



Implementing the Common Core Standards (ICCS)

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Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment consortium released a set of test specification documents and assessment blueprints for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The release of these materials in advance of the 2014-2015 adoption of the PARCC assessment will help educators and the general public understand the structure and design of the tests. With Common Core State Standard (CCSS) implementation underway and teachers beginning to think about the upcoming assessments, these tools will provide valuable information on what students will be expected to know. CCSSO will continue to share information from both PARCC and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia as it becomes available.

We also want to remind you that CCSSO and the America's Promise Alliance are hosting a webinar on expanded learning opportunities and the Common Core on **Monday, May 6 at 2pm ET**. We hope you'll join us! To register please follow this link: <https://ccsso.webex.com/ccsso/j.php?J=714237957>.

Thank you!

The CCSSO Common Core Implementation Team

Featured in this newsletter:

- **PARCC Releases Assessment Blueprints and Test Specifications**
- **Governor Engler Discusses Benefits of Common Core With Governor Huckabee on his Radio Program**
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- **Ohio PTA Video In Support of Common Core**
- **Idaho Teacher Pens Op-ed Defending Common Core**
- **Upcoming CCSSO and America's Promise Alliance Webinar**

PARCC Releases Assessment Blueprints and Test Specifications

With states ready to adopt the new assessments in 2014-2015, [PARCC released test specification tools](#) that will help districts, educators and the general public prepare for the new CCSS aligned assessments. The test specification tools and blueprints are for both English language arts/literacy and mathematics and will offer a valuable preview of the assessments that schools will be administering.

Visitors can view and download several sets of English language arts/literacy and mathematics form specifications, passage selections guidance, and evidence statement tables. PARCC also released greater detail about Common Core coherence and information on integrating and combing the standards. The English language arts/literacy blueprints include rubrics, passage selection guidelines and worksheets to guide text selection. The mathematics evidence tables help educators and students understand the integration of mathematical practices and content.

With the release of the new assessments, 2014-2015 is a critical year for the CCSS. Please share these resources with district administrators and educators. And, CCSSO will be sure to share future guidance, resources, and test specification tools and blueprints as they are released.

Governor Engler Discusses Benefits of Common Core with Governor Huckabee on his Radio Program

On his radio show "The Mike Huckabee Show" Wednesday, [Governor Mike Huckabee and former Governor and current President of the Business Roundtable John Engler discussed the Common Core](#). Governor Engler discussed why he supports the state-led standards. Drawing on their experiences as Governors, both Huckabee and Engler stressed the importance of having high standards and praised the Common Core as a valuable tool in improving education for all students.

Student Achievement Partners Releases New Tools on Upgraded Website

Student Achievement Partners (SAP) launched an upgraded [achievethecore.org](#) this week. Already a must use source for all things Common Core, SAP has added the following new resources:

- [New Common Core-aligned materials and resources for struggling students;](#)
- [Essential actions and CCSS-aligned tools for school and district leaders;](#)
- [Two new Professional Development modules;](#)
- [Evidence guides for instructional practice that provide specific guidance for what the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics look like in planning and practice;](#) and

- [Information on how educators can support the Common Core beyond their school communities.](#)

Encourage Teachers to Sign a Letter Supporting the Common Core

Student Achievement Partners is circulating [a letter to educators affirming their support for the CCCSS](#). Student Achievement Partners is hoping to collect 10,000 teacher signatures. Please forward to educators you know and encourage them to sign!

Ohio PTA Video In Support of Common Core

[The Ohio PTA recently released a video](#) featuring the national PTA anthem, "Every Child, One Voice" playing over a montage that explains the CCSS. Targeting parents, the video outlines guides and resources available to parents to better understand the standards, the importance of parental outreach to educators and administrators, and the role parents have in successful CCSS implementation.

Idaho Teacher Pens Op-ed Defending Common Core

[Jeff Roper, an English teacher in Idaho](#), wrote an editorial defending the CCSS. Using his long-time experience as a teacher, Mr. Roper provides strong arguments for implementation of the CCSS and affirms that these standards were driven by states and will present high and clear education standards for all children.

Upcoming CCSSO and America's Promise Alliance Webinar

[CCSSO and the America's Promise Alliance are holding a free webinar](#) on **Monday, May 6 from 2pm-3pm (ET)**, exploring how expanded learning opportunities can help students achieve under the Common Core State Standards. The webinar will feature:

- **Bill Wright, VP of Outreach and Advocacy at America's Promise Alliance:** Bill Wright of America's Promise Alliance will cohost the webinar with CCSSO. America's Promise Alliance is the nation's largest partnership dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth.
- **Jenell Holsted, Ph.D. University of WI- Green Bay:** Jenell was the lead researcher and writer of "[Making the Connection: Next Generation Learning and Expanded Learning Opportunities](#)", a CCSSO Innovation Lab publication. She will discuss the afterschool programs highlighted in the brief that are finding innovative ways of connecting school day learning and supporting Common Core implementation.
- **Alison Wineberg, State Coordinator, 21st Century Community Learning Center, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:** Alison will discuss programs in Wisconsin that are developing ways to connect expanded learning opportunities and Common Core implementation.

- **Sarah Cruz, Director of Expanded Learning Opportunities at NJSACC, The Statewide Network for NJ's Afterschool Communities:** Sarah will share the development and outcomes from NJSACC's Supporting Student Success project – a statewide pilot of afterschool provider training on aligning programming to the Common Core State Standards.

To register, visit: <https://ccsso.webex.com/ccsso/j.php?J=714237957>