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Background Information:

Results of Survey of Districts in South Carolina

Gallup National Survey of Superintendents

EOC Summary information provided to Legislators

SC Policy Council Policy Analysis, "Common Core in South Carolina: FAQs"

June 12, 2013 Presentation to Policy and Legislative Committee of State Board of Education by SCDE Staff

2. Action Item: Requests for Participation in Pilot Assessment

NOTE: At the time of this mailing, the actual requests have not been submitted. When they are submitted, the requests will be forwarded via email to EOC members.

Background:

Proviso 1A.62.

Pilot Sites selected in New Carolina's *Transform SC*

Letter to Chief State School Officers from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

3. Update on Smarter Balanced Test Development

Background Information:

Map of Assessment Consortia Membership

June 21, 2013 Presentation by Joe Willhoft, Executive Director of Smarter Balanced

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: _____

Date: August 8, 2013

INFORMATION

Resolution Regarding Standards Implementation

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 as amended through 2008 requires the EOC to approve all state standards and assessments.

CRITICAL FACTS

Due to inquiries from members of the SC General Assembly, school districts in April of 2013 were surveyed on their implementation of the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The results of that survey are attached. In addition, Gallup and *Education Week* surveyed K-12 superintendents in the nation to track their opinions on various topics including Common Core. The Executive Summary of that poll is attached. In the aftermath of the 2013 legislative session, the EOC was contacted by legislators for summary information on the Common Core State Standards. A copy of the information provided is also attached. Finally, the EOC chair asked the staff to prepare the attached DRAFT resolution regarding Common Core State Standards for consideration by the full EOC at its summer retreat.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

DRAFT Resolution

When the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) adopted the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics as South Carolina's state standards in June of 2010, the majority of the EOC believed that the Common Core State Standards would:

- Ensure that students graduating from public schools in South Carolina would be able to compete globally for jobs in the 21st century because the standards were internationally benchmarked;
- Measure the college and career readiness of all students;
- Meet or exceed the current rigor of South Carolina academic standards based upon the results of a 41-member review group;
- Focus on knowledge and skills rather than understanding or memorization;
- Assist students who are mobile and move from one to state to another to have the benefit of being taught the same standards across grades;
- Not interfere with the delivery of public education by local school districts and schools. The standards would leave decisions about what and how to teach to states, districts, and schools;
- Allow South Carolina to maintain its Science and Social Studies standards, which are judged independently as the highest in the nation by the Thomas Fordham Institute;
- Facilitate state-to-state comparisons on the ability of students to master the knowledge and skills of the standards, depending upon the assessments developed; and
- Potentially allow South Carolina to use national or off-the-shelf assessments to assess students, thereby, saving the state monies related to test development.

Based upon the experiences of the state of Kentucky, which fully implemented and assessed Common Core State Standards in 2011-12 and with full implementation of Common Core State Standards to begin in public schools in South Carolina in school year 2014-15, the EOC acknowledges the following:

- The increased rigors of the standards will likely result in lower state assessment scores initially; and
- Professional development for teachers is critical to the successful implementation of the standards. The paradigm shift from teachers being the providers of knowledge to being the facilitators of learning will necessitate changes in instruction that require specific training.

If at any point during implementation of the Common Core State Standards, independently verified data documents that:

- Students are not graduating from public schools in South Carolina able to compete globally for jobs in the 21st century or that students are not college and career ready; or
- If local decisions about what and how to teach are threatened to be taken from the state, districts and schools,

then, the EOC may recommend to the State Superintendent of Education and the State Board of Education that South Carolina, in collaboration with higher education, revises its English Language Arts and Mathematics standards to create new South Carolina College and Career Readiness Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Furthermore, the EOC recommends that Science and Social Studies standards continue to be reviewed, revised and adopted as South Carolina academic standards for the Science and Social Studies content areas.



**Results of Survey of School Districts on Implementation of
Common Core State Standards**

As a result of inquiries from members of the SC General Assembly, the EOC staff conducted a survey of school districts on their implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). School districts were asked to respond to the following questions by April 23, 2013:

1. In the current school year, 2012-13, please indicate which grade levels in your district have implemented Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics.
2. What grade levels in your district will implement Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics next school year?

We received responses from 41 districts (50% of all SC school districts) as well as the SC School for the Deaf and Blind. Seventy percent of the students enrolled in South Carolina public schools are represented in the responses of the 41 school districts and the SC School for the Deaf and Blind.

Of the 42 respondents, 19 districts are currently implementing CCSS (ELA and math) in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade. Six districts are implementing CCSS across the grades (K-12) in ELA and mathematics. Thirteen districts are implementing CCSS in some other grade configuration other than K-2 or K-12, and two school districts responding are not implementing the new standards this school year.

For next school year, 2013-14, 31 of the 40 responding school districts (78% of responding districts) are prepared to implement CCSS in grades K-12. The SC School for the Deaf and Blind is also prepared to implement CCSS in all grades.

School District Responding to Survey	Grade levels implementing CCSS in current school year (2012-13)	Grade levels implementing CCSS <i>next</i> school year (2013-14)
Abbeville (enrollment: 3,150)	K-2	K-8
Aiken (enrollment: 24,758)	K-7	K-8
Anderson One (enrollment: 9,276)	K-2	K-11
Anderson Four (enrollment: 2,875)	K-2	K-12

School District Responding to Survey	Grade levels implementing CCSS in current school year (2012-13)	Grade levels implementing CCSS <i>next</i> school year (2013-14)
Anderson Five (enrollment: 12,559)	6-12	6-12
Barnwell 29 (enrollment: 929)	K-10 th grade, 12 th grade	K-12
Barnwell 45 (enrollment: 2,406)	K-3	K-12
Berkeley (enrollment: 30,085)	K-12	K-12
Charleston (enrollment: 44,126)	ELA - K-12 grades Common Core Writing Standard #1 Math - K-2 full CCSS	K-12
Chester (enrollment: 5,499)	K-1	K-12
Dorchester Two (enrollment: 23,347)	K-2	K-12
Edgefield (enrollment: 3,926)	K-2	K-12
Fairfield (enrollment: 3,108)	K-2	K-2
Florence 3 (enrollment: 3,608)	K-2	K-12
Greenville (enrollment: 72,156)	K-8	K-11
Greenwood 50 (enrollment: 9,094)	K-12	K-12
Greenwood 52 (enrollment: 1,712)	K-8	K-12
Horry (enrollment: 38,960)	K-12	K-12
Kershaw (enrollment: 10,345)	none	K-12

School District Responding to Survey	Grade levels implementing CCSS in current school year (2012-13)	Grade levels implementing CCSS next school year (2013-14)
Laurens 56 (enrollment: 3,050)	1 st grade, 2 nd grade	K-8
Lee County (enrollment: 2,252)	K-2	K-12
Lexington One (enrollment: 22,991)	K-1	K-12
Lexington Two (enrollment: 8,865)	K-2	K-12
Lexington Three (enrollment: 2,021)	K-8	K-12
Lexington Four (enrollment: 3,494)	K-2	K-12
Lexington/ Richland Five (enrollment: 16,560)	K-2	K-12
Marion (enrollment: 5,293)	K-2	K-12
Marlboro County (enrollment: 4,317)	K-2	K-12
Newberry (enrollment: 5,804)	K-2	K-12
Oconee (enrollment: 10,546)	K-5	K-12
Orangeburg Three (enrollment: 3,058)	K-2	K-12
Pickens County (enrollment: 16,548)	K-12	K-12
Richland 1 (enrollment: 23,945)	K-6	K-6
Richland 2 (enrollment: 25,964)	K-2	K-12
Saluda County Schools (enrollment: 2,152)	K-12	K-12

School District Responding to Survey	Grade levels implementing CCSS in current school year (2012-13)	Grade levels implementing CCSS next school year (2013-14)
SC School for the Deaf and Blind (enrollment: 299)	K-5	K-12
Spartanburg District 2 (enrollment: 9,970)	none	K-12
Spartanburg 5 (enrollment: 7,695)	K-2	3-8
Williamsburg (enrollment: 4,738)	K-2	K-12
York One (enrollment: 5,166)	K-1	K-12
York 2 – Clover School District (enrollment: 6,616)	K-12 (ELA) K-5, Algebra I (Math)	K-9
York 3 -- Rock Hill Schools (enrollment: 17,218)	K-2	K-12

Enrollment data based on 45-day enrollment for 2011-12 school year, published on 2012 district report cards.

Districts were given the opportunity to provide additional comments in the survey instrument:

Aiken

We are implementing ELA in K-12 this year and will continue in 13-14.

Anderson One

Anderson School District One's Common Core Implementation: Our district has been intentional in its approach to training teachers to implement the common core state standards. We began training for common core prior to the school year, 2011-2012. Administrators and teachers attended off-site training and all ELA and Math teachers were trained during the school year. The district Summer Academy hosted outside keynote speakers and additional training. During this school year more training has taken place for all ELA and Math teachers, K-12. We have spent many thousands of dollars in training, conference attendance, substitutes, etc. We do feel the time invested to this point has been very helpful to the teachers. Our Summer Academy planned for June 10, 2013 is all Common Core focused.

The response of the training has been outstanding. Our district typically has test scores on all standardized tests in the top 5% of the state. Our teachers are ready for more challenging standards to raise the bar and provide opportunities for students to have more rigorous instruction. Both ELA and Math teachers believe CCSS will bring that challenge. It will require

the teachers to increase their knowledge content while helping our students be better prepared for college and careers.

K5-grade 2 have fully implemented the CCSS and we will fully implement. After much work with teachers to create gap units) the CCSS for all ELA and Math teachers K-12. We have selected textbooks that support the common core.

We do not care what the standards are called and would be fine if we added the additional 15% that other states have done and give them a new name. We do care if they are taken away. We feel to improve instruction and test scores for the students in our district and state we need the level of rigor raised.

Anderson 4

We have invested funds in professional development and curriculum materials for successful transition.

Anderson 5

Portions of Common Core State Standards are being implemented this year where topics correlate with current SC standards. We are removing the SC standards from our curricula for 2013-2014 and FULLY implementing Common Core State Standards.

Barnwell 45

We are moving forward with full implementation in all grades next school year for instructional purposes, based on the State Department's implementation timeline. We have had professional development all year to prepare for the transition and new pacing guides and curriculum guides are currently being completed.

Berkeley

2012-2013 Highlights: \$250,000 spent on summer training for teachers (summer 2012) \$200,000 spent on principal and instructional coach training All early release days dedicated to CCSS training CCSS ELA and math curriculum (K-12) was written during the school year - and teachers will be trained in the use of that curriculum in the summer of 2013 Three CCSS trainings a month (voluntary) after hours for teachers in ELA and math Parent, school board, and business presentations (to the Berkeley and Charleston Chamber of Commerce) about CCSS implementation School and district strategic plans for the current school year and next year reflect CCSS implementation. An additional \$250,000 is budgeted for teacher training for this summer (2013). We moved forward in implementing CCSS fully one year ago.

Year 1 is a familiarization and conversion of curriculum. Year 2 is more the implementation

Dorchester 2

2012-2013- implemented 3-10 writing. All other ELA will be added in 2013-2014. High School math will include algebra I and geometry with partial algebra II and stats in 2013-2014.

ELA Writing standards were also implemented in 3-10 in 2012-2013 school year. Additional ELA standards will be added to those grades in 2013-14.

Florence 3

Partial implementation in high school for 2013-2014. Training was held throughout the year for all teachers.

Greenville

Greenville County School District spends an average of \$100,000 each year toward curriculum writing and implementation of CCSS into the existing curriculum. Additionally, Greenville County will spend roughly \$1,000,000 for materials to support full CCSS implementation in ELA and Mathematics beginning in 2013-2014.

Greenwood 50

During the 2012-13 school year, our district fully implemented Common Core in all grade levels. We have spent approximately \$150,000 providing each of our teachers with approximately 150 hours of professional development related to Common Core.

Kershaw

We will start a deliberative implementation process next school year.

Laurens 56

We have participated in extensive professional development for the past 20 months, increasing the intensity based on our implementation plan. More training, K-12, is planned for Summer 2013.

Lexington One

We are prepared. Our teachers and school leaders have studied the implications of the instructional shifts and developed curricula that will be implemented during the bridge year, which is 2013-14.

Common Core State Standards Implementation in Lexington School District One: We began professional development in Spring 2012. All teachers and administrators participated in a virtual module that introduced CCSS.

In summer 2012, the Implementation Leadership Team members (100 participants) participated in a weeklong institute to prepare to lead the all-day Whatever It Takes (school leadership teams) sessions in 2012-2013.

We are currently fully implementing ELA standards in kindergarten and first grade. With a newly adopted reading program that is aligned to CCSS ELA in K-5, we are partially implementing in ELA in Grades 2-5.

Implementation of Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

Grade/Course	Level of Implementation	Date
Kindergarten	All CCSSM content taught	Fall 2011
Grades 1-2	All CCSSM content taught	Fall 2012
Grades 3-5	All CCSSM content taught plus SC Academic Standards that are not included in CCSSM	Fall 2012
Grades 6-8	Partial implementation (pre-requisite content for grade-level	Fall 2012

	CCSSM taught in appropriate grade) plus all 2007 SC Academic Standards not included in CCSSM taught	
Algebra 1	CCSSM designated for Algebra 1 plus 2007 SC Academic Standards for Algebra 1 not included in this content	Fall 2012
Algebra 1, Part 1; Algebra 1, Part 2;	CCSSM designated for Algebra 1 plus 2007 SC Academic Standards for Algebra 1 not included in this content	Fall 2012
Algebra 2;	Partial implementation (CCSSM designated for Algebra 1 that were not taught in Algebra 1 in 2011-2012 plus most CCSSM designated for Algebra 2)	Fall 2012
Geometry;	Partial implementation (most, but not all, CCSSM taught)	Fall 2012
Other Courses	Partial implementation	Fall 2012
Grades 6-8	Full implementation	Fall 2013
All High School Courses	Full implementation	Fall 2013

We have taken a capacity-building approach to implementing these standards. Approximately 100 teachers and school and district administrators lead the CCSS implementation through service on the Implementation Leadership Team. This year, school leadership teams (approximately 350 teachers district-wide) attended six full-day “Whatever It Takes” sessions. School leadership teams led the professional learning and curriculum design process back at their school after each all-day session. **EVERY** teacher in the district has participated in professional learning during the 2012-2013 school year. Every teacher has viewed a series of virtual modules that explain the instructional shifts that accompany the transition to CCSS. Many teachers have already begun implementing these shifts. In addition, all teachers have participated in professional learning regarding increasing rigor in instruction and assessment with an emphasis on Webb’s Depth of Knowledge and the Cognitive Rigor Matrix. Every teacher has participated in designing new curricula for every content area to incorporate the new standards. We have developed new units of study for every course – ELA, math, science, social studies, and all technical subjects, including fine and performing arts and PE.

During monthly Team Learning sessions, school and district administrators have studied Webb’s Depth of Knowledge, the Standards for Mathematical Practice, rigorous instruction and assessment, and Smarter Balanced assessment tasks.

This summer, Implementation Leadership Team members (100 participants) will participate in a weeklong institute to prepare to lead the four all-day Whatever It Takes sessions next year. In addition, approximately 200 teachers will participate in curriculum design courses to continue work on units of study and the compilation of instructional resources to be utilized during the 2013-1014 school year (bridge year).

We are READY for the bridge year in Lexington One!

Hours of Professional Learning and Curriculum Design with CCSS:

District Implementation Team (20 participants) – 184 hours each

Implementation Leadership Team (100 participants) – 80 hours each

Whatever It Takes School Leadership Team (350 participants) – 48 hours each

Every Teacher and Administrator in the District – 20 hours each

Summer Institute and Team Learning (all administrators) – 20 hours each

*These hours do not include invitational and targeted professional learning and curriculum work sessions for ELA and Math teachers

Costs associated with professional learning with CCSS:

Virtual modules viewed by all teachers - \$0

Professional learning to prepare for curriculum design process - \$22,671.00

2012 Implementation Leadership Team Institute (stipends) – Approx. \$30,000

Curriculum writing to supplement math curriculum (stipends) – Approx. \$15,000

2012- 2013 Whatever It Takes Sessions (substitute pay) – Approx. \$150,000

2013 Implementation Leadership Team Institute (stipends) – Approx. \$30,000

Summer curriculum courses (graduate courses, facilitators) - \$35,000

Lexington 4

Common Core implementation in credit bearing courses is of course impacted by our current HSAP and EOCEP assessments. Also there are well known differences in the design of common core math standards and the organization of current high school math courses. This issue has not been resolved in South Carolina as it has in many of the other states that have adopted the common core.

Lexington / Richland 5

This was a transition year where both state standards and elements of common core were taught.

Marion

This year we fully implemented Common Core K-2 and implemented the writing, speaking, and listening standards K-12.

Newberry

We began implementing the CCSS writing 2012-13 K-12 science, social studies and technical areas.

Oconee

Dianne England, our Assistant Supt of Instruction, also completed the survey but I wanted to add some specifics. We have used all of our staff development days and our 4 early release days to prepare for the implementation of the CCSS. I am not sure how to put a \$\$ amount on that. Our district has also invested in the following to help with implementation: Common Core

Black Belt program: \$74,250 for 34 Black Belt participants Deconstructed standards: \$20,300
 Printed standards for teachers and administrators: \$29,000 Travel to attend CCSS and Smarter
 Balanced conferences/seminars/trainings: Thousands of dollars ELA and Math CCSS cohort:
 between stipends and sub pay: around \$15,000 Again, I cannot put a dollar amount on the
 man-hours that have been spent on the transition.

We fully implemented the CCSS in grades K-5 this year. We also dedicated monthly professional development time and p.d. funding to preparing our teachers for this implementation. Next year it will be all grades K-12. Much thought, time, money and effort have gone into this preparation over the past two years.

Pickens

Our district has dedicated two years of professional development toward the implementation of CCSS. We've formed district implementation teams at all levels of our system, provided training from experts in ELA and mathematics, revamped our curriculum, and focused on implementing instructional strategies that promote higher levels of thinking among our students. Across the state, we need to continue our work with CCSS as these standards will push our schools to raise the bar for our students and give us a better national comparison of how our students are performing. To move away from these standards now would be a huge blow to education in SC. First of all, districts have invested a considerable amount of professional development funding through Title II and EIA funding to provide learning opportunities for our teachers and administrators. As we all know, none of our schools can afford to waste funds. We also cannot afford to retreat from this initiative at this point in its implementation. If we truly want to make a change in public education, to turn back now would send the wrong message to our teachers about education reform and stall future progress. Despite two years of work, there are many more years of work ahead of us if we want to prepare students to meet the high expectations they will face in college and the workplace. It is time to put aside the debate about "should we teach CCSS?" and spend our time ensuring that we are preparing our students and determining how we will do that. Note in our district all ELA & Math K-12 have begun some phase of implementation that will continue next year and beyond.

Saluda

Saluda has devoted countless hours in professional development district-wide in order to prepare our students to master the CCSS. Check out our web pages to see all that we have accomplished as far as a coordinated, sustained PD plan
<http://www.saludaschools.org/domain/5> and look here to see the staff resources from our PD sessions <http://www.saludaschools.org/domain/27> I believe the CCSS are right for our students and the rigor and higher expectations are what our students need in order to prepare for careers and the work force. Our students from 4K-12 are definitely reading and comprehending and writing more than ever through implementing the CCSS and I have seen the improvements first hand across the district. Last year I was Principal of Saluda Middle School, which had already moved to using the CCSS last year and we received our highest gains and accolades by doing so - just check our annual state report card for the evidence. I would love to explain in detail all that Saluda and our amazing teachers have accomplished with the CCSS if interested.
 864.445.8441

Spartanburg 2

Our district instructional team and school-based ELA and Math coaches have worked with teachers throughout the year to transition to Common Core; thus, some lessons this year in all grade-levels were infused with the Common Core instructional shifts. We have also been writing our new ELA and Math Curriculum Guides this year that we will begin to implement next year in all grade levels. These will be fluid documents subject to much revision over time as we continue the Common Core journey.

York 1

This school year we are preparing teachers for full implementation. We have been using drop-in units in math and making adjustments to our curriculum although we have not begun a full implementation.

York 2

We are fully implemented in CCSS for grades K-12 for ELA. However, in mathematics, we are fully implemented in Grades K-5 and in Algebra 1. We have partial implementation in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

School for the Deaf and Blind

For 2012-2013, the implementation has been in ELA (K-5). Our plan is to fully implement CCSS for ELA and math next year.

Comment from Jane Lindle, Clemson University

We have been preparing school leaders to understand and implement high standards, including Common Core since 2011.

GALLUP-*EDUCATION WEEK* SUPERINTENDENT PANEL – INAUGURAL SURVEY FINDINGS

SUPERINTENDENTS SEE THE VALUE OF EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL AND
MANY BELIEVE THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS WILL CREATE CONSISTENCY

JUNE 6, 2013

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All survey releases must include the exact question wording, dates of interviewing, interviewing method, sample size, definition of the survey population, and size of sampling error. Results of only a subset of respondents must be appropriately identified, with the definition of the subsample and its size included in the release. A full description of the survey methodology (provided by Gallup) must be available upon request.

Gallup must approve all press releases and other documents prepared to assist in the public dissemination of the survey data. In the event that the survey data are released in a manner that is unacceptable to Gallup (either because Gallup did not have an opportunity to review the material before release, or because the client did not revise the material to conform with Gallup's methodological and analytical standards), Gallup reserves the right to issue press releases or other public statements that provide its own view of the appropriate interpretation of the survey data.

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ABOUT EDUCATION WEEK

Since its founding in 1981, *Education Week* has been recognized as America's preeminent source of news and information in pre-collegiate education. With an editorial purview that spans local, state, and national news, and issues from preschool through the transition to high school, *Education Week* strives to be a one-stop source for news, information, analysis, and services essential to driving critical changes in K-12 policy and practice. The paper, published 37 times a year, has a print readership of 225,000 and reaches an audience of 1.1 million users through the edweek.org website. *Education Week* is published by Editorial Projects in Education, a nonprofit organization based in Bethesda, Md.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gallup and *Education Week* launched a panel of K-12 superintendents in the United States to track and understand their opinions on important topics and issues facing education. Gallup will survey these leaders every quarter on an annual basis. The key findings from the inaugural study include:

THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

One of the major goals of the common core standards is to create consistent learning for students throughout the country. According to this study, many superintendents believe that the common core standards will provide more consistency in the quality, but some say the change will have no effect.

- More than half of superintendents (58%) say that the common core standards will improve the quality of education in their community. Three in 10 (30%) believe that the common core standards will have no effect.
- Only 2% of superintendents strongly agree that their school district is getting adequate support at the federal level to implement common core standards.
- Seventy five (75%) of superintendents say they believe that having common core standards would provide more consistency in the quality of education between school districts and states.

EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

The majority of superintendents believe that education beyond high school is important for graduates. Few believe that GPA and standardized testing is the best predictor of success in college. In addition, the majority of superintendents believe that high school graduates are not prepared to find a good job, but a few more believe more high school graduates are prepared to enter college. This indicates that they believe it is important to obtain an education beyond high school.

- Nearly all of superintendents — 96% — say that it is very important that high schools prepare students for education beyond high school.
- Only 5% of superintendents strongly agree that a high GPA is the best predictor of success in college, and only 6% strongly agree that a high SAT or ACT score is the best predictor of success in college.

TEACHERS

Having effective teachers in the classroom is essential to creating a successful learning environment.

- Eighty-one percent (81%) of superintendents agree or strongly agree that teachers in their school district are evaluated on their effectiveness in the classroom rather than on the number of years of teaching in the classroom.
- Three in 10 (30%) of superintendents strongly agree that their school district has an effective ongoing professional development program designed for teachers.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

The ability to add technology universally in the classroom, with the intent of increasing student learning is still a substantial challenge.

- Forty four percent (44%) of superintendents strongly agree that the use of technology in the classroom increases student engagement.
- When asked if every student should have a laptop or tablet in the classroom to accelerate his/her learning, 37% of superintendents strongly agree.
- More than three in 10 (33%) superintendents strongly agree that a good teacher who uses advanced technology to teach creates a better student learning environment than a good teacher who does not use advanced technology to teach.

BUDGET CUTS

Balancing school districts' budgets remains one of the most challenging tasks for superintendents. According to this study, many superintendents are prepared to make budget cuts in the upcoming school year.

- Nearly seven in 10 (66%) superintendents are expected to make budgets cuts in the upcoming school year.
- Of the superintendents planning to make budget cuts, 42% are planning on making cuts within operations and maintenance, while 36% say they will make cuts within instruction.

For more information, refer to the subsequent section, Key Findings.

METHODOLOGY

The sample consists of 12,433 K-12 school districts across the United States. Using email addresses, Gallup recruited leaders and built the sample. The sample is not nationally representative of U.S. school districts. Gallup conducted 2,586 Web surveys from March 14 to April 4, 2013.

For results based on this sample size of 2,586 total respondents, with about 95% confidence, the margin of error attributable to sampling error is ± 1.9 percentage points.

KEY FINDINGS

THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

More than half of superintendents (58%) say that the common core standards will improve the quality of education in their community. Three in 10 (30%) believe that the common core standards will have no effect.

Do you believe common core standards would improve the quality of education in your community, decrease the quality of education in your community, or have no effect?	
Improve the quality of education	58%
Decrease the quality of education	8%
Have no effect	30%
Don't know/Does not apply	4%

Only a few (7%) superintendents strongly agree that the common core standards prevent individualized learning. In contrast, more than two in 10 (24%) strongly disagree that the standards prevent individualized learning.

Nearly six in 10 (56%) strongly disagree that their school district is getting adequate support at the federal level to implement common core standards, and only 2% strongly agree that they are getting adequate support from the federal level.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ Does not apply
The common core standards prevent individualized learning.	24%	30%	22%	14%	7%	4%
My school district is getting adequate support at the federal level to implement common core standards.	56%	24%	10%	3%	2%	6%

Many superintendents (68%) say their school district is not coordinating with any local postsecondary education institutions around the implementation of the common core state standards.

Is your school district coordinating with any local postsecondary education institutions around the implementation of the common core state standards?	
Yes	28%
No	68%
Don't know/Does not apply	4%

More than half (56%) of superintendents say the common core standards would help make education in the United States more competitive globally, while 33% say the common core standards would have no effect.

Do you believe common core standards would help make education in the United States more competitive globally, less competitive globally, or have no effect?	
More competitive	56%
Less competitive	5%
Have no effect	33%
Don't know/Does not apply	6%

Three in four (75%) superintendents believe that the common core standards will provide more consistency in the quality of education between school districts and between states.

Some educators believe that common core standards would provide more consistency in the quality of education between school districts and between states. Do you believe that having common core standards would provide more consistency in the quality of education between school districts and states?	
Yes	75%
No	21%
Don't know/Does not apply	5%

EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Nearly all (96%) superintendents say that it is very important that high schools prepare students for education beyond high school.

In your opinion, is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important that high schools prepare students for education beyond high school?				
Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Don't Know
0%	0%	4%	96%	0%

Four in 10 (40%) superintendents say, other than the cost, lack of social support is one of the biggest barriers that high school students face in pursuing higher education.

In your opinion, other than the cost, which ONE of the following is the biggest barrier that high school students face in pursuing higher education?	
Not being academically prepared	19%
Lack of social support	40%
Lack of information	11%
Another barrier	24%
Don't know	6%

When asked what percentage of students graduate from high school prepared to find a good job in the workforce, only 18% say that 75% to less than 100% are prepared.

In your opinion, what percentage of students graduate from high school prepared to find a good job in the workforce?	
No high school graduates are prepared to find a good job in the workforce	3%
Less than 25 percent	26%
25 to less than 50 percent	23%
50 to less than 75 percent	25%
75 to less than 100 percent	18%
All high school graduates are prepared to find a good job in the workforce	1%
Don't know	3%

When asked what percentage of students graduate from high school prepared to enter college, only 46% say that 50% to less than 75% are prepared.

In your opinion, what percentage of students graduate from high school prepared to enter college?	
No high school graduates are prepared to enter college	0%
Less than 25 percent	5%
25 to less than 50 percent	25%
50 to less than 75 percent	46%
75 to less than 100 percent	23%
All high school graduates are prepared to enter college	1%
Don't know	2%

Only 5% of superintendents strongly agree that a high GPA is the best predictor of success in college and only 6% strongly agree that a high SAT or ACT score is the best predictor of success in college.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't Know/Does not apply
A high GPA is the best predictor of success in college.	7%	21%	35%	32%	5%	0%
A high SAT or ACT score is the best predictor of success in college.	6%	16%	35%	37%	6%	0%

TEACHERS

More than four in 10 (42%) superintendents strongly agree that teachers in their school district are evaluated on their effectiveness in the classroom rather than on the number of years of teaching in the classroom.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't Know/Does not apply
The teachers in my school district are evaluated on their effectiveness in the classroom rather than on the number of years of teaching in the classroom.	3%	5%	12%	39%	42%	0%

One in 10 (10%) superintendents strongly agree that their school district has a process to identify and develop talented students to prepare them for future leadership roles.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't Know/Does not apply
My school district has a process to identify and develop talented students to prepare them for future leadership roles.	3%	16%	33%	37%	10%	1%

A large number of superintendents (72%) say their school district is very effective at providing a quality education. Only 36% of superintendents say their school district is very effective at forming great partnerships with parents/guardians. Five in 10 (50%) superintendents say their school district is very effective at recruiting and retaining talented teachers.

How would you rate the effectiveness of your school district in the following areas?					
	%1 Not effective at all	%2 Not too effective	%3 Somewhat effective	%4 Very effective	Don't Know
Providing a quality education	0%	1%	28%	72%	0%
Preparing students for the world of work	0%	3%	56%	40%	0%
Preparing students for engaged citizenship	0%	5%	51%	44%	0%
Identifying and assessing student outcomes	0%	5%	47%	48%	1%
Forming great partnerships with parents/guardians	0%	10%	54%	36%	1%
Recruiting and retaining talented teachers	0%	6%	43%	50%	1%
Recruiting and retaining talented principals	1%	6%	37%	54%	2%
Forming great partnerships with community members	0%	10%	47%	41%	1%
Using data to inform decision-making	0%	5%	42%	51%	1%

Three in 10 (30%) superintendents strongly agree that their school district has an effective ongoing professional development program designed for teachers. Less than two in 10 (17%) superintendents strongly agree that their school district has an effective ongoing professional development program designed for principals.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't know/Does not apply
My school district has an effective ongoing professional development program designed for teachers.	1%	5%	20%	44%	30%	0%
My school district has an effective ongoing professional development program designed for principals.	3%	13%	29%	37%	17%	1%

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

More than four in 10 (44%) strongly agree that the use of technology in the classroom increases student engagement. Less than three in 10 (27%) strongly agree that the use of technology in the classroom increases teacher engagement.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't know/Does not apply
The use of technology in the classroom increases student engagement.	1%	1%	11%	43%	44%	0%
The use of technology in the classroom increases teacher engagement.	1%	3%	22%	47%	27%	0%

About four in 10 (37%) superintendents strongly agree that every student should have a laptop or tablet in the classroom to accelerate his/her learning.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Every student should have a laptop or tablet in the classroom to accelerate his/her learning.	2%	7%	21%	33%	37%	1%

When asked if a good teacher who uses advanced technology to teach creates a better student learning environment than a good teacher who does not use advanced technology to teach, about three in 10 (33%) strongly agree.

On a five-point scale, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't know/Does not apply
A good teacher who uses advanced technology to teach creates a better student learning environment than a good teacher who does not use advanced technology to teach.	4%	8%	18%	38%	33%	0%

BUDGET CUTS

Nearly seven in 10 (66%) superintendents say their school district expects to make budget cuts in the upcoming school year.

Does your school district expect to make budget cuts in the upcoming school year?	
Yes	66%
No	30%
Don't know/Does not apply	4%

Moreover, of the superintendents who say they expect to make budget cuts in the upcoming school year, 42% report that operations and maintenance will be most affected by those budget cuts, while 36% say instruction will be most affected.

Which of the following areas will be most affected by budget cuts next year? <i>Select all that apply.</i>	
Special education	18%
Transportation	20%
Athletics	21%
Administration	30%
Operations and maintenance	42%
Instruction	36%
Salary and wages	33%
Employee benefits	26%
Other	13%
Don't know	1%

**Asked of those who said "yes" in the previous question.

**Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses.

When asked about issues that will be a challenge this year in their school district, 52% of superintendents strongly agree that budget shortfalls will be a challenge. Likewise, 52% of superintendents strongly agree that rising demands for assessment from the state and federal level will be a challenge.

This year, the following issues will be a challenge for my school district:						
	%1 Strongly Disagree	%2	%3	%4	%5 Strongly Agree	Don't know/Does not apply
Budget shortfalls	4%	7%	15%	21%	52%	1%
Rising demands for assessment from the state and federal level	1%	4%	11%	30%	52%	1%
Strengthening academic rigor	2%	9%	19%	40%	31%	0%
Revamping curriculum	2%	9%	21%	39%	30%	0%
Improving the academic performance of underprepared students	1%	5%	17%	38%	38%	0%
Better preparing students for higher education	2%	8%	26%	40%	22%	2%
Preparing students for engaged citizenship	3%	11%	35%	36%	15%	0%

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Common Core State Standards - New Learning Standards for English language arts and Mathematics

Why were the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) developed?

The goal was to produce common state standards in **English language arts and mathematics** that measure college and career readiness standards. The standards define the **knowledge and skills** students should have within their K-12 education so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards are to be a clear, consistent, rigorous, set of shared goals and expectations for teachers and for parents. They are:

- Internationally benchmarked;
- Written by building upon the best and highest state standards in the nation;
- Based on national research including *Trends Based in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS)* that criticized the US mathematics curriculum as needing to be more coherent; and
- Based on skills required of students entering college and workforce training programs

How were the standards developed?

The Common Core State Standards Initiative was a **state-led** effort including governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia, through their membership in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards themselves were designed by teachers, parents, and education experts, and feedback on drafts was received from national organizations representing teachers, postsecondary education, civil rights groups, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

What was the rationale for the State Board of Education and the EOC adopting Common Core State Standards in South Carolina in the summer of 2010?

- Because they are internationally benchmarked standards, students graduating from SC can compete globally for jobs in the 21st century.
- A 41-member group of SC educators reviewed SC's current standards and the CCSS. The group found the CCSS to **meet or exceed the current rigor of SC academic standards**. The standards are more rigorous and do raise the bar for South Carolina students.
- The standards **focus on knowledge and skills rather than understanding or memorization**.
- Students who are mobile and move from one to state to another will have the benefit of being taught the same standards across grades.
- **The delivery of public education remains a local responsibility**. The standards leave the decisions about what and how to teach to states, districts, and schools. For example, CCSS does not offer a reading list but instead sample texts. And, to date, the textbook adoption process at the state and local levels remains unchanged.
- South Carolina would still keep its science and social studies standards which are judged independently as the highest in the nation by the Thomas Fordham Institute.
- Depending upon the assessments used, having common standards would facilitate state-to-state comparisons on the ability of students to master the knowledge and skills of the standards.
- Potentially, South Carolina would save the cost of creating its own assessments.

To date, 45 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Four states - Texas, Virginia, Nebraska, and Alaska --have not adopted either. Minnesota adopted only CCSS in ELA.

History of Common Core State Standards

(Language in red denotes issues relating to federal government)

1996 - Achieve, Inc. founded as a bi-partisan group led by governors and business leaders to raise academic standards and graduation requirements and to improve assessments and accountability systems.

2004 – Report *Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma That Counts* released by Achieve. It defines the English and math that graduates must master to succeed in credit-bearing college courses and high-performance, high-growth jobs. Key findings: employers' and colleges' academic demands for high school graduates have converged, yet states' current high-school exit expectations fall well short of those demands.

2005 Achieve launched the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network

Today, the network has 35 states (SC is not a member). The Network is composed of governors, state education officials, postsecondary leaders and business leaders worked together to improve postsecondary preparation y aligning high school standards, graduation requirements, assessments and accountability systems with demands of college and careers

2009:

June 2009 -- National Governors Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) begin development of K-12 standards in English and math that "provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them."

July 24, 2009 – Race to the Top competitive federal grant announced. To be eligible, “states had to adopt internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the work place.” i.e. states had to adopt Common Core State Standards or a similar career and college readiness standards.

2010:

March 2010 - The draft K-12 CCSS standards released by CCSSO for public comment

March 29, 2010 Race to the Top, Phase 1 winners announced – Delaware and Tennessee (SC ranked in 6th place)

June 2, 2010 - The final CCSS released. A report was given to the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and the State Board of Education from a 41-member comparative review group who looked at SC’s current standards and the CCSS. The content area review groups found “consistent evidence that the CCSS are written at a cognitive level which meets or exceeds the current rigor of the SC academic standards.” The standards are to be fully implemented by school year 2014-15.

June 10, 2010: EOC adopts CCSS.

July 14, 2010: State Board of Education adopts CCSS; 23rd state in the nation to adopt CCSS

August 24, 2010 Race to the Top Phase 2 winners announced (SC Ranked 14th)

September 2, 2010 U.S .Department of Education announced \$433 million federal grant of \$170 million to Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and \$160 million to the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)

2011:

September 2011 U.S. Department of Education invited states to request flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (i.e. Adequate Yearly Progress).

To receive flexibility through the waivers, states must demonstrate that it has college- and career-ready expectations for all students in the State by adopting **college- and career-ready standards** in at least reading/language arts and mathematics, transitioning to and implementing such standards statewide for all students and schools, and developing and administering annual, statewide, aligned, **high-quality assessments**, and corresponding academic achievement standards, that measure **student growth** in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school.

December 22, 2011 Race to the Top Phase 3 winners announced (SC did not apply)

2012:

February 8, 2012 – State Board of Education voted to adopt tests being developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

School Year Implementation Plan for CCSS:

- 2011-12 Transition Year
- 2012-13 Transition Year
- 2013-14 Bridge Year (CCSS will be used for instructional purposes during this school year.)
- 2014-15 Full Implementation

July 2012 - South Carolina was granted a waiver from several requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). State had to have adopted college and career readiness standards and improve student performance through improved instruction, which could include an improved teacher evaluation system. Per the US Department of Education website, as of July 10, 2013:

- 47 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Bureau of Indian Education submitted requests for ESEA flexibility; and
- 39 States and the District of Columbia are approved for ESEA flexibility.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Adoption

Forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted CCSS. Alaska, Nebraska, Texas and Virginia did not adopt CCSS. .Minnesota adopted ELA CCSS but rejected math CCSS.

<u>Date of Adopting CCSS</u>	<u>State</u>
February 10, 2010	Kentucky
June 2, 2010	Wisconsin
	West Virginia
June 3, 2010	North Carolina
June 8, 2010	Mississippi
June 15, 2010	Missouri
	Michigan
June 18, 2010	Ohio
	Hawaii
June 22, 2010	Maryland
	Nevada
June 23, 2010	New Jersey
June 24, 2010	Illinois
June 25, 2010	Oklahoma
June 28, 2010	Arizona
July 1, 2010	Louisiana
	Rhode Island
July 2, 2010	Pennsylvania
July 7, 2010	Connecticut
July 8, 2010	Georgia
July 12, 2010	Arkansas
July 13, 2010	New Hampshire
July 14, 2010	South Carolina
July 19, 2010	New York
July 21, 2010	Massachusetts
July 27, 2010	Florida
July 29, 2010	Iowa
July 30, 2010	Tennessee
August 2, 2010	California
	Colorado
August 3, 2010	Indiana
August 8, 2010	Utah
August 17, 2010	Vermont
August 19, 2010	Delaware
October 12, 2010	Kansas
October 21, 2010	New Mexico
October 29, 2010	Oregon
November 18, 2010	Alabama
November 29, 2010-	South Dakota
January 24, 2011	Idaho
April 4, 2011	Maine
June 20, 2011	North Dakota
July 20, 2011	Washington
November 4, 2011	Montana
June 16, 2012	Wyoming

The South Carolina Policy Council

South Carolina Policy Council

Common Core in South Carolina: FAQs

Posted by on Monday, July 15, 2013 · [Leave a Comment](#)



WHAT IS IT? HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Over the past several weeks, a great deal of controversy and discussions have arisen on the topic of Common Core Curriculum. We asked our policy analysts to explain exactly what the program is, whether South Carolina has opted in to it, what it costs, and whether the state still has a choice to implement it or not.

What is Common Core?

Common Core State Standards are a list of specific universal benchmarks in English language arts and math developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers that will replace the current state K-12 standards of each state that adopts them.

Only Alaska, Texas, Nebraska, and Virginia have not adopted Common Core. Minnesota adopted English language arts Common Core standards, but not the math standards.

Has South Carolina adopted Common Core?

Yes. In September 2009, South Carolina became the 48th state to join the Common Core standards project after Gov. Mark Sanford and Superintendent Jim Rex co-signed the project application. In July 2010 the State Board of Education voted to adopt Common Core math and reading standards. The past two years have been “transition years” for school districts to begin getting familiar with the new standards, while the coming 2013-14 school year is a “bridge year” in which Common Core will be used for instructional purposes during the school year. Full implementation, which will include the new standardized assessments, will begin in the 2014-15 school year.

Does Common Core implement “national” education standards?

Technically, no. Practically, yes. In fact, the SC Department of Education even **calls it** a “national set of academic benchmarks.” The federal government has its fingerprints all over Common Core via the following (see more from State Budget Solutions [policy brief](#)):

Race to the Top Fund (RTT). Created through the 2009 “stimulus” package passed by Congress and President Obama, RTT is a \$4.35 billion fund that offers competitive grants to all 50 states based on a number of criteria on a 500 point scale. “Developing and adopting common standards” accounts for 40 of these points, giving states the incentive to adopt Common Core in order to accumulate points for that category. Put simply, the federal government offers states money for implementing Common Core.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Waivers: In September 2011, the Obama administration initiated the Conditional NCLB Waiver plan, which would allow states to waive several major accountability requirements of NCLB in exchange for agreeing to specific conditions – conditions strikingly similar to those implemented through Common Core (NCLB is the 2002 law that requires all schools receiving federal funds to evaluate students with rigorous standardized tests and show adequate progress or risk penalties and decreased funding). According to the [Pioneer Institute](#), the NCLB waiver plan will “result in the [Department of Education] leveraging the states into a *de facto* long-term national system of curriculum, programs of instruction, and instructional materials.”

Federally Funded Standardized Tests: The “stimulus” bill also provided \$362 million in funding “to a consortia of states to develop assessments” – and in September 2010, two state consortia (the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Consortium [PARCC] and SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium [SBAC]) won this federal grant money. According to the Pioneer Institute’s study, this process “displaces state assessment autonomy with new common assessments for all states in the consortia, directed and influenced by \$362 million in federal funds and program requirements.” South Carolina’s Board of Education has approved the SBAC assessments, but approval from the Education Oversight Committee is still required before it can be finalized. Indeed, federally funded standardized tests, non-specific to South Carolina, will have a major impact on what South Carolina teachers teach, as their instruction will be centered on the fact that their students must pass a standardized test they have no control over.

How much will (has) it cost to implement Common Core in South Carolina?

It’s hard to say. According to AccountabilityWorks, costs of implementing Common Core for South Carolina are estimated to be **\$232 million** over seven years, not including assessments. However, this doesn’t take into account that the state is constantly getting new instructional materials, funding professional development for

teachers, and purchasing new technology, so much of this money would probably still be spent even without Common Core. Needless to say, while increased taxpayer cost is by itself a legitimate reason to oppose Common Core, the main reason lies with the federal intrusion into yet another area traditionally resting with states – education.

Speaking of spending on Common Core, it may be interesting to note that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is estimated to **spend \$354 million between 2010-2014** to help implement Common Core by helping states build a framework for a “common proficiency conversation,” develop syllabi, develop specifications for tech-based instructional platforms, create new scoring technology, and more.

Can Common Core be stopped in South Carolina?

It's possible, but not easy. The reason has to do with the state's power structure. South Carolina's **Education Accountability Act of 1998** gives the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), neither of which are accountable to a specific public official, the power to develop (or adopt) and approve statewide academic standards and assessments for K-12 education. The Board of Education consists of 17 members, 16 which are appointed by the legislative delegations from the state's judicial circuits and one appointed by the governor. Even less accountable is the EOC, which consists of 6 lawmakers, the governor, five members of the business community (four appointed by legislators, one by the governor), five members from the education community (appointed in the same manner as the business reps), and lastly the State Superintendent of Education – who, oddly, doesn't even get a vote.

There is little or no accountability in this structure. Two boards hold the lion's share of power over the state's education curricula, and these boards are accountable to no one officeholder. The hodgepodge mix of appointments, the majority of which come from the legislative branch, represents a **broader problem** our state has with giving the legislative branch too much power over the executive branch. With legislative appointments, there is no one person the public has to hold accountable when the department makes objectionable decisions.

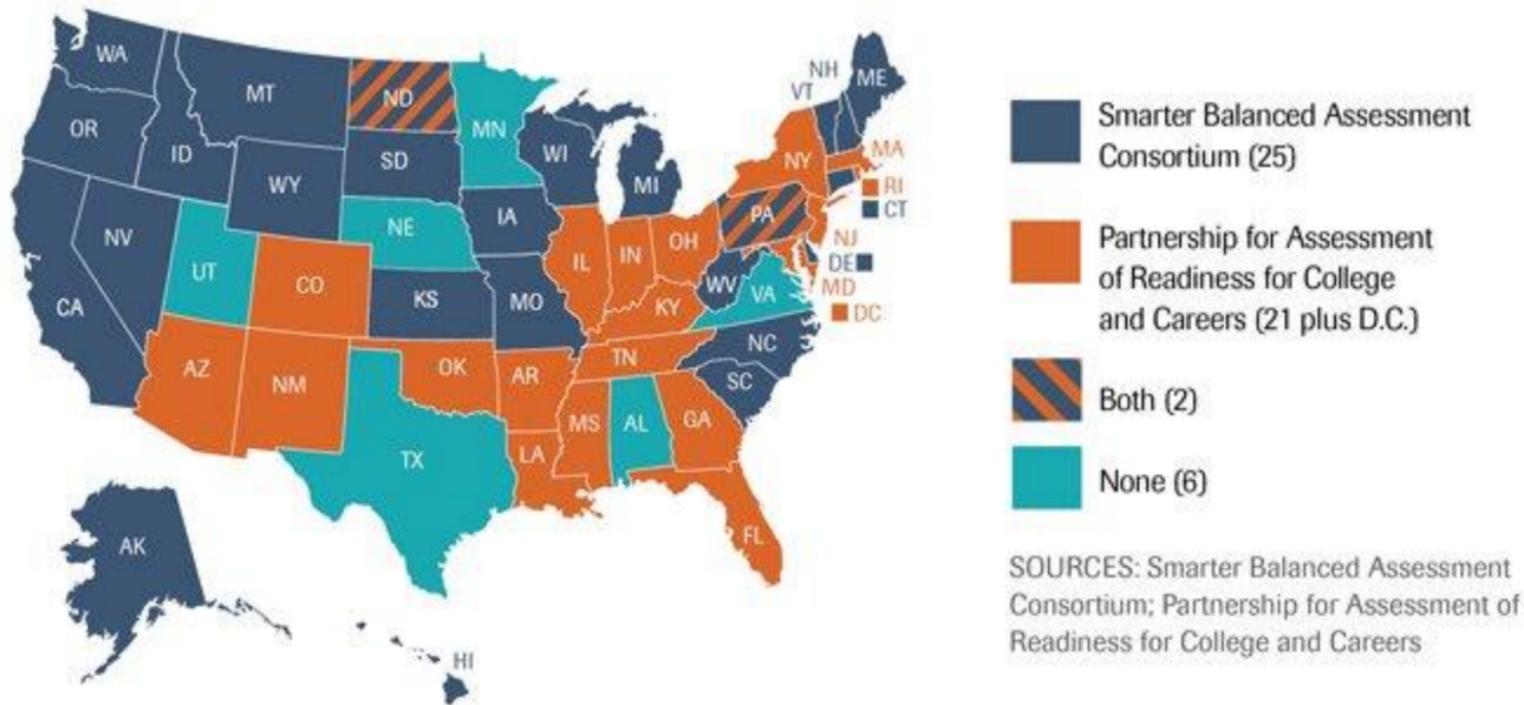
If the state Department of Education is supposed to be in charge of our state's education system and standards, then its leader (state superintendent of education) should have responsibility over academic standards, so the public can have some idea of where and how these decisions are made. As things stand today, both **Superintendent Zais** and **Gov. Haley** are against implementing Common Core, but have no power to stop it because the decisions lie with two unaccountable boards.

On the legislative side, three bills have so far been proposed that would prohibit the Board of Education from implementing Common Core – one from last year's session (which was supported by Gov. Haley) and two this session, including **S.300**. However, given the slow pace our legislature likes to move on important legislation, it's unlikely a bill like this would gain traction without heavy public pressure.

The bigger issue here is twofold, and requires two major policy changes. South Carolina's Department of Education receives over \$800 million annually from the federal government, which forces the state to comply with federal standards. The only way our state can realistically implement our own standards is if the legislature simply refuses those federal dollars. Further, the diffused accountability of the Board of Education and the EOC has allowed these bodies to implement Common core with little regard for the superintendent's and governor's positions against it. Putting the Board and Commission directly under the authority of the governor would go a long way toward putting South Carolinians back in charge of the state's education policy.

ASSESSMENT CONSORTIA MEMBERSHIP

\$360 million in federal grants has gone to groups of states developing common assessments.



The Future is (Almost) Now: Implementing Smarter Balanced Assessments in 2014-15

Joe Willhoft, Executive Director
Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium



Presentation at CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment
June 21, 2013 National Harbor, Maryland

Development of the Sustainability Plan

Dec 2011 - Present

- Formation of and regular meetings with a Sustainability Task Force
- Updates to K-12 and Higher Ed leads
- Interviews with relevant external organizations
- Consultation support
- Approval of business model by Task Force and Executive Committee
- Solicitation of potential partner organizations
- Adoption of Sustainability Plan by governing state chiefs
- Establishing cost models
- Negotiations with selected partner

Key Sustainability Principles

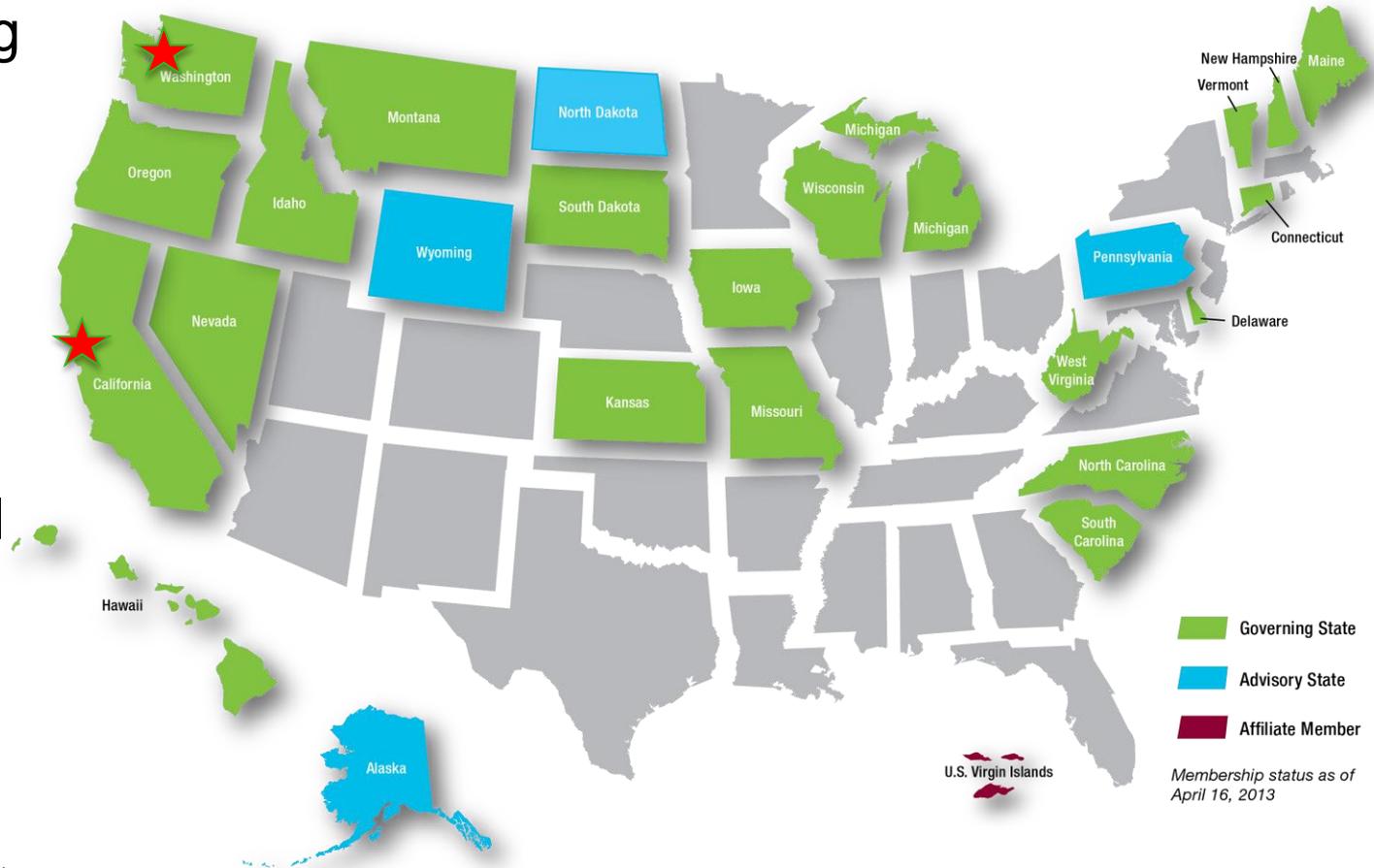
- Retain state led governance of the Consortium, with only minor changes to the current governance structure
- Shared state ownership of the item pool, digital library, and other IP
- Establish a business model that retains state autonomy

The Smarter Balanced Business Model

- Smarter Balanced provides each member state with the services necessary to maintain quality and comparability of the assessment system
- States retain the autonomy and flexibility to acquire assessment management and administration services
- The Consortium affiliates with an existing public entity for “backbone” support
 - HR, legal, fiscal management, front office, etc.

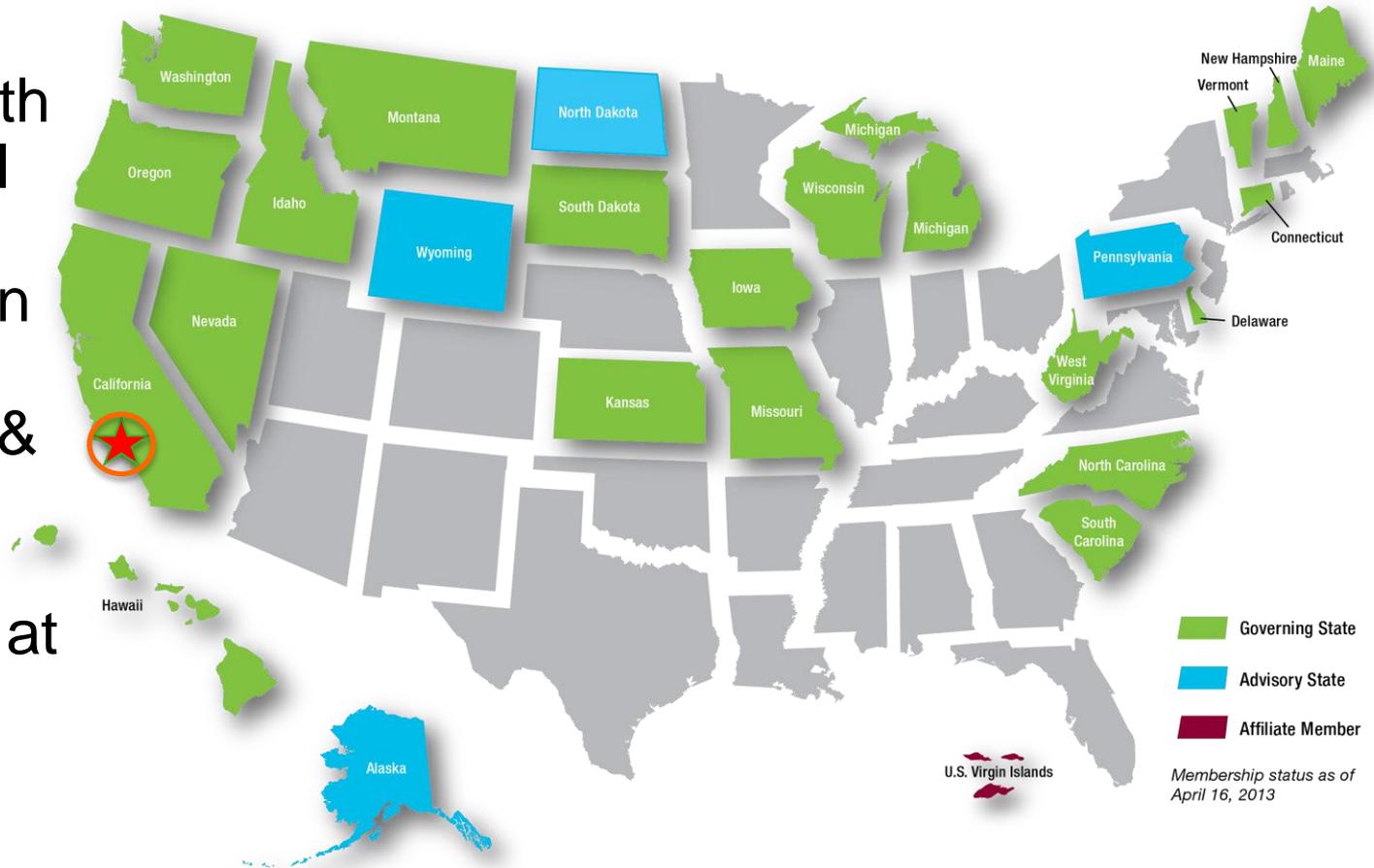
A State-led Assessment Consortium

- 21 Governing States, 4 Advisory States, 1 Affiliate Member
- Washington state is fiscal agent
- WestEd provides project management services



Sustainability for 2014-15 and Beyond

- Future affiliation with the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA



Services Provided by Smarter Balanced

Summative & Interim

- Develop, calibrate and evaluate quality of items
- Ensure integrity of blueprint and scale
- Provide necessary Peer Review assurances for federal accountability
- Develop and release the Smarter Balanced version of the test administration platform (on annual basis)
- Develop and implement a certification process:
 - To certify eligible vendors for test administration
 - To certify States' implementation of the overall Smarter Balanced system
- Produce materials and processes to maintain consistency across States (e.g., training, administration manuals, accommodations procedures, etc.)
- Produce standardized reports for assessment results
- Supply student results to the state level (if requested), and provide access to reporting system
- Conduct research studies in support of the Smarter Balanced validity framework and use of effective accommodations and supports for students
- Design paper & pencil forms

Digital Library

- Develop and maintain digital library application
- Centrally host digital library application
- Facilitate development and review of formative materials
- Regular review and evaluation of user needs

Member Services

- Provide general communication tools & templates
- Provide “Tier-1” help desk support for State Assessment Directors and Chiefs
- Maintain state-led governance system

Services Provided by States

Summative & Interim

- Deliver the assessment
- Host the test administration platform
- Provide help desk services to users for test administration
- Provide training at the local-level on the assessment administration procedures
- Score operational items, tasks, and tests
- Produce any special reports to comply with state-specific accountability requirements
- Produce and distribute any paper & pencil forms
- Manage coherent flow of institution, teacher, and student data, including:
 - Maintain unique, high-quality student identifier
 - Transmit student registration data using the Consortium interoperability standard
 - Reconcile student records
 - Deliver student data sets to Districts
 - Delegate permissions/access to Districts
 - Manage transmission of Grade 11 scores to IHE's

Digital Library

- Establish and maintain user permissions
- Engage with Smarter Balanced in development of formative materials

Member Services

- Communicate with legislature and in-state stakeholders
- Serve as primary point of contact for Districts, Principals, Teachers, Parents and other primary users

Sustainable Per-Student Costs

COMPLETE SYSTEM		Consortium Services	+	State- Managed	=	Total per Student
Gr. 3-8 & 11	Summative Interim Formative	\$9.55	+	\$17.75	=	\$27.30
Gr. 9, 10, 12	Summative Interim Formative	\$9.55	+	\$17.75	=	\$27.30

-OR-

BASIC SYSTEM

Gr. 3-8 & 11	Summative Only	\$6.20	+	\$16.30	=	\$22.50
Gr. 9, 10, 12	Summative Only	\$6.20	+	\$16.30	=	\$22.50

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The screenshot shows the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website. At the top left is the logo, and at the top right are navigation links for Home, Contact Us, and Member States Login. Below the logo is a search bar with the text "What are you looking for?" and a "Search" button. A horizontal navigation menu includes links for ABOUT, SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS, K-12 EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION, PARENTS & STUDENTS, and RESOURCES & EVENTS. The main content area features a large banner for "Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications" with a sub-headline "Minimum specifications allow schools to determine which computers will support the administration of Smarter Balanced assessments in the 2014-15 school year." and a "READ MORE" link. Below the banner are three columns: "Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium" with a brief description and "READ MORE" link; "Latest News" with a headline "Alaska Joins the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium" and a "READ MORE" link; and "School Years" with a list of years (2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013) and a "What's Happening" section for the 2012-2013 year with a "READ MORE" link.

EDUCATION WEEK

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Adaptive Testing Gains Momentum, Prompts Concerns

Bills in Congress highlight debate

By Benjamin Herold

The federal government and dozens of states are slowly paving the way for widespread use of high-stakes online exams that adjust the difficulty of their questions based on the skill levels of individual test-takers.

But dueling congressional proposals to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, currently known as No Child Left Behind, highlight lingering disagreements over how computer-adaptive assessment should function and have reignited long-standing concerns held by advocates for students with disabilities.

At the heart of the debate is the extent to which computer-adaptive exams should ask questions that are above or below a test-taker's grade level. Skeptics worry that too much leeway, along with a relaxation of the federal requirement that state tests cover the full range of grade-level content, could result in dumbed-down assessments—and eventually dumbed-down instruction—for struggling students.

"Prior to NCLB, states were allowed to give fifth grade students a third grade test and call them proficient," said Laura Kaloi, who co-chairs the education task force for the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, a Washington-based advocacy group that has 1,115 member organizations. "We don't want computer-adaptive testing to go down a similar path."

Full Potential

In the U.S. House of Representatives, a **proposal to overhaul the ESEA** would explicitly allow off-grade-level test items. Rep. Tom Petri, R-Wis., who sponsored an earlier bill that was folded into that broader legislation, said that approach would allow states "to use these new assessments to their full potential" by precisely pinpointing what students know and are able to do.

A **competing Senate proposal to rewrite the law** includes a requirement to assess students on grade level, but Ms. Kaloi said it leaves open a "loophole" that "bad actors" could exploit to deliver tests that are heavily off grade level.

Broadly speaking, the benefits of computer-adaptive testing are widely agreed upon: shorter, more secure exams; more precise information on what students know; and faster turnaround of test results for use by educators, administrators, and policymakers.

But the stakes surrounding the contentious details could be high.

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Beginning in 2014-15, more than 20 states intend to administer high-stakes computer-adaptive tests to millions of children. Those exams, which are being created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and will be tied to the Common Core State Standards, are expected to include a limited number of off-grade-level questions.

The U.S. Department of Education is funding the Smarter Balanced effort to the tune of \$175 million, but the group's exams will still need federal approval before they can be used.

Ms. Kaloi said disability-rights advocates are still in "wait-and-see mode" regarding Smarter Balanced's approach.

In its present form, the ESEA neither prohibits nor favors any specific type of test—computer-adaptive or otherwise. But it does require students to be tested on the full depth and breadth of on-grade-level content, which has made it difficult to win federal approval to use some adaptive exams for accountability purposes.

New Breed of Tests

In the next version of the act, lawmakers from both parties and houses of Congress want the new breed of assessments officially acknowledged to ensure they can be used by states.

"I think I've sort of won these battles on recognizing the need to do computer-adaptive testing," said Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., who has pushed proposals on the issue since 2011.

Mr. Franken said the fixed-form NCLB-era assessments do not provide accurate measures of what struggling and advanced students know, creating a "race to the middle."

Computer-adaptive assessments, on the other hand, rely on complex algorithms to feed students questions targeted to their individual skill levels based on their prior responses. The more questions a student gets right, the harder the subsequent questions will be.

A current Senate proposal sponsored by Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa, a Democrat, and supported by Mr. Franken, to reauthorize the ESEA calls for all exams used for federal accountability purposes to assess students in two ways: whether they are performing at grade level or not, and the specific grade level at which they are performing.

Mr. Franken supports the inclusion of test questions that are above and below grade level, though proponents of the Senate legislation stressed that the bill requires all exams used for federal accountability purposes to measure the full range of grade-level standards so that lower-performing students are not held to lower expectations.

Ms. Kaloi said the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities supports the overall Senate proposal sponsored by Mr. Harkin to revise the ESEA, but is disappointed with the bill's language around assessment.

"We remain concerned about the loophole that could allow out-of-level testing," she said, referring to the bill's specific allowance to test for students' grade-level performance, which Ms. Kaloi said could be open to interpretation and abuse.

How It Works: Adaptive Testing



Learn how adaptive testing works in this 2012 video and read the related story, **Adaptive Testing Evolves to Assess Common-Core Skills**.

Disability-rights groups do not support the House Republican proposal to overhaul the law, which Rep. Petri's office said would also require states to measure students' actual grade-level performance, as well as whether they are on grade level or not.

Ms. Kaloi pointed to exams created by the American Institutes for Research, which has been contracted by six states to provide computer-adaptive assessments, as an example of how the tests should protect struggling students.

On the Washington-based institutes' 5th grade exams, for example, reading passages might vary from student to student according to the complexity of the language and concepts they contain. But all test-takers would be asked to engage in grade-appropriate higher-order thinking skills, such as making inferences about what characters in the passage might do next.

"It's important that computer-adaptive testing be standards-based, meaning there is a blueprint that ensures every kid sees test questions that reflect the full breadth and depth of on-grade-level content," said Jon Cohen, AIR's executive vice president and director of assessment.

Delaware, Hawaii, and Oregon have all won federal approval for those types of adaptive exams and have been successfully using them for years, said Mr. Cohen. His organization's approach, he said, helps ensure that struggling students are not limited to being assessed—or taught—only basic skills, such as recall of facts or rote applications of formulas.

Mr. Cohen decried a "big push" from lobbyists on behalf of "companies that sell adaptive tests that are not tied to a strong testing blueprint" to allow off-grade-level testing and tests that do not cover the full range of grade-level content.

"I think that would be a step backwards," he said.

The biggest test of the viability of high-stakes computer-adaptive assessment will come in 2014-15, when many of the schools covered by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium could struggle with the technical hurdles of administering hundreds of exams online at once.

Challenges Ahead

Figuring out an effective, equitable way to implement the exams' adaptive functions **will also be a challenge**, said Joe Willhoft, the consortium's executive director.

"We want to be very careful about our use of out-of-grade level items for students who are struggling," he said. "If we do use [them], we would restrain ourselves to only one or two times" per test.

Such limits constitute a trade-off, Mr. Willhoft acknowledged.

"That approach doesn't take as much advantage of the effectiveness of computer-adaptive testing as possible," he said. "But it does adhere to the value that all students are assessed according to content standards."

Smarter Balanced is still developing its bank of test items. A field test of the fully adaptive exams, in which roughly 20 percent of the students represented by the consortium will participate, will take place next spring.

Ms. Kaloi said that disability-rights groups won't be able to effectively evaluate Smarter Balanced's adaptive exams until closer to that time.

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Mr. Willhoft said he did not anticipate any problems for states seeking Education Department approval to use Smarter Balanced exams to meet their accountability requirements.

"By virtue of its grant award, the department has clearly approved the overall design," he said.

A spokesman for the department offered a different take.

"The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium exams, just like any other state test, will have to go through a new peer review if they will be used for accountability purposes," said Daren Briscoe. "Being funded for the project does not obviate the need for the review."

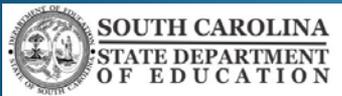
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Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Overview



Policy and Legislative Committee Meeting
State Board of Education
June 12, 2013

Summer 2010

- The SBE and EOC adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as South Carolina's state standards.
- S.C. joined the two assessment consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop assessment systems.
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
 - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Fall/Winter 2011–12

- Convened the South Carolina Assessment Study Group
 - Report included pluses and deltas for four assessment options
 - <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ac/Assessment/documents/SC-ASG-ReportFinal11-07-11.pdf>
- Released a survey to seek input from stakeholders regarding the four assessment options
- Contracted for Fiscal Impact Study of Assessment Costs
 - Independent study by Assessment Solutions Group
 - Estimates provided for each of the four options
 - <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ac/Assessment/documents/SC-FiscalImpactStudy.pdf>

Spring/Summer 2012

- The State Board of Education adopted the assessments being developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.
- South Carolina became a Governing State in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

- State-led
- Experienced educators and researchers
- Governing states make decisions about test development
 - Each state has one vote
 - Consensus-driven

Why change the current system?

- Current assessments in ELA and mathematics are not aligned to the new state standards (CCSS).
 - PASS (Palmetto Assessment of State Standards) – administered in grades 3 through 8
 - HSAP (High School Assessment Program) – administered to high school students
 - EOCEP (End-of-Course Examination Program) – administered as students complete gateway courses

Smarter Balanced Assessments

- Aligned to the Common Core State Standards
- ELA and mathematics
- Grades 3-8 and 11
- Measure of student progress toward college- and career-readiness
- Can be used for federal accountability
- Administered beginning in spring 2015

Smarter Balanced Assessments Available to States

- Summative (end-of-year) Assessments
 - Computer adaptive component
 - Performance tasks (1 ELA, 1 Math) – e.g., student reads several selections and answers open-ended questions
- Optional Interim Assessments – MAP is an example of an interim assessment
 - Computer adaptive component
 - Optional performance tasks
 - Same scale as summative assessments – interim and summative scores can be compared
- Optional Formative Assessment Tools – for use by teachers during instruction

Smarter Balanced Assessments are Computer Adaptive Tests (CAT)

- Adjusts to a student's ability by basing the difficulty of future questions on previous answers
- Provides more accurate measure of student achievement, particularly for high- and low-performing students

Smarter Balanced Assessments are Available in Paper-and-Pencil Versions

- Available for a three-year transition period (spring 2015, 2016, and 2017).
- Due to design of Smarter Balanced assessments, states should administer assessments online, to the extent possible.
 - For example, no more than one grade or subject in a school should be tested with paper and pencil.
- Paper and pencil assessments cannot be computer adaptive.

Smarter Balanced Activities: Current Status

- Pilot test has been administered.
 - Pilot was a test of test items and the online system.
 - Scores/results will not be available.
- Plans are underway for field testing in spring 2014.
- Practice tests were released May 29, 2013.
 - <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/pilot-test/>

Smarter Balanced Activities: Current Status

- Estimates of test length
- Technology readiness online inventory
 - Completed by districts and schools
 - Districts and schools receive a readiness gap analysis

Testing Times

Test Type	Grades	Smarter Balanced		Current SC Assessments	
		Estimated Hours of Testing		Median Testing Times	
		CAT	Perf Task*		
English Language Arts **	3-5	1 ½	2	3 ¼	PASS
	6-8	1 ½	2	3 ¼	PASS
				1 ½	EOCEP English 1
	11	2	2	2 ½	HSAP
Mathematics	3-5	1 ½	1	1 ¾	PASS
	6-8	2	1	1 ¾	PASS
				1 ½	EOCEP Algebra 1
	11	2	1 ½	1 ¾	HSAP

* These times do not include possible class activities or required pre-reading.

** With the exception of the EOCEP English 1 test, all ELA times include both the ELA and writing.

Technology Readiness Results

One Test Session on each Computer, each Day

Number of Testing Weeks	Percent Currently Ready – Minimum Requirements	Percent Ready – Recommended Requirements
3	47.8	25.4
4	57.2	32.3
5	62.2	36.6
6	65.5	40.5
7	67.7	43.5
8	69.5	45.3

- Ready: The school has computers to administer Smarter Balanced to all students online.
- Session: A student taking either an ELA or mathematics test. Each student will need two sessions (one for ELA and one for mathematics).

Technology Readiness Results

Two Test Sessions on each Computer, each Day

Number of Testing Weeks	Percent Currently Ready – Minimum Requirements	Percent Ready – Recommended Requirements
3	65.5	40.5
4	69.5	45.3
5	71.1	48.1
6	72.1	49.8
7	72.5	50.7
8	72.6	51.2

- Ready: The school has computers to administer Smarter Balanced to all students online.
- Session: A student taking either an ELA or mathematics test. Each student will need two sessions (one for ELA and one for mathematics).



Questions?