



Graduate School
of Education
& Human Development

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

EMBARGOED RELEASE:
Wednesday, August 7, 2013 12:01 a.m. EST

CONTACT: Megan Cotten
(301) 656-0348
megan@thehatchergroup.com

States Report Progress in Implementing Common Core, Preparing Teachers and Principals for New Standards

***But in most adopting states, less than three-fourths of math and English teachers
have been trained in Common Core***

WASHINGTON, D.C.—(August 7, 2013)—Most states that have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in math and English language arts (ELA) are already teaching to the standards, according to two new reports by the Center on Education Policy (CEP) at The George Washington University.

The report also finds that these states are preparing teachers and principals to implement these standards. State education agencies, however, are struggling to secure adequate state staffing and resources to implement the standards and to ensure all math and ELA teachers receive training in the Common Core.

Both reports are based on a survey of state deputy superintendents or their designees in 40 of the 46 states that have adopted the CCSS in one or both subjects. The survey was conducted in February through May of this year.

In 30 of the responding states, curricula aligned to the Common Core in math and ELA are being taught in at least some grades and school districts, according to the first report, which gives an overview of state implementation of the CCSS. Some of these states are phasing in CCSS-aligned curriculum by grade span or school district or both. Several states (nine in math and 10 in ELA) will begin implementing aligned curriculum in school year 2013-14 or later.

All 40 survey states are providing some type of professional development in the CCSS to teachers, and 39 are doing the same for principals, according to the second report, which focuses on professional development. In 22 of the survey states, more than half of the math and ELA teachers had received professional development in the Common Core as of school year 2012-13. But only 10 states estimate that more than three-fourths of their teachers of these two subjects have received CCSS-related training.

All of the responding states agree that the CCSS are more rigorous than their previous standards and will improve student skills in these subjects. "It is pretty clear that most state leaders believe the Common Core represents a significant shift toward more rigorous academic standards in math and English language arts and that students will benefit from that increased rigor," said CEP Executive Director Maria Ferguson. "It is equally clear that states are facing significant challenges in preparing and supporting teachers and school leaders as they implement the standards across grades."

States are taking various actions to help teachers master the new standards and use them to guide instruction. For example, 37 survey states have begun to produce and disseminate professional development materials and guides aligned to the CCSS, while 34 states have conducted briefings for faculty in postsecondary schools of education.

States are also working with districts and schools on CCSS implementation. All 40 survey states have conducted informal meetings with district officials about the CCSS, while 39 states are providing technical assistance. And 30 states have mounted initiatives to help low-performing schools make the transition to the Common Core.

In addition, state-level activities related to the Common Core are underway. Specifically, 39 states have developed and disseminated state CCSS implementation plans, 38 states have analyzed similarities and differences between the state's previous standards and the CCSS, and 29 have revised or created curriculum or materials aligned to the CCSS.

Despite these many activities, states face challenges in transitioning to the Common Core. Thirty-four states find it challenging to secure adequate resources to support all of the necessary CCSS implementation activities. Additionally, 32 states report challenges in developing educator evaluation systems that hold teachers and principals accountable for students' mastery of the standards. In the area of professional development, 37 states consider it a challenge to provide enough high-quality professional development to help teachers implement the CCSS, and 31 states said that providing all math and ELA teachers with state-sponsored professional development was proving challenging.

State education agencies are also struggling with capacity issues related to the Common Core. While most states report having adequate staff expertise to implement CCSS-related activities, fewer say they have enough staff and/or resources.

"Finding adequate resources is the main challenge looming over states' efforts to prepare districts, schools, principals and teachers for the Common Core," said Diane Stark Rentner, deputy director of national programs for CEP and author of the study. "Assessments aligned to the new standards will be ready to administer in 2014-15, but funding problems will likely hamper states' efforts to make sure that principals and teachers are prepared to help students master the standards."

The reports released today are the second and third in a series of CEP reports on the third year of states' transition to the Common Core. The reports are available on the CEP Web site at www.cep-dc.org (see *Year Three of Implementing the Common Core State Standards: An Overview of States' Progress and Challenges* and *Year Three of Implementing the Common Core State Standards: Professional Development for Teachers and Principals*). The first report in the series, *Year Three of Implementing the Common Core State Standards: State Education Agencies' Views on the Federal Role*, examines opposition within states to the CCSS and highlights ways in which state officials believe the federal government could assist with implementation. Forthcoming reports in the series will address the role of higher education in implementing the standards and state actions to prepare for the Common Core-aligned assessments.

###

Based in Washington, D.C., and founded in 1995 by Jack Jennings, the Center on Education Policy at The George Washington University is a national advocate for public education and for more effective public schools. The Center works to help Americans better understand the role of public education in a democracy and the need to improve the academic quality of public schools. The Center does not represent special interests. Instead, it helps citizens make sense of conflicting opinions and perceptions about public education and create conditions that will lead to better public schools.