



Implementing the Common Core Standards (ICCS)

Issue 7 • September 26, 2011

Dear colleagues,

It has been an exciting and busy September at the Council, much as we are sure it has been at your offices as well. As you likely read, on Friday, September 23rd the White House and the U.S. Department of Education released a new process for obtaining waivers on accountability based on principles drafted by members of CCSSO. Today's newsletter contains more information on the accountability release, as well as new resources to support Common Core State Standards implementation and announcements from the assessment consortia.

As a reminder, enrollment continues for the 2011-2012 ICCS year. 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.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with questions, ideas for future newsletters, and success stories from your agencies and classrooms by contacting Margaret Millar, margaretm@ccsso.org.

Thank you,

CCSSO's Common Core Implementation Team

This Week's Highlights:

- President Obama's Waiver Announcement
- CCSSO Webinar on Accountability and Educator Effectiveness
- SMARTER Balanced ELA Content Specifications Round 2 Comment Period Ends September 27
- ICCS 2011-2012
- Webinar on Policy Challenges in Transitioning to Common Core Mathematics Standards
- Twenty States Named to Help Draft Next Generation Science Standards
- New Report on the Benefits of Formative Assessment to Improving Writing

- Great Resources Available on spaces.ccsso.org

President Obama's Waiver Announcement

On Friday, September 23rd the White House and the U.S. Department of Education released a new process for obtaining waivers on accountability based on principles drafted by members of CCSSO. The waiver package responds to calls from state education leaders to move beyond current No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements and support state efforts to prepare every child for college and career. Through the newly released waiver package, the U.S. Department of Education is inviting each State Educational Agency (SEA) to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies, and schools. This voluntary opportunity is intended to provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of NCLB in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

- To access the full waiver package from the U.S. Department of Education, click [here](#).
- To access a White House fact sheet on the announcement, click [here](#).
- To access CCSSO's statement on the President's announcement, click [here](#).
- For more information on CCSSO's principles for accountability, upon which much of the U.S. Department of Education's waiver package is based, read [CCSSO's Roadmap for Developing Next-Generation State Accountability Systems \(Roadmap\)](#). The Roadmap, created by taskforce of chiefs over the past year, presents a vision for next-generation accountability systems to support college and career readiness for all students.

CCSSO Webinar on Accountability and Educator Effectiveness

CCSSO has planned a quick-turnaround webinar through the State Consortium on Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) in order to review the waiver provisions related to educator effectiveness. The webinar will be **this Tuesday, September 27 from 2-3 p.m. EDT**.

- The webinar will cover important information about what the U.S. Department of Education is looking for in waiver applications under their principle Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership.
- The webinar will feature Adam Ezring, CCSSO Senior Advocacy Associate and Scott Palmer, Partner and Co-Founder of EducationCounsel, LLC.
- To attend, please log-in by 1:55 p.m. ET on Tuesday to <https://ccsso.webex.com/ccsso/j.php?J=719148931> and enter your name and agency. You will then see the option to either have the WebEx service call you, or you may choose to call-in to the number provided on the screen.

SMARTER Balanced ELA Content Specifications Round 2 Comment Period Ends September 27

Tuesday, September 27th is the final day to submit Round 2 comments on the draft SMARTER Balanced ELA/literacy content specifications. Instructions on how to provide feedback through the online survey are included with the materials posted at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/Resources.aspx>. The survey will close at 11:59 p.m. Pacific time on Tuesday, September 27.

ICCS 2011-2012

As the first year of the Implementing the Common Core Standards (ICCS) state collaborative comes to a close on September 30th, we encourage states to enroll in the second year of ICCS by completing an enrollment form for ICCS 2011-2012. 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. If there are any questions related to enrollment for the 2011-2012 membership year contact Renata Lewis, renatal@ccsso.org.

- Save the Date: The next meeting of ICCS will be **December 5-7, 2011** at the Westin, San Diego in sunny California. Registration and a draft agenda will be available starting the week of October 3rd.

Webinar on Policy Challenges in Transitioning to Common Core Mathematics Standards

At 3:00 p.m. EDT on Thursday, October 4th, 2011, The Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI) will host a webinar on supporting the transition to the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics.

- In this webinar, Dr. Francis "Skip" Fennell, a mathematics education expert and member of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, will bridge research to practice as it relates to implementation of the CCSS initiative in the area of mathematics. He will clarify links between the CCSS and the National Mathematics Advisory Panel Report recommendations and provide an overview of the research foundations and policy considerations for educational leaders and practitioners to understand and implement the CCSS. He will discuss the new expectations for mathematical competency embedded in the CCSS and share practical strategies for building students' foundational mathematics knowledge, particularly as they move through elementary and middle-school grades.
- Click [here](#) to register to attend the webinar.

Twenty States Named to Help Draft Next Generation Science Standards

On September 20th, a group of 20 states was selected to lead an effort to draft next generation science standards.

- The development of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) will be a state-led effort that will clearly define the content and practices all students will need to learn from kindergarten through high school graduation.
- The NGSS process is being managed by Achieve, a non-partisan education non-profit.
- To learn more about the effort and the states selected, visit <http://www.nextgenscience.org/>.

New Report on the Benefits of Formative Assessment to Improving Writing

The Alliance for Excellent Education released a new report on September 15th titled *Informing Writing: The Benefits of Formative Assessment*.

- The report uses meta-analysis to determine that classroom-based writing assessments can help

students improve their writing skills. Additionally, these formative assessments allow teachers to gauge the effectiveness of their instructional practices, modify instruction as needed, and provide students with feedback on writing strengths and areas in need of improvement.

- The report also provides specific recommendations on how teachers can improve their students' writing skills and includes examples of how each of the recommendations can be carried out in the classroom.
- To access the report, visit <http://www.all4ed.org/>

Great Resources Available on spaces.ccsso.org

Don't forget to keep utilizing spaces.ccsso.org to access great resources from other states and from CCSSO to support implementation, including:

- Revised Publishers' Criteria for K-2 and 3-12 from David Coleman and Sue Pimentel,
- Dr. David Conley's validity study on the Common Core State Standards,
- Videos of the Common Core State Standards lead writers, produced by CCSSO and the Hunt Institute,
- Guides to the standards at each level in English and Spanish produced for parents by the Parent Teacher Association,

And much, much more!