



April 2, 2010

*Evidence of
late feedback
round (April, 2010)*

Chris Minnich
Council of Chief State School Officers
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431

Dear Chris:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the public draft of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics that were released on March 10. Attached are the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's comments regarding the most recent draft.

Overall, we continue to congratulate and applaud the progress made between the various drafts on this very important work for both Wisconsin and the nation. The comments provided represent the response from experts within our agency as well as comments heard from our stakeholders.

Again, thank you for the ongoing opportunities that you provided to the states throughout the development process. As the drafts evolved from one to the next, it was clear the comments provided by the states were listened to and addressed.

Sincerely,

Tony Evers, PhD
State Superintendent

TE:sg

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**Common Core State Standards
Wisconsin Feedback (April 2, 2010)**

1. The documents still contain too many standards. This becomes especially problematic when considering the impact on assessment.
2. The documents **must** have a common architecture, creating parallel language, structure, and organization for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Both ELA and mathematics will be used by K-5 teachers. In other words, at least half of the teachers using the standards will be using both ELA and mathematics. Consequently, the standards must have the same architecture. As this architecture is designed, the emerging Common Core efforts in science and social studies must be considered. Again, if this common architecture is not addressed, it will result in elementary teachers and perhaps others wading through different content area structures (e.g., ELA, math, science, social studies). When an individual state develops standards, care is to taken to create the same structure because it is the foundation for discussion across the content areas. Part of the “Common Core” should be common language, common structure, common organization.

To achieve this, consider the following:

- a. Use the same definitions of the various “layers” of each discipline’s standards (mathematics uses domain and clusters; ELA uses strands).
- b. The grade level narratives that are given in mathematics are useful to provide an overview to the grade level, but for English language arts, the grade-to-grade differences are minimal, so a narrative overview should be given to each grade

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band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12). The grade level narratives for mathematics at the high school are currently more like a list of topics than a description of learning about the topic.

3. Including literacy only in history/social studies & science suggests that ELA teachers need to include this content in their classes. We encourage instead a broader emphasis on literacy across all subject areas (arts, world languages, career and technical education, health/physical education, mathematics). We recommend placing these standards either as an appendix to the ELA document or saving them for future development of common core standards for social studies and science. If these standards are still to be included in the ELA Common Core, we recommend:
 - a. Identify who is responsible for these standards
 - b. Show how these standards are connected to ELA instruction as well as instruction in social studies and science classes
 - c. Regardless of whether or not these standards are included in this document, include more elaboration to explain their connection with ELA and answer the question about how these standards would be assessed in ELA and the other subjects.
4. The Common Core Standards need an overarching vision up front that points to applications of knowledge and understanding in order to avoid reading the standards as a skills checklist (necessary to move from current standards to new standards; from current curriculum to new curriculum at LEA-level)
5. A clearer integration of technology applications needs to be embedded in the ELA and mathematics standards. If not explicitly included, this is easily ignored.

6. English Language Arts specific:

- a. The content of the discipline is more than the communication skills learned.

Therefore, the elements detailed in the standards are necessary, but not sufficient in defining the discipline. Communication processes are an important inclusion, but learning about the human experience across time through ELA is left out.

- b. The writing exemplars showcase informational and explanatory writing, but should also include persuasive and creative writing exemplars.

- c. The “Exemplars of Reading Text Complexity and Quality” (Appendix B) becomes a recommended (if not required) list with the addition in the description of “and quality.” In “Appendix B: Illustrative Texts,” we recommend fewer exemplars (perhaps 2-3 per grade, in a variety of genres) and the inclusion of an explanation as to why each was chosen, highlighting the text complexity demonstrated in each. These changes would provide the technical assistance that would help teachers in choosing materials of comparable complexity. Such an approach would mirror what was done in “Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing,” as well as the approach in “Appendix A: The Model in Action: Sample Annotated Reading Texts” (pp. 15-25). It has been noted that there are passages drawn from materials that are listed in the “Appendix B: Illustrative Texts” that have been used or are being considered for future use on NAEP assessments. The use of these passages on NAEP sets the stage for the unintended interpretation of this list as a focus for instruction, leading to limitations on teachers’ instructional decisions.

- d. The Reading Foundations, unlike other strands, is singled out. This section is described both as standards and as foundational skills. These two terms are not the same and the role of this section must be determined: If the section is standards, the content belongs integrated into the ELA document; if the section is foundational skills, the section belongs in an appendix.

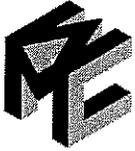
7. Mathematics specific:

- a. With the “Standards for Mathematical Practices” (pp. 4-5) relegated to front matter (and not embedded in the actual K-12 standards), the K-12 standards become too much a skills checklist. We recommend clustering the standards into deeper understandings, to connect topics within a grade level and also to show the connections of concepts K-12, such as making more explicit how the K-5 concepts lead to algebraic thinking. Leaving the grade level standards as they are now, the long list could be interpreted as a checklist of isolated skills rather than as concepts to teach for understanding. Clustering will also diminish redundancies such as found in grade 2, Number – Base 10 (#7 & #9 both refer to mental computation and could be combined.)
- b. The language of the standards must strike a balance between a *mathematician’s* language and a *mathematics educator’s* language in both the Standards for Mathematical Practice and the Grade Level Standards. It is important that the final version uses terms that are mathematically accurate, but not unnecessarily technical, especially critical for teachers of grades K-8.

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- c. As noted earlier, the narrative at the beginning of each grade level is a benefit and needs to reflect the skills, understandings, and mathematical proficiencies to truly ‘tell the story’ of mathematical learning at that level. There needs to be a coherent message that builds across levels. In the public draft version, the high school narratives seem to be more of a list of skills. It would be helpful if the writers would review the narratives side-by-side to ensure the coherence.
- d. The elementary and middle school overview on pages 7 and 8 is very helpful to see how the standards build across grade levels K-5 and 6-8; however, a clear connection is missing to help bridge elementary to middle school. The link of the six domains in grades K-5 to the six domains in grades 6-8 must be explicit (currently only “Geometry” appears in both domain groupings). The recommendation is to identify the specific connections linking elementary grades to middle school and middle school to senior high school. Broad categories that provide K-12 coherence would be helpful, for example
- Number and Algebra
 - Geometry
 - Measurement, Data/Statistics, and Probability
- e. The current learning progression, especially at the elementary level, designates mastery of some skills prior to developmental readiness. This has the potential consequence of focusing instruction on memorizing procedures and skills rather than building an important foundation of understanding. This is especially apparent in the areas of base-ten number, development of relational thinking about all numbers, including fractions, and decimal concepts.

- f. The focus on ‘the standard algorithm’ continues to be problematic. This narrow definition will likely be interpreted in a very limited way by educators and will not provide access to all students. It is debated what ‘the standard algorithm’ actually means in the international world of mathematics. We suggest that the language be broadened to include multiple algorithms and efficient computational strategies.
- g. Application of mathematical knowledge is very important and seems to be missing from the current draft. Application of mathematics needs to be readily apparent through rich examples in all areas. Most of the standards seem to point to modeling; however, more applications through modeling need to be included. Modeling as a separate standard with no applications is insufficient for this important component of mathematics.
- h. The course pathways section (Appendix A) does not belong in a standards document. These are curriculum and program decisions, not elements of standards. The course pathways are too skills-based and are not neutral, especially when it comes to assessment. The course pathways support end-of-course assessment or the general ACT-type of assessment, whereas the international benchmark (comparison with nations ranking high on international assessment measures) is for integrated maths (in the plural).



Wisconsin Mathematics Council, Inc.
Leading Quality Mathematics Education in Wisconsin

Chris Minnich
Council of Chief State School Officers
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431

April 2, 2010

WMC feedback
to CCSSO on
public release
of standards.

Greetings:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the March draft of the Common Core State Standards. The Wisconsin Mathematics Council (WMC) is an affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and leader in mathematics education across the Wisconsin. The attached comments reflect the perspectives of the Wisconsin Mathematics Council Board of Directors.

In this important time in mathematics education, WMC welcomes the opportunity to partner with CCSSO in the further development of the Common Core State Standards, as well as the implementation strategies, assessment tools, and professional development that are critical components of the next phase. As a statewide leader in mathematics education, we bring both a passion and a desire to be involved in future endeavors.

We look forward to future collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diana L. Kasbaum".

Diana L. Kasbaum, President
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The Wisconsin Mathematics Council (WMC), an Affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, applauds the efforts of the standards writing teams as they attempt to articulate the important mathematics that students must learn. The Mathematical Practices have the potential to be an organizing structure around K-12 learning. We agree with the introductory statements about stressing conceptual understanding and revisiting organizing principles. However, the current document does not fully reach those goals and there are some components of the standards that are either designated too early or are missing from the March 2010 Draft of the Common Core Standards.

The ensuing comments reflect the perspectives and reactions of the WMC Board of Directors to the March 2010 Draft of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics.

- **Standards must identify the important big ideas of mathematics.** Teachers welcome standards that clearly delineate the important 'big ideas' of mathematics. However, as teachers reviewed the draft CCSS the first thing they noticed was a long list of paper and pencil skills that will easily become a checklist of things to do. This results in students memorizing procedures rather than being able to learn and apply mathematics. The big ideas of geometry, especially at the elementary level, are not well connected. As you look across the geometry standards, they appear to be a series of discrete, unrelated activities.
- **There must be coherence between grades and across grade bands (grades K-5 to grades 6-8 to high school).** The current document shows how a topic builds across a given grade band (e.g. grades K-5); however, there is little continuity across the K-12 spectrum. We suggest that a K-12 coherence could be more readily achieved if the standards were aligned in three K-12 areas:
 - Number and Algebra
 - Measurement, Data, Statistics, and Probability
 - Geometry

By describing a K-12 picture of mathematics, teachers and students are able to clearly see how learning at their particular grade level either builds a foundation for subsequent mathematics or builds upon the learning that has been previously acquired. This is a critical component of a coherent curriculum.

- **The standards must be developmentally appropriate in order to ensure that students are ready to learn with understanding** otherwise they become a checklist of procedures that are memorized with little or no understanding. We are concerned that the consequence of designating standards before students are developmentally ready will impede student learning and will result misconceptions that could have been avoided. This is particularly concerning at the primary grades (K-2) in place value, base 10, and computation. This is also concern at the middle school level where algebra appears to be the primary focus of eighth grade.
- **There must be clear connection between the Standards for Mathematical Practice and the Grade Level Standards.** The practice or "doing" of mathematics needs to be integrated with the mathematics topics that our students should be learning. In order to ensure that this occurs, the Mathematical Practices need to be explained in grade level narratives and combined, where appropriate, with the skills and understandings in the grade level standards. We also suggest that

specific examples applicable to each level (K-5, 6-8, and high school) be included in each of the Standards for Mathematical Practice at the beginning of the document.

- **The focus on paper/pencil computation and using the standard algorithm has the potential of short circuiting student understanding.** Using multiple strategies and reasoning is an important component of the end goal that students know how to select and use efficient strategies to compute. They need to be able to choose from among strategies given the context of the problem. The standard subtraction algorithm (with regrouping) is certainly not efficient for some problems (e.g. 3000-2997). Students need to understand the importance of looking at the relationships between numbers. They need to understand what they are computing, not just memorizing a procedure. 'The' standard algorithm can cause a lack of understanding in the traditional manner in which many students have learned how to divide with fractions by invert and multiply (e.g. $\frac{7}{8} \div \frac{1}{4} = \frac{7}{8} \times \frac{4}{1}$), while having no understanding of why the answer must be between 3 and 4. Many adults are still confused why dividing by a fraction yields a larger number than the dividend.
- **Mathematical modeling, problem solving and applications need to be explicit and infused across all grade levels.** These areas are the essence of doing mathematics and, in the current version of the CCSS, are missing. The description of the Modeling category for high school is very strong; however the current format, in which there are no explicit modeling standards, but only connections to modeling across other categories, has the potential for modeling to be reduced in practice to two or three "applications" problems at the end of a unit or chapter. (In general we ask the writing group to consider the effect of the final document on commercial textbook publishers: will it push them to produce materials which present mathematics as a coherent subject, with a significant proportion of high-cognitive-demand tasks, or will they simply be able to cut-and-paste from current editions and claim they are aligned to the Common Core?)
- **Other areas of concern:**
 - No clear connection between mathematical topics or between mathematics and other disciplines
 - Very little attention to communication – writing, speaking, reflecting.
 - Little or no reference to the use of the "tools of mathematics" (except in the mathematical practices)– this includes manipulatives, measuring tools, technology, as well as paper/pencil.
 - Weak references to number sense, estimation and determining the reasonableness of solutions.
 - The extensive list of topics, especially at grades 9-12 will lead to breadth, not depth – continuing the dilemma of the "mile wide and inch deep" teaching of mathematics.
 - Insufficient attention to the infusion of mathematical processes, K-12 (problem solving, reasoning and proof, connections, representation, communication)
 - Appendix A reads like a table of contents for a textbook, and should not be a component of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics. There is a concern that it will result in publication of mathematics textbooks that reflect isolated topics.

The Wisconsin Mathematics Council agrees that focus and consistency nationwide could benefit mathematics education and that it is important for students to leave our K-12 schools with a firm grasp of key mathematical skills; however, WMC has concerns that much of the March 2010 draft of the Common Core State Standards seems to be a movement away from understanding and applying mathematics and toward more of an arithmetic-focused curriculum.

As a leader in mathematics education, the Wisconsin Mathematics Council welcomes the opportunity to partner on a national level with CCSSO and other organizations in the further development and review of the Common Core State Standards, as well as planning for and carrying out implementation strategies, assessment tools, and professional development.

Evidence of
WASCD feedback
to CCSSO
on public
draft April 2010

WISCONSIN ASCD
RESPONSE TO

Common Core State Standards Draft

April 1, 2010



**Wisconsin ASCD is a non-profit,
non-partisan membership organization
that represents 750 educators in
Wisconsin focused on improving
teaching and learning. Our members span
the entire profession of educators—
curriculum leaders, superintendents,
principals, teachers, professors and
state education agency personnel.**

Wisconsin ASCD and its parent organization, ASCD, have access to the education experts who will assist school districts in implementing the standards through professional development, leadership, resources and capacity building. We offer the following comments summarized from input by our Board Members— many who consulted their school staffs— representing 21 school districts, 2 colleges and 3 state education agencies in Wisconsin. These comments were also informed by the discussions of 200 education leaders gathered at a symposium on the Common Core State Standards Initiative sponsored by Wisconsin ASCD which included representatives from 98 school districts, 9 colleges and universities, and 12 state education agencies in Wisconsin. ►►

A national test/ assessment system is desperately needed with national cut scores defined by the US Dept. of Ed. instead of each state. Move to a growth model of accountability as part of ESEA reauthorization and make sure growth for all is the goal of entire system. We need to embrace the EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT assessment system because College and Career Readiness Standards are backed by a large body of evidence. They are a credible measure of student achievement, a gatekeeper of higher education regionally and are skills-based not content-based. MAP testing needs to be considered in the assessment conversation.

We have kept the 19th century model; time is finite and learning is not.

This era is about instruction, assessment and standards. Why did Wisconsin join the Common Core Initiative? To compete globally and ensure economic success. This will help us with the "how" of teaching, not the "what." – Tony Evers, Wisconsin State Superintendent

Every student must be a critical thinker, problem solver, innovator, effective communicator, collaborator, self-directed learner. Each student must also be information and media literate, globally aware, civically engaged and financially and economically literate. – Paul Sandrock, WI Dept of Public Instruction

Funding is all about competitive grant programs now versus providing equity. This is a change the Obama administration is bringing to education. – David Griffith, ASCD Director of Public Policy

What we don't have time to do is replication of thought and design. DPI should be the "hub" of information and quality control. We don't have time for everyone to do their own thing. We need to pool resources regionally. Districts should work collaboratively to accomplish the tasks. – Nick Dussault, WASCD Board Member, Green Bay Area Public Schools

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WISCONSIN ASCD'S RESPONSE

View the draft standards at: www.corestandards.org/standards/k12/

What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

- A joint effort between the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices in partnership with ACT, the College Board, and Achieve.
- They believe it provides a significant and historic opportunity for states to collectively develop and adopt a core set of K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts.
- 48 states and 3 territories have signed on to the Common Core State Standards Initiative process.

What will the common core standards look like?

- Fewer, clearer, and higher
- Inclusive of content and skills
- Internationally benchmarked
- Research and evidence based
- Accessible to students, parents, and the public

What is the timeline?

- September 2009: Release public draft of college and career ready standards for public input
- March 2010: Release draft standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts for grades K-12
- May, 2010: ASCD endorses the Common Core State Standards Initiative
- June, 2010: K-12 standards finalized

More information at www.corestandards.org



General Comments

High standards alone will not increase student achievement. Wisconsin ASCD is interested in how the Common Core Standards will improve teaching and learning and how they will be aligned with instructionally relevant assessments, curricula, instruction, materials and new technologies. What are the changes? How are these standards different? Do they reflect the future? Do they make clear what is valued? And how is the development of global competencies connected to economic growth?

- The grade level format contributes to logistical utility and understanding of the standards.
- We find it very positive that the documents represent consideration of ELL's and students with disabilities.
- Attempts are made to strategically integrate technology skills.
- We like the examples that were used to clarify a standard. It would be helpful if the final document had more examples.

General Concerns

1. There is a noticeable influence from ACT in creating these standards which may result in a constrained curriculum driven by large-scale testing.
2. In the classroom, will these standards foster the development of deeper understanding rather than a skills checklist approach?
 - When should concepts get introduced to students? The current draft is a mastery list. A "learning continuum" model would be more helpful for teachers.
 - How do these standards support "depth" of understanding a concept? Unfortunately, it appears they are the old "mile wide and inch deep."
 - What about the application of knowledge? How is this represented in the standards? How do these standards support students demonstrating higher levels of knowledge?
3. Are these standards clear?
 - There is specific technical vocabulary within standards that does not always have an explicit common understanding. (for example, "domain-specific" p. 13, 19, 21, 24, 28, 31, 40, 43 etc. The term "content area" is more easily recognized by teachers and students.)
 - Are these standards easily understood by students and parents? (for example, "scaffolding" p. 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 34, 36, 37, etc.)

English Language Arts and Literature in History, Science, and Social Studies

ELA Comments:

- All important ideas are represented in a contemporary balanced literacy model. The K-3 Foundational Skills (pp. 12-13) is balanced and non-political with an equal treatment of phonics and comprehension. We especially like the emphasis on sustained reading and increased independent reading.
- The specification of range and level of text complexity, language (grammar & convention), grade expectations, and range of writing tasks are clear, user-friendly and consistent with current knowledge about literacy development.
- Exemplars and appendices provide useful examples; however specific lists of books have a delimiting effect.
- It is encouraging to have research, technology and cooperative learning integrated in a meaningful manner.

ELA Concerns:

1. Metacognitive strategies are not emphasized enough and need to be more explicit. (for example, K p. 8 # 9 – kindergartners are able to compare more than characters in a story, just ask them about plant-eating and meat eating dinosaurs. The metacognitive strategy is identifying similarities and differences starting in kindergarten. At higher levels this becomes compare/contrast and also categorizing and classifying.)
2. Omit the book lists. Provide a lexile chart to indicate general levels of complexity. Leave book decisions to local control.
3. Resources: We are not in favor of the booklists. They are dated and very traditional. There is not much literature from the 21st century and they reflect little diversity. However if they must be included, the current lists do not represent the description of desired literature that accompanies the lists. (p. 7 & 31)
4. The standards seem to be developmentally aggressive. For example: Are most second graders competent in revising and editing? (Gr2 p. 16 #5) Only in certain areas, such as adding to text or using capital letters and end punctuation. We could have the same wording (“competent in revising and editing”) for grades 5, 9 and 12. Some specificity would help teachers.

ELA Specific Concerns:

1. The use of the phrase “decoding words” (K-3 p. 13 #3) could be misinterpreted as “phonics only” instruction. Simply eliminate that phrase to keep a balanced focus on “phonics and word analysis.”
2. Do the writing standards represent the skills and processes that students need to be competent?
For example, creative writing standards appear to be missing. Creative writing often leads to career writing – journalism, screenwriting, advertising, songwriting, etc. This may represent an imbalance. The types of writing need to be clearly defined and equally represented.

Myth: English teachers will be asked to teach science and social studies reading materials.

Fact: With the Common Core ELA *Standards*, English teachers will still teach their students literature as well as literary non-fiction. However, because college and career readiness overwhelming focuses on complex texts outside of literature, these standards also ensure students are being prepared to read, write, and research across the curriculum, including in history and science. These goals can be achieved by ensuring that teachers in other disciplines are also focusing on reading and writing to build knowledge within their subject areas.

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Myth: Key math topics are missing or appear in the wrong grade.

Fact: The mathematical progressions presented in the Common Core are coherent and based on evidence.

Part of the problem with having 50 different sets of state standards is that today, different states cover different topics at different grade levels. Coming to consensus guarantees that from the viewpoint of any given state, topics will move up or down in the grade level sequence. This is unavoidable. What is important to keep in mind is that the progression in the Common Core State Standards is mathematically coherent and leads to college and career readiness at an internationally competitive level.

Mathematics

Math Comments:

- The ultimate purpose of mathematics is problem-solving. We appreciate the specificity but it seems like a laundry list of discrete skills that will be easily translated into workbooks. Our concern is that this will put us back into individual skill development and move away from inquiry and the interconnectedness of mathematics. Include examples of broader problems and the application of mathematics to solve them consistent with the Standards of Mathematical Practice as described on pages 4-5.
- Hong Kong and Singapore math instruction appear to be the basis of the Common Core Math Standards. Therefore it is critical to make explicit the key understandings behind the Hong Kong and Singapore math approaches.
- Base Ten is the core of our number system and is not sufficiently understood by our children—hence the difficulty with decimals, place value, etc. The increased emphasis on these topics is appreciated.

Math General Concerns:

1. The math standards are no longer organized by the NCTM strands. Consistency and alignment with NCTM would be more acceptable to teachers.
2. The layout of the math standards is very difficult to read—way too text heavy. It also is impossible to see a progression from one grade level to the next in the current format (unlike the ELA layout).
3. Standards for communication in mathematics are missing or not explicit enough in this document.
4. Standards for math processes are not clearly evident.
5. The lack of algebra in primary grades (patterning, and graphing) is of concern. There is a need to make the concept of equality and use of letters in place of numbers as variables explicit for earlier grades (K-6).

Math Specific Concerns:

1. There is very little 3D geometry before grade 4; also, very little “movement” in geometry before grade 4 (for example, transformations p. 41 grade 8).
2. What is the “standard algorithm?” (pp. 15-17, 21, 23-24, 28, 32) Does every student need to use the same algorithm? Does this push a more traditional, direct instructional model?
3. Are the “proofs” described in the high school standards formal or informal proofs?
4. Are students expected to have access to the dynamic geometry software and algebra systems?

Implementation Concerns

These are issues that if considered up front will ease the implementation of the Common Core Standards.

General Concerns

1. The document is overwhelming, especially for elementary teachers. What happened to "fewer, clearer, higher?" With the length of this document, teachers will only concentrate on their particular grade level. Consistency in skill development and deeper understanding which can only occur over time will suffer. Consider developing simple charts of sequential development of skills and concepts to highlight grade to grade progression, especially in mathematics.
2. In the classroom will these standards result in a skill and drill approach focused on success that is measured by large-scale testing (provided by ACT)? Other than one set of standards rather than 50, this is not much different from what we have now.
3. What is the expectation for implementation? Be sure to consider that we will have to wait for materials that support the Common Core Standards. It would be valuable to develop a list of current high school and middle school textbooks and materials that support these standards. It would also be valuable to support the use of e-books and technology in order to make the implementation of these standards more current and in order to help public school districts to move the publishing industry forward. An e-book does not and should not cost the same as a hard cover book.
4. When will an assessment framework be developed?

ELA

5. With sustained reading and writing time increasing, will science and social studies become primarily time for literary instruction? For example, The Human Body sustained reading example over K-5 grades (p. 29) accomplishes deep knowledge on an important topic but seldom does an elementary teacher spend such significant time on a science topic each year. The unintended consequence may be less topic "coverage" in science and social studies since our current K-5 science curricula is more eclectic.
6. If science and social studies teachers (6-12) are expected to fulfill their instructional role with regard to literacy as outlined with explicit tasks for reading and writing, the need for professional development as well as revamping of teacher preparation programs in those areas is necessary.
7. The current middle school system of teaching literature and writing together may need restructuring. Separate classes are not the answer because an integrated cognitive emphasis is underlying the Common Core Standards.

Math

8. Teachers, especially at the elementary and middle school levels, are not trained sufficiently to offer deep instruction in math reasoning and variety in problem-solving and mathematical models. In the classroom, the danger is that assigning more problems will be the result (quantity over quality), not deeper understanding or a variety of ways to solve problems.
9. It is more and more difficult to find "math minded" elementary and middle school teachers. These Standards will require more than a surface level of understanding to make an impact. Again this will involve professional development and revamping of teacher training and certification programs, especially in order for students to be ready for algebra in 8th grade as indicated. ■■■■

Myth: The Standards tell teachers what to teach.

Fact: The best understanding of what works in the classroom comes from the teachers who are in them. That's why these standards will establish what students need to learn, but they will not dictate how teachers should teach. Instead, schools and teachers will decide how best to help students reach the standards.

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From: Donna L. Pasternak [dlp2@uwm.edu]
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2010 2:15 PM
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Subject: Common Core Standards Response

Evidence of NCTE feedback on the draft CCS 3/18/2010

Dear Colleagues:

What follows is the WCTE response to the CCS, crafted from notes taken at the DPI preview last Tuesday. The board members who participated in the conversation included Barbara, Erin, Scott, Tom, Emilie and me. I want to thank those of you who provided feedback on the first draft and/or accepted the invitation to place your name on the document. If you haven't already done so, I encourage everyone to read the CCS at <http://www.corestandards.org/>

I know you are all extremely busy, dedicated to the advancement of our profession, and some of you felt you did not have enough time to study the CCS in the time I allotted for helping me craft a response to it. I concede that I expedited its writing, because I felt the CCS warranted an immediate response after the DPI preview. When initiatives such as the CCS are shaped by organizations that appear to sidestep the members of the professional organizations that will have to enact them, I fear that our silence will be misunderstood as acceptance of the situation. Will our response change having to follow the CCS? I think not, but it may cause some revision to occur. At the very least, we will be on record that WCTE is not happy with the narrow vision of English studies found in the CCS. I encourage you all to respond to the CCS individually.

All best,

Donna

Donna L. Pasternak, President, WCTE

The Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE) is firm in its insistence that the Common Core Standards (CCS) fit the needs of English Language Arts teachers and their students in the State of Wisconsin. Therefore, WCTE asks that the following concerns be taken into consideration when revising and implementing this document:

1. The English Language Arts Common Core Standards fail to acknowledge the heart of our discipline: Humanities.

Focusing the CCS on the skills needed to read, write, listen, and speak is only a partial vision of what is necessary for students to be college and career ready in English Studies. What is missing from the CCS is an articulation of the humanities portion of the discipline. The CCS document does not

acknowledge the reasons for reading, discussing and writing about literature, which is to explore the readers' own experiences and the social and political worlds they inhabit. The skills identified in the CCS are the means to learning the content of English Studies. Without this content articulated in the CCS, the reading of texts becomes nothing more than sophisticated (or unsophisticated) decoding.

The CCS should identify standards that address the knowledge foundational to literary (textual) study and meaning-making. This content should facilitate the students' personal growth in a developmentally appropriate way, increasing their awareness of the world around them, fostering their growth as independent learners, and supporting their own decision-making. In the same vein, the study of writing in English Studies should address creative exploration. If these aspects of English Studies are not included in the CCS, we fear that the disciplinary knowledge of English Studies will be subordinated to learning to write, read, speak, and listen in "history, social studies, and science." In other words, we fear that teachers in English studies will become the handmaidens (gendered language intended) to the other disciplines as English teachers teach students skills and teachers in other disciplines teach content. We recommend that the State of Wisconsin contextualize the CCS with what we know and value about English Studies that helps all of us better understand the human condition.

2. Grade-specific standards and grade appropriate texts ignore what we know about child development.

Providing grade-specific standards, while helpful for teachers who wish guidance, ignores what we know about child development. Students come into our age-specified grades (e.g., 1st grade) with different abilities and widely varying backgrounds in language experience and exposure. To expect that all students would achieve the standards specified in a narrow grade level identified in the CCS is tantamount to saying that scientific studies of child development are irrelevant. Providing bands spanning grade equivalencies (e.g., K-2) of expected development would be much more in line with scientific knowledge and commonplace experience.

Despite the disclaimer that the texts listed in the narrow grade levels in the CCS are merely "illustrative," we fear that school districts will purchase these texts out of expediency to implement an unfunded mandate. The exemplar texts listed do not address the complexity and diversity of the State of Wisconsin. We propose that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction provide English teachers in the State of Wisconsin with peer-reviewed models that reflect the values of its population. This type of document could become a "living" compendium where additional peer-reviewed exemplars could be uploaded and commented upon by practitioners.

3. The use of the term "Standard" English throughout the CCS is offensive and does not underscore what we know about audience and register in the study of language in the State of Wisconsin.

WCTE recognizes that differences in language have always existed and respects that people in Wisconsin have home languages that are central to their identities. We will not subordinate the home language by assuming that there is one "standard" language in the United States, and we repudiate the use of the term "standard." The CCS should reflect the understanding that there are varieties of language in the United States and students have a right to their own languages and patterns of language appropriate to their home situations. The CCS should indicate such and discuss the teaching of language in a more equitable manner.

WCTE acknowledges the impending reality of the CCS in the State of Wisconsin. We ask the writers of the CCS to implement changes to the document as it now stands to make it relevant to teachers of English in our state.

Respectfully submitted,

The Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE)

Donna L. Pasternak, President, WCTE

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From: Jen Scott Curwood [jenscottcurwood@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2010 11:57 AM
To: literacy@lists.wisc.edu; glsstudents@lists.wisc.edu; dsicg@lists.wisc.edu
Subject: K-12 Common Core Standards

The Common Core Standards are now online and open to public comment.

And (with thanks to Damiana Gibbons for pointing me to it) here's a New York Times article on the topic:

March 10, 2010

Panel Releases Proposal to Set U.S. Standards for Educati

By SAM DILLON

Evidence of
mainstream
media coverage of
period of open
feedback on
standards

Evidence of
engagement of
English higher ed
community (all higher
ed listservs) in
responding to public
draft.

Culminating a year's work, a panel of educators convened by the nation's governors and state school superintendents released a set of proposed common academic standards on Wednesday. The standards, posted on the panel's web site, lay out the panel's vision of what American public school students should learn in math and English, year by year, from kindergarten to high school graduation.

Forty-eight states cooperated in producing the proposed standards, which amount to a new road map for American public education. If a majority of states were to adopt them over the next few months, which experts said was a growing possibility, the new standards would replace the nation's motley current checkerboard of locally written standards, which vary greatly in content and sophistication. And adoption of the new standards would set off a vast new effort to rewrite textbooks and standardized tests.

"I'd say this is one of the most important events of the last several years in American education," said Chester Finn, Jr., a former assistant secretary of education who has been an advocate for national standards for nearly two decades. "Now we have the possibility that, for the first time, states could come together around new standards and high school graduation requirements that are ambitious and coherent. This is a big deal."

The proposed standards lay out a blueprint of the concepts and skills students should learn year by year as they make their way through the public schools. In English, for instance, they say that fifth graders should be able to explain major differences between drama and prose stories, and refer to elements of drama like casts of characters, dialogue, and stage directions when writing or speaking about specific works of dramatic literature, among other skills.

In seventh grade math, as another example, instructional time should focus on developing students' understanding of proportional relationships, of operations with rational numbers and solving linear equations, of two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence; and of how to draw inferences about populations based on samples, the proposed standards say.

The National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers set the common-standards initiative in motion early last year, convening panels of English and math experts from the College Board, A.C.T., and from Achieve, Inc., a group that has been working with states for years to upgrade their high school graduation standards.

Alaska and Texas are the only states not participating in the standards-writing effort. In keeping his state out of the movement, Gov. Rick Perry argued that only Texans should decide what children there learn.

The Obama Administration quickly endorsed the effort. Under the Department of Education's Race to the Top initiative, in which states are competing for a share of \$4 billion in school improvement money, states can earn 40 points of the possible 500 for participating in the common effort and adopting the new standards.

Over the coming weeks, the public and education experts are invited to review and comment on the proposed standards before final versions are published later this spring.

But some states are already preparing to adopt them. Kentucky last month became the first state to do so formally, and officials in Illinois, Florida and several other states have begun internal discussions to lay the groundwork for adoption, said Dane Linn, the education division director at the National Governors' Association.

The standards adoption process varies greatly in complexity from state to state. In some, the state schools superintendent has considerable power to move forward in as little as three months. But other states, including California, have extremely complicated standards adoption procedures, involving the state board of education and other groups that could prolong the process for a year or more, Mr. Linn said.

Educators and officials involved in the writing process pointed to what they considered to be strengths in the proposed standards that could make them beneficial for teachers. One is that they are concise.

"Many states have too many expectations in their academic standards that force teachers to cover too much in a superficial way," said Gene Wilhoit, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers. "We said, 'Let's keep these very understandable and at a number that is manageable. Let's not put on teachers more requirements than they can deliver.'"

Another improvement over current state benchmarks is that the proposed standards are what educators call vertically aligned, meaning that what students are expected to learn in early years builds a foundation for what they are to learn in the next grade.

"Students are asked to do progressively more challenging things, and although that may sound obvious, it's a real breakthrough," said Michael Cohen, a former Clinton Administration Education Department official who is president of Achieve.

Several major education organizations immediately endorsed the draft standards. The Council of the Great City Schools, which represents the nation's largest urban public school systems, said in a statement that it "considers the draft to be high quality grade-by-grade standards that the nation can be proud of."

The proposed standards outline concepts to be learned, but do not lay down a specific curriculum.

In English, for instance, they do not prescribe individual works of literature, but instead offer a list of texts "illustrating the quality, complexity and range" of student reading that would be appropriate for various grades. The middle school list includes "Little Women" and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," as well as works of nonfiction like "Letter on Thomas Jefferson" by John Adams. The 11th grade nonfiction list includes Henry David Thoreau's "Walden" and President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Since the late 1980s, many educators and policymakers have considered the current system of state standards as a weak link in American education. Because the standards vary so widely, standardized tests keyed to them are not comparable from state to state, nor to national tests. As a result, for example, 87 percent of Tennessee students achieved scores rated as proficient or above in math on state tests in 2005, while only 21 percent scored in the proficient range on the federal math test.

Earlier attempts to draft voluntary national standards during the first Bush and Clinton Administrations foundered after conservatives attacked them as federal meddling in classroom teaching. Because of that tumultuous history, leaders of the latest effort have defended its state-led nature and independence, despite frequent endorsements of it by the Obama Administration.

Also, they enlisted considerable help from education groups, including the two national teachers unions, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and others.

Writers who participated said they sought to build on the best of what is already in some states' standards, while clarifying and simplifying.

"We tried to clean house a bit, keeping only what is most important and most critical," said Susan Pimentel, a New Hampshire-based consultant who helped write the proposed English standards.

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From: Amundson, Emilie A. DPI [Emilie.Amundson@dpi.wi.gov]
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2010 12:43 PM
To: Informational forum for English teachers
Subject: Common Core Standards available for public feedback

Evidence of
DPI engagement
of English educators
to view & provide
feedback to draft
Standards March 2010

Greetings Colleagues:

As you may be aware, the Common Core Standards Initiative for English Language Arts has been underway for most this past year. On Wednesday, the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governor's Association released the most recent version of the Common Core Standards for public review and comment. I am writing to both inform you as an English educator and to encourage you as an important stakeholder to take time during the next three weeks to review the ELA standards with your colleagues and to submit feedback. As an English educator, this is your opportunity to share your perspectives. You have an important voice!

There are multiple levels of opportunity to respond to the Common Core. *(Please note that feedback is due no later than April 2, 2010 at: <http://www.corestandards.org/>.)*

- Review the standards and provide personal feedback.
- Meet with colleagues at your school, district, or institution to submit comments.
- Meet regionally to submit a collective response.

As educators who have a vested interest in the teaching and learning of ELA, this is our window of opportunity to have a voice in the next iteration of this nationwide initiative. Thank you for your on-going commitment to ELA, and please forward to all interested parties.

Take care,
Emilie

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Draft K-12 Common Core State Standards

Wisconsin Response to Questions for State Feedback

December 4, 2009

1. **Is the architecture of the draft standards clear and easy to follow? How can we ensure the documents are designed to be accessible for all audiences?**
 - **The documents need a gestalt—a cohesive vision for each discipline in a broad sense.**
 - The document promotes a checklist of isolated skills rather than the depth of understanding that comes with an integrated view of a discipline.
 - Attached are examples from Wisconsin’s draft revisions to model academic standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics illustrating a vision for each discipline.
 - **The documents need a shared vocabulary and architecture.**
 - Each discipline is organized differently, making cross-disciplinary conversations and vertical team discussions very difficult .
 - To help teachers work in vertical teams across grades PK-12 within a discipline and in cross-disciplinary teams, the standards documents need common structure and terms, both across grade levels and across disciplines. Elementary teachers will have to deal with both disciplines and therefore need standards documents with consistent terminology and architecture.
 - Both documents need a clear identification of the overarching standards and a consistent organization used by each discipline.
 - The mathematics document is organized around core concepts and core skills, placed next to each other under the “progression heading,” but never identifying what are the “standards.”
 - The ELA document is organized around key achievements, core skills, and core skills applied to core text or communication types. For K-3 the document provides alphabetic and print, language, and writing foundations. Again, the “standards” are not identified.
 - **The documents need an overview of the progression of a skill.**
 - In mathematics, the current architecture makes each grade level appear to stand alone, lacking connections across the grades.
 - In ELA, the foundations document has the same grade-by-grade stand alone structure.

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Sample Illustrating a Vision for English Language Arts

PK-12 Standards: RECEPTIVE

Students listen to, read, and view multiple types of texts using various evolving technologies and strategies. With these texts, students will engage in critical, creative, and reflective thinking to achieve diverse purposes within local, national, and world communities.

Learning Priority

Engage with, respond to, analyze, interpret, and evaluate local, national, and world literature from various periods

Focus Areas

Grades PK-2 Learning Continuum



Recognize relationships between and among texts	Attend to modeling of making text to self, text to text, and text to world connections → Make text to self, text to text, and text to world connections
Analyze genre conventions and literary devices	Attend to modeling of analysis of literary elements (e.g. setting, plot, characters, etc.) → Identify and examine literary elements
Interpret text through the lens of history, society, ethics and culture	
Develop a habit of reading a variety of texts	Engage in reading through structured activities (e.g. read alouds, shared reading, listening centers, etc.) → Engage in independent reading and discussion outside of structured activities and assigned reading.
Select a variety of texts for enjoyment and enrichment	Choose texts for listening, viewing, and reading from recommendations provided (e.g. teacher sharing and modeling) → Seek texts for listening, viewing, and reading based on the student's own criteria

WI draft
Standards
for ELA

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Sample w/ Draft standards for ELA

Sample Illustrating a Vision for Mathematics

PK-12 Standard: Concepts and Connections in Number and Algebra Grades 9-12: Algebraic Reasoning (Algebra, Number and Operations, Data Analysis)	
Focus Area	Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8
Learning Priority	
Learning Priority NA1: Represent and communicate with real numbers when solving mathematical, real world, and non-routine problems	
Order	<p>Compare and order positive rational numbers with symbols ($>$, $<$, \leq, \geq, \neq, \approx); represent their location on a number line</p> <p>Use understanding of integers and negative rational numbers to locate and order these numbers on a number line</p> <p>Compare and order irrational numbers and represent their approximate location on a number line</p>
Properties	<p>Understand and apply the conventions for algebraic order of operations</p> <p>Describe what it means for a number to be between two numbers</p> <p>Recognize and use the properties of operations, including associative, commutative, distributive, and identity, and identify which properties are true for which operations</p> <p>Understand absolute value</p> <p>Apply distributive and other properties to integer and rational expressions in problem solving situations</p>
Order of Operations	<p>Describe the effect of multiplying or dividing a number by one, by a number between zero and one, and by a number greater than one</p> <p>Understand that division by zero is undefined</p> <p>Extend and apply the conventions for algebraic order of operations to equations and expressions without and with variables</p> <p>Extend and apply the conventions for algebraic order of operations to algebraic expressions</p>
The Concept of Inverse Relationships	<p>Recognize and apply the inverse relationships of addition and subtraction, multiplication and division</p> <p>Extend understanding of inverse relationships, opposites, and reciprocals to integer and rational number operations</p> <p>Understand and use the opposite and reciprocal of a rational number</p> <p>Explore, explain and apply the inverse relationship between squares and square roots</p> <p>Recognize common right triangle triples (e.g., 3, 4, 5) in the context of the Pythagorean Theorem and its converse</p>

Specific to English language arts:

- Need a glossary and a hierarchy of the terminology used in the document (skills, standards, achievements, foundations, etc.) and clear idea of what *are* the “standards” and what are the supporting materials.
- One individual from our Wisconsin writing team noted, “It is difficult to see a cohesive, progressive vision that pushes thinking about ELA forward when I am forced into the old paradigm of pulling apart the skills of reading, writing speaking, etc. that we *know* are truly interconnected processes.”

Specific to Mathematics:

- **The mathematics document is missing some of the important “Big Ideas” of mathematics.**
 - The current articulation of the Core Concepts is inconsistent and often represents a list of skills to be mastered even though there is also a list of Core Skills. The architecture of the mathematics standards is promising, but lacks consistency and a cohesive perspective. Teachers need to know how discrete skills fit together as a cohesive whole.
 - The opening section, ‘Developing Coherent Understanding,’ presents an important overview of the grade level and is a strength of the K-5 document; however, there needs to be a strong connection between the overview and the Concepts and Skills for each grade level. Unfortunately, these narrative sections are often not consistent with nor supported by the lists of concepts and skills. While it is fine that they do not address all of the concepts and skills, it would seem reasonable that they at least address each of the core areas at each grade level.
 - The big ideas of mathematics seem to get lost in the midst of a list of skills to be mastered. Too many of the concepts appear to be miniscule pieces of knowledge or specific skills that students should acquire. The concepts need to be worded to bring out the big mathematical ideas.
- **The relationship between the Core Concepts and the Core Skills is unclear.**
 - Attention to clearly identifying the important core concepts and then aligning the skills to each core concept would provide much needed clarification. The concern is that teachers will ignore the concepts and only directly teach skills to students.
- **There needs to be a view of the standards across grade bands, not just at individual grade levels.**
 - The current architecture makes each grade level appear to stand alone, lacking connections across the grades.
 - The concern is that when the standards (concepts and skills) are not seen as part of a learning continuum or learning progression, they end up as a checklist of skills that students cover, rather than a coherent whole, connecting across grade levels and across mathematical topics.
 - It appears that the skills are to lead to the development of the concepts, but the connection between the concepts and skills is not clear, nor is it clear how one will lead to another. A grid format showing progressions across the grades will

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certainly be helpful to begin to see the development of mathematical ideas across the grades.

- There is an intention of taking a mathematical idea and showing how it develops within and across grades and builds sound understanding of this idea in elementary school. However the intention does not succeed in accomplishing its goal. For example, sound knowledge of place value is not apparent. Rather, the focus appears to be on individual digits rather than on the big ideas of place value. By pulling the topic apart to list certain skills at each grade level, the important ideas and richness of place value is lost. Problem solving and contextual situations are often lost and not connected to the learning of computation.
- **This document needs to include pre-kindergarten/early childhood.**
 - The recent release of the National Research Council Report, *Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood (2009)*, must be considered as part of the elementary learning continuum.
 - The section on “Precursors for Kindergarten Mathematics” is appreciated due to the growing importance and need for sound mathematics goals in prekindergarten programs.

2. In what ways does this early draft convey a coherent vision of the discipline? What else is needed to enhance a coherent vision?

- **These documents outline discrete, compartmentalized instruction rather than the big ideas.**
 - The documents read more like a curriculum-level list of skills rather than a vision of the discipline focused by fewer and clearer standards.

Specific to English language arts:

- **No mention is made of viewing and representing.**
 - Students must be knowledgeable about the use of media and technology as tools to further learning. Also, texts such as web texts, multiplatform books, graphic novels, visual displays, and models are not included.
- **Only small attention is paid to speaking and listening.**
 - There is no mention of the connectivity among the processes of speaking and listening.
- **Differing approaches to the discipline are evident**
 - Some grade bands emphasize the recursive nature of ELA, while other grade bands emphasize incremental changes.
 - Specifically, the Core Skills in Reading at K-3 and 4-5 appear to be recursive in nature. They are nearly identical at the two levels, honoring the recursive nature of a skill like reading, indicating that students continue to learn and relearn skills with increasingly difficult text. However, the set of Core Skills change quite a bit in 6-8 showing that the authors truly believe that the reading skills a child is developing really are the same across K-5 and make a significant shift in grade 6.

Specific to Mathematics:

- **The document needs an explicit infusion of the strands of mathematical proficiency across the concepts and skills.**
 - We understand that there is an intention to include mathematical practices/processes; however, it is critical that they be infused within each of the concepts and skills, not an add-on.
 - The omission of the mathematical processes and mathematical practices is glaring. Processes and practices must be an integral part of each of the standards at both the core concept and core skill levels.
- **The core concepts and core skills do not seem to be fully aligned with research as noted in the National Research Council's report, *Adding It Up*. The current document lies predominantly in the domain of procedural fluency with little attention and emphasis on the other domains of mathematical proficiency.**
 - Neither skills nor understanding should be done in isolation from the other. There needs to be an explicit infusion of the stand of mathematical proficiency across the concepts and skills:
 - *conceptual understanding* – comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations, and relations

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- *procedural fluency* – skill in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately
 - *strategic competence* – ability to formulate, represent, and solve mathematical problems
 - *adaptive reasoning* – capacity for logical thought, reflection, explanation, and justification
 - *productive disposition* – habitual inclination to see mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile, coupled with a belief in diligence and one’s own efficacy.
- **There is clearly a lack of a comprehensive vision for preparing students with 21st century skills.**
 - The current version of the K-8 common core state standards for mathematics lacks a coherent and comprehensive vision of student’s mathematics learning and the development of their mathematical proficiency in preparing students with 21st century skills. The current document focuses on procedural fluency with little attention and emphasis on the other domains of mathematical proficiency. The National Research Council’s argument is strong in that it is essential to develop all strands in concert.

3. To the extent that the early drafts provide progressions for grade level/grade span expectations, does the document present a rigorous, yet reasonable continuum of expectations?

- **Rigor seems to be defined by level of skill, rather than level of understanding**
 - The focus on a set of discrete skills seems to miss the goal of defining a clear continuum of expectations. Mastery of a discrete list of skills does not equal conceptual understanding of a discipline.
- **Grain size is at times incredibly small and feels more like a scope and sequence than a set of standards.**

Specific to English language arts:

- **The progression of these skills across grade bands is inconsistent and confusing.**
 - Sometimes, there is no progression, and in other places, there is a huge jump between grade band levels. For example, see Reading Core Skills at K-3, 4-5 (no progression) and 6-8(huge jump).
 - The inconsistent grain size of the skills and the artificial decisions about what skill is appropriate in which grade band is problematic. For example, on page 45 of the ELA standards, often skills build across two grade bands by adding a new or unique expectation within the same skill, but this creates a narrowing of the curriculum where it is seen that one can *only* do certain tasks at certain grade levels (grade 6-8), like “drawing on a range of evidence to understand tone, motivation and theme.”
- **Grain size is, at times, incredibly small.**
 - There is a very narrow “foundations document” at grades K-3 in reading, but it does not exist in other places (yet). This grain size is incredibly small and feels more like a scope and sequence than a set of standards.
- **The standards are not “fewer.”**
 - Given all the text, nomenclature, sections, and differing epistemology, the ELA document feels unwieldy and disconnected, with divergent approaches.

Specific to Mathematics:

- **The clear view of a continuum or learning progression is missing.**
 - The mathematics document does not show a clear progression across grade bands. We recommend that the writing committee clearly articulate how concepts progress across grades and across grade bands. While the document attempts to present a progression of learning across grades, the progression is more evident in skills and not in concepts. It is essential that, as the National Math Panel Report clearly stated, conceptual understanding and procedural skills are most effectively developed in concert with each continuously supporting the other at all stages and levels of mathematical learning.
 - The usefulness of the mathematics document would be enhanced with an overview/chart showing the learning progression across grade levels for various grade bands. We would recommend considering four grade bands: PK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. As teachers review the mathematics for their particular grade level, it is important to also know what mathematics students have learned at previous levels, as well as

what mathematics concepts and skills will follow (such as how the prior and later grade bands were summarized in the ELA document).

- **In looking at the topics across grade levels, a major developmental strand that is missing is a progression of key ideas for laying the foundation for algebraic reasoning.**

4. **Is the language in this early draft clear, concise, and precise? Please identify any areas where more concision and precision is needed.**

Specific to English language arts:

- **Clearly defined terminology that is used with consistency in all disciplines (skills, standards, achievements, foundations, etc.) would help educators understand the Common Core Standards.**

Specific to Mathematics:

- **The language in the mathematics draft is very inconsistent from one grade level to the next, as well as within grade levels.**
 - For example, Grade 2 and 3 uses the phrase “story problems” but in Grades K and 1 the terms are “situation problems” and “problem situations.”
- **While there is an attempt to connect topics grade to grade, the corresponding growth of concepts across levels is not made clear.**
 - It appears that attempts to be precise may have had the opposite effect intended and have made the ideas less accessible and more unclear, especially at the middle level. For example, the concepts listed in Grade 6 and Grade 7, “Ratios, Rates, & Proportional Relationships” are not clear and not concise. More importantly, these proposed “concepts” do not convey the conceptual knowledge and big ideas that students need to be developed. These are not much more than a mathematical definition found in a mathematics textbook and do not contribute to establishing a sense of the conceptual understanding students need to develop.

5. If you could add and/or remove ONE concept or skill, what would it be? Please provide an explanation/justification.

Add

English language arts and mathematics:

- **Add 21st century skills, e.g., problem solving, collaboration, creating your own information.**
 - To be college and career ready students must demonstrate 21st century skills. The message from Wisconsin's leaders in business and industry, city and county government, and community organizations was to embed the skills that lead to instructional strategies that engage students in learning the discipline, prepare students with the skills needed to be successful in any future education beyond high school, and serve students well in the work force. These skills include critical thinking and problem solving, collaborative communication skills, contextual learning skills (learning how to learn, unlearn, and relearn), personal responsibility, ethics, and adaptability or nimbleness.

Mathematics:

- **Technology as a tool of mathematics must be included in this document.**
 - Omission of appropriate use of technology and other tools of mathematics (including manipulatives and measuring tools) has serious implications for both the learning and application of mathematics, PK-12, as well as in post-secondary and career applications. Technology, when used appropriately, contributes to student understanding of rigorous mathematics, provides access to mathematics for more students, and prepares students for the future.

Remove

English language arts:

- **Remove the illustrative texts; keep only the description of texts, not the actual examples.**
 - Illustrative texts may, for some, become a required reading list. There's an over abundance of historic and classic texts and a lack of contemporary works. Including student voice and choice in text selection is essential. Concern about the phrase, "texts can only partially represent the cultural diversity of the United States."

Mathematics:

- **Remove core concepts that are stated as mathematical definitions**
 - Concepts must be stated as big mathematical ideas, fundamental understandings, rather than discrete skills.

6. Do you have any other general feedback about the draft standards?

- **Link of the K-12 Common Core Standards with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) is not clear.**
 - Make clear the target that is represented by the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). It is unclear if the CCRS are meant to represent high school exit expectations, grade nine expectations, or expectations for entering college-level coursework.
 - If, the CCRS are to represent high school exit expectations, the CCRS should match the end of grade 12 standards and the grade level standards in grades K-11 should lead to that set of final expectations.
 - Categories of organization within the CCRS do not match the K-12 Common Core Standards (the only exception is Student Practices in the ELA standards, which do match the comparable section in the CCRS); in Mathematics, the stated intent is to infuse mathematical practices (described in the CCRS); however, they are not evident in the Common Core Standards' concepts and skills.

Specific Questions from Mathematics Common Core Writing Team:

How should high school material be presented?

- Use learning progressions to indicate the core concepts and core skills.
- Allow for a variety of course structures and “routes” (traditional sequences, integrated courses, STEM courses).
- To be internationally competitive, do not provide a prescriptive progression that ties standards to courses that are labeled Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; no other country organizes mathematics this way.
- There needs to be a clear link to the College and Career Readiness Standards, including an integration of the mathematical practices.

How would you use an arrangement into blocks (with connections between blocks indicated) in designing curriculum in your state?

- The state would provide model curriculum around the blocks, to illustrate a variety of course structures and “routes.”
- Samples would provide clear direction as to how to incorporate the core skills and core concepts into a variety of high school course options.
- Identify clear learning priorities rather than an outline of topics.
- The current example of the progression seems to be more of a list from a textbook, rather than a standards document to guide teaching and learning.

Do you want us to indicate different pathways through the high school standards, and, if so, how?

- No. The standards should be presented as the core concepts and skills that all students need to acquire, regardless of the chosen pathway. In addition, there can be additional mathematics standards for students pursuing STEM, technical, and mathematics-focused post-secondary options.
- States should provide this support for local districts’ implementation, showing how the common core standards can be achieved in a variety of formats or pathways. The task is best left to the states, as each state has different high school graduation requirements and a variety of diploma options.

General feedback on the sample middle and high school level progression

- There is an omission of mathematical practices and the mathematical processes
- As with the K-8 document, the concepts at this level seem to be more skill-driven, than concept driven. There needs to be both.
- There is a need for more relevance to 21st century thinking, including communication, application, and technology as a tool of mathematics.
- Wisconsin’s recent work revising state standards identifies key concepts (learning priorities) and how they are demonstrated by students across a learning continuum. In the example provided here, the labels are Stages 1 through 4 rather than grade levels. The purpose is to indicate benchmarks of progress through a concept rather than assignment to a specific course or grade level. Curriculum will determine the course or grade level where the concept is to be taught and mastered. In addition, under the stages the

unshaded cells indicate the mathematics that all students need to acquire. The shaded areas indicate the mathematics for students who are pursuing more math-intensive career paths, including STEM, technology, and mathematics. We present the following as an example of how part of one of the learning priorities related to functions could show this learning progression:

Sample Learning Progression for High School

Learning Priority	Focus Areas	Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:
<p><u>Learning Priority NA2:</u> Understand functions and their representations, properties and applications</p>	Representation of Functions	<p>Explain whether a relation given in symbolic, graphical or tabular form is a function</p>	<p>Identify and summarize properties of different types of functions from their graphs including linear, quadratic, exponential, absolute value, sine and cosine trigonometric functions</p>	<p>Create and interpret different representations including numerical, graphical, and functional notation of the functions in Stage 2</p> <p>Analyze and communicate, with and without the use of technology, the effect of transformations on the graphical representations of different types of functions</p>	<p>Identify, summarize, and interpret properties and create different representations of polynomial, step, and other trigonometric functions, including an analysis of even and odd functions</p>
	Basics of Functions	<p>Evaluate a function at a specified point in the domain</p> <p>Understand the concepts of domain and range of functions and determine the domain</p>	<p>Apply arithmetic operations to functions and determine the domain of the resulting function</p>	<p>Determine the range of the function</p> <p>Determine and understand the composition of functions</p> <p>Understand the meaning of the inverse of a function and determine whether a given function has an inverse</p>	<p>Determine the inverse of a function</p> <p>Prove basic properties of logarithms using properties of exponential functions</p>