



COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

A THOUGHTFUL DELIBERATIVE PROCESS BY WORLD CLASS PROFESSIONALS

One of the greatest accomplishments of the Common Core State Standards was the coming together of many of the most accomplished teachers, mathematicians, English language arts/literacy professionals, and state education representatives from 48 states. The group's dialogue crossed state and district lines and focused on a simple question: What is truly required for a student to be prepared to succeed at college-level work and for the demands of 21st century careers?

The Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association convened local and state leaders to pull together leading content experts, teachers, and researchers who devoted much of their life's work to the development of great academic goals and materials for students. Many of these experts played key roles in the development of their own state's standards. However, never before was there an opportunity to collaborate across state lines and build on the existing standards from states with historically high standards, such as Massachusetts and California.

A thorough review of the highest state standards, the best research on student learning, and the firsthand experience of teachers was used to create a first draft that was then put through a rigorous feedback process. Work teams, feedback teams, and a validation committee were created in both mathematics and English language arts to ensure a consensus-driven process in which no single opinion or personality could influence the collective wisdom of the group. In fact, the teams opened up the drafts twice for public comment and received more than 10,000 pieces of input from teachers, parents, and content experts nationwide.

Below is a detailed summary of the vast ecosystem of credentialed experts that were put in place to write the standards, provide feedback, verify the rigor, and come to a consensus of essential standards by grade level, which has been described by the National Council of Mathematics Teachers as, "*[A]n unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the United States,*" and by the National Council of Teachers of English Past President Carol Jago as, "*[An] amazing opportunity to do the work that we came to this job to do. It's setting the goal of college and career readiness for every child in America.*"

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

April 2009

The development of the standards began when an informal group of states decided to collaboratively update their learning standards. Gradually, more states voluntarily joined the project overseen by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). After two years of discussion, the CCSSO and the National Governors Association formed the Common Core State Standards Initiative and invited any states interested in collaboration to join together in the creation of higher, clearer expectations for what students should know by each grade level in English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

June 2009

Governors and state education chiefs from 46 states commit to participating in a state-led process to develop common English language arts and mathematics standards. Two more governors and state education chiefs later join the effort, during the development process.

English language arts and mathematics work and feedback groups are assembled, made up of representatives from backgrounds in academia, local and state education administration, classroom teaching, and other experts with experience in K–12 academic standards. The development teams worked together, with input from teacher and parent groups, nationally and in the states, to develop drafts of graduation standards and grade-by-grade standards to be released to the public.

The Evidence Base –

The Common Core State Standards build on the best of previous state standards plus a large body of evidence from domestic reports, comparisons, and recommendations in addition to international comparisons.

The development teams consulted **ACT National Curriculum Surveys** to inform the new standards. In these surveys more than 55,000 middle school/junior high school, secondary, and postsecondary teachers for both English language arts and

mathematics identified what skills and knowledge are critical for college success. In addition, the standards of the highest performing states helped guide the drafting of the new standards. The Fordham Institute’s independent review of previous state standards and how they compare to the new Common Core State Standards can be seen [here](#). It is critical to understand that states whose previous standards were closest to the Common

Two research mathematicians on the mathematics development team are members of the exclusive National Academy of Sciences.

Core State Standards also had the highest scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Educational research and international comparisons drove the drafting of the standards in both English language arts and mathematics. A detailed report of how international benchmarking was used to create the standards can be read [here](#). In addition, an important [study conducted by Michigan State University](#) provides tangible examples of the influence of successful international education systems on the development of the standards. This peer-reviewed research found that the Common Core State Standards for math bore the closest resemblance to those of the highest achieving countries. In [Appendix A of the ELA and Literacy Standards](#) there is a 35-page detailed articulation of the evidence and research which informed the creation of the new standards.

The development teams included distinguished members such as:

***Hung-Hsi Wu,
Professor of Mathematics,
Emeritus Department of
Mathematics,
University of California -
Berkeley***

***William McCallum,
Lead, Mathematics
Head, Department of
Mathematics, The University of
Arizona
Senior Consultant, Achieve***

***Marilyn Jager Adams,
Research Professor,
Department of Cognitive and
Linguistic Sciences,
Brown University***

***Carol D. Lee,
Professor of Learning Sciences
& African American Studies
Northwestern University
President, American
Educational Research
Association***

The Standards Development Teams –

English Language Arts Development Team* –

- 18 education or content experts
- 17 English professors or education professors specialized in the teaching of English and literacy
- 16 state department of education staff members
- 7 current classroom teachers
- 5 local school district staff members

Mathematics Development Team* –

- 32 research mathematicians or education professors specialized in the teaching of mathematics
- 23 state department of education staff members
- 9 local school district staff members
- 9 education or content experts
- 7 current classroom teachers

Key stakeholders assembled groups to provide feedback to the development teams –

- **Teachers:** American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Council of Teachers of English
- **Parents:** National Parent Teacher Association
- **States:** State teams, including teachers and parents, organized by governors and state education chiefs

September 2009

A draft of the college- and career-ready standards was released for public comment for one month. Feedback was received from individuals and groups representing more than 1,000 people. In addition, three dozen groups or individuals sent direct feedback. Those who submitted comments identified themselves in the following categories (multiple selections were permitted):

- 53 percent as educators and another category
- 29 percent as content experts
- 28 percent as teachers
- 22 percent as parents and another category
- 14 percent as professors
- 10 percent as local school district staff
- 8 percent as students and another category
- 5 percent as state education agency/state department of education staff
- 3 percent as parents only
- 1 percent as students

Teacher and parent groups, such as the PTA and the National Education Association, played an integral role providing specific and constructive feedback to drafts.

These comments were taken into consideration for revising the next draft.

At this time, six governors and chief state school officers from the involved states selected members for a validation committee. This committee was charged with certifying that the standards were research- and evidence-based, aligned with college and career expectations, and respected unique state contexts and the authority of each state to govern its public education system. The validation committee consisted of individuals with experience in the development, implementation, or study of state, national, or international standards; a demonstrated record of expertise in English language arts or mathematics; or a unique expertise such as special education, English language learners, or assessments.

- Validation Committee* –
 - 18 academics
 - 5 education or content experts
 - 3 classroom teachers
 - 3 local school district staff

December 2009

The validation committee met for the first time. The committee reviewed the draft and submitted feedback.

The validation committee included distinguished members such as:

Catherine Snow, Ph.D., Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Jeremy Kilpatrick, Ph.D., Regents Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Georgia

Jere Confrey, Ph.D., Senior Research Fellow and Joseph D. Moore Distinguished Professor at the William and Ida Friday Institute for Education Innovation, North Carolina State University College of Education

March 2010

A draft of the grade-by-grade Common Core State Standards was released for public comment. Feedback was received from every state and territory in the United States representing more than 10,000 individuals online. Those who submitted comments online identified themselves as:

- 92 percent representing individuals rather than groups or organizations
- 48 percent as K–12 teachers
- 20 percent as parents
- 6 percent as school administrators
- 5 percent as professors or academic researchers
- 2 percent as students
- 2 percent as other

Three-fourths of the feedback respondents gave the draft high marks.

April 2010

Incorporating feedback from 10,000 individuals, a new draft was submitted to the validation committee. The validation committee met and provided suggestions.

May 2010

A final embargoed copy of the standards were presented to the validation committee and they were asked to certify that the standards were research- and evidence-based standards, aligned

with college and career expectations, and respected unique state contexts and the authority of each state to govern its public education system.

- Validation Committee Signatories
 - 24 signed
 - 5 did not sign (4 academics, 1 expert)

June 2010 through Present Day – The final standards were released to the public. To adopt the new standards, states and territories used their own local processes specific to each location. Forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity reviewed and adopted the Common Core State Standards to replace former standards. In Minnesota, the standards were adopted in English language arts.

*Individuals' occupations are classified as their positions during the Common Core State Standards creation and validation process.