



Implementing the Common Core Standards (ICCS)

Issue 6 • September 14, 2011

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the start of a new school year. We wish all your schools the best as they kick-off another academic year. We especially look forward to hearing your success stories and reflections from classrooms that have begun fully implementing the Common Core State Standards this year. As we move through the fall, we would love to highlight some of your experiences through the collaborative website, spaces.ccsso.org, through this newsletter, and potentially through a webinar. If you would be willing to share your progress, please let Margaret Millar know, margaretm@ccsso.org.

In September's newsletter you will find new and updated resources, including a new report from the James B. Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy, a revised version of the English language arts (ELA) Publishers' Criteria for K-2 and 3-12, and the final version of Dr. David Conley's report on higher education faculty's views on the standards.

Also, we are excited to announce the start of the 2011-2012 ICCS year on October 1st. We hope that you will all consider enrolling for a second year of ICCS meetings, collaboration, and systems thinking. Mark your calendars- our next meeting will take place at the Westin, San Diego on December 5-7, 2011.

If you have any questions on the Council's implementation efforts, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at carrieh@ccsso.org.

Thank you,
Carrie Heath Phillips
Program Director, Common Core Implementation
Council of Chief State School Officers

ICCS State Collaborative 2011-2012

- As the first year of the Implementing the Common Core Standards (ICCS) state collaborative comes to a close, the enrollment form for ICCS for 2011-2012 is now available. Please complete the [enrollment form](#) *even if a third party will be paying for your participation in ICCS*. The 2011-2012 ICCS membership year will run from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012.

- Save the Date: The next meeting of ICCS will be **December 5-7, 2011** at the Westin, San Diego in sunny California.

Revised Publishers' Criteria for ELA

- Based on feedback from a wide variety of individuals and organizations, ELA lead writers David Coleman and Sue Pimentel have revised and clarified the Publishers' Criteria released earlier this summer. To download the new versions, please visit the resource library at spaces.ccsso.org.
- Key themes from the feedback addressed in the revisions include:
- Revising the 3-12 criteria to make sure it does not focus on close reading to the exclusion of reading for other purposes. Now throughout, the Criteria emphasize the capacity to handle larger volumes of text. For example, the following sentences appear now in the first section:
- Not only do students need to be able to read closely, but they also need to be able to read larger volumes of text when necessary for research or other purposes.
- Texts should also vary in length and density, requiring students to slow down or read more quickly depending on their purpose for reading.
 - In K-2 and 3-12 much of the prescriptive detail has been deleted.
 - There is an emphasis in K-2 on students *asking* as well as *answering* questions which reflects the requirements contained within the Standards. In addition, the Criteria now speak to writing in the early grades.
 - The revisions clarify the intervention and other support services some students (including ELLs) may require in areas like text complexity and vocabulary.
 - Clarification on the role of prior knowledge.

Participate in Transforming Professional Learning Project - RFP is DUE on September 30

- As mentioned during the August ICCS meeting by Stephanie Hirsh, Learning Forward and CCSSO are collaborating to launch a new initiative, Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core. We are seeking state partners to serve as a national Demonstration State and five Critical Friends States.
- The [Request for Proposal](#) describes the initiative and includes directions for states that wish to apply to serve as either or both. Applications are due **September 30, 2011**. PowerPoints and responses to questions from informational webinar meetings held earlier this month to explain the initiative and address questions are posted on the [Learning Forward website](#).
- For additional information, contact [Joellen Killion](#) of Learning Forward.

SMARTER Balanced Accepting Comments on Draft Math Content Specifications

- SMARTER Balanced has announced that the Consortium's draft content specifications for math are available for review. <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/Resources.aspx>
- Like the ELA/literacy content specifications released earlier, organizations and interested stakeholders will have two opportunities to comment on the math document. Feedback on the first draft of the math content specifications will

be accepted through **September 19** (11:59 p.m. Pacific time). A revised draft will be released in October.

- Once finalized, the content specifications for math and ELA/literacy will serve as the basis for the SMARTER Balanced system of summative and interim assessments and its formative assessment support for teachers.

Release of “Impacting the Future,” a Special Report from the Hunt Institute

James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute

- The James B. Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy published a special report, “Impacting the Future,” for *Governing* magazine. The report highlights the importance of work taking place across the country to implement the Common Core State Standards.
- State exemplars include Massachusetts, Utah, Kentucky, and Indiana. The article highlights voices of leading thinkers from both sides of the aisle. Learn more at <http://www.governing.com/papers/Impacting-the-Future.html>, and to download a copy of the report visit spaces.ccsso.org.

Release of Study on College-Readiness in the Common Core State Standards

- The Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) released a validity study on the Common Core State Standards led by Dr. David Conley. The study is based on a national sample of entry-level college instructors to rate the applicability of each Common Core State Standard in comparison to their courses. If the standard was applicable, instructors were asked to rate its importance. The ratings provide information to address two central research questions:
- How applicable are the Common Core State Standards to college courses?
- When they are perceived as applicable, how important are the Common Core State Standards to college courses?
- The study analyzes ratings from instructors of 1,897 courses at two- and four-year degree-granting institutions. The full report, *Reaching the Goal: Applicability and Importance of the Common Core State Standards to College and Career Readiness*, is available on <https://www.epiconline.org/standardsvaliditystudy> and also available on spaces.ccsso.org.

Reminder - Videos of Common Core State Standards Writers Available for Use

- To help states with the implementation process, the Hunt Institute and CCSSO commissioned a series of video vignettes that explain the Common Core State Standards in depth.
- States, schools, districts and teachers can use these videos in a number of ways—including, but not limited to:
- Starting compelling conversations about state or district policy goals, orienting staff to new classroom demands, assessing professional development tools, and creating local curricula and instructional materials.
- Help educators understand the major changes and advances in their state standards and their impact on what happens in classrooms.
- Use as strong lead-ins to teacher and administrator engagement in implementation and in setting higher expectations for students.
- Help parents understand the true essence of the Standards—why changes were important what will be different in the educational experiences of their children, and how shared expectations—between parents and teachers—can help support children’s learning.
- Each user should decide how to package the video vignettes in a way that best serves individual or organizational

purposes. The segments can be used individually or can easily be linked together to create a customized package. To access the full set of video vignettes, please click here: <http://bit.ly/nCOVID>.

CCSSO Offers New ELA SCASS

- **CCSSO is offering a new state collaborative on English Language Arts (ELA) in 2011-2012. This new collaborative will focus on the challenges around standards and student assessments in ELA and the opportunities for state collaboration, to be led by Susan Pimentel, lead writer for the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. The first meeting of the ELA SCASS will be November 2-4 in Phoenix.**
- Information on the costs and the process to become a SCASS member are found at: www.ccsso.org/scass. For more information, please contact Bob Olsen, roberto@ccsso.org.

CCSSO is Hiring!

CCSSO has a position open for a Senior Program Associate for Common Core State Standards. If you are aware of a qualified applicant with at least 3-5 years of experience, preferably in a state or local education agency, in D.C. or who wants to move to D.C., please encourage him or her to apply. [Senior Program Associate Position](#)