychologists in our state. WSPA provides today's comments with a unique perspective about the Common Core State Standards based on our backgrounds as scientist-practitioners. We agree with both the State Superintendent *and* with the Governor, and we have a recommendation for moving forward that takes both of perspectives into account.

First, we believe that the Common Core State Standards are a major step forward. Wisconsin's history with the development of standards for our state was messy at best, and never resulted in the types of high standards that resulted in improved outcomes for our students. As Governor Walker cited in his 2010 Budget Request and again in 2013, "Looking at National Assessment of Educational Standards data historically shows that Wisconsin has not been in the top 10 states for 4th grade reading since 1998. In fact, a recent Harvard study measuring states' progress in both reading and math shows Wisconsin ranks 38th out of 41 states with complete data between 1992 and 2011."

Very simply, if we want to improve outcomes for our students, we need higher, better, standards. WSPA believes that the Common Core does exactly that. Raising the academic bar through the Common Core will establish meaningful targets to get Wisconsin's students back to being among the best in the nation. The Common Core was developed with the strong involvement of business and education leaders, Governors, and many teachers. There is broad agreement on the positive impact they have had already. I have seen firsthand the significant, positive impact these new standards have had on our work in schools. The Common Core has required us to refocus our efforts. In Dodgeville for example, our staff spent hundreds of hours this summer re-working our curricula in order to align with the new, higher standards. We allocated tens of thousands of dollars toward this effort, and already our Board has been thrilled to see the excellent work of our staff. We felt it was important for our students to have a full year of Core-aligned instruction before they are assessed using the new Smarter Balanced Assessments. And WSPA believes that implementation of the Common Core State Standards should proceed as quickly as possible to maximize the impact of higher expectations. There is truly no time to waste.

With regard to the Smarter Balanced Assessments, WSPA would like to refute any concerns about privacy, utility, and scope of these assessments. The Smarter Balanced Assessments themselves are remarkably better than the current WKCE tests, yet the data are treated in very similar ways. These new assessment tools allow us to measure real-world educational skills rather than paper-pencil, rote learning. Many students around Wisconsin have already taken the beta version of these tests, and in the process they have shown administrators, teachers, and parents the utility of advanced assessment tools. The assessments are focused on meaningful academic skills, and any concerns about testing outside of this scope are clearly unfounded. And finally, after the assessments are completed, the data are quickly used by educators to make important instructional decisions. All educators take our roles as data custodians very seriously, and WSPA would ask this committee to be very cautious about restricting the use of Smarter Balanced Assessments that align with the Common Core on the basis of unfounded concerns.

And, while teachers and students across the state are reaching higher with improved standards and assessments that align with them, WSPA believes we can do better. The Common Core should be a baseline of expectations. The standards identify end goals, but there are places where more explicit definitions could be provided and where some of the assumptions of the document should be clarified. Dr. Louisa Moats, one of the participants in the group who created the Common Core Reading Standards recently spoke in Wisconsin, elucidating several key assumptions that Wisconsin would be wise to clarify. These include the assumption that foundational (reading) skills are relatively easy to teach and acquire; the assumption that the field should be directed away from ineffective practices of the past toward better teaching of text comprehension; and finally the assumption that the use of more complex, informational texts to teach reading will result in better readers in all grades. While there are numerous significant problems with the Common Core, frankly, Wisconsin can and has done much *worse* in the past.

Our recommendation therefore is to identify those areas of the Common Core that can be improved and to provide more information to Wisconsin districts about how best to implement the new standards. We advocate the development of a task force to identify those areas, along with resources to support high-level implementation of the CCSS. These might be called "The Wisconsin CCSS Extension Standards." This would clearly identify those areas where our state wants Wisconsin students to excel beyond the national standards. Such a task force should include a broad and inclusive group of stakeholders, but also include national experts in reading and math skill acquisition who can guide Wisconsin as we move forward. Dr. Moats would both provide a critical opinion such as this.

In summary, Wisconsin can do better. Let's identify those areas where we want our students to excel, provide resources to do so, use data wisely, and help our students once again have world-class academic skills.

Thank you again for your time and focus on these important educational issues.

Contact information:

John Humphries, NCSP

President-Elect

Wisconsin School Psychologists Association

johnhumphriesncsp@gmail.com

(608) 438-6109

My name is Christine Stratton and I am the district administrator for the School District of the Menomonie Area. I have worked in education for thirty-eight years. As a leader in education I am very supportive of the move to the common core state standards.

Just a year ago, over 500 Menomonie citizens participated in seventeen different listening sessions and the development of our new strategic plan. We heard business leaders, parents, and participants from all stakeholder groups emphasize the importance of high levels of accountability, higher standards, and an emphasis on higher levels of critical thinking and problem solving for our students. Our community wants our students to be competitive globally and college- and career-ready. The new common core standards have been welcomed as a tool to enable our teachers to plan curriculum in order to meet those goals.

The new common core state standards are more rigorous, internationally- benchmarked English language arts and mathematics standards that are designed to ensure students leave school with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and careers. They have been aligned to the benchmarks in the ACT and SAT programs, as well as the top performing countries in the world. They are clearly more challenging and guide a better education for our students.

Menomonie teachers are currently using the new standards to guide their instruction and plan their curriculum. Our teachers are able to clearly see what outcomes are aligned to each grade level. The content, problem solving, critical thinking, and communication required is changing how we teach and children learn. Menomonie teachers have been working to implement the common core over the past four years. It has required professional development to enhance instructional practices and student achievement. It has been money well spent.

Simply said, teaching mathematics and English language arts in order to meet more rigorous standards is not controversial. It is what is right for our children. Locally, we are held responsible for preparing our students for their futures. We make local decisions about curriculum, scope and sequence, and instructional practices. Since 2010, the CCSS have garnered support from business, professional, advocacy, and policy stakeholders, and also have the support of national parent organizations. The CCSS set a rigorous bar but we are also free to extend beyond the rigor at the local level.

I would challenge anti-common core advocates to read the standards and be specific about the standards that they think are too stringent or controversial. Some of the claims about common core seemed designed to radicalize the sentiment against them. CCSS was a state-driven initiative based upon the desire to improve education for our children.

If our state somehow abandons the new common core state standards, bowing to political recklessness, it will mean Menomonie teachers have wasted hundreds of hours and precious resources. It will mean our assessment system will continue to be misaligned with international standards and college and career entrance requirements. Our teachers and students deserve better.

As an advocate for our children's future, I advocate for setting and achieving a high bar in ALL program areas. Our district is asking for your support with the continued implementation of the common core standards.

Thank you.

My name is Brian Seguin. I am the Director of Instruction for the School District of the Menomonie Area, a community member, and a parent. In my educational career I have had the pleasure of serving as a classroom teacher, as well as a building and district level administrator. I have experience in both public and public charter school settings. As a proponent of quality educational experiences for all learners, I am supportive of the move to common core state standards.

In my daily role, which is focused on curriculum, instruction, and assessment at a PreK-12 level, I have the opportunity to work alongside classroom teachers as they plan, develop, and implement lessons focused on the unique academic needs of all students—students who come to the classroom daily with a wide range of academic abilities.

Classroom teachers in the School District of the Menomonie Area, as well as prior districts I have served, have historically used academic standards to guide their instructional planning. The CCSS provide a more rigorous set of expectations in the areas of mathematics and English language arts that are internationally- benchmarked and designed to ensure students leave their PreK-12 academic experience with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and careers.

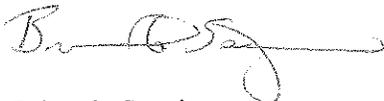
The CCSS are currently in use at all grade levels in the School District of the Menomonie Area as a guide for instructional planning. They are not curriculum nor are they assessments. They are a set of minimum expectations set at higher level of rigor at all grade levels than prior academic standards adopted by schools in the state of Wisconsin. At a district and classroom level, the CCSS help bring clarity and focus around what all students should be able to know, understand, and be able to do. The CCSS are also structured around grade level expectations for all students.

All students learn differently. The CCSS provides a set of baseline expectations, which we as educators strive for all students to work toward, meet, or exceed. The CCSS provide a common set of academic expectations that allow local districts the opportunity to develop local curriculum that is engaging, relevant to local needs, rigorous for all students, and that provides flexibility in instructional delivery. As a district, the School District of the Menomonie Area has been focused over the past four years on how the CCSS prepares students to better compete in a global society.

As a parent of three children under the age of nine, I am pleased with the level of knowledge and skill for which students must demonstrate an understanding, not only of content, but also of the application of knowledge, problem solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. It is with this focus on real world application that the CCSS provides a framework to guide instructional planning, without limiting teacher and student creativity that is essential to meeting the needs of diverse learners.

As an educator, a parent, and a community member, I advocate for relevant and rigorous expectations for ALL students and ALL program areas. I am asking for your support with the continued implementation of the common core standards.

Respectfully,



Brian G. Seguin

COMMON CORE TESTIMONY

My name is Dan Koch and I'm the Middle School Principal in Hudson, Wisconsin. Our school has approximately 1,300 middle level learners in grades six through eight. The Hudson School District is in western Wisconsin on the Minnesota border. Our location places us in the shadow of Minneapolis-St. Paul and as a result we are significantly impacted by the socio-economic influence of the metro-plex and the value placed on a high quality education for all students. Our goal in Hudson is to provide our students with an education that can be leveraged into meaningful and productive life experiences. To do this our students must be college and career ready. They need the skill sets that promise the greatest chance for future success. The acquisition of these skills begins early and they are strengthened as students stair step their way toward graduation. The Common Core State Standards provide a framework for instruction and a consistent pathway that also enables educators to formatively assess student progress along the way. We have begun utilizing the Common Core in our school and are pleased with how it supports our curriculum.

We are at a critical point in framing the future of education in our state and nation. It is imperative that the decisions being made about the substance and the implementation of the Common Core State Standards be focused on their educational merit. The last thing our students need, the last thing our state needs is an educational platform rooted in provincial thinking; one that does not see beyond the boundaries of community or state. An education with little universal application or context will not hold up under the rigors of a rapidly changing world. The Common Core is a solid and consistent set of skills around which to build a curriculum that is both appropriate and inspiring. Political expediency and opportunism have no place in this conversation. To sacrifice the potential of these standards to the politically convenient rallying cry of government control is both short sighted and disingenuous. Furthermore, it suggests people do not know what the standards are about. The Common Core State Standards are not as many critics want to believe a national curriculum. They are a well-conceived set of expectations around which a vibrant and meaningful curriculum can be constructed. A curriculum that affords every school district; its teachers and its school board the autonomy to select materials, resources, activities and instructional strategies necessary to achieve their learning goals.

Research marches on. It pays homage to the past only as a starting point to engage the present and the future. In many ways the Common Core is a product of what we know of our educational past. We have been lacking in substantive standards, universal in nature that will serve our students throughout their lifetime as caring and contributing citizens. The Common Core State Standards represent a concerted effort to focus on skills that matter. The standards do not undermine substance, creativity or innovation. They are in reality the tools with which these qualities are shaped. The Common Core State Standards leave room for great teaching to motivate and inspire students. As caretakers of our children's future let's not be short-sited and limiting by bowing before loud and uninformed critics.

We need to take advantage of a framework for learning that has promise. If we are unable to make this work then we most probably will find ourselves sliding back into the uneven and ineffective system of the past that will continue to put our students and their future at risk.



HUDSON SCHOOL
DISTRICT

LEARNING – *the path to our global future*

To: Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt
From: Sandra Kovatch, Director of Learning Services
Date: October 23, 2013
Re: Common Core State Standard Hearing

My name is Sandra Kovatch and I'm the Director of Learning Services for the Hudson School District. Hudson serves approximately 5,600 students in early childhood – grade 12. Hudson sits on the western side of the state, right on the MN border. Because of our proximity to the Twin Cities, our stakeholders often look for comparisons with MN districts.

Hudson has taken a common-sense approach to implementation of Wisconsin's Common Core State Standards. Alignment to standards is just one component of our in-depth system for learning improvement process. As a district, we have immense local control in determining curricular resources and instructional methods. We view the Common Core State Standards as the floor or the foundation from which we build our curriculum and instructional framework. Hudson's system for learning improvement also includes work on assessing student performance data; identifying student learning strengths and gaps; analyzing educational literature and research on current instructional trends and best practices; establishing course and grade level learning targets; designing assessment tasks; and selecting resources. Hudson believes the Common Core State standards provide a college and career focus for all Wisconsin students and they are appropriately rigorous. We have spent a great deal of time and resources the last three years to review, analyze, interpret, and align the Common Core State standards with Hudson's learning expectations and strategic vision.

Hudson staff values the clarity, rigor, depth and articulation of the Common Core State Standards. The 1998 Wisconsin Model Academic Standards were written only for grades 4, 8 and 12. All Wisconsin districts had to develop benchmarks for the remaining grades which resulted in different expectations in these additional grade levels across the state. The K-12 articulation and clarity found in the Common Core State Standards are a welcome change. A foundational common scope and sequence is defined for all students, staff and districts in the state. We expect our educators to use this foundation from which to launch personalized learning and differentiation based on student need. So, if a student needs additional challenge, or requires modification of expectations, that is what we do – we focus on what is best for students. Districts across the state have local control to go above and beyond if they have the capacity. This is similar to what the state does with HS graduation standards. The state has set the bar for minimum graduation requirements but districts have local control to go above and beyond the state requirements.

Hudson believes it is in the best interest of student learning expectations, district accountability, and providing families with comparable school data to have state standards. Hudson supports the implementation of the Common Core State Standards as the foundation for rigorous learning in WI.

School District of River Falls

852 East Division Street, River Falls WI 54022
715-425-1800 phone / 715-425-1804 fax

Michael A. Johnson
Director of Academic Services
michael.johnson@rfsd.k12.wi.us
Twitter - @mhansjohnson

October 23, 2013

Dear Members of the Select Committee on the Common Core State Standards:

The School District of River Falls sets high expectations for learning and achievement. Our district achievement is ranked 10th of all 424 Wisconsin K-12 districts, according to the 2013 DPI District Report Cards. This is a tremendous credit to our professional educators in River Falls. To prepare our students and staff for such expectations, high academic standards are necessary. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide our K-12 staff and students with that clear and rigorous framework.

Our Wisconsin 1998 Model Academic Standards were extremely general, not grade-specific, and less rigorous. As a former Wisconsin secondary language arts teacher, I discovered the difference immediately with our CCSS workshops in 2010. Our English and math teachers agreed. The CCSS promote different learning processes, discovery, and application – not simple understanding. There are many instances of this, but here is an example for Reading/Language Arts:

1998 WI Model Academic Standard - By the end of Grade 8, students will use visual text features and structures of text (chronology and cause/effect) to aid comprehension.

2010 CCSS - Grade 5 students will compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

Our elementary students' reading and math achievement continues to climb as we implement the CCSS. In one elementary school, our poorest students are actually outperforming their peers in math; this can be attributed to our educators aligning instructional materials, assessments, and tailoring instruction to the CCSS. We have not changed the staffing levels or instructors, and the student cohort has remained constant – the CCSS is the variable.

Our district staff alters its curriculum and utilizes appropriate materials to personalize kids' learning. Standards and curriculum are two very different educational components. River Falls controls its curriculum – River Falls teachers can teach about River Falls' own Kinnickinnic River, Olympian Karyn Bye Dietz, or Governor Warren Knowles – to meet grade level standards.

We live in a very mobile society; common standards are common sense. There is no such thing as *Michigan Math* or *Alabama Reading*. Do we want that in Wisconsin? Of course not. This past summer, about 170 students have arrived in River Falls or left for another district. Without commonality in standards, how do we ensure educational equity if families move? The answer is – we cannot.

In the 1998 Grade 4 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test, Wisconsin ranked 2nd in the nation. According to the 2012 Grade 4 NAEP, we are now 15th. If you believe “repealing” the CCSS or “waiting for something better” is the answer, remember that Wisconsin kids most likely will be in the bottom half of the nation in reading achievement before my first-grader gets to high school.

The rhetoric against the CCSS is driven by adults and their passions, rather than by kids' college and career readiness. Our legislators must seek the expertise of professional educators like you are doing today, not through a few loud, uninformed voices; and our fine Wisconsin teachers should be supported in this time of change.

Former Governor Jim Doyle was a staunch supporter of K-12 public education. Ten years ago, my son was fortunate enough to meet Governor Doyle and get his picture and autograph here in Eau Claire. My son sits with me today, and he supports what the Common Core does now – and will do for his future, as well as his peers across the state. Governor Walker and this legislative committee can support my son, as well as thousands of other Wisconsin students, by continuing “Forward” with the Common Core.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael A. Johnson
Director of Academic Services
School District of River Falls



Michael,
To a great future student!
Jim Liff

Good Afternoon,

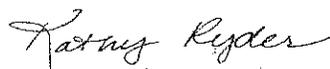
I am Kathy Ryder, and I am the director of the Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center. I am a parent of 3 boys, an educator, and an educational leader. I have been in the educational system for over 20 years, teaching all grade levels in California, Minnesota, and for the last 13 years in Wisconsin. I have spent the bulk of my educational career as a special education teacher for learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disabilities.

I am in support of the Common Core Standards being adopted in Wisconsin. As a special education instructor, I would have welcomed a common set of standards. Common Core Standards provide a coherent and cohesive map of the critical knowledge and skills needed by students. Having worked with and supported teachers, schools and districts in which standards were not commonly taught nor understood by all educators, this made instructing students with disabilities difficult. My job was to close an achievement gap with a student who was identified as having a disability. It was a very difficult task indeed when the end goal, or standard, for those students was a moving target. Until CCS, teachers were not always aware of or fully understood the standards, they were not trained in a consistent understanding or trained on how to implement this with all students. More frequently, the special education staff was less knowledgeable and trained. CCS were created with all students in mind. Special education professionals participated in the development of CCS. Schools are able to spend their time being trained in a common understanding and consistent implementation, rather than on interpreting standards that were more of a general path.

My experience includes working in schools, supporting schools, and supervising both special education teachers and student teachers. I have found that many teachers, schools, and districts spent far too much time trying to understand standards, and too much time trying to identify the essential end-of-year goals. There is too much variability between districts, schools, and classrooms. How are we to move forward all students' education, whether students are above, at, or below benchmarks, when there isn't an agreed-upon common set of standards? If Wisconsin does not adopt the CCS, then the education field in Wisconsin will spend an excessive amount of time trying to identify a common set of standards with agreement from all groups. If Wisconsin creates their own standards, how will they ever compare to other states to ensure that they are of high quality? How will Wisconsin be considered globally competitive if it never checks itself against other states?

Wisconsin has had a long history of high educational standards for most of the students in the state, but not all. Having districts, schools, and teachers all adopt, train in, and implement CCS for students, ensures that all students in Wisconsin have the same educational access and opportunities. Students who move from school to school within a district will have the same high standards and their parents will know exactly what they are to achieve by the end of their school year, rather than guessing. Students who move from district to district within the state can expect the same understanding of the standards. Students who move from state to state have the same access, understanding, and opportunities as their peers. Wisconsin must spend its time now training all in the understanding and implementation of CCS. This will provide the essential time for educators to do what they have always need time to do: instruct students in the most responsive way to ensure that all students have access and move forward in their educational careers.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Ryder, Director
Wisconsin RtI Center
626 East Slifer St.
Portage, WI 53901

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you in your hearings about the Common Core. For the record, I am Mary Ann Hardebeck. I represent the Eau Claire Area School District as their Superintendent. We are a school district of over 11,000 students and 1400 employees on 20 campuses across the district. Our school board has adopted as its vision “that all students in the district are prepared for post-secondary success.”

For us, post-secondary success means that our graduates will be academically and socially/emotionally prepared to pursue education or career training beyond high school or to be ready to enter the workforce or military. Our vision is for all Eau Claire Area School District graduates to become productive members of their communities and of the world.

As you consider the questions emerging about Wisconsin’s 2010 adoption of the Common Core State Standards, I would respectfully ask that you take the following points under advisement.

The adoption of the Common Core is only one facet of Wisconsin’s waiver from the requirements of the federal government’s No Child Left Behind legislation, which was signed into law in 2001. No Child Left Behind was an exceedingly test-driven approach to determining whether a school was successful or not. Requirements for testing and meeting learning objectives varied from state to state, and schools were often judged as failing or not failing based on test scores alone. It was an initiative generated at the federal level. In my view, it was difficult for local school boards to assess how effective they were in deploying their resources or in delivering their programs to improve student achievement. It was almost impossible to compare student or school performance in different states and locales. Each individual state had its own test. Students were tested on different learning standards depending on the state in which they resided. Consequently it was problematic for parents, school boards, and educators to know if their children were adequately prepared when they left high school because there was little mutual agreement on what constituted learning in the 21st Century.

With its waiver to No Child Left Behind, Wisconsin has taken a different approach to determine a district or school’s success in educating its students. We now have a defined set of learning standards for students through the Common Core State Standards that are in place in 45 states and the District of Columbia. Teachers across Eau Claire, the state, and even the nation have worked together to develop curriculum, lesson plans to deliver the curriculum, and classroom assessments to gauge student progress and academic growth in meeting these Common Core standards. Adopting these standards does not limit what content or skills might be taught or with what materials. Those decisions still reside with local control – as with local School Boards - and more pointedly as they always have - with individual teachers working day in and day out with our children and their families.

The standards outlined in the Common Core were developed to help our students learn, perform, and compete successfully in whatever pursuit they choose after high school. We are often told that our public schools are failing. An internationally benchmarked set of learning standards in math and Reading (English Language Arts) - and soon in social studies and science- has the potential to offer all of us, including taxpayers, apples to apples comparison of what and how much the students in our public schools are learning. It will be possible to see how our students perform when compared to other students across the nation and the world and to determine if they are prepared to compete in a global economy. From what I have observed recently in the work of our teachers and in the performance of our students, I expect that with your continued support of the Common Core State Standards, students across Wisconsin will rise to the top.

Mary Ann Hardebeck, Ed.D. Superintendent, Eau Claire Area School District
500 Main Street, Eau Claire, WI 54107

THE NEW SMART SET

What happens when millions of kids are asked to master fewer things more deeply?

Quotes from Time article on September 30, 2013 on the Common Core Standards

"Tea Party groups refer to the standards as Obamacore, despite the fact that the federal government had nothing to do with their creation. They were developed by teachers and researchers at the behest of a bipartisan group of governors and state education leaders." "It was driven by Republicans demanding higher standards for our kids"

"States used to require first-graders to learn 13 different math skills which meant teachers did not have time to go into all of them in depth (and sometimes skipped some altogether). The Common Core requires that first graders learn just eight skills. The standards are more rigorous according to a 2010 study by the Thomas Fordham Institute - than the existing standards in 39 states and about the same as those in the remaining states. They are also as high as any found in the top education systems in the world, from Finland to Japan."

"In August 2010, Kentucky rolled out the Common Core standards in math and English" State officials warned parents, teachers, students and the media to expect lower scores and interpret them as a sign of progress."

"This past Spring, Kentucky achieved an 86% high school graduation rate - up from 80% in 2010 and above most other states. The portion of students considered college or career ready is up 20 percentage points to 54% since 2010, according to a battery of assessments given to seniors."

Examples of when children would master skills before and after Common Core in Kentucky:

Pythagorean theorem:	2010 - 10th grade;	now - 8th grade
Identifying literary devices:	2010 - 6th grade;	now - 4th grade
Volume of prisms:	2010 - 8th grade;	now - 6th grade
Identifying an author's purpose:	2010 - 7th grade;	now - 2nd grade

"Some states may step back from the standards altogether, while others will likely select dumbed-down tests that do not require kids to think for themselves. A few states will stand firm continuing to work on smarter tests and better teacher training."

My name is Ann Franke and I serve as the Director of Secondary Education for the Eau Claire Area School District. I am also on the board for Wisconsin ASCD.

I am here today to express my support for the Common Core State Standards.

The state's previous Model Academic Standards were a patchwork of expectations only providing what students should know and be able to do at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The Common Core State Standards provide a clearly articulated set of expectations across each grade level that are aligned with the state's goal of all students college and career ready, and the Eau Claire Area School District's vision of all students prepared for post-secondary success.

By having a consistent set of academic expectations through the Common Core State Standards, districts are able to collaborate and develop greater opportunities for equity and access to key skills and concepts that are aligned with college and career expectations.

The Common Core State Standards are absolutely in the best interest of our students. They go beyond the memorization of facts and figures and move our students to think critically and to apply what they are learning to real world situations. They are rigorous standards that will challenge our students and prepare them much more thoroughly for post-secondary education.

The Common Core State Standards serve as a guide for local districts. The standards are not curriculum. Districts still have local control related to specific outcomes, curriculum, resources and assessments that are used. This was the case with the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and will be the case again with the Common Core State Standards.

As an educator with twelve years of experience in curriculum, assessment, and instruction, I believe these standards give us a clearly articulated road map that we can use to develop high quality curriculum at the local level.

I ask that the committee honor the decision that was made in June of 2010 to adopt the Common Core State Standards as Wisconsin's State Standards.

Thank you for your time.

October 23, 2013

Good afternoon. In a recent news release announcing the special committee created to study the common core standards, Speaker Vos said, “Democrats and Republicans agree nothing is more important than educating our children.” – true, but...

the bigger issue that brings us here today is, “are we educating our children with skills and proficiencies to ensure graduates will be successful adults in this ever-changing world market place?” I believe that question propelled The National Governors’ Assoc. to endorse the Common Cores Standards and I believe that is why 48 of 50 states have adopted common core standards as benchmarks for educating their youth to be successful in a future of global challenges.

These are **core standards** – standards that will ensure Wisconsin high school graduates are compared with benchmark standards of other high school graduates from throughout United States and from other countries – Japan, Germany, Finland.

For the last several years The Eau Claire School district has invested greatly in realigning and redeveloping learning environments compatible with core standards. Similarly, not too long ago our local medical organizations had to do a major realignment ---going from paper to digital recording, it takes time and money –but in the end, reflects the dynamic changes in business.

Education is also dynamic – core standards are dynamic changes that each school board can use as benchmarks for effectiveness. Our school board knows that core standards do not dictate curriculum or teaching styles – they are a way to measure effectiveness. Like using mileage standards to measure your car’s performance. Eau Claire School District made the commitment and the investment – and now....

We are here today – having a public hearing on IF schools in Wisconsin should have core standards to measure their effectiveness– standards that have been endorsed by the National Governor’s Association and Educational Leaders throughout the country?

As president of the Eau Claire Area School Board, I have a moral and fiduciary responsibility to members of the Eau Claire community to support core standards...standards that will safeguard our students’ right to a education that will prepare them for success in this dynamic world market. As elected legislators you have a to have a moral and fiduciary responsibility to ensure public schools are educating our children with skills and proficiencies to ensure graduates will be successful adults in this ever-changing world market place. I urge you to support the implementing of core standards as a safeguard to our future.

Dr. Carol J. Craig, President
Eau Claire Area School Board

891 Blackoak Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701

Richard Spindler, PhD
UWEC and Johns Hopkins University Mathematics Instructor
Common Core Hearing Comments – 10/23/2013

Although I am an Eau Claire Area School Board Member, I am writing this public hearing comment as a university mathematics instructor. I feel the Common Core Standards will provide greater consistency and certainty for colleges and university in the preparation of students. It will assist universities and their faculty in their work by knowing the expectations of students from our K-12 schools.

I am particularly interested in the Standards of Mathematical *Practice*. These are Standards that are different from the Content Standards you may be aware of (which provide guidance on what content, such as algebra, should be taught when). The mathematical practice standards are about how should students be practicing mathematics. These *Practice* Standards are:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with Mathematics. (Applying mathematics.)
- Use appropriate tools strategically. (Use the right mathematical tool for the right job.)
- Attend to precision. (Be precise.)
- Look for and makes use of structure. (See patterns.)
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

These standards reflect the essential work of any person using mathematics. It is difficult for me to understand why someone would oppose the goal that students and future technical workers in our state should be able to use these practices.

Please realize that the standards are just that and only that. They simply identify what students should be able to do at certain points in their education. They do not determine how these standards are reached, such as the curriculum used.

Finally, please understand that the standards are academically rigorous and challenging.

Please support the Common Core Standards. Thank you.

23 October 2013

Michael D. Steele
Associate Professor

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Chairpersons Farrow and Theisfeldt, and Members of the Joint Committee,

My name is Dr. Michael Steele, and I am an associate professor of mathematics education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where I direct the secondary mathematics teacher preparation program and work extensively with mathematics teachers in the greater Milwaukee area. I possess a Bachelors of Science in Mathematics and a Masters of Science in Natural Sciences from Rensselaer Polytechnic University, and a Doctor of Education in Mathematics Education from the University of Pittsburgh. I taught middle school and high school mathematics and science in the state of Maryland. From 2006-2013, I was an assistant professor of mathematics education at Michigan State University, and I am a nationally recognized research scholar in the areas of mathematics teacher knowledge and teaching practice.

I come today to express my strong support for Wisconsin's adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Let me clarify what the Common Core Standards are and what they are not, and what the material impacts of the Common Core are likely to be on teachers and students.

The Common Core State Standards are Learning Expectations.

The Common Core Standards are learning expectations, not prescriptions. Like state standards and other national standards documents before them, they describe the mathematical concepts, practices, and procedures that we expect every student to be able to display at a particular grade level. These expectations do not prescribe a particular curriculum, a particular textbook, or a particular way of teaching students. One can think of this idea similar to the US Army's Basic Fitness Training. The Army's standards for a male 22-26 years old are 40 push-ups, 50 sit-ups, and a 2-mile run in 16:36 or less. The standards don't specify how one engages in a training regimen to meet those standards or precisely how much time and practice each trainee must put in before taking that assessment. The standards do not preclude a soldier from completing 47 push-ups or running a 6-minute mile.

You have heard and read many claims about Common Core stating that the adoption of these standards will require teachers to teach in a particular way, for all students to learn precisely the same mathematics at the same grade level and on the same day as their peers locally and nationally, and will prescribe the use of only certain mathematics textbooks. None of these

statements are true. As a former teacher and a current teacher educator, I would be greatly concerned about any set of standards that limit teachers' abilities to make smart choices for their students based on their unique professional knowledge as teachers. The Common Core actually provides teachers with common language to discuss with one another ways in which to teach similar mathematical ideas across districts and contexts.

The Common Core State Standards are Mathematically Rigorous.

I speak to this issue both as a mathematics educator and from my experiences as a mathematics major at a leading science and engineering institution. State, national, and international data prior to the adoption of Common Core tells us a clear story that mathematics education in this country is not working for most students. Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress administrations from 1992-2007, from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies, and from the Programme for International Student Assessment consistently show that US students have limited and fragmented understandings of mathematics, usually limited to executing memorized procedures and plugging numbers into formulas. These performances sit in stark comparison to the modeling and problem solving practices that are needed in technologically-oriented 21st century jobs, not to mention specialized careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields that Wisconsin and the nation will need to remain globally competitive. Teachers, administrators, mathematicians, and educators alike agree that students need better mathematical experiences in K-12 education that open the doors to those career paths.

In a discussion with colleagues about the Common Core prior to its adoption, my colleague Al Cuoco, mathematician at the Education Development Center and advisor to the Massachusetts Department of Education reported the following:

[T]here was a great deal of discussion around the rising frustration among administrators and teachers about the pressure to teach isolated ideas and skills (one member called it "checking of a series of boxes") in order to meet the various MA standards. The structure of the Common Core draft calls for something different. It layers its recommendations, starting with the high-level mathematical practices that underlie proficiency across all mathematical disciplines and that closely align with the styles of work employed by many mathematicians. In my teaching, it's these mathematical practices that form both the glue that brings coherence to the disparate topics that make up the lists in most state standards (and in the chapters of most texts) and the connections to mathematics as it is practiced outside of school.

The Common Core Standards are mathematically rigorous, and they model the sorts of activities and practice that mathematicians and other professional users of mathematics engage in outside of the school. This is a far cry from the repetition of basic skills and reproductions of procedures that have dominated our mathematics classrooms. My own high school mathematics preparation was of very high quality, and I still needed to do significant work in college to begin to think like a mathematician does. A student like me today, prepared under

the Common Core, would have a significantly lower hurdle to entering mathematics-intensive fields.

The Standards are a Framework upon which Courses and Textbooks are Built.

I hear many claims about how the Common Core Standards will change the math courses we teach in middle and high schools. One claim that I hear quite often is that students will no longer be able to take Algebra in 8th grade. The Standards do not specify a set of courses to teach, nor do they specify an order in which to teach them. Up to 8th grade, each grade level has a set of standards that represent the core learning expectations for all students, free for a teacher to organize in whatever way he or she wishes. At the high school level, standards are presented as threads, and can be organized in a typical sequence like Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II, and so on, or as a more integrated set of mathematical experiences as appears in most international curricula. Because these standards are a minimum threshold, there is nothing that precludes middle school students from taking courses that address high school standards as well, even going so far as to count for high school credit in Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II.

Along with colleagues at Michigan State University and the University of Pennsylvania, I am presently conducting a study of Algebra I policy and practice funded by the National Science Foundation. We surveyed a nationally-representative sample of districts about when they offer Algebra I and to whom, and conducted in-depth case studies of selected districts and their practice. On the whole, mandating Algebra I in a universal way at 8th grade is an extremely rare policy. Only 7.1% of districts reported 100% of their 8th grade students were enrolled in Algebra I. Our case studies determined that many districts that had tried universal 8th grade Algebra policies had found that it was detrimental to all students. Higher achieving students simply memorized facts and moved on, and lower achieving students had difficulty with the concepts. Instead, the national trend is towards a readiness model – students take Algebra I in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade when they demonstrate mathematical readiness to do so. Common Core's 7th and 8th grade standards are designed with learning progressions that support this readiness by 9th grade, with the understanding that some students will demonstrate that readiness in the middle grades.

The Standards have Broad Support.

Finally, I would like to note that the Common Core Standards have broad and far-reaching support from teachers, administrators, mathematicians, and mathematics educators. Every major national mathematics and mathematics education organization has expressed support for the Common Core, including the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the American Mathematical Society, the Mathematical Association of America, American Statistical Association, the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, and the Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences. Here in Wisconsin, we have invested significant resources in supporting the Common Core rollout, most notably in people like myself coming together with teachers and administrators to transform classroom instruction and improve outcomes for

students. This work has been fruitful, but every teacher with which I have worked has indicated that we have a long way to go to meet the demands of the Common Core. There is significant room for growth. But the work is improving learning in Wisconsin classrooms and will continue to do so provided we remain committed rather than redeveloping a new set of standards that will require more change and churn for our K-12 students and have no guarantee of being as rigorous or well designed as the Common Core.

The Common Core State Standards are good for Wisconsin. Analyses of these standards show them to be significantly more rigorous than Wisconsin's previous state standards; those data are attached to my written testimony. They represent the ways that mathematicians and other professional mathematics users think about and use mathematics. Implementation of the Common Core Standards is improving thinking and learning in Wisconsin's mathematics classrooms, and will grease the wheels for more students to enter advanced technological careers through our fine Wisconsin universities. Supporting and growing technologically-focused businesses in our state mandates that we produce an informed and technologically savvy population. The Common Core State Standards are Wisconsin's best route to technological competitiveness in the national and international markets.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Steele', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dr. Michael D. Steele

Attachments:

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Position Statement on Common Core State Standards

Op-Ed from Drs. Al Cuoco and Glenn Stevens re: Common Core in Massachusetts



Supporting the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The widespread adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) presents an unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the United States. The Common Core State Standards offer a foundation for the development of more rigorous, focused, and coherent mathematics curricula, instruction, and assessments that promote conceptual understanding and reasoning as well as skill fluency. This foundation will help to ensure that all students are ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school and that they are prepared to take their place as productive, full participants in society.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) is committed to helping educators interpret and understand the Common Core State Standards. The Council supports educators' efforts to develop and put in place the associated comprehensive and coherent school, district, and state systems of instruction and assessment. Instruction and assessment that are aligned with these standards must be rooted in and promote principles of access and equity. When properly implemented, the Common State Standards will support all students' access to, and success in, high-quality mathematics programs. Such programs lead to knowledge of mathematics content and reasoning skills that enable students to apply mathematics effectively in a myriad of careers and in everyday life.

The Common Core State Standards are a significant component of systemic improvement in mathematics learning, but on their own they are not sufficient to produce the mathematics achievement that our country needs to be competitive in the global economy of the 21st century. Other factors are critical to realizing the potential of the Common Core:

- *Substantial opportunities for ongoing professional development* to ensure that all teachers understand and are prepared to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and that all administrators and policymakers understand teachers' needs
- *Accommodations in teacher evaluation systems* to allow time for the profession and institutions to adjust and adapt to the Common Core State Standards before evaluation systems include accountability for student achievement as one element of a valid, multifaceted teacher evaluation
- *Ample funding for education*, including funding for preschool education, to ensure that all students enter kindergarten with basic knowledge essential for school success
- *Funding for research and implementation of Common Core assessments* to ensure that these assessments meet the goal of measuring conceptual understanding and reasoning, as well as procedural fluency
- *Adequate state funding* to ensure that all students have access to Common Core assessments in formats that allow them to demonstrate their proficiency in all aspects of mathematics

Most important, all stakeholders must acknowledge that systemic improvement takes a number of years, and a long-term commitment to supporting the Common Core State Standards is necessary, even if initial assessment results do not show substantial improvements in student achievement.

Finally, for the Common Core State Standards to have long-term, positive effects on mathematics education, they must be dynamic. They must be updated periodically to reflect both emerging research on students' learning and practitioners' experiences with the current standards. NCTM is committed to working with other stakeholders to develop and implement a transparent, research-based process and realistic timetable for CCSSM's improvement over short, medium, and long terms to best support high levels of mathematics learning by all students.



April 1, 2010

OP-ED: A STEP UP: COMMON CORE MATHEMATICS AND THE MASSACHUSETTS FRAMEWORKS

On March 10, the Council of Chief State School Officers released a draft of the Common Core State Standards, the proposed national standards for Mathematics and for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science. Here in Massachusetts, much of the discussion about the mathematics draft — at a recent state Board of Education meeting, for example — centers on comparisons between the Massachusetts Frameworks and Common Core. Which set of standards is more rigorous? Which has higher expectations? Which is better?

The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in mathematics is one of the strongest sets of state standards in the country. Because of the tireless work of Massachusetts teachers to implement these standards, our students regularly perform near the top of national and international comparisons. Rather than as a competitor to the Massachusetts standards, we see Common Core as the next step in their evolution. Indeed, the draft overlaps significantly with the Massachusetts Frameworks. That's no surprise, because the Massachusetts document was a key resource for much of the writing of Common Core, and senior members of the Massachusetts Department of Education were on the writing team. Still, there are differences — differences that refine the Massachusetts Frameworks and, in many cases, improve them.

It's important to analyze the specifics of the current draft of Common Core, and detailed comments — such as the placement of particular topics in particular grades — are likely to stir debate. But we want to make the case that the structure of Common Core is a real improvement over current models for state standards.

We are aware of the rising frustration among administrators and teachers in the Commonwealth about the pressure to teach isolated ideas and skills to meet the various Massachusetts standards. (One administrator recently called it “checking off a series of boxes.”) The structure of the Common Core draft, however, calls for something different. It layers its recommendations, beginning with the high-level mathematical practices that underlie proficiency across all mathematical disciplines and that closely align with the styles of work employed by many mathematicians. It is these mathematical practices that form both the glue that brings coherence to the disparate topics that make up the lists in most state standards and the connections to mathematics as it is practiced outside of school.

Making these high-level mathematical practices explicit standards in their own right is a great step forward. Over a year ago, an editorial in the *Globe* (“A 21st-century Caution,” Feb. 24, 2009) pointed to the dangers of standards that call for generic thinking skills. Common Core offers a content-focused alternative—thinking skills that are indigenous to mathematics as a scientific discipline, the kinds of mathematical habits that every American needs to succeed in a technologically demanding economy. Not all students will pursue careers in disciplines that are mathematics intensive, but all students benefit from an education that puts reasoning, sense making and serious mathematical thinking high on the list.

One of the most promising features of Common Core is that it gives equal attention to two essential aspects of mathematical proficiency: learning to work with classical mathematical tools and learning to create mathematical tools for oneself. For example, it includes a cluster for interpreting algebraic



Education Development Center, Inc.

expressions and another for building such expressions to model situations. It makes a similar distinction for mathematical functions. The individual content standards get right at the essence of what it means to understand and do mathematics, showing how even very elementary ideas in school mathematics sit squarely inside the broader mathematical landscape.

We have worries about some of the details in Common Core. But let's not lose the forest for the trees. Everyone involved in education has here a chance to break loose from the stranglehold of standards that list disconnected and low-level skills and methods, a chance to hold on to the rigor for which Massachusetts is well known, while at the same time helping our children see the real utility and beauty of mathematics — a highly textured and intricate edifice of tools that that can be built up from a very small set of ideas. By setting standards that are faithful to mathematics, Common Core gives us a tool that will help us prepare the next generation for success in a world in which mathematics permeates almost every aspect of our daily lives.

Al Cuoco
Director, Center for Mathematics Education
Learning and Teaching Division
Education Development Center, Inc.

Glenn Stevens
Professor of Mathematics
Boston University

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Challenge Empower Achieve

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Dear Respected Representatives;

Hello. My name is Mary Randall. I am the District Administrator (Superintendent) of the School District of Bloomer. First I would like to thank you for your work. It is a difficult job, and I am sure you hear from a variety of constituents on many matters.

I am here today representing my district with 124 employees, and most importantly, the 1211 students who go to school every day in our district. I want to express concerns about the dialogue regarding changing away from the Common Core Academic Standards which were adopted years ago by the State of Wisconsin.

Our district has spent the past three and one half years aligning our curriculum, modifying assessments, training staff and administrators, purchasing curriculums and communicating with parents about the Common Core. We have adopted new Mathematics, English, Reading, Language Arts and Writing curriculums to match the Common Core expectations with great expense to our district. All told over one million dollars has been spent on curriculum and staff training for the Common Core. Please think about the impact this will have to taxpayers and the overall academic delays this will cause if the standard is changed.

The very thought of pulling the standards rug out from under the school districts in the state is unfathomable to me. What standards would you move toward if you eliminate this standard? The previous Wisconsin standards were so broad in nature that the "anything goes" model could be employed. The Common Core Standards are specific, measurable and attainable with time and effort. Notice I didn't say easy.

In our district we set learning targets. These targets are communicated to staff, students, and parents. We would never think of changing a target mid-stream, because it disrupts the learning of all of the stakeholders. Curriculum work takes an average of 3 to 5 years to see impact because students need baseline data, scope and sequence for marked academic progression, and skill sets which spiral to be successful.

As superintendent in my district I can tell you our staff have committed thousands of hours of training and developing curriculum throughout the past three years. We are currently in the middle of our Science curriculum.

Curriculum development takes more than a line from the legislature. It takes hundreds of thousands of dollars a year and drives professional development across the state. I ask that you have a standard to follow. The Common Core is rigorous. However, I urge you to end this dialogue and allow the continuance of the work in the Common Core. It is a matter of knowing the target, even if the target is challenging. When you know what your target is, you can at least aim for it. Our community and students cannot afford another moving target. As educators, I am sure most all of us know that the Common Core is rigorous and it may indeed require some tweaking; but at least we have a target.

Thank you for your time. Please continue your good work on behalf of the Great State of Wisconsin.

Respectfully,



Mary E. Randall

District Administrator

Good afternoon,

I'm Jill Koenitzer, and I have been a Wisconsin educator for over 20 years.

There are two points I would like to make about the Common Core State Standards:

- 1) Elimination of the Common Core will cost schools across the State millions of dollars and countless hours of effort
- 2) Great leaders set a true and clear direction

In my last position, as principal at a high-performing elementary school, we spent an entire year carefully selecting, adopting, and purchasing reading curricular materials and textbooks at a cost of over \$80,000. We did this to ensure we had materials aligned to the Common Core, and we did this three years ago. If the Common Core State Standards are not implemented, this expense, time, and effort will have been for naught. Imagine this, multiplied by every school in the State and for both reading and mathematics. In my current position, training and supporting schools throughout the State, I can verify that all schools have made purchases and spent many hours aligning to the Common Core State Standards. If you were going to question adoption of the Common Core, you needed to do that several years ago.

There is nothing more frustrating to followers than having leaders change their mind at the last minute guaranteeing wasted effort and wasted money. As legislators, you are the leaders of much of the education in Wisconsin. If you change course at this late hour, you will lose the respect of your followers and waste money. Clearly, taxpayers and voters do not want us wasting money.

That being said, may I propose a compromise: I encourage you to proceed with the full adoption of the Common Core State Standards, but concurrently convene a committee to write more rigorous standards specific for Wisconsin. Due to the number of interest groups that will expect to be involved in this process, writing standards will take years and be politically charged. By the time the new standards are complete, schools will be well-aligned to the Common Core. Thus, the Common Core will become a stepping stone to Wisconsin Standards that meet our specific needs in our beautiful State.

Respectfully submitted,



Jill Koenitzer

Good Afternoon, I am Alice Kissinger, a retired District Reading Specialist from the Chippewa Falls School District. I am testifying in support of the Common Core State Standards because I am pleased to see a comprehensive set of Mathematics and English Language Arts standards that truly challenge students at their grade levels from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

In my work experience I found that teachers who had high expectations for their students inspired them to meet those expectations. They challenged students to excel and were able to help them produce the kind of high quality performances they were seeking.

Not all teachers have those high expectations, however. But by implementing these standards, we can be assured that, while individual school districts may teach them differently, the ultimate goal will still be to achieve that high level of understanding and use. There will be more challenge built into standards at every grade level.

Having these standards nation-wide will help the students, who are members of our increasingly mobile society, so when transferring schools these rigorous standards will be the same from state to state and district to district within states.

These standards focus on problem-solving and decision making skills useful in today's world. To make education more practical they encourage the use of problems from today's world. The in-depth treatment of fewer discreet standards will allow students to feel real pride when they've mastered them. Teachers will no longer need to choose which standards to teach in order to be able to give adequate time to each of them.

The overriding goal of the CCSS is to prepare students for college and the workplace. That was the main focus of the governors, educators, researchers and members of the world of business who collaborated in creating them. Following a standard from Kindergarten through High School, one can see the scaffolding and increasing complexity that makes each one so logical and relevant for today.

We are all aware that competition in the world-wide education market has shown our country that we are not coming up to the levels we would like. Therefore,

when work began on the creation of these standards time was spent investigating; 1) expectations of students in countries that had the higher scores such as Finland, Korea, Japan and Poland, 2) they did surveys of skills that were expected of students entering college or work training programs, and 3) they looked at basic characteristics of our National Assessment of Educational Progress, as well as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

There are some differences between the United States and the countries that produce the highest scoring kids. For example, in Korea kids spend about 15 hours a day at school, including an extra session from 5:00 pm to 10:00 or 11:00 pm where they get special tutoring. In Finland teachers must apply early for teacher training colleges and only about 20% of applicants are accepted. In Poland calculators are not allowed in math classes.

I have twin grandchildren who are now in first grade. A year ago, in 2012, when they entered kindergarten, they loved to hear stories, but they could not read them. After their year in Kindergarten, last summer, they could read stories to me. They used efficient word attack procedures. They could talk about the stories. These procedures showed me that in their school district, the discreet teaching of reading has been accelerated and has moved from First Grade and now begins in Kindergarten.

This is what will happen with the implementation of the CCSS nation-wide. For example, pre-algebra will be taught in 7th grade to prepare for algebra in 8th grade. Algebra used to be a 9th grade course. This will leave time in High School for students to take calculus, trigonometry and geometry.

Third grade students will learn to state the author's purpose and discuss the impact of the setting on a story. And we know these kids will be able to handle these expectations because they will be following a sequential series of standards that have prepared them for this next level.

They will read stories and fables from around the world, documents from our country's history, non-fiction from science and social studies. They will learn basic

math facts at specific levels and then be asked to solve real life problems using those facts.

Some people are worried that the CCSS are a national curriculum. This is certainly not true. States and districts will continue to create their own curriculum to accomplish. These standards will give all schools common targets. They clarify what we expect teachers to be teaching and what school districts will be accountable for. This will help all schools set their sights on one set of high standards.

The CCSS are a good thing. Implementing them in our schools will be the first major attempt to increase expectations in all of our schools in several decades. Doing it nation-wide is a brilliant idea whose time has come. Let's get behind our teachers and students to help everyone achieve great things.

Alice Kissinger
Stone Lake, Wisconsin

Common Core State Standards Testimony/10-23-13/Eau Claire, WI

By: Chris Hambuch-Boyle, M.S./former National Board Certified Teacher/retired

I have lived for the past 37 years in the field of education. I stand here as a witness to the 1000s of hours spent by educators on making the CCSS the corner stone of what children need to learn and be able to do. It allowed stakeholders to have deep educational conversations connecting all levels from preschool to grade 16. It allowed for the re-commitment to keeping our public schools at the highest level of achievement possible. It wasn't easy. We did this because of the commitment we have to the children, their families and the communities we serve. We did this because we remain a system that innovates. We did this because we serve ALL children. We mirror what our state looks and feels like. We mirror success with high ACT scores and attendance/graduation rates but we also mirror poverty and higher incidence of medically fragile children and those with autism. We took the CCSS journey because we are NOT a system that is failing. We took this journey to stay on the cutting edge. The CCSS are rigorous, internationally benchmarked English language arts and mathematics standards. The CCSS connect families that tend to be more mobile in following job opportunities. The CCSS connect us to our global economy.

Often, public schools in WI are equated with what is happening in Milwaukee. Please quit equating schools across your state with Milwaukee. There is quite a different conversation among many educational leaders outside Milwaukee. Much of what is entrenched in Milwaukee is there because of their history tied to its real backstory of educational policymaking. I would suggest that all panel members read Barbara Miner's recent book, "Lessons from the Heartland". It adequately tells the story of the last half-century of public education in our iconic, largest city of Milwaukee. I think it would behoove all of us to know this and get on board looking at actual data that will help Milwaukee, not spread what has been tried there statewide.

In closing, I would like to say that I never thought that educational standards would make front page headlines as it did recently in our Eau Claire Leader-Telegram (hold up paper). I look at this as a good thing because it allows public schools to have the opportunity to tell our state of Wisconsin how really great our public schools are. I want to ask Governor Walker: If the CCSS were initiated by the National Governor's Association why didn't he or his legislative leaders have these conversations with the legislature long ago when he first took office in 2010? I want to ask why when I recently (last week) sat down with our local legislators (one that was assigned to the CCSS panel) some didn't even know anything about the CCSS. I am going to assume that our Governor was spending more time on things he felt were more important. I am going to assume this is just another time our public schools are a pawn between the political left and right. As a public school teacher I value ALL children and families, which is why, I took the CCSS journey. I feel bad that Governor Walker is making you all play catch up when you should have been in the loop in the first place. The focus in our great state of Wisconsin should be school funding reform NOT defunding of public schools using vouchers or debunking the CCSS.