



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

December 10th, 2013

## Select Committees on Common Core

Superintendent Responses



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

Dear District Administrator,

As you may know, select committees in the Wisconsin legislature recently began a process of reviewing the Common Core model standards. Through public hearings, these committees will solicit input from parents and stakeholders and lead a statewide conversation on what sort of standards should be taught in Wisconsin schools.

We have already heard directly from several school districts as to how they have adopted and in some cases strengthened the model standards, but we also want to hear from you. Education professionals have firsthand knowledge of the nexus between standards, curriculum, and assessments, and your response would be of value.

1. Since 1997, Wisconsin law has required each school board to adopt academic standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history. Wis. Stat. 118.30(1g)(a). School boards may adopt the Department of Public Instruction's model standards or adopt their own. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards? Please provide a copy.
2. State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core model standards for the state of Wisconsin in 2010. These standards have also been adopted by many school districts and are sometimes augmented and/or strengthened by local officials to better meet the needs of their individual district. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? Has your district augmented those standards in any way? How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?
3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June of 2010?



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4. Many states, such as Minnesota, Iowa and Massachusetts, have a formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not?

To ensure that your district's voice is heard, please respond by Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> via electronic mail at [commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov). We hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dean Knudson  
30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Jeremy Thiesfeldt  
52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District

Paul Farrow  
33<sup>rd</sup> Senate District

Alberta Darling  
8<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Michael Schraa  
53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Tom Larson  
67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Don Pridemore  
22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District

Jim Steineke  
5<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

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## Our Academic Standards & Student Success

From kindergarteners to seniors in high school, preparing all students for success is our highest priority. We know that the expectations and standards we set for our children play a critical role in how far they go and how successful they are.

Wisconsin has adopted the Common Core State Standards, and we are in the process of implementing these new academic goals in mathematics and English language arts. Our new standards raise the bar to ensure every child is a graduate, ready for college and career. This essentially means that any student graduating from high school is capable of successfully completing first-year college courses.



### Our new academic standards are...

- **Standards for success.** Our new standards in math and English language arts ensure our students will be ready for college and career.
- **Consistent and shared.** More than 45 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Schools have adopted the CCSS.
- **Provide opportunities for meaningful information and feedback.** In the 2014-15 school year, new assessments will measure the standards and allow teachers and parents to help students succeed.

#### Sample ELA Standard from Grade 3:

Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea

#### Sample mathematics CCSS from grade

**6:** Fluently add, subtract, multiply, and divide multi-digit decimals using the standard algorithm for each operation

Now more than ever, the economy demands innovative thinking, and high expectations. Our new standards move beyond memorizing facts to challenge our students to develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, learn how to think critically, and apply what they are learning to the real world. Rather than racing to cover a curriculum that is a mile wide and an inch deep, teachers will be able to significantly narrow and deepen their lessons so students master critical skills.

The Common Core State Standards are the result of extensive research on what skills and knowledge students need to succeed. Educators in our state collaborated with experts and teachers from across the country to develop a set of high and consistent standards.

The state and individual districts are working hard to ensure that our teachers and principals are fully supported with dynamic tools and resources that will prepare them with the information they need to help all students achieve the new standards. Educators and district leaders are working together to develop curricula, materials, and lessons plans tailored to the unique needs of their students, which will bring our standards to life.

In the 2014-15 school year, we will be rolling out new assessments that will measure how well students are progressing toward the standards and will provide meaningful feedback to teachers and principals to help more students succeed. Our standards and assessments are a critical part of the state's education plan to help students excel—regardless of their zip code—and be fully prepared for college and career.

The School District of Wild Rose adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and aligned our curriculum with the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards shortly thereafter.

The School District of Wild Rose has adopted the Common Core Standards and we have been working to align our curriculum with the Common Core Standards since they were adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. A review of our records shows that our district has spent \$4,845 to reimburse substitutes while working on curriculum revisions in math and language arts. We have spent \$16,309.60 on teachers salaries while they were working directly on revising our curriculum in these two areas.

We consider the common core standards to be significantly more rigorous than the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. We anticipate the Smarter Balanced Assessment will be more challenging than the WKCE and more meaningful than the current testing program.

We have spent approximately \$41,583 to purchase a new math textbook series and a literacy intervention program. The alignment of these materials with the common core standards was a significant factor that our staff considered while selecting these instructional materials. While we may have still needed to purchase these materials, we may not have selected the same materials if the common core standards were not in place. While standards are in place we still select the materials we use to deliver instruction and the instructional format to deliver instruction.

I would support a formalized review of our state's academic standards if it could be completed in a manner that was not subject to partisan politics.

Sincerely,

Claude Olson  
District Administrator  
School District of Wild Rose



## Response to Legislative Request

November 11, 2013

1. The only documentation I can find that the Boyceville Community School District had adopted academic standards was dated July 23, 1990. This was a confirmation of the 20 Standards required by then State Superintendent Herbert Grover. (enclosed)
2. Our district has not formally adopted the Common Core Standards as a matter of board action. We were under the assumption the state has mandated this adoption as a part of the NCLB waiver process. Local impact- a significant amount of resources has been allocated and used to transition to the Common Core. Curriculum changes, staff training, staff development and additional curriculum leadership all have costs involved. We consider the Common Core to more rigorous. My best teachers tell me the Common Core is a good change, adds rigor and consistency and is long overdue in our state.
3. We have invested somewhere around \$30,000 to date.
4. I think I could support a 5-7 year review process of academic standards across the state. The larger question would be the process and sustainability. We tried this in the 90's and DPI could not sustain the process.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity for input.

Kevin Sipple- Superintendent

Boyceville Community School District



**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE**

901 – 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172

**Rita M. Olson, Ph.D.**  
*Superintendent*

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Phone: 414-766-5011  
Fax: 414-766-5005  
www.sdsm.k12.wi.us

November 18, 2013

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Legislature,

This letter is in response to your request for information related to Common Core Standards and their implementation in the School District of South Milwaukee. I have provided a response to each of your respective questions:

1. **Adoption of the Standards:** Our School Board formally adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on November 7, 2012. A copy of our School Board Policy is attached.
2. **Impact of the Standards:** Our district has not augmented the CCSS. We have found the standards to be significantly more rigorous and robust than the previous state standards. Our teachers, particularly in English Language Arts, Math, and Science, have taken additional coursework and/or attended conferences to build their confidence and competency in best practice related to CCSS implementation. There is some confusion around implementation of the CCSS for "Literacy in All Subjects," but overall, we have been able to strengthen our curriculum using CCSS as a basis for discussion and implementation.
3. **Costs:** While we have invested in professional development for staff, the costs have been within the realm of our usual costs for updating curriculum, materials, and teacher training. Our district supports on-going research and implementation of best practices and we would have incurred similar costs with or without the CCSS.
4. **Review Process:** As research continues and we gain a better understanding of teaching and learning, it is simply best practice to review our current standards and curriculum. However, 5 to 7 years seems to be a short window for full implementation and progress review. (The CCSS are already three years old and have yet to be implemented in some districts.) We agree that academic standards need to be reviewed, but teachers need time to understand the changes and adjust their instruction accordingly. The previous standards served us for approximately 12 years, so we would support a longer review process timeframe of 9 to 12 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rita M. Olson".

Rita M. Olson, Ph.D.  
Superintendent, School District of South Milwaukee

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE

330

### CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

The Board recognizes the importance of continuous review and modification of curriculum in order to meet the changing needs of students, developments in content areas and improved teaching procedures.

The Board has adopted the Common Core State Standards. All courses of study shall be consistent with statute, regulations and State standards of the Department of Public Instruction or appropriate State agency.

While the Board is ultimately responsible for adopting curriculum, curriculum development and planning rests primarily with faculty and the administrative team. The district curriculum shall provide opportunities for continuous and cumulative learning through effective articulation at all levels. A variety of learning resources shall be utilized to accomplish educational goals.

Major changes (i.e., changes in standards and benchmarks, new courses) to the established curriculum shall be subject to Board approval, following review and recommendations by the Superintendent or designee.

LEGAL REF.: Wisconsin Statutes Sections  
118.01 (Educational goals and expectations)  
118.015 (Reading instruction)  
121.02(1)(k) (School district standards)  
Wisconsin Administrative Code Section  
PI 8.01(2)(k) (School district standards)

CROSS REF.: 361, Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption

APPROVED: November 15, 2000

REVISED: November 20, 2007  
November 7, 2012

# BERLIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Berlin, Wisconsin 54923**

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<i>Administrator</i> Bob Eidahl Business Office 295 E. Marquette St 920-361-2004	<i>High School Principal</i> Lynn Mork Berlin High School 222 Memorial Dr. 920-361-2000	<i>Middle School Principal</i> Rick Hammes Berlin Middle School 289 E Huron St. 920-361-2441	<i>Elementary Principal</i> Scott Bartol Clay Lamberton School 259 E. Marquette St. 920-361-2442	<i>4K-5 Direct. of Instruction</i> Judy Munsey Clay Lamberton School 259 E. Marquette St. 920-361-2442	<i>6-12 Direct. of Instruction</i> Jodi Becker Berlin High School 222 Memorial Dr. 920-361-2000
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November 1, 2013

*Dear Members of the Legislature:*

*I have been requested to write a response to questions provided on the Common Core Standards. Our district has worked hard over the 16 years I have served as an administrator to provide current, rigorous, and relevant curriculum for all of our students. In the past our district has followed the Academic Model standards adopted by the Department of Public Instruction. Those standards have served as the guidelines to anchor our past curriculum development writing. Our district is doing the same thing with the Common Core Standards. This process began after the D.P.I. adopted the standards. We have found these standards to be rigorous and relevant while providing a focus for learning. They are not to be misconstrued as our curriculum, however. Our district curriculum goes beyond the standards and attempts to provide more than what is asked. The Common Core Standards have helped us to pare down some parts of our curriculum but that should be a regular process to keep curriculum current.*

*In the last several years we have spent a significant amount of resources on integrating the Common Core Standards into our curriculum. This started when we sent teachers to work on the Standards as they were being developed and continued as they were rolled out to staff. We have provided implementation training, planning and writing time, and even engaged consultants to help guide our efforts. I estimate our costs over the last three years to be about \$45,000. That will be added to by more spending this year.*

*The Common Core Standards seem to have drawn a lot of negative attention which is unfortunate. They have been prepared by experts in their fields and screened by teachers who are practicing in the field. Standards like curriculum should never be put on a shelf someplace but should be living breathing documents. I would support regular reviews of our standards. Our district evaluates all curriculums on a seven year rotation. This allows us to be current but does not drain our resources by reviews that are too closely timed. That some philosophy could work for the standards as well.*

*I hope the legislature will consider allowing the Common Core Standards to continue to be implemented. I have read of criticisms of how the standards were created and pushed on the states but from a school perspective that is generally how most legislative educational changes happen. You are now just feeling the way educators have felt about all kinds of educational trends over the years. I feel the standards provide a positive direction for improving and focusing learning.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. Robert Eidahl*

**“CHILDREN, OUR FIRST PRIORITY”**

Hello-

I am writing in response to your request for information regarding the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). I appreciate the opportunity to provide you this information to ensure that we as a State make a thoughtful, informed decision about the CCSS as well as the work our district has engaged in over the past three years. Following are the answers to your questions in order as they appeared on your letter:

1) Yes, the district had adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards prior to 2010. They are found on the DPI website at:

Social Studies: [http://dpi.wi.gov/stn\\_ssintro](http://dpi.wi.gov/stn_ssintro)

Science: [http://dpi.wi.gov/stn\\_sciintro](http://dpi.wi.gov/stn_sciintro)

English/ Language Arts: [http://dpi.wi.gov/stn\\_elaintro](http://dpi.wi.gov/stn_elaintro)

Math: [http://dpi.wi.gov/stn\\_matintro](http://dpi.wi.gov/stn_matintro)

Simply scroll down to the bottom of each respective page for a listing of the standards for 4th, 8th, and 10th grade.

2) Yes, we have adopted the Common Core standards. We have not modified or augmented the standards at this point, but are aware of our ability to do so at some point in the future if necessary. We consider the Common Core to be more rigorous than the former WI Model Academic Standards based on the fact that they clearly state what students should know or be able to do. The former standards were quite broad.

3) It is difficult to provide you with a specific cost of curriculum updates as a result of the Common Core due to the fact that we do not code specifically for the purpose of the training staff receive. We have spent money on trainings and in-service but we have not necessarily had to purchase new curricular materials or services we did not have before the adoption of the common core. I would say that a majority of our staff training and in-service expenses over the past three years have been devoted to the common core. Over the past 3 years we have spent \$24,000.00 in 10-11, \$26,000.00 in 11-12, and \$48,000 in 12-13. The portion spent on training and staff development for the common core would be at least 50% of those total figures.

4) I would definitely support an evaluation process of our academic standards every five to seven years.

Again, I appreciate your inquiry into the CCSS and urge you to consider the ramifications of changing our State's use of the CCSS. This appeal is not due to a devotion to the CCSS in particular, but rather out of necessity. Aside from the time and money we have spent on instituting the CCSS in our district there are greater ramifications if we make a change. Our current ESEA waiver produced a litany of accountability measures for schools; in particular, the development of the school and district report cards. Please do not forget that the "Next Generation Assessment" will be implemented in the 14-15 school year which will have an impact on our accountability report cards. It is clear that this "next generation assessment" will

be based on the common core standards. If we are to do away with the CCSS, where does that leave districts in the light of these new accountability measures?

Please contact me at any time with questions.

Sincerely,



**Craig G. Broeren**

*District Administrator*

*Barron Area School District*

*100 West River Avenue*

*Barron, WI 54812*

*(715) 537-5612 ext. 402*

<http://www.barron.k12.wi.us>

<http://barronadministrator.blogspot.com/>

Representatives Knudson, Thiesfeldt, Schraa, Pridemore, Larson, Steinke and Senators Darling and Farrow,

I am writing in response to your correspondence received on October 28 (attached) in which you ask several questions related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). I will try to answer each question.

1. The Chequamegon School District is a new district (2009) consolidated from the old Park Falls and Glidden school districts. I can find no record of formal adoption of the DPI Model Standards, however I can say that we have used those standards as the basis for developing local curriculum that contains a scope and sequence of instruction that is at least consistent with those standards. It is important to have a baseline of expected standards for each discipline and quite honestly small rural districts do not have the resources to spend an extended period of time with committee development of district standards and curriculum. The state standards have given us a much needed set of expectations to look at as the minimum expected.
2. With the CCSS we have not, again, had formal board adoption of them. We have however informally adopted them and used them as the focus for curriculum development in language arts in the recent past and this year for the selection and development of a math curriculum. Our district has been impacted by CCSS in that it has driven and focused our professional development over the last few years. The CCSS are more rigorous than the old model standards and in some areas we may exceed the expectations of CCSS.
3. I would estimate the cost of professional development since June of 2010 to be approximately \$300,000. This has been focused primarily on instructional strategies and initiatives related in some way to the increased expectations of the state which include the CCSS.
4. I would not object to a periodic review of standards, however you have to realize that every time the standards change that imposes significant burdens and pressures on the school districts of Wisconsin and its educators. However, I would object to any review of standards that is driven by politics and politicians rather than by educational research. I think it is unfortunate that the CCSS have become so controversial among certain politicians now, 3 years after their adoption, because of the objections of a small minority of constituents.

I am happy to provide this input. However, I am concerned that the sudden motivation to take a critical look at the CCSS is another action that is hardly designed to promote the strength and effectiveness of public education in Wisconsin. I urge you to consider the decisions related to this matter and others related to public education in light of the Constitutional obligation under Article X to provide a strong free public education. Actions taken in recent years have had the unintended, or perhaps intended, result of weakening our strong public education system. Please consider your actions in light of the needs of all children in Wisconsin.

Dave

***David G. Anderson***  
***District Administrator***  
***Chequamegon School District***  
***420 Ninth Street North***  
***Park Falls, WI 54552***



*715-762-2474 ext. 2427*



# SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.*

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for seeking input from the Sheboygan Area School District as you review the Common Core State Standards in the State of Wisconsin. In response to your request, we have answered your questions below:

**1. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?**

The Sheboygan Area School District (SASD) adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. In order for teachers to support and ensure students attained the standards at 4, 8, and 10, the SASD curriculum teams created SASD specific standards for each grade level kindergarten through twelfth grade.

**2. Has your district adopted the Common Core standards? Yes, the district has adopted the both the ELA and Math Common Core Standards (CCSS).**

**Has your district augmented those standards in any way?** The SASD views the CCSS as the minimal set of learning expectations for ELA and Math that all district students need to attain. However, teacher teams have ability to include other learning standards within the district's ELA and Math curriculum. One example of this is the inclusion of standards pertaining to money at the first grade level that are not part of the CCSS at this grade level.

**How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these standards?** Just as it has occurred in the past, district administrators, teachers, students, and parents are impacted whenever standards change. This includes professional development for staff regarding the new standards, examination of the current curriculum scope and sequence, the instructional resources used by teachers, the district's assessment plan and report cards, and communication with parents and the community about the new standards.

**Would you consider the Common Core standards more or less rigorous than the district's previous standards?** We consider the Common Core to be more rigorous than previous standards.

**3. What costs has the SASD incurred as a result of the adoption of the Common Core State Standards?**

Our district has a continuous improvement model, which has substantial professional development costs. These costs would be incurred with or without the implementation of the Common Core. The costs incurred for implementation of the Common Core were no different than costs routinely associated with any change in academic standards or the adoption of any new district-wide text series.

**4. Would the SASD support the adoption of a process to review of academic standards every 5-7 years?**

**Why or why not?** We support a process that ensures continual review, revision and improvement of academic standards.

# ST. CROIX CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



**Tim Widiker**  
Superintendent

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November 15, 2013

Dear Esteemed Legislators:

In 2008, when former Superintendent of St. Croix Central School District, David Bradley, was hired, he began an initiative focusing on student achievement. He implemented PLC's, common assessments and curriculum alignment. In 2010, the district adopted the Common Core State Standards and began extensive professional development to fully implement the standards. St. Croix Central School District has spent 19 days and \$565,912 worth of professional development over the last two years working on the CCSS and multiple initiatives tied to CCSS including assessment, curriculum, RtI and Professional Learning Communities. We are spending four more days this year working on professional development tied to CCSS.

Without a doubt, Common Core State Standards are more rigorous than the previous Model Academic Standards. I have worked most extensively with the Math standards and have seen firsthand the rigor pushed down from high school to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. All students are getting Algebra 1 curriculum by 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Lastly, I support a formal state review of our state standards every five to seven years. As our expectations for student achievement continue to increase, I believe it is relevant to review our standards and assess whether they align with our local curriculum, instructional strategies, and career and college readiness standards.

Sincerely,

Tim Widiker  
Superintendent  
St. Croix Central School District

*"Be A District Respected By Others As A Model of Excellence In Student Achievement"*

10/28/2013 12:49 PM

Respected co-chairs Senator Farrow and Representative, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the questions sent me regarding the implementation of the Common Core Standards (Standards). I will try not to be repetitive of my colleagues and their testimony to the Committee as each District is different and will have different experiences in the implementation of the Standards.

Let me begin by stating that in Wisconsin we have historically been a catalysis for the improvement and enhancement of academic standards in school districts. In 1996 Wisconsin's Governor Tommy G. Thompson and IBM CEO Lou Gerstner hosted a National Educational Summit to discuss educational attainment of skills and the identification of common standards to propel our Nation's public school systems into institutions of learning that would develop young women and men with the skills necessary to compete in an environment that was experiencing competitive challenges from an international community of skilled workers. They recognized as did many that to be truly competitive we needed to expose our students to classrooms where the achievement of high academic standards were expected; and learners in partnership with their teachers needed to have these standards not only identified, but common across this nation such that we did not create high achieving communities or States and others of lesser quality. The Summit participants (each State's Governor and one business leader in the respective State) recognized that regardless of where students gained skills they may work and compete in a different State and/or Country and needed a common set of standards to guide school entities to higher levels of learning. As a result if there is a Common Set of Core Standards every student's educational experiences will strive for the highest level of learning and that rigor would be "common" across Wisconsin and the United States.

Now more specifically to answer your stated questions:

- 1.) We use the Department of Public Instruction's model standards due to the fact they were developed with rigor based upon input with all stakeholders which then included the Wisconsin Legislature. I personally was involved in this process and knowing State assessment was to be tied to these standards it seemed prudent that a District would accept these standards as their base and accelerate learning to the highest level possible such that their students would be ready to take their place in this society.
- 2.) We have adopted the Common Core Standards. We will not augment the standards as we will the delivery of content such that through Advanced Placement classes (AP) and other classes of higher rigor students' skill needs will be met and our students will be ready for whatever pathway they deem appropriate to follow after they graduate. The Common Core Standards are rigorous and certainly the benchmarks of success will provide our students and academic staff the needed evaluative tools to better judge the curriculum and delivery system such that a high level of achievement is the standard for each student.
- 3.) We have had substantial costs in in-service and in re-writing of curriculum to ensure that the curriculum exposes the students to the standards that will be evaluated. This however does not diminish or curtail our ability to expand any curriculum and expose our students to enhanced skills that will prepare them for the world they will compete. Any set of standards adopted District or State wide will always be the base, regardless of what is stated, as that is what is

going to be evaluated by the State assessment that the Legislature is demanding from its public schools. Our cost will equal approximately 1/2 of 1 % of our budget or for us \$23,500.00. The amount may vary year by year.

4) Absolutely! Standards need to be re-evaluated as our competition is not static nor should our educational program not the standards that drive the program be static. This was recognized when the DPI needed to re-norm the bench marks for the current State's assessment program and normed our tests to NAPE standards. However even in re-evaluation there needs to be a common core set of standards to guide assessment and curriculum development. This issue should not become a political matter, but one of acceptance that our educational program is going to develop young citizens that take their place in this society, but most likely in different locations than where they were educated. If we have a common core then all communities will know that when their schools are evaluated they are being evaluated against rigorous standards that are common across this country and their schools are being evaluated in common concert with the best in the Nation.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my beliefs and opinions.

Jon Litscher  
District Administrator  
Cambria-Friesland School District  
Cambria, Wisconsin  
920-348-5548 ext, 279  
Superintendent/Middle School Principal

To whom it may concern,

I testified at the Eau Claire hearing please read the letter I left with you. Here are my answers to the questions that you sent.

1. We had adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. They are available at DPI.
2. Yes we have adopted the CCSS. We are using them as is. Positively! We embrace the new standards! They CCSS are more rigorous. Even the Stanford Professor that was given special treatment said they were more rigorous. That was a sham, giving paid speakers special treatment.
3. This is a ridiculous question. To get accurate numbers I would need to spend hours on specific in-services dates, time and numbers of staff that went. We do not have the luxury of spending that much time. I can say that we have spent easily 100 hours per teacher x 125 staff members. This process has been good, the CCSS are worth this effort. Throwing out the CCSS would be a very big mistake. I also believe that DPI should be the organization that determines the standards in Wisconsin, not politicians, you are not trained for this as a whole group.
4. Having a procedure for evaluation is good. I also believe that any school, private, must be tested and follow the same standard procedures as public schools if they receive voucher money.

Politicians wanted accountability, the CCSS can bring this for **all schools**. Now is time for you to support your schools. Thank you.

Stephen Schiell  
District Administrator  
School District of Amery

Good Afternoon,

This is in response to the request from “select committees” signed Dean Knudson, Paul Farrow, Michael Schraa, Don Pridemore, Jeremy Thiesfeldt, Alberta Darling, Tom Larson and Jim Steienke.

1. Yes, Seymour Community School District adopted DPI standards in July of 1998.
2. Yes, the Seymour Community School District adopted the Common Core Standards for math and reading language arts. We are currently not in the position to augment the standards as we consider the Common Core to be more rigorous than previous standards and we are adjusting to this increased rigor. We will spend time in the future thinking about augmentation as needs arise.
3. We have an annual budget of approximately \$94,000 for professional development. Of this amount, about half can be attributed to professional practice related to infusing new curriculum. Additional money is budgeted to cover the cost of resources as needed. For example, in a k-12 math adoption year, textbooks and ancillary materials can be as much as \$150,000. This district’s commitment to professional development and resources has not changed as a result of the Common Core Standards. However, I would say the Common Core Standards in math and reading language arts have provided us with focus and commitment and in doing so has created efficiency in our adoption process.
4. Yes, the academic standards should be reviewed periodically. I would fully support a 5 to 7 year cycle of review/evaluation of the standards. This is a process most school districts adhere to with respect to curriculum review cycles. Make no mistake, we all believe expectations change and schools must adapt to these changes.

I hope this helps in your decision to work alongside schools to increase rigor through the Common Core Standards and to set in place a system to evaluate these standards in some type of 5 to 7 year cycle. Our district will be considering (our normal cycle) k-12 math and reading language arts adoption around that time. So for us, the timing couldn’t be better.

Thank you for thinking first about keeping our children globally competitive. I doubt other countries think twice about increased rigor in their academic standards.

*Peter Ross  
District Administrator  
Seymour Community School District*

Good afternoon

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard concerning the debate over the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Below are responses to your inquiry.

1. The DPI's model standards were adopted by the School District of Stratford.
2. Beginning in 2010, the district has focused their curriculum review and implementation based on the anticipation of adopting the Common Core. After intensive review of the district's existing math and reading curricula and thorough, systematic research into the various curricula available, the district has adopted curricula in both areas that align with the Common Core Standards. The results have already proved positive as testing at all levels have indicated steady growth since implementation. Without question, the Common Core model standards are more rigorous.
3. The cost of district wide adoptions of new curricula in math and reading that are aligned with the district's goal of adopting the Common Core model standards to date has been in the neighborhood of \$100,000. That is the cost of the materials for the curricula and does not include the costs to involve staff in the curriculum review, research of curriculum options, and professional development to support the curricula. Examples of those costs include the hiring of substitutes and extra "curriculum pay" as per policy. I apologize for not being able to provide specific data reflecting those costs, but I can assure you that they are significant.
4. In response to question number four, I believe that successful schools consistently review, analyze, and evaluate curriculum. The Common Core model standards serve as a map to guide schools through their curriculum process. The Common Core model standards provides the rigor necessary for our students to compete on a global level and the flexibility to allow the district to determine the methodology, strategies and pedagogies of delivery of instruction.

In conclusion, the School District of Stratford supports the Common Core Standards. The district will continue moving forward, aligning our curriculum with the CCSS. Should the state choose to drop the adoption of the CCSS, the time lapse and void created by an attempt to roll out something "better" would seem to be wasteful.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions.

Scott Winch  
Superintendent  
School District of Stratford



To Whom it May Concern,

1. Prior to the adoption of the Common Core we already had formally adopted academic standards and had for many years. I have attached the curriculum review cycle that we use. The curriculum binders and folders are too large to mail or attach. We adopted the common core after the state adopted the common core.
2. Our District sometimes does augment the common core depending on the recommendation of the curriculum teams and school board. We consider the Common Core standards to be more rigorous than our previous standards.
3. Our district has incurred significant costs since the Common Core was adopted for curriculum review teams (subs and professional release time), texts, training, software, etc. Some of this would have been spent anyway on the 6 year review cycle, but there was additional costs.
4. We would support a formalized review process reviewing the academic standards every 5-7 years.

We do object to federal control and interference into the State's responsibility for education. If you can put safeguards in place for this it would be a good idea. Wisconsin and local boards need the autonomy to decide what is taught in the schools.

Sincerely,

Joni Burgin  
Superintendent  
Grantsburg School District

## **330 Curriculum Review Policy Grantsburg School District**

The Grantsburg School District's curriculum/instruction/assessment processes are based on the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, and are approved by the Board of Education yearly, following the six-year curriculum review cycle.

All district teachers/faculty/staff will teach the Board approved curriculum.

Our curriculum meets diverse learner needs and provides a variety of opportunities for students to meet challenging content and performance standards and/or district benchmarks.

The state and local assessments provide the accountability and documentation of student achievement based on the curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the District Curriculum Coordinator and Building Principals to see that all aspects of the curriculum are taught, meet the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, and are assessed and revised using the district procedure. The District Administrator will oversee that all aspects of this policy are followed.

### ***CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES***

The following plan and set of guidelines have been developed in order to provide an orderly approach to curriculum development, avoid duplication of course content, capitalize on the expertise of staff and administration, and to maximize use of resources.

#### **I. IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENTS**

This plan includes basic instructional components for each subject to be studied. These components and timelines for achieving the desired outcomes are as follows.

#### **ACTIVITY**

- A. Conduct a K-12 needs assessment. Align local curriculum to state content standards. Develop revised curriculum addressing gaps and overlaps. Board approves/adopts revised curriculum and appropriate resources and/or texts to implement new curriculum. TIME 1 year
- B. Conduct training and staff development support on new curriculum resources, texts, and instructional methods necessary. TIME 1 year

C. Implement the adopted program of study. TIME 1 year

**II. SEQUENCE OF STUDIES- Revised Spring 2012**

	<b>Needs Assessment</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
2008-2009	Math	Math	K-8 Writing - Dunn
2009-2010	Language Arts	Language Arts	Math
2010-2011	Couns., Health, M.A.P.E.	Couns., Health, M.A.P.E.	Language Arts,
2011-2012	Science	Science	Couns., Health, M.A.P.E.
2012-2013	Math	Math	Science
<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Math</b>
2014-2015	Specialties	Specialties	Social Studies
2015-2016	Early Learning, Fine Arts, School Counseling	Early Learning, Fine Arts, School Counseling	Specialties
2016-2017	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	Early Learning, Fine Arts, School Counseling
2017-2018	Math, Personal Financial Literacy	Math, Personal Financial Literacy	English Language Arts
2018-2019	Science, PE, Health and Nutrition	Science, PE, Health and Nutrition	Math, Personal Financial Literacy
2019-2020	Social Studies, World Language, Environmental Education	Social Studies, World Language, Environmental Education	Science, PE, Health and Nutrition
2020-2021	Career and Technical Education, Information and Technology Literacy	Career and Technical Education, Information and Technology Literacy	Social Studies, World Language, Environmental Education
2021-2022	Fine Arts, School Counseling	Fine Arts, School Counseling	Career and Technical Education, Information and Technology Literacy
2022-2023	Early Learning	Early Learning	Fine Arts, School Counseling
			Early Learning

\*\* M.A.P.E. includes Music, Art and Physical Education

\*\*\* Specialties are those areas unique to elementary secondary, or classroom support topics. Examples Handwriting, Foreign Language, Library, FCS (Family and Consumer Science), Tech. Ed. Technology/Computers, Business Ed.

### **III. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Standard committee membership is comprised of a representative group of faculty and administrators. Student, parent and community representation is encouraged at all appropriate levels on an advisory basis. A person having the authority, and responsibility to set meetings, assign tasks to committee members and make public presentations shall chair the committee. The District Curriculum Coordinator will oversee all aspects of the committee review process.
- B. Committee membership shall be determined by appointment and/or volunteers. Elementary staff shall adequately reflect appropriate grade levels with representation from each school. Total committee membership will be determined in accordance with the needs of the subject being studied. There will be at least one administrator serving on the committee.

### **IV. MINIMAL AREAS OF CONSIDERATION FOR STUDY**

During the needs assessment and textbook adoption phases, an evaluation and critique of the existing programs (including the sequential skills) is conducted. The following areas shall be addressed in this review.

- A. Wisconsin Content Standards
- B. State and local assessment data
- C. Student needs, interests and future self-supporting living skills
- B. Analysis of meeting the academic range of the student body
- C. Inventory of equipment and supply needs
- D. Facility requirements and limitations
- E. Community resources
- F. Media/technology support needs
- G. Current curricular offerings
- H. Anticipated staff and administrative inservice needs
- I. Projected total budget costs for all components necessary for implementation

### **V. GUIDELINES FOR CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

The following guidelines have been established for each curriculum committee. It is recognized that certain studies will have their own unique deviations.

- A. The study committee will write/review/revise (prepared in booklet form)
  - 1. Program Vision Statement,
  - 2. Program Mission Statement
  - 3. Program outcomes: pre-k-12 sequential scope and sequence
  - 4. Course and grade level outcomes with correlating assessments

5. Unit outcomes with correlating assessments
6. Recommended course/class additions or deletions

B. Revised Curriculum is to be presented to school board for adoption in June, after the first year of curriculum revision.

C. A cost analysis for conducting staff development will be part of the needs assessment.

D. Textbook guidelines:

- a. Any textbook with a copyright date of more than two years prior to the year of implementation cannot be adopted without the written consent of the principal.
- b. All textbook adoptions shall be made on a district-wide or subject basis.
- c. Textbook adoptions will be approved annually by the Board of Education by June.
- d. Each textbook adoption remains in effect for the six-year period. Updated supplemental materials or equipment can be purchased if funds become available.

#### **BASIC ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE SIX-YEAR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

1. Excellent way to share district—wide curriculum content and priorities with staff, board, and citizens.
2. Budget allocations for implementation increases at the time of revision.
3. Greatly benefits elementary teachers and students in curriculum planning.
4. All “non core” subjects have a designated year place in curriculum development/revision.
5. Usually improves student achievement/interest by reducing content omissions and duplication.
6. Estimated funds for implementation are designated prior to training and implementation.
7. Funds for instruction go farther since materials are purchased to meet specific skill needs.
8. Staff inservice/professional development greatly improves.
9. All teachers have an approved, district-wide set of skills to teach without being told how to teach.
10. A sequential skill program maintains teacher autonomy for day-to-day skill application.
11. Curriculum studies do get implemented on an established schedule.

# **PLAN FOR CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION RENEWAL, ASSESSMENT AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

## **CURRICULUM RENEWAL PROCESS**

Grantsburg School District will have a general long-term plan for curriculum work and more detailed plans for each curriculum project. The long-term plan will be developed by the Administrative Team. District and school leaders will review the plan. The detailed project plan will be developed by the appropriate task force and reviewed by the Superintendent.

The long-term plan. Grantsburg School District will use a systematic, cyclical process. This process will include planning and creating a curriculum vision for each discipline area, providing for systematic analysis of the schools' programs of study and instructional practice, and implementing and evaluating curriculum. Our district will use the three stages described to accomplish this cyclical process as each discipline enters into the Curriculum Renewal Cycle.

Stage One: Planning and Creating a Curriculum Vision. Examine each stage of the curriculum renewal process, along with specific issues related to the district and schools, and develop a specific plan for renewing the curriculum. Analyze new trends, ideas, innovative programs, and standards to develop a vision for the curriculum of the future. Inform the Administrative Team and the Board of Education of this plan and ask for their input.

Strategies: Review stages, begin program analysis, find materials and resources, and create a tentative plan. Analyze readings, use consultants, examine district programs, review national programs, examine regulations and frameworks, and explore integration with other subjects.

Stage Two: Analyze the Curriculum in Practice and Develop a Plan for Action. Compare current curriculum with the Wisconsin Model Standards. Identify gaps and overlaps. Collect data to describe the current curriculum in practice – its goals, units of study, instructional time, materials and programs in use, curriculum guides, assessment strategies, etc. Determine the perceived needs of current teachers. Compare the ideal and the actual program in practice. Develop recommendations for change and plans for action.

Strategies: Conduct surveys, map curriculum, review assessment data, conduct program evaluations and audits, evaluate curriculum, examine integration, and synthesize data. Conduct activities to examine gaps between an ideal curriculum and current curriculum in practice.

Stage Three: Redesign, Implement and Evaluate the Curriculum. Redesign and restructure the curriculum according to the plan of action, with emphasis on building a standards-based program, revising the curriculum guide, reviewing materials and instructional practices, and incorporating various forms of assessment. Offer appropriate professional development. Monitor the redesigned program as it is implemented. Evaluate and revise if appropriate. Seek input of the Principal, Superintendent, and approval from the Board of Education.

Strategies: Revise philosophy and goals, determine standards, redesign scope and sequence, revise instructional strategies, select resources, devise new assessment procedures, develop curriculum blueprint, and revise specific courses and units. Institute new curriculum, communicate with parents and community, pilot programs, initiate appropriate professional development, implement new assessments, evaluate and monitor programs.

## CURRICULUM RENEWAL FUNCTIONS

The Department Curriculum Team, with the assistance of the Professional Development Team, will identify curricular needs, develop a curriculum calendar, and appoint and monitor the work of curriculum task forces as follows.

- \* Explain the process that the district will use in developing each curriculum plan.
- \* Appoint, provide training, and monitor the work of curriculum task forces.
- \* Develop and submit budget recommendations for curriculum work.
- \* Arrange for the needed leadership training and staff development.
- \* Develop a process to conduct a needs assessment that identifies priorities for developing curriculum guides and related materials.
- \* Identify a standard format for curriculum guides.
- \* Develop processes and materials to ensure that the curriculum is effectively implemented.
- \* Identify and implement curriculum evaluation processes.

Curriculum Task Forces. Curriculum Task Forces will accomplish most of the curriculum development. These professionals, recommended and appointed by principals, will accomplish specific curriculum projects, e.g., developing a K-12 mathematics curriculum. These members should be chosen on the basis of the following criteria: knowledge of the subject area for which they are responsible; ability to produce work on schedule; knowledge of the district's curriculum development processes; and influence with classroom teachers. Ordinarily each task force includes one principal, the Director of Curriculum, and several teachers who can work together to produce high-quality work.



The building principals will be charged with overseeing student data and curriculum outcomes as they relate to:

- \* Reading with comprehension and critical judgment;
- \* Writing clearly and effectively;
- \* Mastering mathematical computations and problem solving.

As the work in curriculum renewal proceeds, the need to closely align curriculum with the district's assessment program will become increasingly important. This is especially significant in a standards-based environment in which the curriculum is geared toward helping students demonstrate their mastery of important curriculum standards. The assessment data will be used to judge how well students are doing throughout the district and to provide feedback to teachers and students for curriculum and student improvement.

The District Staff Development Committee. This district advisory committee will be responsible for making recommendations of the District's plan for staff development, assist site staff development teams in developing a site plan consistent with the goals of the District, and evaluate staff development efforts at the site level.

Staff development activities need to grow out of the curriculum renewal process. Staff development offerings will be designed to meet the needs of teachers. The recommendations for staff development in relation to curriculum renewal will be forwarded to the District Staff Development Committee.

## **SUMMARY**

Improving the learning of all students is the ultimate goal of a quality curriculum renewal process. To achieve the high expectations articulated in standards, all pieces of the curriculum renewal process must work in concert. By analyzing what changes are needed, setting a clear time line, and clearly defining roles and responsibilities as outlined in this Curriculum Renewal Plan, the climate exists for all students to master essential concepts and skills.

Dear Legislators,

Please find the attached response to the requested information about the Common Core for the Brillion School District.

1. Prior to June, 2010 the Brillion School District utilized the Wisconsin DPI's model academic standards.
2. Our district has now adopted the Common Core standards. These standards are far more rigorous than the previous model academic standards.
3. Our district spend approximately \$100,000 annually on curriculum improvement and materials. These funds have been directed toward the Common Core the last three years. However, if not for the Common Core the funds would have still been spent on curriculum review and improvements. The Common Core has helped sharpen the focus of our efforts.
4. I support a formal review process every 5-7 years and would expect that any set of standards would be subject to a comprehensive review process.
- 5.
6. Sincerely,
- 7.
8. Dominick Madison
9. Superintendent
10. Brillion Public Schools
- 11.
- 12.



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARSHFIELD

*Peg Geegan  
Superintendent*

*Board of Education Office  
1010 E Fourth Street  
Marshfield, WI 54449  
Ph. (715) 387-1101  
Fax: (715) 387-0133  
geegan@marshfield.k12.wi.us*

November 5, 2013

Wisconsin Legislature  
Select Committee on Common Core State Standards  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

[commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Dear Representatives and Senators,

Thank you for soliciting input from district administrators related to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. This is an important venture for the State of Wisconsin as we prepare our children for the challenges of succeeding in a global society. While our students have historically achieved at high levels, we must fortify our commitment to giving them a stronger competitive edge. The Common Core Standards can do this by providing districts with an improved framework for designing local curriculum that will increase our students' literacy and numeracy skills. These new standards are more challenging and concise than the previous state academic standards. They emphasize critical thinking, advanced communication skills and problem solving. Such skills have never been more important in preparing our students to secure high skills jobs in the future.

As you are aware, the school year calendar has not changed in over 100 years, yet the content we are required to teach has increased dramatically – at least five fold! We have to make difficult decisions about what knowledge and skills are most important and absolutely essential for our students at each level. In our curriculum review cycle, we carefully consider 'what stays' and 'what goes.' We examine our data, get feedback from teachers, and research standards from other states and countries. We draw from multiple sources in our community as well, such as feedback from our employers and post-secondary education providers. This gives us a comprehensive look at how effective our current curriculum has been and what we need to do to improve it. Our district will use the Common Core State Standards as we have used previous standards to update our curriculum, but remember that the CCSS are limited in scope since they do not cover all the academic areas that we must teach. They are only part of the total development process. We have always regarded our local curriculum as surpassing state standards, and our achievement data supports this assertion. This will not change.

Our local curriculum plan is approved by our Board of Education and includes more than selected standards; it includes detailed learning targets, a scope and sequence of instruction, common assessments and the instructional resources needed to teach the curriculum. As such, we will maintain strong local control over our comprehensive curriculum and do not anticipate incurring additional costs due to the CCSS.

In a way, the CCSS are like nutrition standards that identify the components of a well-balanced diet. These may be helpful but are not sufficient to keep people well fed. It takes imagination and creativity to combine basic ingredients and seasonings in inexpensive ways to serve delicious and nutritious meals. The possibilities are endless! The same is true of our instructional programs. We start with the standards and then create all kinds of lessons to 'serve up' learning that is good for our kids. And we have the flexibility to add local 'flavor' to our menu! The standards don't define us, rather the talents of our staff drive us to excellence.

Lastly, I do not agree with the recommendation of reviewing the state standards every 5-7 years. This does not allow sufficient time for districts to evaluate their usefulness and impact. Such frequency would create uncertainty and disruption to a district's internal curriculum review process. It would create inefficiencies in the use of our time and money to update curriculum if the state standards are in continual review. For example, if we approve our math curriculum mid-way through the state's math standards review process, then our approved curriculum may be out of date within a few years. And expecting districts to align their curriculum review schedule with the state's standard review process would take away another level of local control, so we would not support that.

We are confident that the CCSS have the viability to guide us in the process of creating a strong curriculum for our students. We encourage the legislature to move forward with their approval so that DPI can continue to develop sound assessments aligned with the standards. We will continue to do our part to assure that our students will benefit from rigorous and relevant instruction that will result in high levels of learning, as has been our tradition for many years.

Sincerely,

Peg Geegan

Members of the Wisconsin Legislature: Enclosed you will find the answers to your Common Core questionnaire.

**Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?**

Yes, prior to June of 2010 our school district had adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. A copy of the standards can be found at this DPI link. [http://dpi.wi.gov/stn\\_stds](http://dpi.wi.gov/stn_stds)

**Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards?**

Yes, they are the basis of our Math and ELA courses. We have also launched a reading and writing initiative that seeks to meet the Disciplinary Literacy Standards as well.

**Has your district augmented those standards in any way?**

No, we have not made any changes to the standards.

**How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards.**

We have changed our courses and added a Junior English course to meet the standards. We have spent time and money through in-service and training devoted of alignment.

**If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?**

The Common Core standards are more rigorous.

**What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc. as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June 2010?**

Our district has incurred costs for training, purchasing new textbooks and for consulting services.

**Many states such as Minnesota, Iowa, and Massachusetts, have formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not?**

Yes, we would support the adoption of a cycle for reviewing standards because we want to continue to meet the needs of our students.

Yours Educationally,

Tom

Thomas J. Hermann  
Principal/Activities Director

Union Grove High School  
Home of the Broncos  
262-878-2434 Ext. 1203  
[hermtom@ug.k12.wi.us](mailto:hermtom@ug.k12.wi.us)

Dear Legislators:

Thank you for seeking out information from schools about the Common Core Standards. Our staff has been “unpacking”, reviewing the standards, and “repacking”, implementing the standards, for the past two and a half years. Many of the standards closely relate to other standards that we have used to direct our instruction in the past and some are significantly different. We have implemented the standards into our curricula that we believe our students will benefit from the most. The Common Core Standards have been another excellent resource for our staff to use to help enhance and improve their curriculums in order to improve student outcomes. Our district has not adopted the Common Core as a whole, but our board of education does approve the curriculum changes that might include elements from the Common Core.

Our district has invested a great deal of professional development time and money to become familiar the Common Core. It has been a major initiative for our math and language arts departments. The time and money has been well spent in my opinion, because it has helped our staff update their curriculums and be able to identify some new learning targets for our students. My estimate on cost would be in the thousands of dollar range when you consider staff hours, materials and presenters.

I know that there has been a growing political debate about the Common Core. We have not found the Common Core to be some kind of federal indoctrination program or another attack on local control. Our district has simply used them as another resource to help our staff make good, well-informed decisions about what our students need to know or need to be able to do.

In my opinion, it is not the standards that are really driving education in our state and nation. It is the overuse of tests that our students, schools and entire districts are measured by that steals our focus, energy and resources. Unfortunately, the tests are also stealing elective course opportunities, education for employment opportunities and opportunities to be creative from our students.

Again, I want to thank you for seeking out information from school districts across the state. I also want to thank you for the service you provide to the citizens of the state. I see our state at a crossroads. Your leadership during this time in our state’s history will be instrumental in determining the future of our state.

Sincerely,

John Gaier  
District Administrator  
School District of Neillsville  
Office: 715-743-3323 (6)  
Cell Phone: 715-937-1081



November 20, 2013

Wisconsin Legislature  
[commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Dear Legislators:

I am in receipt of your letter requesting information regarding Hamilton School District's work in the area of standards, curriculum and assessments. Below please find the response to each of your questions: (Please note a separate duplicate letter was sent to each of the legislators who represent Hamilton School District constituents. Copies of Hamilton School District curriculum documents with our key learning targets were sent to our legislators.)

*1) Provide a copy of academic standards in math, science, reading, writing, geography and history adopted prior to June of 2010.*

Hamilton School District has had a long history of robust curriculum work which has led to high student performance. The district has a curriculum review cycle and curriculum documents are updated on a regular basis. A copy of our curriculum review cycle as well as our academic standards for math, science, reading, writing, geography and history were sent to our individual legislators. Due to the size of the documents they are not included in this email but are available through Senator Farrow, Senator Darling or Representative Pridemore.

*2) Has our district adopted common core standards/augmented them/has the district been impacted by the Department's adoption of model standards?*

Our goals in developing curriculum standards are to ensure our students are college and career ready while addressing the expectations of our local community. The Hamilton School District curriculum development process includes a review of all relevant standards for each content area, input from related business community and review of best instructional practices. Types of standards that are reviewed and integrated with each content area include: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction model standards, Common Core model standards, Financial Literacy standards, Tech Literacy standards and College and Career Readiness standards.

*3) What cost has the district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training?*

The district has not incurred separate additional costs associated with the Common Core model standards since the incorporation of relevant standards is part of our regular, ongoing curriculum work and professional development for staff.

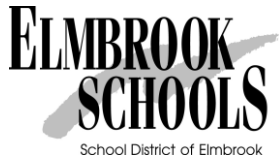
*4) Would we support the adoption of a five to seven year academic standard review process?*

Hamilton School District believes in local control and we wish to have the autonomy to develop our own learning standards to meet the expectations of our parents, business community and Board of Education. We do not believe a standards review process should be legislated. We also understand that in order for our state to be competitive, identification of rigorous academic state standards assists in ensuring academic focus and equitable opportunity for all students throughout Wisconsin. Academic standards should guide the identification of the state's standardized assessments. Standards and assessments must be aligned to be meaningful.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Cooke, Ph. D.  
District Administrator  
Hamilton School District



October 29, 2013

District Context:

The School District of Elmbrook, located in the suburban ring of Milwaukee, is a district with a history of strong student achievement and of setting and meeting high standards for both students and adults in the system. Serving nearly 7000 students in five elementary schools, two middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and one alternative, multi-district cooperative school for students with exceptional education needs, the School District of Elmbrook currently employs nearly 530 full-time teaching staff. 85% of Elmbrook graduates attend a four-year college or university upon graduation, while 10% seek entrance into a two-year technical college or training institution.

1. Prior to 2010, the School District of Elmbrook aligned curriculum to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards.
2. The School District of Elmbrook follows a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum renewal and design process (see attached). The Common Core State Standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics are among a variety of inputs into this process. We have “unpacked” these standards and tailored them to our local needs. Our district has been positively impacted by the state’s adoption of these standards as it has afforded us the opportunity to thoroughly review and renew our curriculum in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics to ensure our students’ future success in the classroom, on state assessments, and in pursuits beyond high school. We believe the Common Core Standards are more rigorous than the previously adopted Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and have pushed us to create higher expectations for our students, K-12.
3. The School District of Elmbrook follows a comprehensive curriculum renewal and design process that results in annual adoptions and updates. The DPI’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards has not directly caused the district to incur costs associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc.
4. The School District of Elmbrook would strongly support a formal review process of standards to occur every 5 to 7 years to ensure our students receive the most appropriate, relevant and rigorous instruction possible.

Elmbrook has a long-standing tradition of excellence. Continuing to honor our wishes for local control over curriculum renewal and design remains a priority to the Elmbrook Community.

Thank you for your inquiry and opportunity to provide feedback.



## Curriculum Renewal & Design Plan

**Context:** Through transparent and collaborative efforts amongst stakeholder groups, the School District of Elmbrook will work to design and renew K-12 curriculum. In our ongoing quest to be the best school district in the state of Wisconsin and the country, we will compare our work and results to those of local, regional and national benchmark districts through a robust and comprehensive continuous improvement process. We will rely on educational research so we can manage by and lead by fact. We will communicate our intentions, our progress and our results at the district and school levels so that all Elmbrook learning community members are informed and have opportunities to engage in our curriculum renewal and design process.

**Student Outcomes:** All curricular areas will be systematically updated with learning expectations (e.g. targets) reformatted as specific learning content and performance standards for students. A review of the Common Core State Standards, Wisconsin State Smarter Balanced Assessment System, The Next Generation Science Standards, The National Educational Technology Standards, best practices as defined by respected educational researchers (e.g., Marzano, Hattie) and student achievement data including both state and district assessments will be included as key components of the process.

**Student Assessment:** A balanced systematic student assessment plan will be generated so that student assessments are based upon performance as specified in the content and performance standards. This will provide curriculum design teams with additional data regarding student accomplishment of learning outcomes, and will provide a comprehensive system for assessing student performance that will include both standardized and classroom-specific measures.

**Implementation:** The focus of implementation of the curricular program will be at the building and district level with the staff as the key players in the implementation process. Ongoing monitoring of implementation is important in ensuring a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

**Process:** All curriculum renewal and design efforts will be communicated through the use of the School District of Elmbrook Continuous Improvement Framework. Each alignment process will be detailed through the district's Plan-Do-Study-Act framework. PDSAs will guide all phases of the alignment process from evaluation through continuous improvement. Assessment metrics will be embedded within to ensure fidelity and results.



Improvement Plan using PDSA

<b>Title of Plan:</b>	
<b>P</b>	<b>PLAN - Aligned to the District Strategic Goals</b>
<p>Identify 3 year SMART goal:</p> <p>Identify 1 year SMART goal:</p>	
<b>Data Analysis and Root Cause Analysis</b>	
<p>What work has already been accomplished to meet this long-term goal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p>What are barriers to achieving your goal? (Root Cause Analysis)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p>What data points show the need for this goal? (Input data below or attach actual data; If possible, provide 3-5 years of data to establish trends)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p>List the measures the team will use to determine if the overall goal was met (impact). Provide clear definition of expected results, including format in which they will be presented:</p>	
<b>Summative</b>	<b>When is the Data Available?</b>
<b>Formative</b>	<b>When is the Data Available?</b>

<b>D DO: Develop and Implement Deployment Plan</b>				
Action Steps What steps will you and your team take?	Measure /Indicator of Effectiveness What data will be collected?		When will work be completed and data collected?	Person(s) Responsible
	How will you know step is completed?	How will you know the step was done with fidelity or quality?		

<b>Implementation Plan Quality Check</b>
What resources/budget needs do you have?
What professional development, if any, will be conducted? When?

**Quarterly Review and Updates to Plan**

<b>S</b>	<b>STUDY:</b> To be completed quarterly & at end of school year
<b>Summarize Data to Date</b>	
<b>Color</b>	On your action plan, color code the steps that you planned for this

<p><b>Coding</b></p>	<p><b>past quarter:</b>  <b>Green</b> - Action step completed  <b>Yellow</b> - Action step in progress  <b>Red</b> - Action step was not started as planned</p> <p>Describe any reason an action step scheduled for the past quarter was changed or moved rather than coded red.</p>	
<p>Analyze how this data gives evidence to your progress on the plan (refer to the measures you listed)?</p> <p>Number of Action Steps planned for this past quarter and completed:</p>	<p>Analyze the data that gives evidence to lack of progress toward the plan (refer to the measures you listed)?</p> <p>Any Yellow or red area needs to be addressed.</p>	
<p><b>A</b></p>	<p><b>ACT: Revise or continue with implementation based on data analysis</b></p>	
<p><b>What will you change about your plan for the next quarter? Please provide a brief description of changes to be made and actual changes in action steps are added or deleted from the original plan.</b></p>		

**Quarterly updates will be due November X, January X, March X and June X.**  
 Updates will first be communicated at the Teaching and Learning Committee of the School Board with subsequent interactions with the full board upon request.  
 Quarterly updates can include:

1. # of action steps completed
2. Summary of work accomplished
3. Description of next steps
4. Description of stakeholder involvement
5. Description of student data examined and/or acted upon
6. Opportunity for board member feedback and questions

Throughout this process, four key corollary questions will continually be asked:

1. What do I want my students to learn?
2. How will I know when they have learned it?
3. What must I do to facilitate the learning?
4. What can I do for students who already know it?



## Phase 1: Evaluation

**Facilitator (s):** Educational Services Staff convene a district-level steering committee, comprised of teacher and administrator representatives, charged with shepherding the alignment process. In addition, level-specific work groups may be convened to assist in all phases of the alignment process.

**Timeline:** The Steering Committee should be comprised by June 1 for work occurring the following year.

**Purpose:** To complete a comprehensive evaluation of a selected curricular and/or program area.

### **Possible Tasks:**

1. Review Common Core State Standards, ACT College Readiness Standards, the College Board Readiness Standard, The National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NET-S), and various content area national standards.
2. Review existing curriculum documents including rubrics, common assessments, scoring guides and curriculum frameworks.
3. Gather information regarding materials currently in use by surveying constituents and evaluating performance data on EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, and Advanced Placement testing.
4. Gather assessment data from formative and summative classroom assessments to state-level assessments.
5. Gather feedback from parents, students, The Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) of the Board, The School Board, and staff regarding their overall satisfaction and perceptions of effectiveness. In order to fully inform the curriculum renewal and design process with stakeholder feedback, the following activities should be considered for deployment:
  - a. Focus groups - parents, students, teachers, community members
  - b. PTA Meeting presentations and subsequent dialogue
  - c. Survey data
  - d. TLC and/or full-board discussions at the outset, mid-point and end of the design or renewal process
6. Consult most recent peer-reviewed research from the field.

7. Communication amongst stakeholder groups throughout the entire design or renewal process is paramount to its success. The design team should ensure the following:
  - a. The development and deployment of a communication plan to include specific communication strategies and timelines to employ with all stakeholder groups.
  - b. Opportunities for two-way communication and feedback must be embedded throughout the communication play to ensure input, feedback and ownership.

**Guiding questions:**

1. What are the current expected student outcomes?
2. Are the student outcomes aligned with the appropriate state and/or national standards?
3. Are the student outcomes consistent with the expectation of external assessments (ACT College Readiness, College Board Readiness standards and other National Content Standards)?
4. How well are students performing on the expected outcomes? (Review data to answer this question).
5. What instructional strategies, including the use of instructional technology supports, and best practices are used?
6. What materials are used for each learning target?
7. How comprehensive and effective are the current materials?
8. What opportunities for differentiation are included in the curriculum that impact our spectrum of learners to those functioning below grade-level expectations to those gifted and talented?
9. What opportunities for intervention are included in the curriculum that impact our spectrum of learners to those functioning below grade-level expectations to those gifted and talented?
10. To what extent is the curriculum meeting or exceeding our expectations?
11. To what extent is the curriculum aligned K-12?

## Phase 2: Curriculum Renewal and Design

**Facilitator (s):** The District Level Steering Committee in conjunction with any level-specific work team will complete this phase of the alignment process.

**Timeline:** Recommendations for board consideration and approval must be presented by December for implementation the following school year.

**Purpose:** Building off the Comprehensive Program Evaluation Report, this phase seeks to improve the design of the curriculum. It also focuses on instructional best practices and includes selection of materials and development of assessments. Consideration will also be given during this phase to necessary professional development. Selection of core and supplemental materials will take place guided by the Teaching and Learning Committee of the School Board.

### Possible Tasks:

1. Recommend changes to scope and sequence (learning targets)
2. Identify gaps and overlaps through alignment with Common Core State Standards, ACT College Readiness Standards, the College Board Readiness Standards, The National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NET-S), and various content area national standards
3. Recommend adjustments to the scope and sequence
4. Ensure integration of:
  - a. Disciplinary literacy
  - b. Information and Technology Literacy Standards (NET-S)
  - c. Education for Employment connections
  - d. Differentiation that impacts our spectrum of learners
  - e. Intervention and support services - direct links to Response to Intervention (RtI) mandates and district recommendations
5. Update grade level learning targets
6. Design district formative and summative assessments
7. Update curriculum maps
8. Update parent brochures

9. Identify “best practices” in the curricular area
10. Develop a resource plan. This may include recommendations with respect to:
  - a. Curricular resources (classroom materials and supplies, technology)
  - b. Human resources (adjustments to job descriptions or position configurations)
11. Develop a professional development plan
12. Develop a long term implementation plan
13. Propose and/or modify middle and high school courses to address identified needs

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What changes are recommended for our curriculum to continuously improve?
  - a. Identified gaps and overlaps
  - b. Scope and sequence modifications
  - c. Disciplinary literacy
  - e. Information and Technology Literacy Standards
  - f. Education for Employment connections
  - g. Differentiation opportunities
2. What are the changes needed in anticipated student outcomes, learning targets, etc. identified in the evaluation phase?
3. What additional assessments or modifications to current assessments are needed?
4. What topics should be covered at each grade level?
5. What emphasis should be placed on each topic?
6. How much time should be spent on each topic?
7. What teacher support is needed in the curriculum to make it viable?
8. What instructional strategies, including specific instructional technology tools, should be used?
9. What professional development will be needed to ensure implementation?

10. What is the financial impact of the recommended methods, materials, and professional development?
11. What changes (if any) need to be made to the student report card?

**Tools**

Each design team will be asked to document their work and present their progress to the Teaching and Learning Committee of the School Board for the purposes of progress updates, dialogue and board input, and eventually, board approval. Secondary design teams are asked to use the following template to ensure continuity and consistency across departments:

<b>School District of Elmbrook CURRICULUM GUIDE</b>	
Curriculum Area:	Course Length:
Course Title:	Date Last Reviewed:
Prerequisites:	Board Approval Date:
<b>Stage 1: Desired Results</b>	
<b><u>Course Description and Purpose:</u></b>	

<b><u>Enduring Understanding(s):</u></b>  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	<b><u>Essential Question(s):</u></b>  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.
<b><u>Learning Targets (include on student syllabus):</u></b>          	
<b>Stage 2: Assessment Evidence</b>	
<b><u>Performance Assessment(s):</u></b>          	<b><u>Other Assessment(s):</u></b>          

**Stage 3: Learning Plan**

**Term One** (time periods are approximate)

I.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:

II.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:

III.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:

IV.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:

**Term Two**

V.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:



- VI.
- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

Learning Targets Addressed:

- VII.
- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

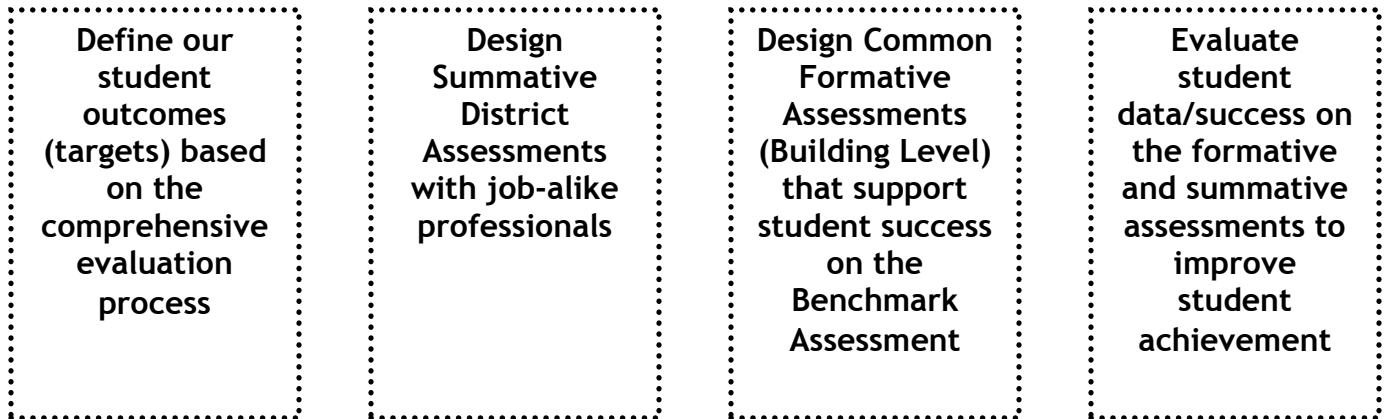
Learning Targets Addressed:

- VIII.
- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

CCSS:

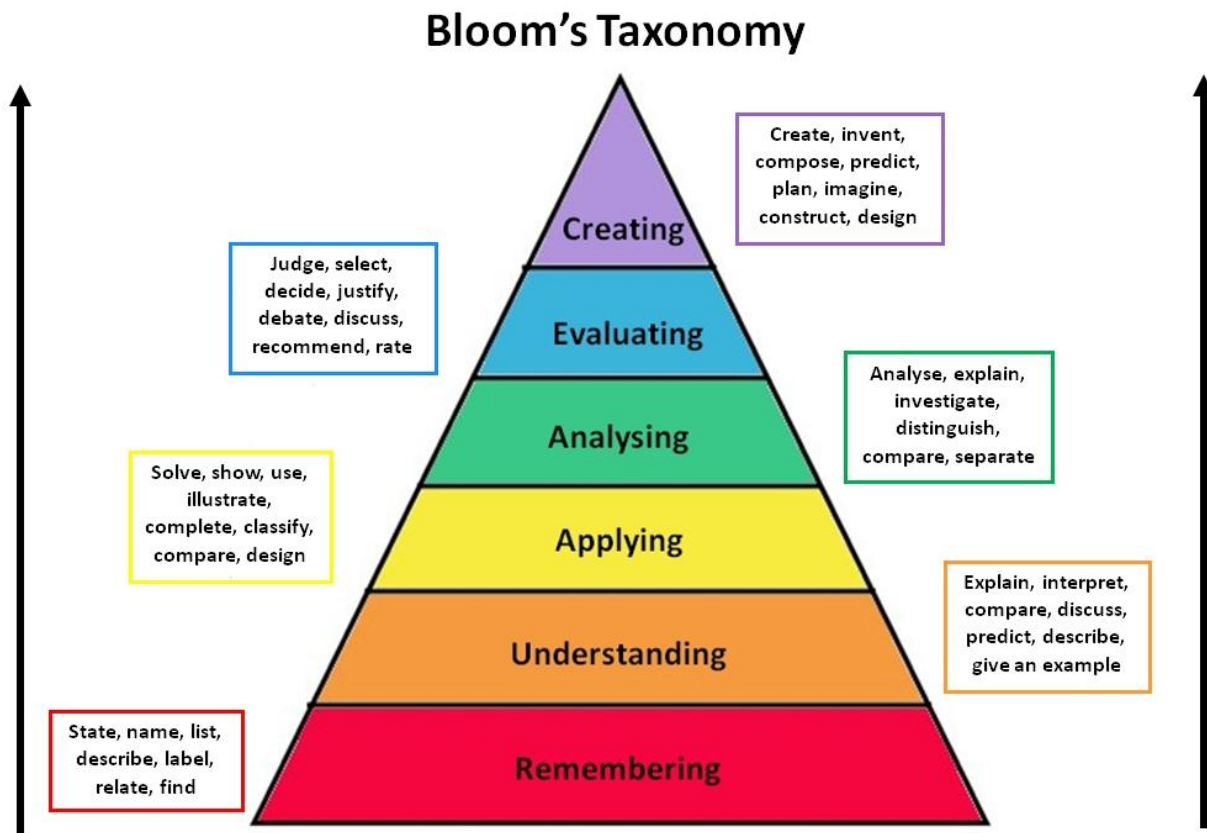
Learning Targets Addressed:

## The Elmbrook Assessment System



To ensure rigor on the assessment, the tasks should be a blend of “knowing”, “doing” and “understanding”.

Students should be afforded the opportunity to reveal their level of understanding through assessments that incorporate most/all levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy .



Forehand, M. (2005). Bloom's taxonomy: Original and revised.. In M. Orey (Ed.), Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology. Retrieved July 16, 2013, from <http://projects.coe.uga.edu/epltt/>

Ultimately, we hope to strive to build assessments that have a balance of “understanding” tasks and “knowing” or “doing” tasks. Not only do we want to ensure our students’ foundational knowledge, but also work to develop the following in our students:

- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication

We work to create dynamic assessments environments for students that introduce and engage them in varied types of assessment experiences over time:

- authentic tasks and projects
- academic exam questions, prompts, and problems
- quizzes and test items
- informal checks for understanding
- debate, presentation, critique

## Phase 3: Implementation

**Facilitator (s):** The District Level Steering Committee will determine who will assist in the crafting of the implementation plan.

**Timeline:** Implementation plans should be developed and completed by May 1 for implementation the following fall. Implementation activities may begin in late spring, through the summer and into the school year.

**Purpose:** To implement the curricular program or enhancement with fidelity. A PDSA plan must be developed detailing the specifics of the implementation phase. In order to achievement deep implementation, the implementation strategy must include the following:

- Specific professional development activities and associated timelines
- Communication plans including the identification of stakeholders and communication methods
- Specific progress monitoring strategies to ensure quarterly checks for progress and fidelity
- A plan for the development of teacher leadership to shepherd the curricular change
- Specific knowledge, skills and dispositions of teachers and administrators necessary for successful implementation
- Leadership actions necessary for successful implementation
- Resources necessary for successful implementation

## Phase 4: Continuous Improvement

**Facilitator (s):** Educational Services Staff will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating implementation and impact on student achievement.

**Timeline:** Formal implementation will be analyzed and assessed using the PDSA process to ensure fidelity and to recommend changes or enhancements as needed.

**Purpose:** To monitor curriculum alignment and improvement efforts to ensure implementation with fidelity and positive impact on student achievement.

- Data analysis of both formal and informal measures of effectiveness
- Recommendations for continued professional development to support effective and lasting implementation
- Recommendations with respect to additional resources or classroom supports
- Recommendations to enhance pedagogy
- Recommendations with respect to district and/or school scorecard measures

**Accountability:** A presentation should be made to the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Full Board that details the impact of the curricular design or renewal process on student achievement and any subsequent adjustments to district and/or school processes that resulted from the process.

### **Leadership Actions necessary to achieve deep implementation of curricular initiatives**

To move steadily through the stages of a successful curriculum renewal or redesign process, specific leadership actions must be present at all levels of our organization, from the classroom to the district office to the school board.

Specifically, we value:

#### ***From classroom teachers and instructional support personnel (RRTs/IRTs):***

- A positive willingness to meaningfully participate in the curriculum renewal and design process, from evaluation to deep implementation
- Consistent advocacy for what they and their students need in order to successfully implement
- An openness to investigate and try new or different approaches to curriculum design, instructional delivery, or assessment design.
- Instructional fidelity to learning targets collaboratively developed formative and summative assessments, and instructional strategies that are known to be effective.
- Consistent involvement in professional learning that supports the ability to successfully implement with curricular and instructional fidelity.

#### ***From building-level leaders:***

- A positive willingness to meaningfully participate in the curriculum renewal and design process, from evaluation to deep implementation
- Consistent inspection of instruction to insure curricular and instructional fidelity
- Consistent advocacy for what their teachers and students need in order to successfully implement
- A commitment to follow district expectations and collaboratively agreed-upon components of any curriculum renewal or redesign.
- Consistent involvement in professional learning that supports their ability to insure curricular and instructional fidelity in their respective building(s)

#### ***From Central Administrative Office Staff:***

- A positive willingness to meaningfully participate in the curriculum renewal and design process, from evaluation to deep implementation
- Consistent inspection of instruction to insure curricular and instructional fidelity

- Assurance that the most up-to-date information, resources, research and best-practices provide the foundation for all curriculum renewal and redesign processes
- A consistent and direct connection to building-level leaders and teachers so that feedback about the curriculum renewal or redesign process guides decisions
- Advocacy with the school board to insure teachers and building-level leaders have the resources and supports necessary for successful implementation
- Consistent communication with the school board to insure transparency, collaboration and a process that embraces local values and norms
- A willingness to facilitate processes that are inclusive, well-planned, student-centered and forward-thinking

***From School Board Members:***

- A genuine interest in the curricular program and its ability to meet the needs of and challenge our students so they are fully prepared for life after high school.
- Consistent communication with Central Administrative Office staff with respect to all aspects of the curriculum renewal or redesign process.
- Advocacy with respect to community wants and needs as they pertain to the curriculum renewal or redesign process.
- Trust in district personnel to competently carry out a successful and effective curriculum renewal or redesign process.
- Courage to ask strategic questions of CAO staff to insure a curricular program that is rigorous, innovative and engaging for students.

Important Links:

National Educational Technology Standards for Students

[http://www.iste.org/Libraries/PDFs/NETS-S\\_Standards.sflb.ashx](http://www.iste.org/Libraries/PDFs/NETS-S_Standards.sflb.ashx)

The Next Generation Science Standards

[www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org)

The Common Core State Standards

[www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

The ACT College Readiness

[www.act.org/standard/](http://www.act.org/standard/)

College Board Standards for College Success

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/k-12/standards>

### **Educational Research that Guides our Work**

Hattie, John A. (2008). *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*.

Hattie, John A. (2011). *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*.

Marzano, R. J. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



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# *SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SLINGER*

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207 Pulk Street • Slinger, Wisconsin 53086

Daren Sievers  
*District Administrator*

Jennifer Boyd  
*Director of Technology & Support Services*

Stephanie Bernander  
*Director of Curriculum & Instruction*

November 20, 2013

Wisconsin Legislature,

We hope that the following information regarding district adoption of standards and common core implementation will be helpful as you continue review of the Common Core State Standards.

On June 19, 2006, the School District of Slinger enacted policy 330: Curriculum and Instructional Program Development that states: "The School Board shall adopt a course of study which meets Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction requirements and Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards as minimum in core academic areas and other areas as determined by the district. The Board defines curriculum as the processes, attitudes, skills and knowledge that are to be taught and learned at the appropriate levels of courses in the School District of Slinger."

The policy is currently under revision to reflect the State's adoption of Wisconsin Common Core State Standards. As stated in the policy written in 2006, the district will adopt those standards as a minimum in core areas with the flexibility to augment the standards through the curriculum development process.

For the last two years, the School District of Slinger has been working on implementing the Common Core State Standards and has been very impressed with what we have found. It is important to note that the standards themselves are the skills and knowledge students need to know at each grade level. At first glance, someone might think that the standards are "too hard" or "too easy", but after working with the standards for two years, they actually provide a very methodical and research-based scaffolding of skills to enhance student learning. In our experience, to say that the standards aren't rigorous enough is simply not true. If we thought there were standards that weren't rigorous enough, we would still have the authority, in policy, to add or revise as needed.

The Common Core State Standards ARE needed for our teachers. Even in hiring the best teachers we can find, the teachers graduate from teacher prep programs often with only 3 credits in specific training of "how to teach math" or math pedagogy. In addition, the broad license categories of PK-8<sup>th</sup> grade do not allow a teacher learn all the intricacies of the topics they are to teach in all grade levels. Teachers often have come to rely on following the pages of a textbook to figure out what is to be taught. I

can say in Slinger that the process of learning the Common Core State Standards (and other work done previous on common assessments) has helped our teachers become much more knowledgeable about math pedagogy (for instance), why certain skills are taught at certain grade levels, how certain skills are connected, and what skills are necessary to know before a new skill can be taught.

The costs associated with the implementation of Common Core State Standards are about the same as what we would have invested for continuous teacher training otherwise. However, the Common Core State Standards has helped us focus our training and to build professional learning teams around best teaching practices, how students learn and acquire knowledge, and how to create lessons that motivate and increase student learning.

For those of us in education, the Common Core State Standards are not seen or interpreted as a federal mandate or a governmental takeover of power. They are seen as a great tool to help us do our job better. We work for this community, the parents and the students, and are committed to doing the very best we can to produce an educated workforce for our future. The Common Core State Standards has helped us do our job better. It has streamlined and focused our instruction, it has helped fill gaps in teachers understanding of learning pedagogy, and it still provides the flexibility for us to make local decisions about how we are going to go about teaching those skills.

Wisconsin was instrumental in providing feedback to the author's of both Common Core documents before they were adopted. It would be prudent for Wisconsin to continue to review the academic standards every 5 to 7 years to determine if they are still the most current and best description of the skills to be learned.

If further information is needed, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



Daren Sievers  
Superintendent



Stephanie Bernander  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Attached is response to your request for information.

Question #1 – **Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?** Yes. According the Superintendent at the time, the Auburndale School District approved , through its goals and objectives, to “adhere to current curriculum based legislative mandates (open enrollment, **state standards**, production tests), etc. This happened at the Board October 1998 board meeting (see attachments). Since that date the School District of Auburndale has followed the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and moved to the common core with their adoption.

Question #2 – **Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards?** As stated above the Auburndale School District follows the academic standards as adopted by the state. **Has your district augmented those standards in any way?** No. **How has your district been impacted by the department’s adoption of these model standards?** The district has implemented textbooks and other curricular items that provide a stronger base with more defined standards for each grade level. The district has made a greater investment in staff development. **Would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?** More rigorous.

Question #3 – **What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the DPI’s adoption of the Common Core model standards in June of 2010?** This would be very difficult to disaggregate as the district was sorely in need of updating its math and reading programs and needed to move in a direction that would ensure the district’s test scores and student achievement improved. The district sees the Common Core as an extremely necessary step in the right direction.

Question #4 – **Have formalized review of academic standards every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or Why not?** It is in the nature of educators to continually review and reflect on whether what their districts are doing is effective and achieving the positive results. I believe all administrators as a matter of practice would assess their district’s academic progress. How formal, costly, time consuming or labor intensive would need to be considered.

**School District of Auburndale**  
**School Board Goals and Objectives**  
**1998-99 School Year**

**Fiscal**

- ☐ Complete the construction project financially on or under budget.
  - Whenever possible, use school district's tax free status to purchase construction items to save on sales tax.
- ☐ Work toward establishing an endowment resource for school related activities.
- ☐ Seek additional grant money for curriculum enrichment, integration of subject matter, and staff development.
- ☐ Pay off early the remaining debt on the new middle school addition.
- ☐ Decrease the the local tax mill rate below 10 mills.
  - Continue to take full advantage of the current favorable state aides.
  - Use the bid process when applicable.

**Technology**

- Complete networking of computers in the elementary school.
- Network elementary computer system to the high school.
- Upgrade computer file server to support a computerized grading and attendance infrastructure.
- ☐ Promote and support staff and community technology knowledge development.
- Purchase and install updated school district communication/data system.
- Examine distance learning options for the purpose of creating a functioning and effective distance learning station in the district media center.
- Install a camera surveillance system at the high school.
- ☐ Initiate Internet opportunities for the elementary students, secondary students, school staff, and community.
- ☐ Continue to upgrade computers and software.
- Incorporate technology into all student curriculum.

**Policy**

- Examine, review, update, author, or implement an average minimum of three policies or job descriptions per month.

**Building**

- ☐ Progress effectively toward completion of building construction project.
- Provide additional parking at the high school and elementary facilities.
- Examine and improve heating and cooling at the high school and elementary facilities.

- Upgrade fire alarm system at the elementary school.
- Take necessary steps to insure an adequate building water supply.
- Stress safety through instruction to students and communications with parents.
- Continue to clean and maintain buildings in an appropriate manner.
- Continue a maintenance schedule for school equipment.
- Continue to follow and update all building safety plans. (fire, bloodborne pathogens, science lab, shop, etc.)

### **Curriculum**

- Continue newly implemented "teaching and enforcing positive behavior" curriculum in the jr. high.
- Continue to coordinate advances in the integration of the entire K-12 curriculum.
- Integrate technology into curriculum.
- Continue to explore the modification of graduation requirements.
- Adhere to current curriculum based legislative mandates (open enrollment, state standards, production tests), etc.
- Conduct examination of effects and results of the past student curriculum effectiveness.
- Research appropriateness of current 8 hour class days at the 7-12 grade levels.
- Study the feasibility of a possible 4 year old kindergarten program.
- Evaluate current curriculum for student employment preparedness.
- Analyze current teacher/student ratio and establish a staffing plan for the 1999-2000 school year.

### **Staff Development**

- Provide inservice and collaboration time for the professional staff.
- Positively promote and encourage staff development at all levels.
- Provide training for all professional staff to promote the integration of technology into curriculum and instruction.

### **Community**

- Establish a plan to incorporate the community into the Internet, distance learning, library, reading programs, etc.
- Use the community as a resource in the education of students.
- Explore feasibility of a volunteer and advisory group for managing the use of the new media center by the general public.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF AUBURNDALE  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1998

The meeting was called to order by President Susan Raab at 7:30 p.m. in the High School Library. The President read the Compliance with the Open Meeting Law and Statutory Notices.

Roll call showed members present were: Marilyn Follen, Marleen Knutson, Kristin Hess and Susan Raab. Excused: Douglas Reding.

Marleen Knutson moved, Kristin Hess seconded, to declare the meeting legal. Roll call vote: all members present voting yes.

Recognition of the public who wish to comment to the Board. Marleen Knutson congratulated Jane Olsen, Speech and Language Pathologist, on being one of 150 teachers chosen to attend the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Institute. Mrs. Knutson congratulated the volleyball and cross country team members and coaches on their successful seasons and wished the teams good luck in the upcoming regionals.

Kristin Hess moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to approve the agenda with the deletion of item IX, F - Consideration of transfer of \$87,500 from Fund 40 to Fund 30. Roll call vote: all members present voting yes.

Kristin Hess moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of September 16, 1998. Roll call vote: Marilyn Follen, yes; Marleen Knutson, yes; Kristin Hess, yes; Susan Raab, yes. Excused: Douglas Reding.

Kristin Hess, Treasurer, reported on the meeting of the Finance Committee. Kristin Hess moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to approve the additional September and the October vendor checks #9442-9476 and #30553-30739 (Fund 10), #298-315 (Fund 40), payroll checks #23726-23882 and direct deposits #903512-903596 in the amount of \$1,176,090.63. Roll call vote: all members present voting yes.

Correspondence. Jami Gebert thanked the Board for their support in attending the FBLA Nationals.

Koby Scheel of Stubenrauch Architects, Inc. and Paul Kusilek of AP Wisconsin, Inc. reported on the building project.

The three bids received for the additional well at the elementary school site were examined. The board directed the District Administrator to clear up some questions on the bids.

Douglas Reding arrived at 8:30 p.m.

Douglas Reding moved, Kristin Hess seconded to approve the lobby flooring upgrade and air conditioning proposals. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Koby Scheel reviewed the cost of expanding and surfacing of the parking lots.

Bill Emery, Horticulture Instructor, reported on the progress of the greenhouse, landscaping and possible school sign location.

CD-S Instructor Linda Cerling and Special Education Program Aides Diane Kunze and Bonnie Peters gave a presentation on the Elementary CD-S Program. There are eight students ranging from 6-11 years of age in this program.

Kristin Hess moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to accept the donation of \$7,100.00 from the Auburndale FFA Alumni to be used for new greenhouse accessories. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Marilyn Follen moved, Marleen Knutson seconded, to accept the donation of \$81.39 from the Knights of Columbus Council #4646 representing proceeds from the annual Tootsie Roll sale to be used for the district's handicapped students. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Kristin Hess moved, Marleen Knutson seconded, to accept the donation of a tree, shrubbery, landscaping brick and stone at an approximate value of \$280.00 from Schalow's Nursery. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Kristin Hess moved, Marleen Knutson seconded, to approve the FFA request for students to attend the "Made for Excellence Conference" in Eau Claire, WI on October 24-25, 1998. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Marilyn Follen moved, Douglas Reding seconded, to approve the minutes of the special board meeting of August 6, 1998. Roll call vote: Marilyn Follen, yes; Marleen Knutson, abstain (excused from meeting); Douglas Reding, yes; Kristin Hess, abstain (excused from meeting); Susan Raab, yes.

Kristin Hess moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to approve the 1998-99 school year budget, transfer the amount of \$231,524.40 from Fund 40 to Fund 30 for payment on debt service, and to certify the total 1998-99 school year tax levy in the amount of \$1,398,690.00. Roll call vote: all members voting yes. The total levy and mill rate remained the same as approved by the citizens of the school district at the Annual Meeting.

Marleen Knutson moved, Kristin Hess seconded, to approve the Secondary School Secretary and Special Education Secretary job descriptions with modifications as discussed. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

Marilyn Follen moved, Kristin Hess seconded, to approve the 7-12 Special Education LD/CD-B Aide and the 7-12 Special Education CD-S Aide job descriptions with modifications as discussed. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

The current expulsion policy was reviewed. Possible changes were discussed with the new laws and the need for new procedures. In cases of a conflict of interest, the panel can be three assigned board members and/or administrators.

Douglas Reding moved, Marilyn Follen seconded, to approve the 1998-99 School Board Goals and Objectives with modifications as discussed. Roll call vote: all members voting yes.

A discussion was held on the upcoming code of conduct requirements and committee. This policy must be in place by August 1, 1999.

Providing athletic passes for home events for substitute personnel was discussed.

Mary Salo, Elementary Principal; John Molis, Jr/Sr High Principal; Chuck Payant, Business

10/28/2013 2:31 PM

We are in the process of reviewing and implementing the standards. They are very much more rigorous than the previous state standards. This will positively impact our students. We are at the same time having our staff re-evaluate their teaching techniques to see if they can be improved as we implement the standards. We do like that the Common Core Standards are just that, standards. We get to decide locally the curriculum and methods of teaching that will meet those standards. We did not lose local control. The bar was just set higher.

We do support constant review of any curriculum locally and the same should be done with the Common Core Standards.

As far as cost, we have had training and substitutes for teachers during training and development of the new curriculum. We have spent around \$35,000 so far.

Dennis

Go Rockets!

Dennis Birr  
Superintendent  
New Lisbon School District  
500 S. Forest St.  
New Lisbon, WI 53950  
608-562-3700 ext. 1522  
FAX 608-562-5333





HUDSON SCHOOL  
DISTRICT

LEARNING - *the path to our global future*

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**Mary Bowen-Eggebraaten**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Diane Radle**  
*Executive Administrative Assistant*

November 19, 2013

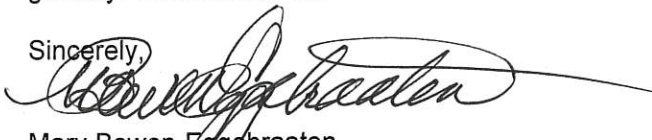
To: Assemblyman Dean Knudsen      Assemblyman Jeremy Thiesfeldt      Senator Paul Farrow  
Senator Alberta Darling      Assemblyman Michael Schraa      Assemblyman Tom Larson  
Assemblyman Don Pridemore      Assemblyman Jim Steineke

Thank you for asking for information about the district's implementation of academic standards. I hope that our responses will help you support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These rigorous standards will help us facilitate a higher level of student learning and prepare students to be college and career ready. Here are the responses you have requested:

1. The Hudson Board of Education took action and officially adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards on May 12, 1998. I will not attach a copy since I assume that you are aware of these standards that were developed by the DPI with input from educators across Wisconsin.
2. The Hudson Board of Education took action and officially adopted the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and math on May 11, 2010. We have not supplemented the standards. These standards are providing rich opportunities for teachers to consider and discuss how the standards can be incorporated into their content. These CCSS are not only more rigorous than the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, they support the development of workplace skills that we have heard from local business and industry representatives as a primary need.
3. It would not be a good allocation of district resources to take the time to calculate the financial investment by the district that has occurred since the adoption of the CCSS. For the last 3 years, we have invested significant teacher time in professional development. We have paid for CESA 11 training and substitutes to give time for teachers to work on aligning local curriculum to the CCSS. Administrations and teacher leadership teams have spent days working on planning for this alignment. Teachers have spent time at work and on their own time to design lessons to align. Considering district level, school level, and teacher level time and investment, the financial implications are significant to support improved student learning through implementation of the CCSS. Even if we were earlier in the implementation process and had not already invested time and resources, the district would still advocate for the continuance of the CCSS because of their level of quality and rigor.
4. Quality academic standards like the CCSS that are developed over time by educators and experts from multiple states do not require review again in short cycles like 5-7 years. Implementation that reaches the student level takes multiple years and is improved over time as teachers monitor and adjust based on student feedback and data. With that said, academic standards should be reviewed on a longer regular basis such as 10-15 years.

The Hudson School District supports the Common Core State Standards without reservation and ask for your support of their continued implementation in classrooms across Wisconsin. I hope that Hudson's comments and those from other Wisconsin public school districts are held in high regard and considered as having the most significant weight since our responses are based on first-hand experience preparing students to be work and college ready for an ever changing, globally connected world.

Sincerely,



Mary Bowen-Eggebraaten  
Superintendent of Schools

The Stanley-Boyd Area Schools, having ranked 19th highest on the recent state report card data while also receiving additional state aid as a high poverty school, should be counted as a huge supporter of the Common Core. We have worked hard the past three years to align our curriculum and sincerely hope that we don't have to start over.

1. Stanley-Boyd Area Schools followed the state standards prior to June, 2010 but there was no formal board adoption.

2. Our District fully follows the Common Core State Standards. We find them to be very rigorous and in many cases, more so than past standards.

3. The District has spent multiple days writing curriculum each year for the past three years. Thereby, we have long ago surpassed the one hundred thousand dollar mark on developing curriculum aligned to the Common Core.

4. We review our standards and curriculum constantly. While I support the constant relook at Common Core State Standards, I don't see it making much difference in what we do.

Jim Jones  
District Administrator  
Stanley-Boyd Area Schools

1. Shell Lake adopted the DPI Model Standards.
2. We have made adjustments to our curriculums based on the Common Core Standards. We believe that the new standards are more reflective of the real world, helping to make connections and get students to think about the what and why of problems, not just memorize.
3. We have spent money for substitute teachers and for summer curriculum work for staff to update curriculum to the Common Core. We have also purchased text books based on their alignment to the common core.
4. We believe that a formal review every 4 or 5 years would be beneficial. We do have some concerns about losing local control if the state starts changing that often.

Thanks for asking for some input.

Jim Connell  
Superintendent  
Shell Lake School District

Prior to June of 2010 the District had adopted the DPI Model Academic Standards.

The District is currently using the Common Core Standards as the basis for curriculum development. We have not augmented those standards. We have spent a significant amount of time during the past three years aligning our English and math curriculum to the Common Core. We consider these standards to be far more rigorous than the previous DPI Model Academic Standards.

We do not have a specific dollar amount identified that has been used in the adoption. We have used some of our Title IIa budget for staff training. We have also adopted a new textbook series in math. Additionally recent English/Language Arts materials that have been purchased are aligned with the Common Core.

The evaluation and adoption of standards should be an ongoing process that is reviewed regularly. We would support the updating of those standards on a 5-7 year cycle but not a complete overhaul or a completely new direction.

--

***Gary Berger***

District Administrator

School District of Horicon

611 Mill St., Horicon, WI 53032

920-485-2898 Ext. 241

*"Strive For Excellence"*

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Common Core State Standards.

1. Mukwonago Area School District adopted the Model Academic Standards in October, 1998. A copy of the school board minutes is attached.
2. Mukwonago Area School District has used the Common Core State Standards, as published, since they were adopted by the state in June, 2010.

Since of the state adoption of the CCSS in 2010, the district has reviewed its K-12 reading, language arts, and mathematics curriculum. Disciplinary literacy has been reviewed in all content areas.

It's difficult to make a blanket statement about the Common Core State Standards. CCSS are clearer than previous state standards because they list expectations for each and every grade, rather than listing expectations by the end of grades 4, 8, and 12. Some of the standards have expectations similar to those in the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. Others are more rigorous.

3. The district has incurred the costs of curriculum review, professional development, communication, and the purchase of some professional and student materials.
4. On the plus side, regular review of standards would allow for their continuous improvement. On the negative side are the costs to the state and districts to do so.

Hello,

1. The Potosi School District did not formally adopt academic standards other than the State's model standards prior to 2010.
2. The Potosi School District did not officially adopt the Common Core, but has accepted them as our new curriculum. We do plan to augment the standards if we find a need to customize them to meet our local District needs. Our District has invested over \$75,000 over the last 3 years in a variety of resources that are aligned with the new Common Core Standards. We consider the Common Core Standards to be much more rigorous than what we were previously using.
3. A minimum of \$75,000 in the purchasing of resources. Along with several thousand dollars in professional learning activities.
4. We would support the adoption of a formalized process every 5-7 years for WI to review our academic standards. The goal would be to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and current, and appropriately rigorous. The only problem I see is if this process gets political, then we will be stuck with a variety of things that would get added which have little chance of being taught (even if they should be taught). The link below is to the DPI's list of 21 Observance Days for schools in WI which is an example of what appears to be a negative impact from political involvement.

[http://eis.dpi.wi.gov/eis\\_observe](http://eis.dpi.wi.gov/eis_observe)

If the District finds political propoganda in the Common Core Standards, we will very likely alter or drop that information from instruction.

Ron Saari  
District Administrator  
Potosi School District

10/29/2013 2:17 PM

Dear Legislators

I appreciate you giving me an additional opportunity to share information about the Common Core and how it has impacted the Hilbert School District. I will respond to your questions as they were numbered in the correspondence that you sent me on October 28.

1. Prior to June, 2010, the Hilbert School District adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Mathematics, Science, Reading, Writing, Geography and History. After a review of the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics and English/Language Arts by our district curriculum team and school board, we adopted the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts in November of 2010. We still utilize the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Science, Geography and History because no Common Core State Standards have been released in these areas.
2. As I stated above, our district curriculum team and school board reviewed and adopted the CCSS in Mathematics and English/Language Arts in November of 2010. In adopting the standards, we have revised and implemented the curriculum to meet these rigorous standards in mathematics and ELA. This revision and alignment has occurred K-12 for an appropriate scope and sequence of curriculum. To ask the question of whether the DPI's adoption of the standards has impacted us is a very general question. Of course it has impacted us, but I would say that it has been a very positive impact for our district as a whole. It provided us the guidance for our staff to meet and align our curriculum K-12 in these two areas. It created a format for our teachers to collaborate and align what we are doing in mathematics and ELA. Having worked with all of these teacher teams in some fashion, I can honestly say that these standards are much more rigorous and beneficial for the students in the Hilbert School District than the past Model Academic Standards.
3. Our district has not incurred any cost above and beyond what we would normally spend each year in staff development costs, curriculum training and/or planning, text book adoption, etc. As you know, the budget status in Wisconsin schools is not a good situation, so we have been and will continue to be frugal with the taxpayer's money in the Hilbert School District.
4. I would not be opposed to reviewing our academic standards every 5 to 7 years. I think that is only good practice as we continue to evolve in the educational setting. Reviewing our standards and curriculum is a good thing and needs to be completed, so that we are teaching the most rigorous curriculum to our students.

If you have any further questions, please contact me by email [sweeret@hilbert.k12.wi.us](mailto:sweeret@hilbert.k12.wi.us) or by phone at 920-853-3558. I have also attached the letters that I have shared with Senator Leibham and Representative Tittl.

*Anthony Sweere*  
**Middle School Principal/District Administrator**  
**Hilbert School District**  
**“Live-Love-Learn-Leave A Legacy”**

Dear Senator Liebham,

Criticism of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is “out there” and is simply without merit. In the Hilbert School District, we have committed time, money and resources to align our curriculum with the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This commitment has resulted in our students being exposed to a more rigorous set of standards that will help them be college and career ready in the near future. These standards have provided our teachers with a clear 4K-12 scope and sequence in these two areas. This alignment was not committed to a “nationalization” of education, but an alignment to a high set of standards that we were able to customize to what was best for the students in the Hilbert School District. To veer away from this commitment at this time will be detrimental to the students of our district and the students of the State of Wisconsin. People in our community and surrounding communities talk about improving academic rigor and making diplomas meaningful and the public wants teachers to be evaluated and accountable for results. How is this achieved without teaching and testing to a standard? I have listened to concerns from business that kids are entering the job market without useful skills like communication and problem solving. We also know that assessments and accountability are important life lessons in and of themselves. It seems to me that many concerns are simply longstanding grievances with government and the educational system, redirected now toward a singular target. Allow me to share some of my thoughts regarding the CCSS.

- The development of the CCSS has been long and thoughtful process the roots of which goes back many years and has involved many organizations including the National Governor’s Association, National Chamber of Commerce, and Association of State’s Education Officers.
- Wisconsin educators, parents, community leaders and the public have provided input for the development of educational standards here in our state.
- Local schools decide how to achieve the benchmarks the CCSS represent.
- The CCSS are more rigorous than any of Wisconsin’s previous standards. They continue to promote creative and critical thinking skill essential for our children who will enter a global competitive workforce.
- The CCSS are clear benchmarks, specific at each grade level. Teachers are able to collaborate within and across academic disciplines to engage student learning.
- The CCSS are aligned with college and career expectations. Students are better equipped for college and the demands place upon them as they enter the workforce.

Here is a quick takeaway as I ask you to support the CCSS for our school children: Existing Wisconsin standards and the state’s test (WKCE) need to be replaced. So, replaced with what? Several years of work have been invested in our district to align standards and benchmarks with what our children need in terms of college and career readiness. This has been a long and thoughtful process involving business, government, and educational leaders from this state and across the country. We have made adjustments already in response to the new State tests, the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) and the ACT suite of tests given to our middle and high school students. Our work here is to have our children college and/or career ready and we wish always to exceed any baseline standards. That is our goal. We fully support the increase rigor of the CCSS and hope to work with you in every way to enhance what we do for children here in the Hilbert School District.



Sincerely,

Anthony Sweere  
District Administrator

Dear Representative Tittl,

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Sincerely,

Anthony Sweere  
District Administrator

**Northwood School District  
N14463 Hwy 53  
Minong, WI 54859**

November 18, 2013,

Dear Wisconsin Legislature,

I was one of the district administrators who sent a letter in support of the common core standards. As the educational leader in a small rural school, I have wholeheartedly supported Tony Evers' effort to strengthen the educational program in our great state. I have seen tremendous growth of our staff as they have embraced the changes. We have spent hundreds of hours collaborating on the Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balance Assessments. Please take the comments seriously - and do not send us backwards. We are moving forward!

1. Yes, the school board adopted the state's standards. We believe that all schools should follow the state's plan in order to have a united effort. We should all be working for the same standards and goals.
2. Without a doubt, I believe the Common Core model standards are more rigorous. They require students to apply the knowledge-not just regurgitate it.
3. We generally have spent \$12,000- 15,000 a year on staff training and curriculum updates.
4. I support continuous school improvement. We constantly need to improve our system. Thus, for schools to improve, the state needs to continue to lead the improvement.

Thanks for taking the time to consider the facts of how schools have embraced the common core. Please let me know if I may be of further service to you.

Professionally,

Jean A. Serum  
District Administrator  
(715) 466-2297

10/29/2013 8:53 AM

1. Since 1997 ...

Yes - we adopted the standards that were adopted at the state level. As of 10/28/2013 the School District of Black Hawk adopted the Common Core standards.

2. State Superintendent Tony Evers....

Yes as of 10/28/2013

Yes we have augmented the standards in the sense of personalizing them for our staff and students. We have been impacted by the adoption of the standards by the need to provide professional development to implement the standards. We also invested in the Curriculum Companion software (CESA 7) to assist the transition. I strongly feel the implementation of the standards created an urgency to review what and how we are teaching, More rigorous standards - not to say teachers were not expecting a high standard from our students.

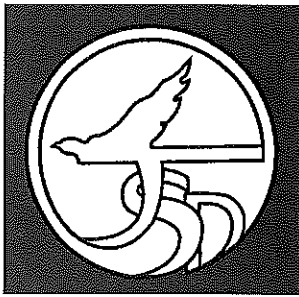
3. What costs...

Two summers of approximately twenty teachers working on the standards at three days per teacher at \$160 per day. Two or three in-service days per year. The cost of the Curriculum Companion. The expenditure of human resources over the last two years and going forward (well spent).

4. Yes a formalized review makes sense to check the validity of the standards. Learning and education are ongoing endeavors, the target is not stationary, therefore we need to adapt. I would be for the review, but at whatever level the review occurs, it would need to be paid for (please do not make it an unfunded mandate).

Thank you,

Willy Chambers  
Superintendent/ Dir. of Spec. Ed.  
Black Hawk School District  
608-439-5400 ext 103



# School District of Jefferson

*Providing an environment of excellence and opportunity  
for all students to achieve their dreams.*

[www.jefferson.k12.wi.us](http://www.jefferson.k12.wi.us)

November 11, 2013

## Office of the Superintendent

206 S. Taft Avenue  
Jefferson, WI 53549  
(920) 675-1000  
(920) 675-1020 (FAX)  
(920) 674-7880 (TDD)

## Jefferson High School

700 W. Milwaukee Street  
Jefferson, WI 53549  
(920) 675-1100  
(920) 675-1115 (Attendance)  
(920) 675-1126 (Guidance)  
(920) 675-1120 (FAX)

## Jefferson Middle School

501 S. Taft Avenue  
Jefferson, WI 53549  
(920) 675-1300  
(920) 675-1320 (FAX)

## East Elementary School

120 S. Sanborn Avenue  
Jefferson, WI 53549  
(920) 675-1400  
(920) 675-1420 (FAX)

## West Elementary School

900 W. Milwaukee Street  
Jefferson, WI 53549  
(920) 675-1200  
(920) 675-1220 (FAX)

## Sullivan Elementary School

618 Bakertown Road  
Sullivan, WI 53178  
(920) 675-1500  
(920) 675-1520 (FAX)

Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt  
Chairman  
Assembly Select Committee on  
Common Core Standards  
State Capitol, Room 16 West  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt and Members of the Assembly Select Committee:

I am writing to respond to the questions posed in a letter received on October 28, 2013, in relation to select committees in the Wisconsin legislature beginning the process of reviewing the Common Core model standards.

I assumed the role of Superintendent of Schools in the School District of Jefferson on July 1, 2013. In addition, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Pupil Services assumed their roles on July 1, 2013. The information provided to respond to your questions is knowledge that we are acting under.

The School District of Jefferson aligns curriculum standards to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. In 2010, under State Superintendent, Tony Evers, Wisconsin adopted the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The School District of Jefferson followed this adoption for our district and began the process of aligning both PK-12 English Language Arts and PK-12 Mathematics standards to those in the Common Core. In addition, in 2012-2013, the district purchased the Common Core version of Northwestern Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment for students in grades K-11 to assist us in evaluating learning outcomes in the areas of reading, language usage, mathematics, and science.

When calculating costs incurred with curriculum updates and teacher training, the estimated cost comes to \$335,100 in expenses to provide the student resources in English Language Arts and Mathematics aligned to Common Core standards and professional development for instructors. The Common Core standards and benchmarks for student proficiency are more rigorous as well as more clearly defined for each grade level than the Wisconsin Model Academic

Letter to Representative Thiesfeldt and Members  
of the Assembly Select Committee  
November 11, 2013  
Page 2

Standards were. In addition, Wisconsin has changed the benchmark levels on the state assessment for what is considered proficient in the area of reading, language usage and mathematics. This change has caused all districts to reassess their curriculum and analyze student outcomes in order to continue to meet proficiency benchmarks.

In closing, you asked whether our district supports the adoption of a review process of academic standards every five to seven years. Our district process is to review each curricular area every six years. In order to stay current, we would appreciate that the state maintains current standards in each curricular area (not only English Language Arts and Mathematics). By doing so, district leadership can ensure our students are globally competitive and prepared for the college or career of their choice.

Sincerely,



Craig S. Gerlach  
Superintendent

dh

November 12, 2013

Wisconsin Legislature

[commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:commoncore@legis.wisconsin.gov)

Dear Common Core Committee Members:

Following are Kewaskum School District responses to your request for input on Common Core State Standards:

1. Since 1997, Wisconsin law has required each school board to adopt academic standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history. Wis. Stat. 118.30(1g)(a). School boards may adopt the Department of Public Instruction's model standards or adopt their own. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards? **(No. Kewaskum School District used State Standards.)**
2. State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core model standards for the state of Wisconsin in 2010. These standards have also been adopted by many school districts and are sometimes augmented and/or strengthened by local officials to better meet the needs of their individual district. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? **(Yes.)** Has your district augmented those standards in any way? **(No.)** How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? **(Disciplinary literacy push across all content areas. Curriculum revision resulting in increased rigor and vertical alignment. Content clarity at each grade level increased balance of fiction and non-fiction literature/text. More rigorous assessment.)** If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously? **(More rigorous.)**
3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc. as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the common Core model standards in June of 2010? **(Difficult to place a dollar amount since new resources were necessary regardless ((math text adoption)) and any workshops or conferences are tied not only to CCSS but curriculum, instruction and assessment as well.)**
4. Many states, such as Minnesota, Iowa and Massachusetts, have a formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not? **(Yes, as career and college readiness changes/evolves, standards should be reviewed.)**

Sincerely,

James Smasal, District Administrator

Kewaskum School District



Honorable Committee on the Common Core,

My name is Bill Van Meer and I am honored to serve public school children in New Holstein and the surrounding communities as their superintendent of schools. Here are the answers to your questions as they apply or I have knowledge of in the School District of New Holstein.

1. I am not aware, without extensive research of the minutes, if the board of education took formal action to adopt the model academic standards after 1997. This was before any current administrator or board member tenure. Having said that, the members of the team who were here prior to the adoption of the CCSS do remember working diligently on our curriculum and making sure it was aligned to the Wisconsin Model Standards. Our school board has been kept aware almost monthly on what our progress has been with the CCSS work since it was adopted by the DPI and the district.
2. Our district has adopted both the ELA CCSS and the math CCSS as a platform for our curriculum development. Our teachers absolutely have augmented or gone beyond the academic standards. They believe the standards are a base from which to build an even stronger learning experience for kids. Yes, the standards are definitely more rigorous than our previous standards.
3. We budget annually for professional development and we have not increased that budget significantly to accommodate the CCSS training needed. In fact, since revenue limits are in place and we are declining in enrollment we have been unable to increase our professional development budget to levels needed. Our teachers have done a lot of this on their own time as well. While we made an effort to find materials to align more closely to the CCSS we would have purchased material otherwise. So your question is confusing and hard to answer.
4. I would support a review of the standards. We would probably do this on our own anyway as part of our SOP.

Sincerely,  
Bill Van Meer  
District Administrator  
School District of New Holstein.

# **School District of Stockbridge**

110 School Street PO Box 188 Stockbridge, WI 53088  
920 439 1158 FAX 920 439 1150

**David Moscinski** Superintendent [davmoscinski@stockbridge.k12.wi.us](mailto:davmoscinski@stockbridge.k12.wi.us)

## **1. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?**

Prior to June of 2010, the School District of Stockbridge followed the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for English Language Arts (including reading and writing), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies (including geography and history) which had been promulgated in 1998 by the Governor's Council on Model Academic Standards. The document detailing these standards can be found at: <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/standards/index.html>

## **2. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards?**

The School District of Stockbridge is currently aligning the curriculum for Mathematics, English Language Arts and Literacy with the model Common Core Standards. Since the Common Core Standards will form the basis for next year's state and federally mandated student achievement testing, it would be foolish for a district not to comply with and follow them.

***....would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had previously used?***

In my opinion the Common Core Standards are more rigorous than the 1998 Model Academic Standards. I do not believe however, that a question of rigor should frame this issue, but rather a question of expectation.

For all of its faults the No Child Left Behind Act set a high degree of expectation for student proficiency no matter what a standards degree of rigor. The NCLB incrementally increased the percentage of students expected to be proficient so that by 2014 the percentage would be 100%, or all of the students.

In the five years prior to 2012, the WKCE scores showed 87% of students in Wisconsin school districts were considered to be proficient. The consistent attainment of this degree of proficiency was outstanding considering that during this same time period 13% of Wisconsin students were identified as having an exceptional educational need.

Faced with the distinct possibility however, that a 100% proficiency level would not be attained by 2014, the DPI applied for a waiver to the NCLB. In the waiver process, the "framing" of the question changed from "Is a 100% proficiency level attainable?" to "How rigorous are the standards? The question of expectation however, remains. No matter the degree of rigor, will all students be expected to master the standard and if not, why?

## **3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates ...?**

In the 2012-13 school year the district purchased a Kg.-8 Mathematics Curriculum including textbooks that were aligned to the Common Core Standards for Mathematics. The cost was approximately \$10,000.

This year the district will purchase a Kg.-8 Curriculum for English Language Arts and Literacy that will also be aligned to the Common Core Standards. The cost will be in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000.

## **4. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin?**

Since 1972 Wisconsin's academic standards have been set and/or reviewed on at least ten occasions. This averages out to a review every four years for the past 41 years. Setting a formalized process of review every 5 to 7 years would stretch the time between reviews and at least give a ninth grade class time to graduate before standards change.

*Award Winning School with an Expectation of Student Success*

10/29/2013 10:58 AM

Dear Legislators,

I have received your letter regarding the common core. I attended the hearing in Fond du Lac and prepared testimony with 10 other districts from Sheboygan County. Attached is the testimony we submitted.

I am incredibly disappointed by how the hearing was conducted. We arrived at 11 am and signed up to testify; fourth on the list. We were told by many people in the legislature that the testimonies were on a first come, first served basis. We were told that there is no way to “get on the agenda” other than by showing up early. Clearly that is not true. Once the hearing began, several “special guests” received preferential treatment, including extended time. One “special guest” wasn’t even a resident of Wisconsin and was granted over 60 minutes to speak. The Superintendents from Sheboygan County did not get to present until several hours later (7:40 to be exact) and we received a whole 3 minutes to speak. Needless to say, I am very disappointed in the process. Perhaps I was naive to the integrity of our government.

Some of the specific questions asked in your letter are addressed below:

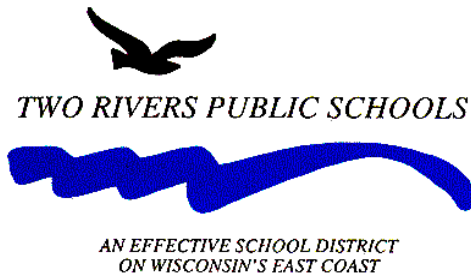
The Howards Grove School District has adopted the model Common Core standards. We have provided professional development time and resources to our teachers to implement them.

Our district has seen an increase in rigor and achievement by our students by adopting these standards. The CCSS are substantially more rigorous than any other standards previously used in this state.

Continuous improvement is always a goal of the Howards Grove School District. We have a budget for professional development every year. We did not add any additional money to that budget to implement the CCSS. There was NO INCREASE to our professional development budget because of the CCSS.

Continuous improvement is always important and a review process should always be in place. The Howards Grove School District would support a review every 5 to 7 years.

Christopher Peterson  
Superintendent  
Howards Grove Public Schools  
403 Audubon Road  
Howards Grove, WI 53083



Two Rivers Public Schools  
4521 Lincoln Ave3nue  
Two Rivers, WI 54241  
(920) 794-1614  
FAX (920) 793-5068  
lisa.quistorf@trschools.k12.wi.us

Date: November 15, 2013

RE: Common Core

The Two Rivers Public School District spoke in favor of maintaining the common core model standards. We had representatives at both Madison and Fond du lac.

1. TRPSD adopted and implemented the Department of Public Instruction's model.
2. We began learning about and understanding the common core in 2010 – 2011. The process of aligning our curriculum to the common core started in the summer of 2011. The common core provided us with the standards to guide the development of our curriculum to be more rigorous.
3. The costs each year including 2010 were designated for teacher curriculum writing summer camps. Also school year grade level math and ELA department in-service throughout the year at approximately \$10,000. This includes additional materials to enrich and support the materials we currently had in our district .We did purchase a new Math series this summer – However. Math was on our curriculum rotation of purchasing text materials. Cost \$100,000.
4. We continually update and improve our curriculum. A process of updating and eliminating standards would be much more beneficial. A continual review process would

benefit everyone. be reviewing our standards. It is important to provide the best guide in standards to meet the needs of our students

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

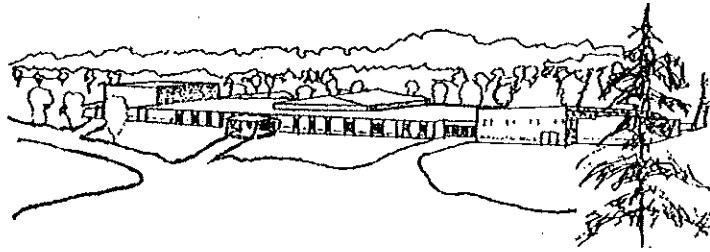
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DIST. ADMINISTRATOR

DR. WILLIAM H. GREB  
CURRICULUM DIRECTOR

DEBRA J. STRAUS  
SPECIAL ED. DIRECTOR

KRISTOFFER BROWN  
TECH. COOR./COMM. ED. DIR.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THREE LAKES**

*"Teaching Students to be Productive Citizens"*

October 30, 2013

Common Core Legislative Committee  
PO Box 8952  
Madison WI 53708

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing a response to your letter regarding the Common Core model standards. We have implemented the standards in the Three Lakes School District, and found that they were more rigorous in some areas and less rigorous in others in regard to our previously adopted standards. Overall, I believe we strengthened the model standards during the process of revising our standards to include the model standards.

The answers to your four questions are as follows:

1. The Three Lakes School District formally adopted the Department of Public Instruction's model standards prior to June of 2010.
2. Our district has adopted the model Common Core Standards and throughout the implementation process has augmented those standards with some of our own that were already in place. There has been little or no impact on our district as a result of the adoption of the Common Core Standards. We believe the Common Core Standards were slightly more rigorous than the previous state standards in some areas. Like most districts, we always go beyond the required standards to ensure our curriculum is more rigorous.
3. The Three Lakes School District has incurred no cost beyond what we normally incur as part of our normal curriculum review in adopting the common core standards. Our district has a living curriculum that is continuously revised over a five-year period with a formal renewal adopted by the Board of Education every five years.
4. Yes, I believe academic standards should be reviewed every 5-7 years. This continuous review will enable us to keep up with a knowledge base that is forever changing, as well as requirements from business and industry.

I appreciate this opportunity to be heard by your committee.

Very truly yours,

Dr. George J. Karling  
District Administrator

GJK/mb



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Response to Inquiry from members of the Select Committee on Common Core Standards**

Members of the Committee on Common Core Standards,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback to your inquiries about the Milwaukee Public School district's experience with implementing the Common Core standards. Below, please find the responses to the specific questions that were posed. We hope the responses are of use in the committee's work.

In previous years, prior to June of 2010, Milwaukee Public Schools used the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and developed Learning Targets that were grade level specific and tied to those standards. The Common Core Standards are a more rigorous set of standards than used previously and the district has not augmented the standards at this time.

Curriculum development, assessment development and instructional improvement are part of a continuous process in any school district. In our experience, the adoption of the Common Core State Standards became integrated into the continuous improvement of curriculum and instruction. The implementation of the Common Core State Standards did not result in additional costs outside of normal Curriculum and Instruction processes. In some ways, the Common Core State Standards have streamlined curriculum processes since standards are identified by grade level rather than grade bands.

The district believes that review and updates cycles are important, but a set timeframe is difficult to predetermine. We do not yet have systemic data on student learning and achievement (SMARTER Balance Assessment that begins in 2014-15) that will measure student's achievement of the standards. We will need to look at these results to determine if students have reached higher levels of achievement and demonstrate greater depth of knowledge as a result of CCSS.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share the district's experience with the Common Core State Standards.

Hello-

My name is Patrick Olson and I am the District Administrator at Prairie Farm Schools here in Wisconsin. This is my first year as District Administrator in Prairie Farm. Prior to this opportunity I was the PreK-12 Principal here at Prairie Farm for three years. Prior to that, I taught in Glenwood City, New Richmond, and Turtle Lake. I am writing in response to the the public hearings that were held on the Common Core Standards and wanted the Wisconsin Legislature to know our story.

As Principal I was also the curriculum director here at Prairie Farm. When I first came to Prairie Farm the board and staff expressed concern over curriculum as a whole. Together with staff we created a four year plan which I have attached. The largest common denominator in this process was the Common Core Standards. These more rigorous standards are not as vague as the previous standards and have allowed us to create common ground with all stakeholders involved. These standards have allowed our staff to focus more on our curriculum as a whole. I am proud to say we have seen great strides in both our staff's understanding of the standards and curriculum due to all of us speaking the same verbiage. I can also say the more detailed standards have increased the rigor which is one of our district goals.

Altogether, we have seen success with our students when it comes to state test scores. For example, our Elementary jumped up 14 points to exceeding expectations on the New Wisconsin State Report card because of our overall collaboration using the Common Core. The Common Core Standards has also allowed our staff to collaboratively create common assessments and create horizontal alignment in other curriculum areas . As a school we have used data and the Common Core as a framework to drive instruction. Just to be clear we use it as a curriculum framework and not curriculum itself..

Overall, the Common Core has been the largest factor to our successes in terms of a Curriculum Framework.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our story and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,

Patrick B. Olson  
District Administrator  
School District of Prairie Farm  
715-455-1861 ext. 219  
[polson@prairiefarm.k12.wi.us](mailto:polson@prairiefarm.k12.wi.us)



Hello, Yes we have adopted the model Common Core Standards.  
We have not augmented the standards in any way.  
The Common Core Standards have definitely been more rigorous than the previous standards.

Thanks

Kevin

Kevin Shetler, Ed. D.  
District Administrator  
Gale-Etrick-Trempealeau School District  
608-582-4657 ext. 1901

November 20, 2013

Dear Wisconsin Legislators,

Brad Saron, Administrator for the Chippewa Falls School District has asked me to respond to the request for information on the Common Core model standards. The information for our district is as follows:

1. Prior to 2010, the Chippewa Falls School District had formally adopted the Wisconsin State Standards at grades 4, 8, and 12. There were not specific standards for other grades. We worked with a consortium at CESA 10 to analyze those standards and what the expectations might be at other grade levels based on those standards. Those Wisconsin Standards were available on the DPI website. I'm sure that you have been able to see them. I have attached our old report card language based on those standards.
2. The Chippewa Falls School District has adopted the Common Core Standards in Mathematics and English/Language Arts. As we have analyzed those standards and our curriculum, there are some areas that are not specifically mentioned in the standards that we continue as a priority for instruction, for example, cursive writing. We have spent the time since 2010 in a standards analysis process for the Common Core Standards developed by national experts in education: Doug Reeves, Larry Ainsworth, and others. This process ensures that the intended standards are connected to the curriculum resources that we utilize and assessment of student progress toward the standard. It has impacted our district by changing the materials and resources that we use and professional development time and expenses for our staff in understanding and meeting those standards. However, those changes also occurred when our district adopted the Wisconsin State Standards at grades 4, 8, and 10, years before. The Common Core Standards are more rigorous than the standards that we had been using in English Language Arts and Math and required quite a bit of change in how concepts were introduced and the pacing guides across all grade levels. Students are now expected to be reading basic books at the end of Kindergarten. Prior to that we focused on letter names and letter sounds as the main kindergarten literacy skill. The Common Core Standards are much more specific than our old standards and that made the curriculum work more efficient. They clearly state expectations vs the old standards that were more vague statements. There is a higher expectation to develop understanding between types of information and draw new conclusions. In math
3. It is not really possible to correctly state costs associated with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. While there were costs with staff planning, professional development, and purchase of resources including textbooks, some of those costs would have incurred anyway as materials wear out or become outdated. Teachers also meet to review materials, student results, and update resources through an ongoing curriculum cycle.

Sincerely,

Jenny Starck  
Curriculum Director  
Chippewa Falls School District

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with additional information regarding the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in the Green Bay Area Public Schools. It should be noted that we also attended the public hearing in Fond du Lac and provided you with both written and oral testimony. Hard copies were provided and electronic copies were also sent.

Staff has put in countless hours in an effort to provide you with a thorough response to your request. We are hopeful that you find the attached information useful as you make your decision. In addition, in the spirit of collaboration, we are also sending the information to the members of the committee who were not part of the request as well as our local legislators.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle Langenfeld  
Superintendent of Schools and Learning  
Green Bay Area Public School District  
200 S. Broadway  
Green Bay, WI 54303  
(920) 448-2100

# Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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**November 18, 2013**

**TO:** Dr. Michelle Langenfeld

**From:** Andrea Landwehr, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

**Re:** Common Core State Standards Legislative Review



GREEN BAY AREA  
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT  
All learning. All growing.

## **1. 1997 Adoption of Department of Public Instruction’s Model Standards:**

### **Background**

From 1997-2009, the Green Bay Area Public School’s Curriculum Department led focused efforts on designing grade level benchmark standards in grades 4K-11 that aligned to the Wisconsin Model Standards for grades 4, 8 and 12 in the areas of English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Copies of second, sixth and tenth grade benchmark standards are attached for your review in the four core areas.

In 2006, curriculum teams began the process of writing curriculum using the researched based framework, *Understanding by Design*, as a curriculum planning framework to unwrap the essential grade level skills and strategies, develop assessments, adopt content specific resources and plan for meaningful learning in the classroom. Curriculum teams used Eclipse, an internet based curriculum management system to organize curriculum and make it accessible to teachers.

Professional learning on both the Model State Standards and the district benchmark standards was designed by each curriculum team at the completion of the writing for each curricular area and provided to the appropriate teachers.

## **2. Adoption of the Common Core State Standards:**

### **Timeline and Process**

**The Green Bay Area public schools adopted the Common Core State Standards in the spring of 2010. The following is a timeline of curriculum alignment and implementation:**

# Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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## English Language Arts

### 2010-2011

Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, curriculum for current elementary and secondary ELA courses was reviewed to determine alignment with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Grade K-6 teams were organized and provided with professional learning to begin the writing of the curriculum and selection of resources to align with the CCSS. This began with professional learning on the understanding of a “standards-based” versus a “standards-referenced” curriculum.

Curriculum teams worked in partnership with CESA 7 to provide additional support in the understanding of the CCSS by unwrapping the standards and learning more about the specific skills, strategies and proficiency outcomes at the end of each grade level or grade band.

Teams of content teachers at the secondary level were formed to look at the 6-12 Literacy Standards for History, Social Studies, Science and the Technical Areas. The goal was to support teacher understanding of the role they play in teaching students to read, write and think as historians, scientists, etc.

### 2011-2012

The formal process of writing curriculum aligned with the CCSS began this year for all K-6 ELA writing teams. Essential questions, assessments, a progression of learning and grade specific units of study were developed by all teams. Mentor texts for whole group instruction, along with text sets at various instructional levels for small group instruction, were selected as resources to support the learning of the new standards.

Grades 7 and 8 ELA teams began the process of deepening their understanding of the CCSS and aligning their curriculum work with expected grade level outcomes.

### 2012-2013

K-8 curriculum teams continued their work on writing curriculum, designing assessments, developing a pacing guide, a learning progression and writing units of study that included additional resources to support the learning of the CCSS. Professional learning was also provided for all teachers to ensure that they understood the implications the CCSS had on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Grades 9-10 began their work with aligning ELA 9 and ELA 10 with the CCSS. An additional shift was made to learning about an instructional framework for all ELA classrooms that allowed opportunities for small collaborative group learning at a student’s instructional level.

# Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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## **2013-2014**

Grades K-8 began implementation of the new curriculum aligned with the CCSS in the fall of 2013.

Grades 9-10 are continuing their work on designing new curriculum and selecting resources that align with the CCSS.

Grades 11-12 have begun the work of unwrapping standards and designing curriculum to align coursework for both ELA 11 and grade 11-12 ELA electives to the CCSS.

## **Math**

### **2010-2011**

Throughout the 2010-2011 school year, K-5 curriculum teams began work to unwrap the Common Core State Standards for Math. Resources were evaluated and the adoption of ***Math Expressions*** was approved as a resource to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

Teachers were provided with professional learning on the CCSS and the new resource in June of 2011.

### **2011-2012**

K-5 teachers began implementation of the new curriculum using the adopted resource to design lessons aligned with CCSS. Additionally, professional learning was provided for teachers through math content leaders at a building level. The professional learning was on the Mathematical Practice Standards and grade level skills, strategies and proficiency outcomes outlined in the CCSS.

### **2012-2013**

Grade K-5 continued their work on providing professional learning through math content leaders on deepening their understanding of the CCSS and implications to teaching and learning in the classroom.

Grades 6-9 began work on unwrapping the CCSS for grades 6-8 and Algebra 1. The Essential questions, common assessments and learning progressions were designed. Mathematical Practice Standards were examined and embedded throughout the learning progressions. Professional learning for grades 6-9 included an inquiry-based instructional framework.

Curriculum teams began the work of aligning Geometry to the CCSS in the spring and continued their work over the summer.

# Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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## **2013-2014**

Curriculum teams have begun the work of aligning the curriculum for Geometry to the CCSS. Additionally, all grade 6-12 teams are in the process of piloting resources to make an informed decision on which resources should be adopted to best support the teaching and learning of the CCSS in the classroom.

Curriculum teams will begin the work of aligning Algebra 2 to the CCSS in the spring of 2014.

### **Augmentation of the Standards:**

Curriculum writing teams have focused on developing a scope and sequence, pacing guide, and lesson progressions at each grade level to guide the teaching and learning in the classroom. Common assessments and units of study have been developed in the area of ELA and math. Exemplar learning plans have been written to guide teacher decision-making focused on best instructional practices.

### **Impact on District Initiatives:**

#### **Staffing**

Since the adoption of the ELA and math CCSS, six additional elementary literacy coaches have been hired to ensure that teachers are supported at all elementary schools. In addition, full-time literacy coaches have been hired in grades 6-8 and part-time in grades 9-12 to support the implementation and job embedded professional learning in the ELA classrooms.

Elementary math content leaders and secondary math coaches have been hired to support the implementation of math CCSS in K-12 classrooms throughout the district.

#### **Professional Learning**

The CCSS has made our district rethink the way we provide professional learning to our teachers. To sustain the deep learning that needs to take place, quality learning needs to happen within the context of a job-embedded, gradual release of responsibility model. The one-size-fits-all model of the past will not support the various needs of teachers. An apprenticeship approach to professional learning, allows for teachers to engage in meaningful colleague conversations within the shared context of the classroom.

#### **RtI-Response to Intervention**

Quality, rigorous universal curriculum is the foundation for increased student achievement. When students are not responding to the universal curriculum, we need to provide a tiered



# Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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approach to additional opportunities for learning. The CCSS provides us with a K-12 continuum of learning that supports an understanding of the gaps a student may have in learning and provide direction for intervention.

## **New Rigor**

The Teaching & Learning Department, in collaboration with district literacy and math leaders, believe that the adoption of the Common Core State Standards has provided our district with an opportunity to increase the expectation of rigorous learning in our classrooms. Just adopting the standards is not at the heart of increasing the rigor of learning. It is the collaborative learning, focused on a deep understanding of the standards, which has a direct impact on shaping a teacher's practice in the classroom and providing children with an environment for rich and rigorous learning. Additionally, the CCSS has provided us with the opportunity to design standards based curriculum versus standards referenced curriculum. This will support the creation of formative and summative assessments that measure expected outcomes at the end of each grade level.

The CCSS has provided us with a shared context and focused attempt to support all teachers in the understanding of grade level outcomes, the need for both common formative and summative assessments and a national networking system to support our district initiatives around teaching and learning.

## **3. Common Core State Standards Cost Incurred:**

As soon as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were approved three years ago our district went to work, because our teachers and administrators saw the increased rigor and were excited to put them into place. We felt they would help us better prepare all our students to be college, career, and community ready. Our teachers and administrators spent hundreds of hours rewriting curriculum to align with the CCSS and we also created report cards based upon the new standards. We purchased textbooks, materials, and technology to align with our new curriculum at a price tag of approximately \$6 million. We also provided hundreds of hours of professional development for our teachers specific to the CCSS at a price tag of \$540,000 because we wanted to be sure our teachers were very knowledgeable about the standards and well-prepared to teach using them.

The investment of money, staff time, and resources has been quite significant, at a total of \$311 per student. If this amount per student is consistent across the state, it would mean Wisconsin taxpayers have already spent a total of \$270 million for the work to align district curricula to the CCSS.

## **4. Curriculum Renewal Cycles:**

## Wisconsin Legislature: Academic Standards Review

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It is the Teaching and Learning Department's belief that curriculum needs to be in a continuous renewal phase. Due to the advancement of technology and global communications, we know that our societal needs are rapidly changing. As a result, characteristics of a proficient graduate are continuously being revised. Having a formal review cycle, with a process to reflect on the changing needs of our workforce, will support an education system that remains progressive and intuitive to the demands of a changing society.

We support a state initiative focused on a curriculum renewal cycle that includes formal review of academic standards every 5 to 7 years. This aligns with district past practices for curriculum revisions. In addition, we believe that we need to support a curriculum process where teachers at the building level are continuously reflecting upon their student needs and creating content specific units of study and learning plans designed to meet those needs. We need to support a district structure that promotes the design of Professional Learning Communities where a culture of learning is nurtured. We need to provide principals and teachers collaborative time with colleagues to go deeper with their own understanding of the critical teaching and learning that needs to take place in our schools and most importantly, individual practice in the classroom.



November 18, 2013

Wisconsin Legislature  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Common Core

Dear Legislators;

I am responding to the letter regarding Common Core questions that you have asked of our district:

Question #1: Prior to 2010, our district had adopted standards consistent with those set forth by the Department of Public Instruction by including these standards in the related coursework curriculum, which in turn was approved by our Board of Education.

Question #2: We have not asked our Board of Education to adopt the Common Core standards as a stand-alone agenda item. We have built in the Common Core as part of our curriculum in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Board of Education approval of these standards occurs when the curriculum developed to address these standards is approved by the Board. We have augmented some of these standards with additional curriculum in certain areas. We believe the Common Core is currently more rigorous than our previous curriculum standards, however we are asking for Board approval in the format discussed here in order to add to or adjust areas that may need some fortification.

We would like to retain some level of flexibility in using these standards, to be able to add, or subtract from them in order to create the most appropriate curriculum for our school district. With the coming onslaught of private school vouchers, we need the flexibility to create very high academic standards in order to gain a competitive advantage over private voucher schools that do not, or cannot, offer the same.

Question #3: Costs incurred for our recent curriculum work that includes developing new curriculum around the Common Core, currently is \$264,677. However some of this curriculum work, especially in Mathematics would have taken place for our elementary math curriculum regardless of previous standards or Common Core standards.

Question 4: My personal opinion is that curriculum standards should be reviewed at least every five years or when particular areas shows a state-average decline in state or national test scores.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd W. Gray', written over a large, stylized flourish.

Todd W. Gray  
Superintendent of Schools  
School District of Waukesha

As you requested, I am replying to the questions concerning the Common Core Standards as they have impacted the Pittsville School District.

1. Prior to June of 2010 the Pittsville School District followed the DPI recommended Standards which were in place at that time.
2. Yes, our District has adopted the model Common Core Standards. The Common Core Standards are much more rigorous than the previous standards. We have embraced the change and feel strongly that the change has been a great improvement. Please do not take away or modify the Common Core. They are excellent for Education!
3. Figuring out the costs is very difficult to say, our teachers have spent a great amount of time and effort the past three years aligning their curriculum and assessments with the common core. This alignment process has provided our staff with the opportunity to have the important discussions with their peers in the quest for improving student achievement levels of all children. They have embraced the concepts and are very supportive of the work and results we are seeing. We have spent a great amount of time on RTI, PBIS and Educator Effectiveness implementation during this time as well, so all the training of staff has been interrelated.
4. We currently have a 5 year review schedule for all of our curriculum development, so a an academic standards review would not be an issue for our District.

Terry Reynolds  
District Administrator  
Pittsville School District  
715-884-5222  
[reynoter@pittsville.k12.wi.us](mailto:reynoter@pittsville.k12.wi.us)

November 18, 2013

RE: Requested Information – Common Core – Verona Area School District

1. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?

We have been unable to ascertain through a review of the records if past Verona Area School District Boards have formally approved Model Academic Records. It has been the practice of the Verona Area School District to use those standards adopted at the state level.

2. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? Has your district augmented those standards in any way? How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?

As with past practice, the Board has not formally adopted the Common Core Standards as we use those standards as adopted by the state.

The Verona Area School District has not augmented the Common Core Standards.

The district has been impacted by the Department's adoption of those model standards in a variety of ways This includes time to learn and understand the standards and then making changes in our curriculum. Additionally, we had to allocate materials and resources to teach the standards we were not currently teaching.

We consider the Common Core Standards to be more rigorous than the Model Academic Standards used in the past.

3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June of 2010?

While very difficult to quantify to a specific dollar amount, costs (both financial and human resource) include:

- Release time
- Curriculum writing pay,
- Teacher staff development
- Purchasing of new and additional resources
- Consultants as necessary

4. Many states, such as Minnesota, Iowa and Massachusetts, have a formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not?

The Verona Area School District supports the adoption of a formalized process whereby standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. School districts are required to review their curriculum and so it would be appropriate for the Department of Public Instruction to do the same with State standards. This support is based on the condition that educators, parents, industry leaders and knowledgeable policy makers largely drive the review process. We do not believe a standards review / adoption belongs to the Legislature en masse as that likely would / will lead to partisan divisiveness and a weakening of the standards.

#### Summary comments:

Most countries that are high performing in terms of student achievement as measured by standardized measures have nationally developed and required performance standards. The recent conversation about dropping the Common Core standards in favor of state or local standards flies in the face of what is best practice in most high performing countries, those very same countries that we are often measured against. Allowing the adoption of local or even state standards has the potential to create great inequities for students / localities in an era of global competition.

1. Yes, the Northland Pines School District did adopt the WI academic state standards. The Board approved this on July 27, 1998.

2. Although we are currently using Common Core State Standards in math and English Language Arts (ESL), we have not formally adopted them.

How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? Our district has been positively impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards. Our staff have worked collaboratively to meet the standards, our test scores have increased and we now have rigorous and common ground that we are covering in every classroom.

Would you consider the Common Core Model Standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district has used previously? Yes, they are definitely more rigorous than our previous standards. Following are five key points:

**I.** CCSS moves education beyond rote memorization of facts and challenges students to develop deeper levels of understanding of concepts. CCSS provides a framework for teachers to teach students how to be critical thinkers and apply what they learn rather than just memorize it. Education is no longer covering curriculum that is a mile wide and an inch deep because the CCSS focuses teaching into critical skills, not quantity of skills.

**II.** CCSS provide much more depth in learning than our earlier standards. What's more, having these common goals between states and schools will help create a network for teachers to share innovative teaching strategies and lessons that target similar goals, which we have never seen before. In a transient society it is essential that schools are all held accountable, have high standards, and consistent standards from school to school, and the CCSS provides this for us. CCSS will provide continuity to the educational experience of students across the state and nation, while allowing local school districts the freedom to choose the methods and materials that are the right fit for their community.

**III.** CCSS focuses on grade levels not grade spans. I like the fact that we now have specific benchmarks for what each student needs to know at the end of kindergarten, first grade, second grade and so on verses what we had before by the end of fourth grade, by the end of eighth grade and by the end of tenth grade. CCSS are grade specific and our old standards were too narrow and too broad.

**IV.** Our local school boards, administrators and teachers all have the authority to teach and use tools they see as best to meet these targets and the needs of individual students.

**V.** Common educational standards are essential for producing an educated workforce which Americans need to remain globally competitive. United States citizens are now

competing in an international environment and our students will need to be well trained for today's workplace(s). I want to know that our students are graduating well prepared to succeed in a competitive future. As a district, as educators, and as adults who reside here, it is our responsibility to prepare the children of today for tomorrow.

3. I really don't know if we can equate any costs specifically to Common Core. We did adopt a new math series this year; however, even without Common Core, the math series was up for review within our textbook review cycle and we were going to purchase new math textbooks in 2013 regardless. We have a 3 year roll-out plan in the area of technology where as a district we would like to be 1:1 with all our students. We are currently in year 1 and spent approximately \$150,000 on chromebooks for our students. Yes this will help when it comes to Smarter Balanced; however, even without Smarter Balanced we were going to go to 1:1.

4. Yes. We always need to look for continued improvement. I think every 5-7 years would be a fair assessment as we know the educational world is always changing and I believe we owe it to our students to be current as we deliver instruction. If Wisconsin modeled some type of review it would only make our curriculum stronger.

Mike Richie, District Administrator  
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Cornell has always followed the lead of DPI on standards and is doing so with the common core. We have not augmented those standards, and have found them to be much more rigorous than the previous standards. With the tougher standards has come the need to purchase new textbooks at this higher level and spending A LOT of time on professional development to bring the teachers up to speed on both the standards and the new teaching materials/methods.

Cost wise, while I could say the new textbook adoption cost us over \$40,000, we would have bought new books anyway, just not more rigorous ones. However, the professional development above and beyond what we would have spent anyway, is roughly \$28,000. This was money well spent as our test scores have gone up considerably.

Review process - I believe the standards are reviewed enough and there should not be a governmental mandate on it. There should be less mandates on public schools until you begin placing the same mandates on voucher schools.

The common core is going to be a challenge for many of our students to meet, probably 1/3 when you consider over 20% of our students are in special education and there are another 10-15% that have very little home support and are considered at-risk. We will continue to push our top students as we have done in the past.

I was at the hearing in Eau Claire and was so disappointed in the testimony of the flown in individuals. One only discussed testing and not the standards while the other thought all children should get a four year degree and that the standards are not tough enough. These people do not know or understand the U.S. education system, nor did the gentleman from Stanford realize many countries do not educate/test all of their children when he used them as a comparison.

The legislature should let professional educators take care of the academics of education. Take care of adequate funding instead. The \$100 million tax deduction could have helped schools instead of taxpayers.

Paul M. Schley, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

# KIMBERLY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Robert S. Mayfield, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Gary M. Kvasnica  
Director of Business Services

Denise M. Weyenberg  
Director of Human Resources



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November 1, 2013

Dear Common Core Legislative Committee:

The information included in this letter is in response to your October 2013 request from the Kimberly Area School District. The District has worked diligently to enhance our curriculum and instruction since the introduction of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2010. It is expected that the increased expectations from CCSS will help a good District become even better. It is important to emphasize that CCSS standards are not curriculum, and the terms are not interchangeable in the context of discussing CCSS. All curriculum decisions for Kimberly Area Schools were made locally.

Legislative Questions:

1. Prior to June 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?

The District adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in 1997, these standards provided direction for curriculum and instruction prior to the introduction of the CCSS in 2010. The Wisconsin Model Academic Standards provided broad direction for English, Math, Science and Social Studies in grades 4, 8 and 10 only.

2. Has your district adopted CCSS/How has your district been impacted by the adoption of CCSS?

The CCSS are now Wisconsin's State Standards and therefore the standards that guide curriculum work in the district. District curriculum is developed based on the CCSS, teacher input and student assessment data. CCSS are more rigorous than previous model academic standards because they are grade specific, and provide better and clear direction for local curriculum development. CCSS has greatly aided the District in the development of its literacy curriculum. The District was in the process of revising curriculum based on previous state standards, and CCSS made that work much easier. We are currently reviewing our math curriculum.

3. What cost has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates?

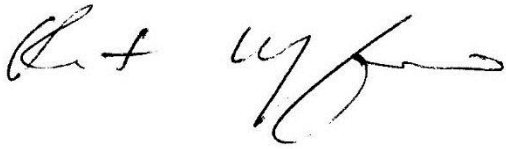
There were additional costs for aligning curriculum to the pending Smarter Balanced Assessment System. However, curriculum is continuously reviewed in the Kimberly Area School District and is part of a comprehensive budget plan. KASD devoted considerable time and resources to align assessment, instruction and curriculum to meet the expectations of the new State assessment based on CCSS. For example, all literacy and math curriculum were reviewed, and teacher training of the expectations for assessment, instruction and curriculum were conducted in grades 4k-12.

4. Would you support the adoption of a process to review standards every 5-7 years?

A review of CCSS every 5-10 years is a reasonable and pragmatic approach to assure that student expectations are aligned with State and National goals. However, there should be a level of local control included in the review/adoption process.

The greatest impact of the CCSS on the Kimberly Area School District is on the process of assessment and instruction by which students are asked to use critical thinking skills to make meaning and transfer knowledge more often. In turn, teachers have a greater focus on instruction to go beyond teaching and assessing rote skills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Mayfield". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Robert S. Mayfield, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

The Hurley School District is All-IN with the Common Core. We see value and unlimited growth potential for our students.

We have adopted the common core standards but we have not gone through a formal process. With this being adopted by our state we felt this step was unnecessary.

The common core standards are more rigorous and I see a focus on application of learning to real world problems. Isn't this something we have been wanting for a long time?

At this time we have not augmented the standards in our district. Over time, I do see us adjusting and possibly moving in a more rigorous direction. This will take time as we will need to have our teachers and our students become comfortable with the new rigor that is there. Like anything else, we can adjust as necessary.

Our district has spent money on this standard change. This is natural for any change schools make. We see the value and potential for our students, so we would naturally fund training and resources to implement the standards. Just as we have always done when we move in a better direction.

I would be very in favor of a process to review the standards every 5 to 7 years. That is the way it should be. Things change and we have to be able to adjust to change. Just like a strategic plan, it needs to be monitored and adjusted to meet every changing needs.

Last, I feel these standards give us a solid direction that provides the needed rigor and also relevancy to the real world. I see this as a giant step forward for our schools. I just feel that if we are not moving forward, we are moving backward. To me, this is a giant step forward!

Thanks for the chance to supply input.

Sincerely

Christopher J. Patritto  
District Administrator  
Hurley School District  
[patritto@mac.com](mailto:patritto@mac.com)

Wisconsin Legislature:

You have requested several pieces of information of me as District Administrator of the Tomahawk School District. Please find my answers below.

1. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards? (Please provide a copy.)

- In short, the TSD had not formally adopted standards. The TSD has however always followed the standards as supported by Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction. Therefore, the TSD has previously followed the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards.

2. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards?

- Yes, however not formally through Board action.

Has your district augmented those standards in any way?

- No

How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards?

- As with all legislative and/or DPI mandates and/or leadership direction, the TSD has spent time and money to be in compliance. With that said, the TSD has unpacked, trained for, and implemented the new Common Core State Standards. We continue to work to embed the standards in our curriculum. Every initiative and/or mandate enacted by the legislature or DPI causes Wisconsin's districts to act. Whether WI Model Academic Standards, CCSS, or any other standards put into place, districts must respond through action, money, and time. These components are standard fare.

If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?

- The CCSS are significantly more rigorous than the WI Model Academic Standards were and are truly an upgrade!

3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June of 2010?

- The costs you seek are unquantifiable. As mentioned before, the TSD has provided training, release time for creating learning targets for the standards (just as we did for the previous standards), etc. Every time our district receives updated mandates from Madison or the federal government, it behooves us to act accordingly.

4. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? (referring to a review every 5-7 years)

- Legislators need to understand that local districts are reviewing curriculum all the time, in continuous cycles. HOWEVER, standards should in large part stay the same over time. Changing standards affects all of the targets we shoot for. With that said, reviewing anything over time is not only wise, but extremely important. However, if the standards are still effective and promote student achievement, major overalls should not be required. Consider the Constitution of the U.S. which has remained fundamentally unchanged for since it was penned...although it has been 'tweaked' over time, it has not undergone fundamental change. Remaining vigilant with expectations for Wisconsin's children's education is a fundamental responsibility of all of us.

In closing, I know you did not ask for my two cents personally, but I would urge you to strongly consider the turbine that action on the Common Core will cause for your constituents and their schools. I realize there are numerous opinions on the 'political' nature of these standards. There is also a ton of misconceptions surrounding what these standards are and what they are not. Please know that local schools continue to do their very best for our kids. We control our curriculum, as we always have and hope to always do. However, these CCSS have raised the bar for our children and for our instructional practice. We ALL have done a lot to prepare the way for more rigor through our curriculum to meet these new expectations; any action taken by legislators at this point in time would be harmful in many ways. First, it would send us back to ground zero, having wasted a lot of time and money working towards higher standards and more rigor. Secondly, it would create an environment of mistrust with our ground troops, our teachers. Like many waves of change that have crashed on educational shores in the past that have subsequently receded back out to sea, this turnabout would say in uncertain terms, "same old, same old." And finally, the CCSS, the new Smarter Balanced Assessment, and Educator Effectiveness have signaled positive reforms for us in education. Do we really want to return to that which you yourselves had deemed ineffective? Food for thought.

Thank you for reading my personal commentary.

Sincerely,

*Sherry Baker*

Sherry (Cheryl) Baker  
Superintendent  
Tomahawk School District

*Go Hatchets!*



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF EDGAR

203 E. Birch Street, P.O. Box 196

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## DISTRICT OFFICE

Cari Guden  
District Administrator  
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## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Curriculum Coordinator  
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## MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

Jordan Sinz  
Middle/High School Principal  
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## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Rick Haanstad, President  
Gary Lewis, Vice-President  
Bill Dittman, Clerk  
Corey Mueller, Treasurer  
Mike Wolf, Member

1. Edgar adopted the Model Academic Standards in all academic areas (this would be in practice and not in specific policy). Our Curriculum & Instruction Director worked with the K-8 staff on the Model Academic Standards from 2002-2010 and then the K-12 staff on the Common Core Standards from 2011-current.
2. Edgar adopted the Common Core State Standards for both ELA and math. We have aligned our current curriculum K-12 with the CCSS. We have also adopted the Curriculum Companion as a guide to help with the full implementation of the ELA CCSS at Edgar. The CCSS are more rigorous in all grade levels. The ELA staff fully embraced the changes in curriculum using the CCSS. We saw many more rigorous changes in the ELA curriculum than we did with the math curriculum. The C&I noted that the Curriculum Companion from CESA 7 gave us a much more specific interpretation of the CCSS which truly guided the changes that we made at Edgar. We do not believe we would have made the drastic changes that we did without the guidance of the Curriculum Companion. Without question, the Common Core model standards are more rigorous.
3. The cost of district wide adoptions of new curriculums in ELA, math, and electives that are aligned with the district's goal of adopting the Common Core model standards to date has been in the neighborhood of \$150,000-\$160,000.
  - a. 2011-2012 Curriculum materials to fully align with the CCSS using the Curriculum Companion \$25,000 in materials, 947.75 hours of curriculum work (\$17,059.50). Total = \$42,059.50
  - b. 2012-2013 Curriculum materials for ELA, Math & Elective curriculums \$75,000 in materials, 758.75 hours of ELA curriculum work (\$13,657.50), 433.25 hours of Math curriculum work (\$7798.50) and 506.50 hours of Elective curriculum work (\$9117). During the 2012-2013 school year each grade level took 2-4 release days to further develop their new ELA units as well as one day for work on correlating the Math Curriculum companion to our newly purchased math materials. Approximately 20 days throughout the school year with 60 subs (\$5700). Total = \$111,273.00
4. In response to question number four, I believe that successful schools consistently review, analyze, and evaluate curriculums. The Common Core model standards serve as a map to guide schools through their curriculum process. The Common Core model standards provides the rigor necessary for our students to compete on a global level and the flexibility to allow the district to determine the methodology, strategies and pedagogies of delivery of instruction. In Edgar we have a 7 year plan to review curriculum K-12. We would be leery of a state mandated review process if it didn't align to our current review plan.

In conclusion, the Edgar School District supports the Common Core Standards. The district will continue moving forward, aligning our curriculum with the CCSS. Should the state choose to drop the adoption of the CCSS, the time lapse and void created by an attempt to roll out something "better" would seem to be wasteful.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions.

Cari L. Guden  
District Administrator

Dear Legislators -

Thank you for the recent letter you sent asking about Common Core Standards. Below are the answers to your questions for the New Glarus School District:

- 1) Prior to June of 2010, the New Glarus School District adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards.
- 2) New Glarus has adopted the Common Core Standards, and has not augmented them in any way. They are more rigorous than our previous standards.
- 3) Being new to the district, I am not able to quantify the costs incurred to implement the Common Core Standards.
- 4) There are pros and cons to having a set cycle to review standards and curriculum. I would prefer a recommended cycle, that isn't required, because there are times that the 5-7 year period does not fall at the right time. For example, if math has just been reviewed in 2009, then the state would not have reviewed it again until 2014 at the earliest and districts would not have known whether to start moving toward meeting the Common Core or not for at least 4 years.

Thank you for your interest in District Administrator's feedback.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Thayer

--

*Jennifer Thayer, Ph.D.*  
*Superintendent - New Glarus School District*

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(608)527-2410



## Legislative Survey on the Common Core Standards

Dr. Randy Refsland District Administrator Clinton Community School District

1. Our school district followed the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in all of the academic areas since their inception. There was no formal Board action. The standards were what were required and we followed them to the best of our ability.
2. The district again has not formally adopted the Common Core Standards but has been following them as the state adopted them. Our Board is in agreement that we needed higher and better standards and felt based upon the information we had that this was and is still the best way to go. The previous state standards were weak and needed to be improved upon. We feel these standards hold us to a higher degree of accountability and we are ok with that. It is what is best for our students. The Common Core standards are much more rigorous than the previous standards and are good for kids.
3. The monetary costs associated with the Common Core would be centered on revision of curriculum which for us means bringing in substitute teachers to cover teachers to do curriculum work. However, the Common Core is about curriculum revision and that is an area that is constantly being reviewed no matter what the curriculum or standards are. We have an ongoing curriculum review schedule for all areas that we offer in our schools and this was true prior to the Common Core and will be true in the future. Bottom line, our costs are in line with what we would have been doing anyway with reviewing and revising our curriculum. The biggest resource we have expended is time. If we have to go back and revise curriculum again so soon we have just wasted three years and we will be going backwards because the old state standards are not nearly as rigorous or research based as the Common Core. In addition the new state evaluation and assessment systems are all based upon implementation of the Common Core. If you pull the plug on the Common Core the ripple effect is significant and in my opinion damaging.
4. A cycle of reviewing standards every seven years or so makes sense, it is what most school districts do on a regular basis. The state certainly can do what individual districts do.

1. Prior to 2010, we did not formally adopt standards.
2. The School District of Thorp did spend a considerable amount of time implementing the standards in to the math and language arts curriculum. As teachers complete the process, the standards will be posted on our web site.
3. Costs associated with implementing the new standards...we have sent many teachers to get trained in the implementation of the standards. Over the course of two years, we have spent well over \$2,000 just for subs.
4. Yes, reviewing the standards periodically (5 or 7 years) is an excellent idea.

James A. Montgomery  
District Administrator/Elementary Principal  
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715-669-5548

Response to request for information from:

Dean Knudson – 30 <sup>th</sup> Assembly District	Jeremy Thiesfeldt – 52 <sup>nd</sup> Assembly
District	Paul Farrow – 33 <sup>rd</sup> Senate District
Alberta Darling – 8 <sup>th</sup> Senate District	Michael Schraa – 53 <sup>rd</sup> Assembly
District	Tom Larson – 67 <sup>th</sup> Assembly District
Don Pridemore – 22 <sup>nd</sup> Assembly District	Jim Steineke – 5 <sup>th</sup> Assembly District

In response to the request for information from certain Wisconsin Legislators (listed above) regarding management and implementation of the Common Core State Standards I am sending this message. As requested, I have attached evidence of the school board action to implement the previously mandated Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. As you will see the De Soto Area School District approved the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards on June 1, 1998.

In regards to the cost of implementation and management of the Common Core State Standards the De Soto Area School District has invested over \$75,000 over the past three years alone in professional development, curriculum development, staff in-service training and associated costs such as substitute teachers on school days, summer professional development and supplies. This is a significant amount of our school district annual budget considering that we have under a \$7 million dollar annual operating budget. Additionally, we have many new staff to train regarding Common Core Implementation due to the extremely high turn-over rate of our staff since the passing of ACT 10.

I will also take this opportunity to note to all legislators that in a relatively small school district like ours we have no Director of Instruction/Curriculum Director, no Elementary Guidance Counselor, far less full-time staff than larger districts and facilities that are sub-par compared to other districts of similar size and especially larger districts, yet the expectations for high performance are the same. We have a high rate of poverty in addition which has a high correlation to student achievement. Yet we make do with what we have and strive for high academic achievement while making no excuses.

Our district has augmented implementation of the Common Core State Standards through purchase of new Common Core based curriculum such as our entire PreK-12 Math Series this school year and teacher training for the new math series last year and this year. We are looking into doing the same with the PreK-12 Reading Series within 1-2 years as well. We have made a commitment to the Common Core and YES it is more rigorous.

In regards to the question of having a formalized process whereby the state's academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years, I am opposed to this because I firmly believe the review of academic standards should be completed by the professionals in the field- the Department of Public Instruction and educators they know are experts in their specific area i.e. math, reading, science, social studies, agriculture, computer science, etc. than by legislators dictating on some random interval when and what should be reviewed.

Jim Kuchta  
District Administrator

De Soto Area School District

accessibility for students was also discussed.

18 Motion was made by Terry Russell and seconded by Donna Shepherd to accept the bid  
19 from First Agency Insurance for student insurance for 1998-99. Motion carried.

20 Kathy Hawkins presented information on French classes and showed a video on the need  
21 for more foreign language courses beginning in the elementary schools. She stated it is very  
22 economical to the United States with students having a strong background in foreign language.

23 Motion was made by Terry Russell and seconded by Stephen McCullick to accept the  
24 Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Reading, English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.  
25 Motion carried.

26 Peggy Audetat and Kevin Walleser applied for the vacancy on the school board. The  
27 appointment was tabled until the June 29th board meeting.

28 Motion was made by Donna Shepherd and seconded by Stephen McCullick to pay \$25 per  
29 day for foreign travel and \$14 per day for domestic travel. Motion carried.

30 A yearly scholarship has been established by the family of John Englerth to be given in his  
31 memory. The Department of Commerce sent a letter stating no further action is necessary for the  
32 PECFA unleaded gas tank closure. Copies of proposals for long range facilities planning from  
33 various architects were presented to the board. The Facilities Needs Assessment Ad Hoc  
34 Committee will further discuss the proposals on June 29. Newspaper articles on the Prairie View  
35 Garden and Schoolhouse Essay by Barb Sedlmayr were presented. The district received a letter  
36 from State Superintendent John Benson thanking for his visit to the schools in March. The  
37 De Soto baseball team qualified for the State sectionals.

38 Motion was made by Donald Egge and seconded by Arnold Trussoni to adjourn to

10/28/2013 4:06 PM

Dear Assemblymen Knudson, Thiesfeldt, Schraa, Larson, Priedmore, Steineke and Senators Farrow, and Darling,

I received your letter seeking my input on the CCSS. My response is below.

As you know, since 2010, 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards. You also know that each state made its own local decision to adopt the CCSS after there were multiple opportunities to review drafts and voice feedback. The process of moving toward higher and clearer standards began in 2007 in partnership with many stakeholders including the business community, higher education and PK-12 public schools. Contrary to some grossly misinformed individuals, the Common Core State Standards were not forced upon states by the federal government. Quite the contrary. The CCSS were conceived when in 2010, when the National Governor's Association and the Council of State School Officers saw an opportunity to clearly define the knowledge and skills that would prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace by making them college and career ready through a set of consistent and rigorous educational standards.

1. Prior to 2010 our District used the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. I am sure that your committee's in-depth study of academic standards has resulted in it already having a copy of this set of standards, so a copy is not provided with this correspondence.
2. The state of Wisconsin, through the constitutional authority provided to the State Superintendent of Schools, adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010. Our District has adopted the CCSS. The premise of your question, "Has your district augmented those standards in any way?" is in question, in that standards are not in and of themselves what is taught to students. All districts, including ours, use district specific curriculums to ensure that all academic standards are addressed. If that is what the legislative committee is referring to when it asks about "...augmented those standards in any way?" then yes. The CCSS are more rigorous and will lead to students being more college and career ready post high school than they were in the past. It should be noted that WI has been among the national leaders in high school graduation rate and ACT scores. The CCSS will certainly maintain and will likely improve this distinction.
3. Our District has spent several thousand dollars in the purchase of curriculum mapping software which allowed our teachers to in some cases match existing curriculum and in others create new curriculum material aligned to the CCSS. We also spent and continue to spend significant time and money on professional development surrounding the implementation of the CCSS. It should also be noted, as you are aware, that the new state assessment system (Smarter Balanced Assessment) will be based on CCSS and will be implemented in the 2014-2015 school year.
4. Of course I would support reviewing our state's academic standards over time. It only makes sense to do so as the needs of students and society change over time.

It is ironic that our own state's Governor Walker highlighted the CCSS and Wisconsin's leadership in being one of the first to adopt CCSS as part of his reading reform effort, noting it in *The Wisconsin Read to Lead Task Force Report*. And though it is with enthusiasm and appreciation that this opportunity for feedback is received, one does wonder why it is coming now, after most of the heavy lifting in getting the CCSS implemented is done and why it did not come back in 2010, 2011 or even 2012.

As an educational professional, I have heard, read and seen from parents, stakeholders and individual legislators all sorts of opinions on the CCSS. I would value each of your thoughts on the following:

1. Why are you seeking input on the CCSS now, in 2013, rather than prior to 2010 when it was adopted by the state?
2. What reasons, groups or individuals prompted your current interest in the CCSS?
3. What are your personal thoughts on the rigor of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards? On what do you base your thoughts?
4. What are your personal thoughts on the CCSS in terms of rigor? On what do you base your thoughts?

I thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback on the CCSS. Thank you in advance to Assemblymen Knudson, Thiesfeldt, Schraa, Larson, Priedmore, Steineke and Senators Farrow, and Darling for your thoughts on my questions. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

*Patrick Mans*  
*Superintendent*  
*School District of Crivitz*  
*400 South Avenue*  
*Crivitz, WI 54114*  
*Phone: (715)854-2721 ext 315*

Please see my responses to the Common Core survey below:

- 1) Yes.....prior to June of 2010 the School District of Chilton had adopted academic standards. We adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. These were developed at grades 4, 8 and 10. They can be found at: <http://standards.dpi.wi.gov>
  
- 2) Yes.....the School District of Chilton has adopted the Common Core State Standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics.  
No.....we have not augmented these standards.  
During the 2012-2013 school year, the School District of Chilton began the implementation process of the ELA and Math Common Core State Standards. We sent teachers to staff development opportunities throughout the summer preceding the 2012-2013 school year, as well as throughout the school year. Utilizing the Curriculum Companion tool, developed by CESA 6, we paid teachers additional stipends to develop year-long curriculum plans to enter into Companion that supported the standards. While this was a significant amount of work, teachers felt that at last they had a better, more sequential curriculum from which to follow and instruct students. As Curriculum Companion is an electronic tool, teachers were able to not only “see” their own curriculum, but also the curriculum for grades above and below them. Teachers found this very valuable and meaningful dialogue about curriculum at all levels and in all content areas was ongoing.
  
- 3) Throughout the implementation of the Common Core Standards, the District has remained within its budget for curriculum development, staff development and the purchase of new resources aligned with the Common Core. Clearly, in order to follow the standards, we are not able to accomplish all that needs to be addressed within the scope of one academic school year. This work continues – as do the ongoing expenditures associated with this work. But this IS the work of school districts. This is the work we should we should be consistently involved in – in order to provide the highest level of academic service to our students.
  
- 4) Yes.....I would gladly welcome an academic review of standards every 5 to 7 years. We should be reviewing the standards on a more consistent rotation in order to remain relevant and maintain high standards. I would welcome the opportunity to be a part of that review process, but any process that involves the review of Wisconsin Standards – needs to rely heavily on the insights of Wisconsin educators. As long as the voices, opinions, expertise and experiences of Wisconsin educators would be truly valued in this process, I would support a formalized review, every 5 to 7 years, of Wisconsin Standards.

Thank you for asking my opinion on this important matter. I was in attendance at the Wausau hearing. Although I did not personally testify, the Chilton Middle School Principal, Mr. Rich Appel, did. At the hearing, I did register my support for the Common Core State Standards.



Dr. Claire Martin  
Superintendent  
School District of Chilton

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the common core standards discussion. I will attempt to add some perspective from the Iola-Scandinavia School District where I serve as the District Administrator.

Our school district does use the common core academic standards as its foundation but as is common in many school districts, we consistently look for opportunities to strengthen standards to best meet the needs of our students. The common core standards brought clarity and uniformity to the process for our school district and provide a benchmark to gauge our academic rigor and student college/career readiness.

Costs associated with all curriculum and assessment materials, professional development, and related trainings are on-going and represent a significant portion of our instructional budget each year. Going away from the investment we have made in this area over the past few years would be of concern.

Adopting a process to review academic standards on a consistent basis is good practice.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share some comments on the common core.

Sincerely,

David C. Dyb, Ed.D.  
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"Every Graduate an Engaged Lifelong Learner"

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November 13, 2013

Dear Wisconsin Legislative Committee on Common Core Standards:

Per the committee members' request, the following are responses from the Whitewater Unified School District (WUSD) related to your committee's review of the Common Core Standards.

**1. Prior to 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards?**

The Whitewater Unified School District previously aligned classroom instruction to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards.

**2. Has your district adopted the model Common Core Standards?**

The Whitewater Unified School District has adopted the Common Core Standards for math and language arts with initial efforts beginning the 2010-11 school year. Over the past three years, WUSD has reviewed, unpacked, aligned and embedded the standards in our instructional curricular maps for math and English/language arts. Our curriculum maps serve as the foundation for our teaching.

**Has your district augmented them in any way?**

WUSD has aligned our instructional programming to the Common Core Standards, and they serve as the foundation for our instruction. As a district, we have not added additional standards beyond the Common Core; however, individual teachers that have taught the skills outlined in the Common Core Standards to mastery have the autonomy to extend or teach beyond them. This is typical of any standards, as standards are meant to establish a "floor" and not a "ceiling."

**How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards?**

The Common Core Standards have provided strong structure for our math and English/language arts instruction and have established a framework for our curriculum mapping of these content areas K-12.

Additionally, we have spent considerable time and money unpacking and analyzing the standards, as well as realigning our curriculum to these new standards. It has been a

challenging and beneficial use of our time. The effort has been a good investment to ensure our students are guaranteed a quality, viable and consistent curriculum. The consistency is also appreciated considering the considerably heavy emphasis that has been placed on standardized assessment results as a means of defining “success” by many educational reformers.

WUSD first targeted math standards in our district’s alignment process. Our students are showing an increased achievement in mathematics on standardized assessment results since our alignment efforts. There is not enough baseline data to appropriately evaluate the impact of our recent ELA alignment to the Common Core Standards.

**Would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?**

The Common Core Standards are more rigorous and clear than the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. The previous standards were quite broad and vague. They identified concepts and some skills to be covered between grade groups K-4, 5-8, 9-12. We have found the Common Core Standards more skill specific and constructive because the grade level specific standards spiral back and build upon previous skills. This was the case repeatedly in both math and English/language arts as we examined and unpacked the standards during our curriculum alignment process. Additionally, it appears more challenging standards are introduced at early grade levels, particularly in math.

**3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction’s adoption of the Common Core model standards in June 2010?**

WUSD has invested considerable money, time and resources in training teachers on the Common Core Standards. In addition, a significant amount of time was used to unpack, align and revise curricular programming. Over the last three years our district has spent at least \$150,000 on professional development, substitutes, summer curriculum work, consultants and material revisions. This monetary investment does not include time and non-monetary resources invested in our three-year effort.

**4. Would you support the process of the standards being reviewed every 5 to 7 years?**

Although we support the value of reflective processes and evaluation, there would be significant concern regarding review and revisions of standards every five to seven years. Frequent shifting of standards would prove to be very disruptive in establishing baseline student achievement data and its correlation to curriculum and standards. In addition, it would prove to be very challenging to continue to mandate the increasing wave of educational accountability reforms. The validity of the student achievement results that are so heavily relied on for accountability reporting would be diminished when instructional targets are frequently changed.

We would support frequent revisions to standards if school district accountability was not so heavily tied to standardized assessment results. The current trend of legislating school accountability requires clear and consistent standards that all schools align their instruction to in preparation for standardized assessments and accountability reporting. That being stated, the Common Core Standards are appropriate and necessary under the current legislative mandates for educational reform and accountability. These standards are solid as they stand now and program revisions every five to seven years would certainly be disruptive and expensive to Wisconsin school districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding Common Core Standards. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Runez". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "E" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric Runez  
District Administrator

\*\*\*\*\*

REPORT SPECIFICATIONS

DISTRICT: WAUTOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REPORT TITLE: Detail Check History Report  
REQUESTED BY: Carmen DATE: 10/29/13  
PROGRAM NAME: hr/4parpt19.p TIME: 3:39:28 PM  
COPIES: 1 LPI: 6  
RUN ON SERVER: yes CREATE ASCII FILE: NO

\*\*\*\*\*

Report Name: Curriculum  
Heading:  
Report Options: Payments  
Report Sequence: Code/Employee  
Page Break: No  
Report Type: Summary  
Select By: Check Date  
Check Date: 06/01/2010 through 12/31/9999  
Period Ending Date: through  
Payroll Posting Date: through  
Display Medicare: No

PAYROLL CHECK HISTORY REPORT OF PAYMENTS

Check Dates from 06/01/2010 through 12/31/9999

<u>PAY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>NAME KEY</u>	<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>PAY AMOUNT</u>	<u>PAY HOURS</u>	<u>RETIRE HOURS</u>
CUR	CURRICULUM		TOTAL:	95,022.42	4,748.700	4,748.70

PAYROLL CHECK HISTORY REPORT OF PAYMENTS

Check Dates from 06/01/2010 through 12/31/9999

<u>NBR EMPS WITH PAY</u>	<u>PAY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>PAY AMOUNT</u>	<u>PAY HOURS</u>	<u>RETIRE HOURS</u>
116	CUR	CURRICULUM	95,022.42	4,748.7000	4,748.70
EMPLOYEES REPORTED:	116		95,022.42	4,748.7000	4,748.70

\*\*\*\*\* End of report \*\*\*\*\*



Common Core Implementation Expenses  
Wautoma Area School District  
June 2010-October 2013

<i><b>Date</b></i>	<i><b>Vendor</b></i>	<i><b>Description</b></i>	<i><b>Dollar Amount</b></i>
Jun-10	CESA 6	Learning & Assessment Consortium Fee	3,560.00
Mar-12	CESA 7	Curriculum Companion-3 year commitment	2,250.00
Fall 2012	NWEA	Aligned to CCSS	17,600.00
Fall 2012	IXL	Aligned to CCSS	3,250.00
Fall 2012	Compass Learning	Aligned to CCSS	32,391.00
Fall 2013	NWEA	Aligned to CCSS	17,600.00
Fall 2013	IXL	Aligned to CCSS	3,250.00
Fall 2013	Compass Learning	Aligned to CCSS	9,950.00
Summer 2013	CPM Educational	Math curriculum and Training-8th and 9th Algebra and Geometry	24,816.00
Summer 2013	CPM Educational	Math curriculum and Training-7th grade	3,745.95
Summer 2013	Houghton Mifflin	Math Expressions-English and Spanish-K-5	42,693.48
2013/14	CESA 6	CCSS Disciplinary Lit	3,150.00
2013/14	CESA 6	CCI-Learning targets for CC ELA & Math	1,500.00
<b>Total District Costs</b>			<b>165,756.43</b>

This letter is being sent on behalf of Dr. Heidi Schmidt, District Administrator for the Hortonville Area School District.

**Attention:**

Dean Knudson – 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, Paul Farrow - 33<sup>rd</sup> Senate District, Michael Schraa – 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District, Don Pridemore – 22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District, Jeremy Thiesfeldt – 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District, Alberta Darling – 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District, Tom Larson – 67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, and Jim Steineke – 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Date: October 30, 2013

Dear Assembly and Senate District members:

This is my 33<sup>rd</sup> year in education and 13th year as a District Administrator. I have been the leader in the Hortonville Area School District for the past four years. Our district is doing amazing work in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

I believe that the Common Core State Standards have given our profession/district direction. The Hortonville Area School District has horizontal alignment across the district and are working toward a vertical alignment (grade levels above and below), so that all of our students receive the same power standards or major concepts during instruction. There are changes that teachers have made to what and how they deliver the skills to their students, but teachers know what is expected at each grade level.

The common core standards have been a framework for our teachers to design their units and lessons around. Teachers have the autonomy to deliver their content and use resources which best fit the group of students that they have.

Below is a quick summary of why the CCSS work for HASD.

- Great rigor, vigor and higher expectations with CCSS
- Standards are clear and are provided by grade level, making implementation efforts organized and clear.
- Local control is maintained because of the way that curriculum delivery is done.
- This is the third year of implementation, and most school districts are embedded in the work of implementing the CCSS; to undo it and move in another direction would waste time and contribute to a loss of focus while an alternative is being developed.
- By having a consistent set of academic expectations through Common Core standards, districts are able to collaborate and develop greater opportunities for equity and access to key skills and concepts that are aligned with college and career expectations.

Please support the Common Core State Standards as Wisconsin students are benefitting from this work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Heidi A. Schmidt  
Dr. Heidi A. Schmidt  
District Administrator  
Hortonville Area School District

HASD Mission Statement: *Our community ensures that every student learns at the highest level.*

*Tamie Neilson*

District Administrative Assistant  
Hortonville Area School District  
246 N. Olk Street  
Hortonville WI 54944  
Phone: 920-779-7921  
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[tamieneilson@hasd.org](mailto:tamieneilson@hasd.org)

10/29/2013 1:22 AM

1. Yes, Denmark School District adopted DPI standards in 1998.
2. Yes, the district adopted the Common Core standards. We have not augmented the standards. We consider the Common Core standards MUCH more rigorous than previous standards
3. We have an annual budget of approximately \$20,000 for curriculum development and implementation. This has not varied before or after the adoption of the Common Core. No additional resources were associated with the Common Core.
4. Yes, the academic standards should be reviewed periodically. We believe expectations change and schools must adapt to these changes

--

Tony Klaubauf  
District Administrator  
Denmark School District  
920-863-4005

Below are the answers to the four questions found in the letter recently received about the Common Core State Standards.

1. The D. C. Everest Area School District School Board initially adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in July 1998. Subsequent editions were adopted in July 1999 and in July 2002. Those standards are still accessible on our web page at

<http://www.dce.k12.wi.us/district/curriculum/academic-standards-benchmarks/>.

2. The D. C. Everest Area School District did adopt the Common Core State Standards in 2010. We have not augmented those standards as they reflect a much higher level of rigor than the original standards. We have, however, augmented our instructional strategies to take advantage of the opportunities for increased student engagement that the Common Core State Standards allow. The new Standards require a depth of thinking and problem solving that were not present in the old standards.

3. A look back at our staff development and materials costs associated with the adoption of the new Common Core State Standards since 2010 shows expenses of \$557,185.20. We have also put an additional \$600,000 in technology upgrades. The Wisconsin Legislature has also mandated serious budget cuts to school districts since 2010. However, we have put a priority on our students and their learning and have continued to move forward.

4. The D. C. Everest Area School District supports a review process of academic standards. This is a crucial piece to ensure that our students are continuing to be ready for college or careers when they graduate from high school.

We look forward to continuing our efforts to fully implement the Common Core State Standards.

Lois M. Alt, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
Curriculum, Instruction, Technology  
D. C. Everest Area Schools  
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Honorable Representatives and Senators,

My responses to the survey sent to school superintendents is below. Thank you for taking the time and effort to get our feedback.

I must admit, for school districts the easy thing would have been to make no changes, but it would not have been the right thing. Even the staff, who often are resistant to change, overall did not “fight” the adoption of the common core, as when they reviewed the standards and they saw them to be more applicable, relevant, and requiring a higher level of thinking and application than what had been in place. This is not to say we “settled” for the prior standards; we had established local standards that we believed raised the level, but the common core standards will provide a “higher and consistent” starting point for all school districts in the state, making transitioning students between districts more effective and also allowing districts to work more collaboratively in addressing the standards. We have been deeply immersed for the past three years, and I am so impressed with how our staff and students have risen to this challenge. Right now, if the standards were withdrawn by the state, we would keep them at ELG as they are a framework that our staff feels provides solid preparation for our students—and the students and parents are seeing this also. At this time, as we have taken the time as a district to analyze and incorporate the standards both in the school and in the community, we would have a mutiny on our hands. As I said, it would be easier to have not changed initially, but if you’re doing what’s best for kids—you need to do what’s right, not what’s easy.

I must admit when I sat through many hours of the FDL hearing, I was amazed at the “assumptions” made by many of the speakers about how the common core was being implemented in the classrooms, the materials that would be used, the time spent on reading vs. writing, etc. I had to wonder if many of these people had even bothered to go into their area public school, or any WI public school, and see how it was actually being implemented. It seems there was an information void, and when that exists, mistrust and misinformation festers. Hopefully out of the hearings, some of the inaccuracies were addressed and explained. As a school district, we have and always will, welcome in parents, community members, and others who would like to see firsthand what is happening in our schools. This partnership is key to fully maximize opportunities for our students’ learning.

Again, thank you so much for your time and study of this issue.

Survey question number 1:

We adopted the state standards in 1997, but over the years have developed a set of “power standards” in each of the areas as the state standards were very broad and not grade specific. As a district we didn’t want to go “a mile wide and an inch thick” but rather analyzed students’ needs/assessment results and using the state standards, developed “power standards” that clearly identified specific skills/concepts to be taught at each grade level so a scope and sequence was developed JK-grade 12. These power standards were annually reviewed by the staff and refined as needed. While this helped our district, our selection of power standards did not necessarily mesh with those around us, making learning expectations different in every school district.

Survey question number 2:

We adopted the standards in 2010 and have been vigorously unpacking them, analyzing them, aligning our curriculum/classroom activities/lessons to the standards, and incorporating them into our classrooms since then. At this time, as we are still getting to thoroughly know, understand, and apply the standards we have not augmented them, but I can see this happening in the future. The standards provide us with a base foundation of what students should know—not the ceiling. Standards never had and never will do that. As these standards are more rigorous than our past standards, esp. in the area of math, right now addressing the level and expectations of application vs acquisition of knowledge is challenging for our students, but after a year or so, as they and the staff become accustomed to this way of teaching, learning, etc. augmentation most likely will occur. Our students and staff will be ready to move forward to the next level. In our district, the ELA standards were not much different than what we were already doing, with the exception of the use of more informational text. In today's world our ELA staff agreed this was needed by our students as they are exposed to much more text in their lives through technology and must become more critical readers and thinkers, able to dissect and analyze information. The ELA teachers are working with content area teachers to incorporate this skill across the curricular areas—which has actually benefitted our students' performance in those areas. Often the reading in the content areas of tech. ed./science/psychology, etc. is much different and much more difficult than the literature used in the ELA classrooms. By working skills on informational text into these areas, it has helped students' ability to better comprehend text in these areas also.

Survey question number 3:

Our district has incurred costs in the 10's of thousands of dollars, but I cannot say these are all directly attributable to the adoption of the common core. Many of these costs are budgeted annually, it's just with the adoption of the common core, the funds were directed to the implementation of these standards as opposed to our previous standards. To get an understanding of the standards and how these will be incorporated into classrooms, we did spend additional professional funds with our CESA to provide this training. Also the majority of our professional development time the past three years has been spent on common core—esp. with the ELA and math teachers the first two years, and now we have also incorporated our content area teachers into the process.

We have adopted new textbook series for math in grades K-advanced algebra. These were up for renewing in our textbook rotation so this is not an additional expense, but alignment with the common core expectations on application of skills was critical. These textbooks will provide a basis of instruction, but other tools/lessons are also being developed. Our classes are a collection of resources—not just textbook use. As far as literature, we haven't seen the need to purchase new textbooks, as we pull resources from many different areas.

So while there has been a financial investment, the biggest investment that could not be recouped if the common core was eliminated at this time is the extensive amount of time the staff has put into this adoption—we are fully implemented. This involves more than the professional development time planned during the year; this is the individual teachers' planning time every day for the past three years. A dollar amount cannot be put on this, but if it could, this would be HUGE!

Survey question number 4:

I would very much support establishing a formalized review of the standards as the world is rapidly changing and so are our students. Once they are using the standards after a period of time and they are meeting the expected standards, should these standards be modified, upgraded, etc? Very possibly. But whether the state implements a formalized review process or not, the implementation of the standards will be reviewed annually in our district. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment work in a continuous circle if you want to best plan and prepare for your students' education, so that's what we do at ELG.

I hope this addressed your questions. Please feel free to contact me if you need any clarification.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ann Buechel Haack  
District Administrator  
Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah School District  
201 N. Lincoln Street  
PO Box 326  
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# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF RANDOM LAKE

605 Random Lake Road  
Random Lake, Wisconsin 53075

Thomas Malmstadt, Superintendent  
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website [www.randomlake.k12.wi.us](http://www.randomlake.k12.wi.us)

Scott A. Schulz, H.S. Principal  
Phone 920-994-9193  
David A. Farnham, M.S. Principal  
Phone 920-994-2498  
Sandra P. Mountain, E.S. Principal  
Phone 920-994-4344

October 31, 2013

My name is Tom Malmstadt and it is my pleasure to serve the students of the School District of Random Lake. I have been an educator for 30 year as a teacher, counselor, principal and most recently, a District Administrator.

Your committee has asked that I respond to letter that was sent to our school district regarding the Common Core State Standards and its adoption and implementation in our District. While our district had no choice in the adoption of the Common Core State Standards because of the nature of their adoption in the state, our administrators, teachers and support staff have embraced them because they are good for our students. I realize that the anti-common core groups do not like the word rigor, but I have been using that word for twenty four years, since I became a guidance counselor. It is not a bad word, in fact, I believe it to be a relevant word in that we have been increasing rigor in our standards for hundreds of years -- and will continue to do so. Contrary to the opinion of many, with each generation, our children get smarter and are able to do more.

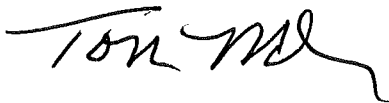
Our district has been working on the Common Core State Standards for three years and our math teachers believe them to be more difficult than our previous standards. In fact, our question from our math teachers was how will we be able to get all of our students to the level of these standards expectations by 8th grade, where they are expected to be taking algebra class. Once they decompressed the standards, it became apparent to the math instructors that through the process of the standards, and its spiraling nature, the students will be exposed to the prerequisite skills and knowledge they will need in order to be prepared for the pace and rigor of algebra. In addition, for those students that will not be ready, and let's not fool ourselves that this will not occur, the standards create a pathway for remediation. The skills that will not be met can be remediated throughout the school year and into the summer, as extra time is what is often needed.

Similarly, the English Language Arts teachers believe the Common Core State Standards are more rigorous than our previous standards and outline the four areas (reading, writing, speaking and listening) very well. Although complex to read and understand at first, they believe them to be systematic and we have been able to converse and come to an understanding around the increasingly difficult expectations from grade level to grade level.

As far as the augmentation of the standards, our teachers know that the standards are not the curriculum. They are the guiding principles by which our students will be measured. The teachers' challenge is to find materials that meet the standards so the students will have the skills and knowledge to meet the standards when assessed. It is here where I find the beauty of the standards and our continued local control of the curriculum, materials and instructional practices.

With any new rollout of standards and curriculum, there are costs. In this case, most of our costs have been in professional development. Many hours have been devoted to reading, understanding, identifying materials for, and creating lessons to attack the Common Core State Standards and defining what mastery looks like. I believe we are prepared to address the rigor and relevance the Common Core has to offer.

As to your last point, I had an opportunity to briefly talk to Rep. Knutson in Fond du Lac during one of the listening sessions, and my only fear is that a review of the standards in Wisconsin in isolation, and potential movement away from the nature of national standards will put us back to where we are now, on an island where we cannot compare ourselves to other states and the nation. I have personally longed for the time where I can compare individual students with students in other schools, districts, counties and states. We are a global society and this comparison can only make the United States a more intellectually sound nation. I fully agree that there should and must be a cycle of review, but I believe it should be on the Common Core as a whole. To address some of the concerns that have been raised as to the make-up of the group that initially devised and developed the Common Core, that can and should be rectified by having a cross section of educational specialists and other relevant shareholders involved in the process.



Tom Malmstadt  
District Administrator  
School District of Random Lake



# School District of Independence

*"Best School Ever"*

23786 Indee Boulevard  
Independence, Wisconsin 54747  
Phone: (715) 985-3172  
Fax: (715) 985-2303

**Dr. PAUL VINE**  
District Administrator  
PreK - Grade 5 Principal  
**BARRY SCHMITT**  
Grades 6-12 Principal  
**WENDY STUTGEN**  
Director of Special Education

November 15, 2013

Wisconsin State Legislators (*Dean Knudson, Paul Farrow, Michael Schraa, Don Pridemeore, Jeremy Thiesfeldt, Alberta Darling, Tom Larson, Jim Stieneke*)  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI, 53708

## REVIEW OF COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Thank you for taking the time to further investigate this important issue for the students and staff of Wisconsin. As a thirty-five year educator, the last eighteen as Superintendent, I understand the challenges you face. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts on the common core.

The common core state standards (CCSS) provide much more depth in learning than earlier standards. The CCSS provide a framework for teachers to teach students how to be critical thinkers. Below is a summary of your questions in bold with my response in regular font.

**1. Did the district previously have a set of academic standards?** Previous to 2011 the Independence School District, like most public schools, used the standards established by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to guide instruction. However, NCLB was a mile wide and an inch deep and did not require students to think critically. The CCSS moves education beyond memorization of facts and challenges students to develop deeper understanding of concepts. In addition, with increasing mobility by families and students it is imperative that there be consistent, high standards that all schools can use. This consistency will help students moving from school to school, as well as provide a network of schools and teachers who can share innovative teaching strategies and goals.

**2. How is the District using the Common Core standards?** Since the adopting the CCSS in 2011 the Independence School District is using the them to develop common assessments and benchmarks which are tied directly to the CCSS.

The benchmarks are communicated to students, parents and community and provide a clear path of what students should know and understand at each grade level. In addition, teachers are now using the results to guide their instruction to better meet the needs of individual students. The CCSS focuses on grade levels not grade spans. Previous standards i.e. the NCLB standards were broad and assessed at fourth, eighth and tenth grade.

In addition, the CCSS form the foundation of Educator Effectiveness, the model adopted by Wisconsin and the Independence School District to evaluate teachers and administrators. The CCSS provide a clear list of learning expectations that principals and superintendents can use to help determine the quality of instruction students are receiving.

**3. What costs have been incurred?** At this time the district has not incurred any additional costs adopting the CCSS. Many staff are supportive of the CCSS and happy the district and state has embraced standards that can be used to ensure each teacher of a subject or grade is teaching similar information to their students.

**4. Would I support review of the standards?** I believe it is always valuable to review the academic standards. This would provide an opportunity to ensure the standards stay current and up to date. Common education standards are essential for producing an educated workforce which Americans need to remain competitive. US graduates are competing on in an international environment and our students will need to be well trained for tomorrow's careers.

Thank you again for seeking my input on the important issue. Please contact me if you have more questions.



Paul Vine, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Independence School District  
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715-985-3172 Ext. 104

As an intro, you have heard from us at Algoma already too. I attended the Fond du Lac session but could not stay long enough to get past the invited guests to speak. I was disappointed in how that worked and yet understand the processes involved in trying to collect all the information needed from all the involved parties. I wrote a letter in support of the Common Core State Standards and left that with the committee hosts. I do find it interesting that your letter to me submits that it was the State Supt. and DPI that made all of this happen and yet, it was with quite open debate that changes were needed in the unrealistic federal ESEA law and the only way out was to write for a waiver that included more rigor, more testing, more teacher/principal accountability, and more and more. The State Supt. and DPI stepped up to the plate and did something before the ESEA train wreck occurred. I laude them for their efforts. Rather than demonizing public employees, maybe our State Legislatures should have stepped up and did something in support of their public schools and worked more with the State Supt. and DPI. These last minute efforts to destroy very quality work by many good people in many good states is an example of the broken system in our State Legislature. Collaboration and appreciations for work well done AND to join forces with educators to continue to try and make a very good system even better would have been a much better mode of operation. For your other questions, I submit the information following:

1. The district adopted the DPI standards.
2. Our district has embraced the Common Core Standards and yet has not officially produced policy to adopt. We do not teach to the standards and as such, teach via a differentiated instruction model that "augments" the standards to best fit the needs of all students. This is a daunting task with the many different learning styles of our students but I would have to say yes to the question on augmenting the standards. Our district has been heavily influenced by the adoption of the common core standards and the smarter balanced assessment that goes along with it. Our staff, administration, and board have attended meetings since the roll out of the common core to try and learn all we can. Meetings continue with more detailed help in learning about the common core and how best to prepare to teach more depth in each discipline. We do believe in the common core and believe them to be more rigorous than the previous standards.
3. I did not take the time to research all the expenses relating to common core standard adoption. I noted above, board members, administration, and staff has all been involved with training etc. Much of the time the teachers are spending is on their own time. The cost to their families, hobbies, etc is unknown. This is not unlike most mandates passed down to us-it takes a great deal of time and time is money in one way or another.
4. I would support a careful review of the standards each 3 years. The problem with that is the standardized testing the you folks mandate to us. If the standards are changed in year 3 or 5 or 7-whatever year-it takes the standardized tests a year or two to catch up. Thus, schools are being judged and rated on constantly changing criteria. You have very good people in education in the State of Wisconsin and standardized testing may make you folks feel you are doing your job and yet, expert after expert tells you that local assessment by teachers closest to the students is best. You don't fatten a pig by weighing it and you don't increase achievement with standardized testing. Thus, as much as I am in favor of a constant review of what standards we teach by, it seems unrealistic to do it very often in the present way of evaluating schools.

Thanks. Ron

Ron Welch  
Superintendent Algoma School District

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920-487-7001 ext. 3403

**School District of West De Pere**  
400 Reid St., Suite W  
De Pere, WI 54115



**John R. Zegers**  
Superintendent

**Phone: (920) 337-1393 x8029**  
**Fax: (920) 347-3380**

**Amy LaPierre**  
Director of Curriculum

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October 29, 2013

Dear Wisconsin Representatives and Senators,

I am writing to you today to express my support for the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. My name is Amy LaPierre, and I am the Director of Curriculum for the School District of West De Pere. I am very proud to say that I have worked in the public education setting for the past 25 years! I'm sure you have received much correspondence telling you what the Common Core Standards are as well as what they are not. The purpose of my letter is not to reiterate all that rhetoric, but rather to give you some insight into how the Common Core Standards and the work that we have done with them has improved the quality of education in West De Pere, and for that matter, Wisconsin.

When I was a brand-new teacher 25 years ago, curriculum development and the improvement of instruction were left up to each individual teacher. There were general guidelines, but they could be interpreted in many ways. I worked hard – as did all the other teachers in my school – but I rarely discussed curriculum and instruction with my colleagues. The learning goals that I had for my students were determined by me, as were the topics I chose to teach. Since my lens really focused only on my classroom at that time, I thought that was sufficient, and I didn't give a thought to the kind of education other students in the same grade level were receiving.

In 1998, the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, which described what students should know and be able to do at the ends of grades 4, 8 and 12, were released. This was the impetus for discussions that allowed me the opportunity to talk with my colleagues to determine what the standards actually meant. We discussed what needed to happen in all of the grades so that students could achieve the standards at grades 4, 8 and 12. Our placement of standards at varying grade levels was well-intentioned, but random at best.

In 2005, I began to work in an administrative position as a K-12 Literacy and Assessment Coordinator. My lens broadened, and I began to look at curriculum, instruction and assessment at school/district levels. I began to see the importance of guaranteeing curriculum for all students. For example, the literacy knowledge, skills, and understandings that were taught in one third-grade classroom should be the same as those taught in ALL third-grade classrooms. In 2010, when I began my current role as Director of Curriculum, my lens grew even broader. I was now working to create a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all subject areas, K-12. I attended various meetings sponsored by DPI and CESA 7 and began to notice that many districts in Wisconsin were working really hard to figure out the “what”, but few districts were able to find time to talk about the more important element of “how”. All districts were focused on the same thing, but we were coming up with different grade-level curricular goals and objectives. From a statewide lens, it didn't make sense that what fourth graders in one district were learning in math was not the same as what fourth graders in other districts were learning.

When the Common Core was released the “what” had been spelled out for us and, for the first time, was no longer negotiable. We spent time having awesome discussions, unpacking the standards so that each teacher had a clear understanding of what each one meant, and we were then able to move our conversation toward the “how”. We shared ideas about what worked. We developed common assessments because we all had the same learning targets for students. We formed collegial groups to examine data and share instructional ideas and strategies. The end result: teachers celebrated the fact that students were learning at levels they had never seen or expected before.

We have devoted much professional development time and funding to implement the Common Core State Standards, but our work hasn't been just about the standards. It's been about expecting ALL students to achieve at high levels and working with them to scaffold instructional experiences so that they can learn. It's been about teachers realizing that their colleagues are great resources and that much can be learned from sharing and problem-solving together. It's been about teachers analyzing data from common assessments to see if students have met the target, and if not, coming up with ways to assist them.

To back away from the Common Core Standards would be devastating not only for West De Pere, but for the entire state of Wisconsin. Great things are happening in public education in our state. I have not seen anything this positive or this powerful in my 25 years as an educator. The Common Core keeps our lens broad so that we can ensure high levels of learning for ALL students in our great state.

Sincerely,

Amy LaPierre  
Director of Curriculum

Dear Wisconsin Legislators,

I am writing in response to the letter you sent recently requesting information related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

With regard to your question about whether my district had formally adopted academic standards prior to 2010, I was hired by my district in 2009 and, as of that time, it is my understanding that we had not formally adopted any such standards. That said, we did follow the state model academic standards.

With regard to your question about our adoption of the CCSS, yes we did adopt those standards.

With regard to your question about whether we have augmented those standards I would say that we are in the process of aligning our local curriculum to the CCSS which enriches our curriculum.

With regard to the question of how that adoption has had an impact on my district, I would say that the adoption has caused us to review our local curriculum in light of the new standards which oftentimes has generated high quality professional discussion about what we want children to know and be able to do.

With regard to the question about the rigor of the CCSS I would say that they are more rigorous. For example, we conducted an analysis of the levels of thinking/thought required by students by the CCSS as reflected in "*Bloom's Taxonomy*" which is a classic tool that educators use to determine the level (complexity) of thought required to complete tasks. As a result of that analysis, we found that the CCSS will require our students use higher (more complex) levels of thought more often than they did previously.

With regard to the question about increased cost to the district because of adoption of the CCSS, we have had to increase our budget for substitute teachers to accommodate all of the meetings necessary to involve teachers in aligning our curriculum with the CCSS.

Please do not hesitate to contact me further with additional questions about CCSS or other matters related to public education.

Sincerely,

Glenn Schlender  
Superintendent  
Palmyra - Eagle Area School District  
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1. The Peshtigo School District adopted the DPI academic standards back in 1997 and maintained those standards until 2010 when the Common Core standards were adopted by the district.
2. It is the position of the stakeholders in the district that the Common Core standards are more rigorous and relevant than the prior standards. The district considers these standards as a baseline and will continue to monitor and analyze student progress to determine other standards and expectations necessary for students to be college and career ready.
3. No matter the entity and its purpose, like business, educational institutions must invest resources for staff development, innovation, and best practices. Exact costs of transitioning to the Common Core exclusively has not been calculated by the district.
4. Although the district doesn't believe in the "conspiracy theory" that the Common Core standards adoption process wasn't transparent, the district would support a review process on a periodic basis.

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Kim Eparvier  
District Administrator  
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# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MENOMONEE FALLS

## MENOMONEE FALLS, WISCONSIN

Request from Legislators Regarding Common Core State Standards  
School District of Menomonee Falls

November 2013

Dear Committee Members:

I am the Superintendent for the School District of Menomonee Falls; I have been involved in the instructional improvements for the state of Wisconsin public schools for more than 30 years. I appreciate your request for additional information regarding the Common Core Standards. I have shared your request with members of our Board Instruction Committee and our Director of Curriculum and Learning. The following feedback represents the process used by the School District of Menomonee Falls in preparing for the state shift in standards and the accountability system.

From 1988 to 1997, **the original academic standards** were drafted by professional associations in the academic areas, and then adopted by the individual states. Each state designed their own final standards and then their state tests; many aligned to the national model academic standards. The challenge in the last cycle was each state designed their own assessments and cut scores for proficiency. The national criticism mounted as the state expectations for proficiency did not align with the international tests (NAEP, PISA, TIMMS). The individual state systems faced significant criticism, because the percentage of students considered proficient on the state

assessments was significantly inflated compared to the percentage on the international assessments.

Along with this inflation, tests were expensive to administer state by state, the results were delayed for months. The results of the individual state tests indicated we were not holding students accountable to international expectations. Nationally, the debate centered on requiring a national assessment in order to ensure international competitiveness across all states.

During the 1990s, school districts adopted the model academic standards. Wisconsin had 502 standards. The research reports (Mid Continental Regional Educational Lab McREL) indicated it would take 26 years for students to reach mastery of the Wisconsin state standards. Districts needed to individually define proficiency and alignment for other grade levels as these standards were released for only 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. To do this, each district needed to align the individual grade level standards, determine proficiency, and determine how the standards would be measured on the state assessment WKCE. This required significant staff time. The accountability of the state assessment, not the standards, required each district to define the alignment.

Similarly, **the shift to Smarter Balance and ACT 166** is the major driver for the required work with the common core. We are administering now the last WCKE. By the 2014-15 school year, the accountability for teachers with student performance will be aligned to Smarter Balance. Half of their evaluations will be dependent on student performance on the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). That performance will be aligned to the grade level standards. The work of taking the College and Career

Readiness Standards from ACT and the Common Core Standards has occurred over the last 3 years and has been substantial. The alignment process involves examining the standards, refining the language to create meaning for the students and families, and determining the focus for each grade level because there are too many standards embedded into the systems. Each set needs to be prioritized and focused by grade level.

**Has our system augmented the standards?** Our system has prioritized the grade level standards based on the college and career readiness targets. Plan, Explore, and ACT assessments have been a significant driver of our work. In addition, the math and science sequence set by common core requires a depth in the problem solving that is greater than what had been the focus in the previous state standards. The work required to prepare for the Smarter Balance Assessment is extensive and has been extensive. The investment of each district has and will continue to be high in preparing students to exceed state expectations on the state assessment.

**What costs has our district incurred associated with curriculum updates and teacher training?** Our costs have driven from the state accountability legislation in ACT 166, not solely the shift to common core. The testing shift is scheduled for 2014, as is the teacher accountability system tied to student accountability. Regardless of common core, Smarter Balance is being required for next year. This has driven the shift in the curricular alignment, teacher training for student accountability, and teacher training for the teacher evaluation systems. The cost annually for our curricular time has been about \$60,000. This is an annual cost regardless of changes in the standards. In the School District of Menomonee Falls, each curriculum strand goes through a 5-year

renewal process where assessments, lessons, and resources are reviewed and updated.

The actual cost of the shift to common core is net neutral because teachers would spend time updating lessons and assessments as part of the renewal process.

Staff training for the evaluation system required with the educator effectiveness model has been more significant. In looking at administrators' time to complete the training (approximately 40 hours), this equates to about \$21,600 in salaries and benefits to complete. With teacher preparation, community/Board preparation, and communication/promotion of the educator effectiveness model, the district has taken time during in-service and pre-service days to train out on the educator effectiveness model. The cost of this training has been about \$31,500. Preparation for the state accountability system in staff time and training has occurred for more than a decade but it directly tied to legislative requirement it would be fair to estimate about \$65,000 per year which includes our interim assessments (MAP testing), the staff training to close the achievement gaps in performance has been about \$108,000 (Rtl coaches and training of staff). All of those are tied to ACT 166 set legislatively.

**Would we support the adoption of a process to review academic standards every 5 to 7 years?** We should drive review based on data regarding our performance not years. Alignment, training, and shifting core curricular resources is expensive for each district. Since standards are similar to mile markers on the freeway, shifts should be based on data and performance indicators. The review should be based on student transition to college and post secondary programs, success on state assessments, and international comparisons. It should not be taken lightly. The cost and implications are significant.

**The original 20 program standards** designed in the 1980s drive significant expense into each district through unfunded program mandates. These do indeed need to be reviewed and reduced. These standards should be examined with a college career priority. The funding remains limited and how we align required programming to meet the demands of the changing workforce should be the priority. Local board control remains a misnomer. Local school boards have very limited programming control within very limited resources. Legislation from 30 years ago is driving significant expense to taxpayers for the public schools in Wisconsin. This should be the focus of change in the state of Wisconsin, not the Common Core standards.

If you have any further questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me personally. We need to keep the focus on the students in the state of Wisconsin, not on political juxtaposing, using education as a tool. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to a quick resolution to this so that districts in the state can move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia Greco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "G".

Patricia Greco, Ph.D.  
School District of Menomonee Falls  
[grecpat@sdmfschools.org](mailto:grecpat@sdmfschools.org)  
262-483-4576



November 13, 2013

To: Representative Dean Knudson  
Senator Paul Farrow  
Representative Michael Schraa  
Representative Don Pridemore  
Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt  
Senator Alberta Darling  
Representative Tom Larson  
Representative Jim Steineke

Re: Response to questions regarding the Common Core State Standards

Thank you for your interest in the Marshall Public Schools and for your inquiry regarding educational standards for Wisconsin public schools. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your queries.

Your first question centered on what, if any, standards the district adopted prior to 2010. Previously, the Marshall Public Schools had implemented the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards (Standards). While you asked for a copy, I have not included the Standards as doing so would likely be duplicative. Access to the Standards are available on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction web site, and I trust that by now you have received at least one copy of them.

Next, you expressed an interest in the extent to which the District has adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To date, the Board of Education has not taken formal action to adopt the model CCSS. The CCSS provide a framework upon which the curriculum can be developed and instruction can be outlined. Utilizing the District's curriculum review process, teachers have been working to align the curriculum to the CCSS, and we have not augmented the CCSS. Educators in our District regard the CCSS as more rigorous than the previous Standards.

As a District, we work to be aware of initiatives that may impact our schools and take a proactive approach to implementing changes that may later be mandated. This is true of the District's approach to the CCSS. The District has provided high quality professional development that supports our teachers in the implementation of the CCSS.

You also expressed an interest in the costs associated with the adoption of the CCSS. As noted above, the District engages in a curriculum review process in all areas of instruction. This process has an established cycle of review, and as such, we have taken the opportunity to integrate the CCSS into our review process. Because the District has a review process in place, and because the review process does have ongoing budget implications locally, we have not incurred additional costs associated with adoption of the CCSS.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL  
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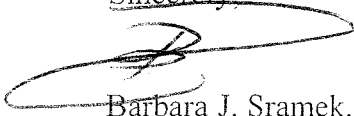
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
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EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
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Finally, you solicited comment on the adoption of a formalized review process in Wisconsin. While the District has established a cycle of review at the local level, we support a cycle of review of the academic standards established at the state level at regularly established intervals. Just as we strive for continuous improvement at the local level by establishing processes, so, too, should we at the state level because changes and improvement at each level can impact student performance and outcomes.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide information on behalf of the Marshall Public Schools. If you have further questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely



Barbara J. Sramek, Ph.D.  
District Administrator  
Marshall Public Schools

Cc: Board of Education, Marshall Public Schools



Dear Legislators,

The School District of Prentice has always been proud of the accomplishments we have made with our students being such a small school district with state funding decreasing every year. We live in North Central Wisconsin where land values are high but people are money poor. There are no homes on lakes to help our district with a nice tax base. Many families in our school district have owned their land for years and now are having to sell it in order to pay their taxes and to make ends meet. Why do I bring that topic up? I believe that this is what legislators need to work on. Fair funding for all students in Wisconsin should be made the priority not worrying about standards that were created by teachers, professors and other professionals. Fair funding gets overlooked year after year and now we are putting time and money into battling about the common core. It is time to put politics aside and work together to support public schooling. For many years Wisconsin public schools have turned out the best and the brightest. Now politics, government, and out of state funding have begun to erode what was great about Wisconsin our leadership in public schools and teaching. The question to you all is how are you going to sustain two educational school choices and by putting more money into private school vouchers how are the small rural schools going to survive?

Now, to answer the questions you have. Yes, the school district adopted the Wisconsin State Model of Academic Standards before June 2010. It was a good guide grade by grade as to what needed to be taught, by whom and by when. We aligned our curriculum up with the standards and we were well prepared to take the state mandated WKCE tests. These tests really haven't helped us with how students have done longitudinally because the tests have changed over the years. It also didn't provide us with quick results and we had to wait months to see how our students performed. By the time we received the results it was time for summer break and we had to use summer school to help remediate students that needed the extra help to meet the standards. My teachers can do a better job of accurately benchmarking students and working on deficit skills without a state mandated test.

Our school district has adopted the Common Core Standards, and has been working on aligning the Common Core to our grade levels. We have used the Curriculum Companion to break down the standards in English Language Arts and have written our instruction on how we will meet the standards at each grade level. We have also implemented the standards in mathematics. It was a review time for mathematics text books so we did purchase Math Expressions that met the Common Core Standards. We believe the Common Core is more rigorous than the previous standards and makes an attempt to educate students for better success in higher education after high school.

We have had numerous costs incurred with changing our curriculum to the meet the Common Core Standards. We purchased Curriculum Companion licenses for the teachers to prepare their classrooms with the standards for English Language Arts and possibly soon with social studies and science. We also had all of the training that went along with the Curriculum Companion. This means that we had days where teachers were in professional development to get trained while the school district incurred costs of substitutes. Because we are a small school district and I serve not only as District Administrator but as the PK-4 principal too, we purchased some time from CESA 9 for a curriculum director to help us through these changes. Also, we bought new mathematics textbooks and manipulatives for the teachers PK-8 that were aligned with the Common Core. We were reviewing mathematics anyway and would have purchased updated materials. I am sure new textbooks for the PK-8 and all of the materials that went with it were at least 13-15 thousand dollars. The curriculum director cost was 22,000 dollars, substitutes were a few thousand dollars and licensing for the Curriculum Companion was \$1500. Yes, we have had some costs as a school district but I believe it has strengthened our mathematics and Language Arts programs in our school. What it has also done is improve the way we use technology in the Language Arts department in the middle school and the high school. I am sure our costs to date would be from 40,000-50,000 dollars maybe a little more to implement the common core to date.

Yes, I do believe that we always need to review what we are doing in education. We need to provide the teachers with opportunities to teach and be creative while teaching. We need to educate our students using sound practices and researched based practices. What we do not need is the politics that have become so involved in education in our state. Is the Common Core the best standards we can come up with? I don't know but it is a step in the right direction to help make education for our students better. The Prentice School District teachers will enhance those standards and our students will be successful. We need to let our teachers teach. Our teachers in Prentice will keep working hard in improving instruction and to be sure when you leave our hallways we have done whatever it takes to make you successful in the global society.

Sincerely,

Randy Bergman  
District Administrator/PK-4 Principal

Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard concerning the debate over the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Below are responses to your inquiry.

1. The DPI's model standards were adopted by the School District of Abbotsford.
2. Beginning in 2010, the district has focused their curriculum review and implementation based on the anticipation of adopting the Common Core. After intensive review of the district's existing math and reading curriculums and thorough, systematic research into the various curriculums available, the district has adopted curriculums in both areas that align with the Common Core Standards. The results have already proved positive as testing at all levels have indicated steady growth since implementation. Without question, the Common Core model standards are more rigorous.
3. The cost of district wide adoptions of new curriculums in math and reading that are aligned with the district's goal of adopting the Common Core model standards to date has been in the neighborhood of \$85,000-\$90,000. That is the cost of the materials for the curriculums and does not include the costs to involve staff in the curriculum review, research of curriculum options, and professional development to support the curriculums. Examples of those costs include the hiring of substitutes and extra "curriculum pay" as per policy. I apologize for not being able to provide specific data reflecting those costs, but I can assure you that they are significant.
4. In response to question number four, I believe that successful schools consistently review, analyze, and evaluate curriculums. The Common Core model standards serve as a map to guide schools through their curriculum process. The Common Core model standards provides the rigor necessary for our students to compete on a global level and the flexibility to allow the district to determine the methodology, strategies and pedagogies of delivery of instruction.

In conclusion, the School District of Abbotsford supports the Common Core Standards. The district will continue moving forward, aligning our curriculum with the CCSS. Should the state choose to drop the adoption of the CCSS, the time lapse and void created by an attempt to roll out something "better" would seem to be wasteful.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions.

*Reed Welsh*  
*District Administrator*  
*School District of Abbotsford*  
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November 1, 2013

To: The Wisconsin Legislature

From: Paul E Blanford, District Administrator

Dear Wisconsin Legislature,

I very much appreciate your interest in each individual school district's views and concerns regarding the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This adoption and its process have created significant impacts to The School District of Elmwood and in my view, all school districts within the State of Wisconsin. I thank you for asking for our input and I thank you for reviewing this matter.

Responses:

1. Prior to the introduction of the Common Core State Standards, the School District of Elmwood formally adopted and followed the Wisconsin State Standards. Now that the State of Wisconsin DPI has formally adopted the Common Core State Standards, we will be adopting these standards. We will adopt these standards not because we agree with them but because we're forced to adopt them by virtue of the new state assessment. If we were not to adopt the CCSS, our curriculum and instruction would not be aligned with the new state assessment; we would then jeopardize our assessment scores which are tied to many state and federal funding formulas.

In my opinion, the adoption of the CCSS nationally will further reduce and will eventually lead to the elimination of local school board control. This adoption comes under the guise of school improvement; making things better for everyone in the nation. Well, not everyone is doing poorly in educating their students; yet, we want to "fix"/control everyone. Nationally, we are continually being compared with other countries around the world. The real problem with this comparison is that this is not apples to apples comparison but apples to carrots comparison. Here in the United States, we educate all students regardless of: socioeconomic background, religion, race, or whatever category. Most notable, we educate all children regardless of having a disability. This is not true in other countries that we are compared with; we are typically compared to their best with our averages of all children. Assessment is essential but it is just a tool. Yes, measuring academics is important to maintain and improve what we are doing with students; however, the spirit of innovation and creativity comes from having the freedom and frankly the necessity to develop and seek new ways of doing things. Whether necessity is due to survival or to fulfill a challenge, it nurtures that spirit.

I highly recommend that legislators read the book by Yong Zhao – Catching Up or Leading the Way. Dr. Zhao has some great insight into worrying too much about our test

scores. He is from China but lives and teaches here in the US at the university level. He came to the US to teach and to experience the freedom and the opportunities that we have. I have heard Dr. Zhao speak a number of times and each time I heard him express his opposition to the United States adopting the Common Core State Standards. The reasoning behind his objection is that in China, the school board is the Communist Party, the Chinese government. The government dictates the curriculum and how it is taught.

Currently here in the United States, we still have local school board control. What many people do not realize and understand is that our local control not only promotes the essential variation among our individual school districts and individual states; local control is the cradle of creativity and innovation. And here we are, trying to be like China and other countries, trying to legislate, formalize, and frankly dictate education in the direction towards what other countries are doing; but now these other countries (particularly China) are trying to get away from these structures because they do not have the creativity and innovation that we have. Many other countries do not have the levels of innovation and creativity that we have because of their “one size fits all” structure; we have the freedom and variation as well competition within our school systems. We need to keep these things. We need to ask ourselves, why do we lead the world in innovation and creativity, and in the past, why did we lead the world in manufacturing and virtually everything else? Why is it that people from all around the world want to come to live here and be educated in the United States? Most answers to these questions would be related to the freedoms that we have here, the American Dream opportunities that we have here; the educational opportunities that we have here.

One size does not fit all. I realize that the CCSS and its adoption does not mean that the School District of Elmwood cannot do other things within its curriculum; however, adopting and following the CCSS does demand that we spend most of our time teaching within this framework, leaving less time for other things. We do a great job educating our students here in Elmwood. Our students are very successful in their adult lives; this is what we should be measuring – how many graduates (percentage) are productive citizens. This is true for Elmwood because we have the freedom to teach our students more than just the CCSS. This may not be true once we must follow the CCSS and meet the new assessment’s demands; again yielding more scores that we will use to compare our students with students from other countries and then we will still have the “apples to carrots” comparisons.

2. At this time, the School District of Elmwood has not formally adopted the CCSS but plan to do a formal adoption in the current fiscal year. We will likely augment these standards when and if we have the time to do so. This district has been impacted by this adoption process as we have attended many workshops and meetings regarding this adoption and

its impending impacts and mandates. We consider the set of standards to be more rigorous than the Wisconsin State Standards. The CCSS are more specific and more comprehensive and leave less room for augmentation.

3. As for the costs associated as a result of the DPI's adoption of the CCSS, I can only estimate that we've spent upwards of \$15,000 in professional development, travel, and expenses associated with sending staff to and attending workshops and conferences. This does include expenses for having personnel from our local CESA come to our school district and provide professional development activities directly related to the Common Core.
4. We would support a process of reviewing standards every 5 to 7 years. The reason we would support this is that it would afford us more time to make adjustments in personnel, professional development, and the budgetary impacts associated with this process.

November 18, 2013

This communication is in response to a series of questions asked by several State legislators' regarding the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The St. Francis School District (SFSD) has approved a Reading and Literacy Plan aligned with the English Language Arts CCSS. We anticipate asking the School Board to approve the new local math curriculum once we completed our final alignment with the Math CCSS. Resources have been purchased that align with the math CCSS as part of our normal textbook replacement cycle so should not be viewed as costs directly tied to the CCSS. It was important we begin this work as the statutorily required Smarter Balanced Assessment, is aligned to the CCSS and will be required of public schools in 2014.

The SFSD has been working with teacher leaders on refining and realigning our local curriculum and resources to the ELA CCSS. This process has been going on since 2011, as we are utilizing professional development time and local resources on this important endeavor. District leaders and teachers view the CCSS as much more rigorous than the previous Wisconsin State Standards. These higher expectations align with the vision of the SFSD and Board of Education.

Costs incurred by the SFSD include professional development time to realign local curriculum and resources, as well as, classroom materials to support our local curriculum refinements and student learning. These costs are budgeted and are normally incurred as part of any curriculum review and refinement process. The costs cannot be directly tied to the CCSS. The increased rigor of the CCSS will inform local curriculum re-alignment and acquisition of resources. It is important to remember that the CCSS is aligned to the ACT College Readiness Targets, as well.

What our local curriculum looks like, the resources that we used, and the pedagogical practices applied to engage students are all local decisions. Aligning the aforementioned to the more rigorous CCSS will best ensure we continue to better develop graduates ready to be successful in college, careers and life.

Regular review of State Standards makes great sense. Please understand there is a very direct connection and relationship between State standards, local curriculum decisions, the acquisition of resources that support learning and required high stakes testing. Aligning all of these areas is paramount if student success is desired. Please feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions regarding this communication.

Respectfully,

Dr. John W. Thomsen – Superintendent

CC: Board of Education

**John W. Thomsen, Ed. D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

St. Francis School District  
4225 S. Lake Drive  
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*The best sailors are not defined in the calmest seas.*



Good Afternoon;

I am responding to the request for information on how the Kickapoo School District has managed the Common Core standards implementation. This will not be a short communication, as I will be commented on the myriad of educational issues that the implementation of the Common Core standards is meant to "fix".

In your communication you asked a number of questions that I would like to address directly. Prior to the Common Core Standards the district utilized the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards that DPI had formally adopted. Small districts have had a more difficult time preparing for the shift to the common core because of the lack of Directors of Instruction/Curriculum. With administrative compression in small districts, and many initiatives coming forth from the department, small rural districts are at a significant disadvantage in preparation. The Common Core Standards are indeed more rigorous than the old standards, and as a result parents will need to prepare their children better for entrance to the school system. The research shows that where areas of high poverty exist, this is the fundamental problem in "closing the gap". Students come to school at 4 years old already significantly behind their more socioeconomically advantaged peers. From language skills, phonological awareness, concepts of print, to letter knowledge, they are typically very behind. All of the initiatives currently in effect from the department fail to address or recognize this fact. Furthermore, I do not believe that this will close any achievement gaps, it will exacerbate the gaps. Follow my logic here, if each student is challenged to learn what they need to learn next, the gap intensifies from a very early age. Advantaged students learn to read by the end of Kindergarten, they access text and encounter many more words than their disadvantaged counterparts (Matthew Effect), and thus continue on a literacy trajectory that is vastly different from most of their disadvantaged peers.

Over the last three years we have spent a minimum of \$80,000 on professional development, curriculum, summer teacher compensation, and software to unpack the standards.

The real issue affecting achievement is poverty, it is consistent and pervasive within the research literature and within our own state wide results. Whether it is the ACT, the WSAS or the School Report Card, poverty levels are the single greatest corollary to performance.

The common core standards will create two tracks of schooling within a school, it is simply a fact. Some students will be in common core compliant curriculum, others will receive differentiated curriculum which will meet their needs in order to insure their growth towards these rigorous standards. This material will not be consistent with the common core because you cannot teach kids some skills without having taught the pre-requisite skills.

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.10](#) By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

While this is a great second grade literacy standard, it does not address the fact there will be children that you are still teaching to explode the code efficiently, to become more fluent readers at grade level. Some students will be comparing and contrasting using multiple genres, and some will continue their intensive phonics instruction because of their individual needs. In areas of the high poverty the second group of children is larger.

No matter how hard we try, Educator Effectiveness, Common Core Standards, Pay for Performance, Increased Competition between districts can not negate the effects of poverty on the developing brain from 0-4 years old. Only a community of committed parents, committed agencies both public and private, and committed educational professionals can overcome the direct effects of poverty on achievement. You have to build a culture and an expectation of excellence, and people have to BELIEVE in it. Agencies have to have outreach to parents at very young ages promoting reading to their children in order to improve language skills. We must have better coordinated systems to improve results for children in poverty. In the end, none of these system improvement efforts will completely eliminate the reality of individual differences.

One final thought, given the vast amounts of research on poverty and achievement, wouldn't it be fair to say that schools in the highest 25% of poverty in the state who continue to excel on these quantitative measures should be lauded by our legislators? They do it with fewer economies of scale, and thus fewer administrative positions to direct these types of initiatives, they pay their teachers less than their suburban and urban counterparts so recruitment and retainment is difficult, and still find a way to make it happen. Yet when these schools were recognized at the Capital for their achievements, few of our legislators were in the audience.

It would be great if we could compare "like" schools with one another so that the job of educating children from similar circumstances/backgrounds was the primary comparative factor. Instead we have a report card system that unfairly declares that the schools with little to no poverty are somehow more effective than the others. If the competition model is to be adopted, then we should be comparing apples to apples.

Sincerely,

Doug Olsen  
District Administrator/Elementary Principal  
Kickapoo Area School District



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARATHON

204 EAST STREET • MARATHON WI • 54448-0037 • (715) 443-2226

Richard T. Parks  
*Administrator*

David Beranek  
*HS Principal*

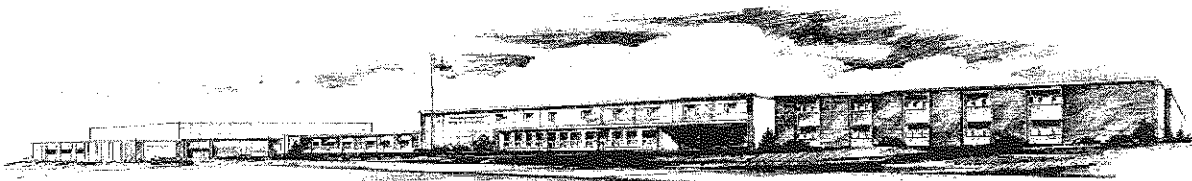
Jeff Reiche  
*ES/MS Principal*

November 15, 2013

Common Core Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share information on behalf of our District concerning the debate over the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Below are responses to your inquiry.

1. The School Board for the School District of Marathon City School adopted the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) model academic standards on July 15, 1998.
2. Beginning in 2010, our district has focused our curriculum review, revision, alignment and implementation based on the anticipation of adopting the Common Core State Standards as the DPI moves from the model academic standards to the CCSS. After intensive review of our district's math and reading/language arts curriculums and a thorough, systematic research into various curriculums available, the district adopted curriculums (PK-5) in both areas that align with the Common Core State Standards. These curriculums are also augmented with additional materials within classrooms by our faculty. The results of our curriculum changes have already shown positive results as our MAP testing at all levels have indicated steady growth since implementation. Without question, the Common Core State Standards are more rigorous.
3. The costs our district has incurred, from our teacher training and curriculum updates in math and reading that are aligned with the district's goal of adopting the Common Core State Standards, we have calculated to be \$69,627.00. This is the cost for our teacher professional development training, curriculum review and writing, substitute costs, and travel. This does not include the cost of the curriculums that we have purchased nor the time involved to include the staff in the curriculum review and research of curriculum options.
4. To respond to your fourth question, I believe that our school is successful. And, like successful schools, we consistently review, analyze, and evaluate our curriculum and planning to improve our instruction. The Common Core Standards serve as a map to guide schools with their curriculum processes. The Common Core Standards provide the rigor necessary for our students to compete on a global level and also give the flexibility to allow districts to determine the methodology, strategies, additional content, and pedagogies for delivery of instruction.



I also believe that our Department of Public Instruction already provides review and update of our state academic standards. However, when doing this work there is great number of staff and professionals that need to be involved in the review and rewriting process, if needed, and the associated costs for standards development and assessment alignment or re-alignment would also be great. It is my thought that the DPI should be in charge of providing the guidance for formalizing our State's process for academic standard review.

In conclusion, the School District of Marathon supports the Common Core State Standards. Our district will continue moving forward and aligning our curriculum with the CCSS. Should the State choose to drop the adoption of the CCSS, I believe the time lapse and void created from the need to roll out something different, which may or may not be "better", would seem to be wasteful.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions.



Richard Parks, Ed.S.

District Administrator

School District of Marathon City

PO Box 37

Marathon, WI 54448

(715) 443-2226

FAX: (715) 443-2611

Dear esteemed committee members,

Thank you for asking my opinion regarding common core. I will list my thoughts below:

1- I believe that a common curriculum nationwide is a step in the right direction. Too many states & localities had varying requirements that resulted in unequal educational goals.

2- Yes, it did cost time, money, and labor to align curriculum with standards but the exercise in & of itself caused much self reflection. I believe this leads to better instruction.

3- The standards are more rigorous and expose students to concepts at an earlier age. They also require higher level thinking skills and increased writing proficiency.

4- Actual costs were in assigned teacher work time and in procuring programs such as Eclipse and Curriculum Companion to use as tools to document common core alignment.

5- I believe that not only should the common core be revised on a regular basis but that we need to locally review our approach yearly based upon student achievement results.

I hope that the committee will support the common core. I know that some groups and individuals are chastising it. But I also believe they are uninformed or not willing to hear the educational value of it. Even some teachers are taking it to task... but many of them just do not want to change.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steven Lozeau  
Wonewoc-Union Center Schools District

Dear Legislators,

Here are my responses to your questions about the Common Core Standards:

1. Winter School District had adopted the DPI model standards.
2. We did adopt the Common Core Standards and have not altered them. They are somewhat more rigorous and they are clearly written.
3. We spent about \$50,000 on new literacy curriculum, but we would not have to adopt new curriculum if our state doesn't continue with the Common Core. We can easily adapt.
4. Reviewing standards every 5 years may be too quick. I would support reviewing them 7-10 years.

Some issues I have thought about with the Common Core Standards:

1. If we adopt standards from the federal government, do we lose our state and local say in how they may change? I personally believe standards should come from the state level.
2. I have heard the standards are not curriculum, but if testing is driven by these standards, will we all be teaching the same curriculum anyway to do well on the tests?
3. Do they support UN Agenda 21? We haven't seen the social studies standards yet. Will they support UN Agenda 21? I have found most people don't even know what UN agenda 21 is or how it could impact the future of our country. We should understand this thoroughly before adopting the standards.

Thank you,

Dr. Penny Boileau  
Winter School District

10/28/2013 12:14 PM

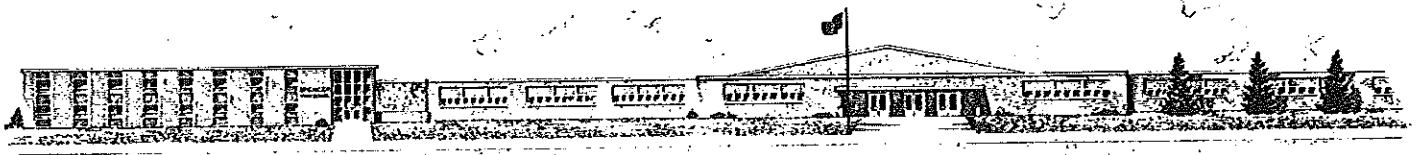
First of all, the Common Core Standards are far more rigorous than the previous Wisconsin State Standards. That being said, if this conversation regarding the standards would have taken place three years ago, I would have no objection. At this point Lomira has adopted a new K-8 math series (\$60,000.00) which is aligned to the common core, have spent hours of staff development updating our report card, assessments, and alignment of curriculum to prepare our students for the Smarter Balanced Assessment which is aligned to the common core.

To me, the biggest issue with legislatures is passing a budget that will pay for the Smarter Balanced Assessment, which is aligned to the standards you are now reviewing. As a fiscal conservative, I have a real issue with this level of government waste. Every legislature I have spoken to, Democrat and Republican, admits that the standards are fine and the timing is wrong. Once again, if this conversation to "tweak" the standards was had three years ago I would not object, but "the train has left the station" and we simply cannot go back and start over.

Thank you and enjoy the day!

Bob Lloyd  
Lomira School District  
Superintendent/Middle School Principal

# SPENCER PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Dawn Reckner, President  
Eric Zenner, Vice President  
Jim Krasselt, Treasurer  
Jerry Wienke, Clerk  
Jordan Franklin, Director

Phone: 715-659-5347 Fax: 715-659-5470  
300 North School Street PO Box 418 Spencer Wisconsin

Michael L. Endreas  
Superintendent

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to thank you for soliciting input from Educational institutions throughout the state of Wisconsin. As a State we have always prided ourselves on being leaders in the nation in educating our children. The Midwest work ethic along with a commitment to our public education has been a cornerstone of this success. The debate over the Common Core model standards along with the attempt of privatization of our educational program shows great evidence in the misconception and misinformation that our citizens have been basing their decisions on. I appreciate your attempt at creating clarity to sure up any misconceptions that have been fostered. The following responses correlate with the questions numbered 1 – 4 in your letter.

1. Prior to 2010 the School District of Spencer like many schools has utilized the Wisconsin State Standards as guidelines for our Curriculum distribution. These standards provided benchmarks for students at grades 4, 8 and 10 and were used as guidelines for School Districts to determine where a student should be academically at the end of the school year. Our Curriculum (what we taught) is different from other schools but we all worked off the same standards.
2. Dr. Evers addressed a federal initiative by agreeing to adopt the common core standards. The nationwide attempt to be able to compare one state's academic progress to another resulted in creating and mandating the use of the common core. As a district we have taken and run with the common core. Our notion is this is the minimum requirements that our students should know at the end of a certain school year. As a district we have always prided ourselves in going above and beyond prescribed limits. The common core has allowed us venue to integrate subject areas. An example of this would be partnering a Social Studies teacher with an English teacher to collaborate on a project. The Social studies teacher focuses on content and the English teacher on sentence structure. The amount of rigor is not determined by a core standard. The control of amount of rigor is up to the local school board and administration to determine as that is where this decision should be made. The common core addresses the minimum and local authority determines how high.
3. In my opinion it is not fair to put a dollar amount on these updates. Each year we focus our inservice time to address professional development and curricular

School District of Spencer  
Village of Spencer— Towns of Spencer, Brighton, McMillan, Unity and Sherman

**“Excellence for every student, every day, the Rocket Way”**



updates. Since 2010 our focus has been on the implementation of the common core. We have purchased computer software to assure that we are aligning what we do on a daily basis with the common core. All in all it has been a positive step in allowing our district to be more efficient in the administration of our curriculum. This process has given us a venue to build collaboration amongst our staff. Tax payer money that has been spent throughout the years is still being spent to upgrade our curriculum.

4. I firmly believe that if it is not broke don't fix it. By creating a formalized system where a review is done every 5 to 7 years in order to justify the process changes will be made whether warranted or not. I go back to the Wisconsin pride in education. We have more data and information on our individual student needs than we ever have. Each district in the state (public that is) has a report card that formulates the requirements we need to meet. I would put faith in our educators and Department of Public instruction to determine the need to change or alter our standards. Remember the common core is the minimum standard.

In conclusion, the School District of Spencer supports the Common Core Standards. We have appreciated the format to allow us to collaborate and work together in moving the district forward to align our curriculum. I am troubled by the notion that the gains we have made will be unraveled by a change in our standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Andreas  
District Administrator  
School District of Spencer  
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[mendreas@spencer.k12.wi.us](mailto:mendreas@spencer.k12.wi.us)

Question 1:

The district did not formally adopt academic standards prior to 1997.

Question 2:

The district formally adopted the common core standards utilizing an updated strategic plan. The common core standards are as rigorous as the standards the district has used previously.

Question 3:

The district has incurred approximately \$125,000 in costs associated with curriculum updates and professional development as a result of DPI adopting the common core model standards in June of 2010.

--

Paula Anderson  
Assistant to the Superintendent/HR  
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November 13, 2013

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE  
P O BOX 8952  
MADISON, WI 53708

ATTN: Dean Knudson, 30th Assembly District  
Paul Farrow, 33rd Senate District  
Michael Schraa, 53rd Assembly District  
Don Pridemore, 22nd Assembly District  
Jeremy Thiesfeldt, 52nd Assembly District  
Alberta Darling, 8th Senate District  
Tom Larson, 67th Assembly District  
Jim Steineke, 5th Assembly District

Dear Legislators of Wisconsin,

In response to your letter of October 2013 with regard to the Common Core Model Standards, we, the Kettle Moraine School District, would like to share our responses with you.

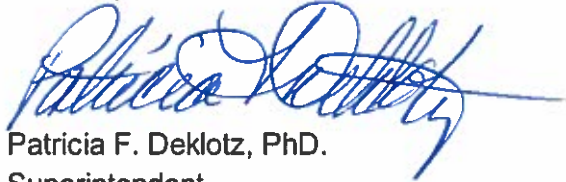
1. Kettle Moraine School District's Board of Education governs under a policy governance structure, delegating standards alignment to administration. The administrative team began analyzing drafts of standards in November 2009. Curriculum teams provided feedback regarding rigor, scope and sequence. In June 2010, the CCSS were officially released and curriculum teams, led by administrators, began aligning course expectations to the CCSS. All of this work was regularly reported to the Kettle Moraine Board of Education via monitoring reports.
2. The CCSS provide our administrators, teachers and students a continuum of skills that aligns with our desire for rigor and district vision of personalized learning. By viewing the CCSS as a continuum we are able to find where a student lands on the continuum and provide supports and instruction that will move the student to the next level. We are not bound by the grade level or course title suggested by the CCSS. We find the rigor appropriate and higher than the previous Wisconsin State Standards. Additionally, we have the ability to move a child to more rigorous standards, within the CCSS, as needed.

3. Each fiscal year Kettle Moraine School District budgets for aligning curriculum to standards, for professional development to understand standards, for time to analyze assessment results to respond to student needs and to review resources. This work and money has been a typical expense. Additionally, a cycle of resource purchases has remained in place. While we struggle to maintain the most up-to-date resources, the allocation of monies for this work has always been part of the budgeting process.

4. Analyzing standards as they relate to student needs is an essential component to the success of any set of standards. Additionally, a study of students determined to be college & career ready and their actual success in college is needed. Kettle Moraine School District would fully support ongoing review of any standards and their subsequent measurement tool.

Thank you for the invitation to be able to respond to your questions and provide you with information from Kettle Moraine School District. We appreciate the opportunity to have our voices heard.

Sincerely,



Patricia F. Deklotz, PhD.  
Superintendent



Theresa Gennerman, PhD.  
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning

## Legislators:

In regards to your questions about the Common Core Standards, please see my responses below, with the number of each related question preceding the response:

1. Prior to 2010, our school followed the Wisconsin DPI academic standards. Each classroom teacher is responsible for setting their individual curriculum. Administration approves texts, and each teacher's curriculum is reviewed by administration when they are evaluated. We get assistance from our local CESA when attempting major curriculum modifications. I do not have access to each teacher's individual curriculum prior to 2010.

2. Our District adopted the CCS, after reviewing them when they were initially presented. We have integrated many of the activities and projects we were doing in the past into the CCS curriculum, and are currently teaching to those standards. We feel there is enough flexibility within the structure of the Common Core to allow for individual and local differences; teachers and schools can implement their own methods of getting the material across to the students. We began the implementation process in 2010. Like many other Wisconsin schools, we have invested four years of time, effort, and finances in training and preparing for the implementation of this set of curriculum standards. We feel that the DPI laid out a well thought out and well planned transition phase, so that we could gradually implement the new standards. We have been able to train our teachers and staff members in a proactive fashion. We have purchased textbooks that follow the CCS, as the need for new textbooks has come up. We have been able to get support and training from our local CESA, as they have shown leadership in helping schools transition into the new curriculum.

From our experiences, the CCS are significantly more rigorous than what was being expected of schools and students in the recent past. Wisconsin schools were beginning to lag behind other states in terms of the rigor of our curriculum and the standards to which we were holding our students. The Common Core is a level playing field, a good framework for schools to lay out instruction from. In their future, our students will have to ratchet up their level of learning in order to compete in the new global market. Technology has become the great equalizer in education and in business; our future citizens must now be able to compete with those from other countries. The Common Core is set up to meet that challenge, and help us accomplish those objectives.

3. Our District has invested the following time and resources in implementing these new standards:

-Purchase of the Common Core Companion curriculum framework, for our teachers to be able to more effectively implement the guidelines in their specific classroom. Cost of \$600 per year.

-All core subject and English teachers attended a CESA training August 9 and 10, 2012 at a neighboring school district. Cost of \$405 for seminar, plus wages for 9 teachers for 2 days each. Math teachers attended a two day training at CESA 3 in July of 2012. Cost of \$750 plus wages for two teachers, for three days each.

-Teacher inservice training in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 to educate teachers about the CCS, and to spend time aligning classroom instruction with the CCS curriculum.

This is a partial list; it would be virtually impossible to list the individual time and efforts each staff member has made, in an effort to continue to provide a top-notch education for our children. It is frustrating for us as educators to follow a well laid-out plan in a proactive fashion, only to have consideration given to "having the rug jerked out from under us" just as we start to see the fruition of our efforts in addressing this new challenge.

4. I see no problem with having a formalized process of reviewing state academic process on a regular basis. I would only ask that schools are given advanced notice well ahead of time, for planned changes and modifications.

Summarizing, I would like to voice my support for the Common Core Standards. It is a rigorous, comprehensive program which we have received support from the DPI and CESA for implementing. If not the Common Core, what options should we pursue? Unless there is a significantly better alternative for us to follow, we should stay this course until we find one. We have transitioned our students, and we are currently teaching to these standards, as are many other schools. I do not feel we as a state should

throw that preparation away, and pursue another path. School resources are too valuable to waste, especially considering that our funding is constantly being scrutinized. From our perspective, the final determining factor on the issue should be this: the Common Core standards are good for kids. It is irrelevant to consider most other factors relating to this issue. School resources are too valuable to squander. Bottom line is that the Common Core standards will benefit kids and schools.

Thanks for taking the time to consider our perspective. I salute you for going directly to the schools to consider the course education should travel.

--

David Boland  
District Administrator  
Seneca Area School District  
Phone: 608-734-3411, ext. 151  
Email: [dboland@seneca.k12.wi.us](mailto:dboland@seneca.k12.wi.us)

Thank you for the recent letter pertaining to common core hearings.

I will respond to the questions below as delineated in the letter:

1. The District adopted the WI model standards, prior to 2010.

2. While there was no formal adoption by Board action of the Common Core standards, it seemed as if the common core would be a mandate and an unfunded one.

The premise of the standards as described in 2010 was well-grounded. The consequence for not embracing them (lower student achievement scores) seemed obvious with the looming revision of state assessments in response to the waiver application of NCLB. In other words, the common core was going to be aligned to the new state assessment/accountability system.

Regarding the rigor, we have found the literacy/English-Language Arts to be more rigorous especially in the primary grades, most notably in the area of writing.

In math, we may have to switch a few topics around, but the common core generally matched our program's rigor.

3. Costs realized in curriculum updates have equated to approximately: \$17000 in sub release time over the past few school years. This was due to curriculum revision and staff training.

4. A time-staggered review process might make sense. For the sake of work load purposes (especially in cases of elementary teachers), I would suggest doing content areas separately. In other words, stagger them a few years apart so teachers do not have to implement too many instructional changes at once and be expected to do them well.

5. Keep in mind the history of public schools in this country. Too much local control was disastrous for having an educated citizenry and in a way perpetuated the socio-economic class differences. Yet too many mandates subtract from the geography and cultural diversity of America which is important to foster through education at the local level. (Imagine children in Wisconsin not having learning experiences about the dairy/agriculture and tourism industries, Native Americans or environmental ed, life sciences or the importance of the Mississippi River and Great Lakes!) Thus, it is important to strike a balance between local control (which can better be achieved in social studies and science programming) and mandated curriculum expectations. To reach a higher degree of international competitiveness, rigorous expectations need to be in place for math and literacy and those expectations need to come from the top-down, otherwise there is too much room for ambiguity, compromise and ultimately, mediocrity.

Finally, I would encourage the legislature to be very conscious of the Educator Effectiveness initiative. It is a bigger "game-changer" in public education than common core. The success of common core hinges on the effectiveness of the teachers and their instruction. There is an unprecedented workload being added to administrators that will take them away from other job responsibilities key to their positions and the accountability of teachers will escalate. There will likely be hidden costs once it is implemented as well. If individuals are squeaking about common core, wait until the Educator Effectiveness initiative goes live. Please keep a pulse on this.

Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Appreciatively,

**Chris Joch**

Superintendent

Waterford Graded Schools

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Waterford, WI 53185

Phone: 262.514.8200 x5500

Fax: 262.514.8251





## COMMUNICATION



November 12, 2013

Dean Knudson – 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Paul Farrow – 33<sup>rd</sup> Senate District  
Michael Schraa – 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District  
Don Pridemore – 22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Jeremy Thiesfeldt – 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Alberta Darling – 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Tom Larson – 67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Jim Steineke – 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Legislature,

In response to your letter, I would like to thank you for asking my opinion on a number of questions and soliciting feedback regarding the Common Core State Standards. I will do my best to give you a concise, yet eloquent response to your questions. Additionally, I did present information at the first hearing on October 3, 2013 in Madison so you can also refer to this presented information.

Prior to 2010, the Northern Ozaukee School District adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards as their basis for the “what” and “when” critical concepts and knowledge needed to be instructed. The District ultimately developed curriculum and materials to support this endeavor along with spending appropriate funds to insure proper professional learning opportunities for the staff. This process gave a decent framework from which to start and staff members worked to make sure that students received appropriate levels of instruction that would meet the rigors at that time. As far as providing a copy, I would refer you to information already provided by the DPI as these materials would be too time and labor intensive to reproduce.


After State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core model standards in 2010, the District did, in essence, adopt the common core. All areas of the standards were unpacked, processes were put into place to insure that they met the needs of our school and district, and certain standards were shuffled to insure a more cohesive plan for teaching and learning. I would not say that we have augmented the standards, due to their rigor level, but we have fine-tuned them for our needs as a District under our more broad local control. We have not been impacted negatively by the adoption of these model standards and in fact welcomed the adoption of a higher level of standard attainment. As stated previously, the Common Core model standards are more rigorous and were welcomed by our district as we strive for greater student and teacher outcomes.

The district has incurred very little additional cost as opposed to any other year. We have invested in the CESA 7 Common Core Curriculum Companion to the tune of about \$600 per year and have sent a few staff to some CCSS training opportunities, but we would have done that as a matter of regular practice within our continuous improvement model. We have stressed across the district that the move to the Common Core is not about throwing what we have done in the past out completely, but using the materials and strategies already ascertained to meet a more rigorous and coherent set of standards. We have not spent an exorbitant amount of money on resources as we believe this is best left to the instructor to help cater to the learning of the students.

Formalizing a process to review standards should be a part of the process. With teaching and learning, you must always be assessing the effects of your efforts. To do anything else would be short sighted and detrimental to our students. I would say, though, that this is something that individual districts should have in policy and these standards should not necessarily be looked at every 5-7 years but more likely every 2-3 years to insure proper implementation, increased student achievement, and that they are meeting the goal of having every student be college and career ready. I believe that most, if not all, school districts already take this on in a proactive way through regular professional development and learning opportunities. We must do this to remain competitive with the rest of the state, nation, and world. Complacency is not in our vocabulary so we are always looking for ways to improve, adapt, and excel on behalf of our students, staff, parents, and community.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me as indicated below. I would be more than happy to discuss our process as we are a fully implemented standards based PK-12 school district, meeting the needs of our students today through best practice methods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Blake Peuse".

Blake Peuse, Superintendent  
Northern Ozaukee School District  
401 Highland Drive  
Fredonia, WI 53021  
262-692-2489 X 402 (Office)  
262-501-3678 (Cell)  
[bpeuse@nosd.edu](mailto:bpeuse@nosd.edu)



Evansville Community School District  
340 Fair Street  
Evansville, Wisconsin 53536

November 18, 2013

Paula Landers  
Director of Instruction  
landersp@evansville.k12.wi.us  
(608) 882-3382

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Legislature,

As you have heard, Wisconsin public school educators have taken the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) quite seriously. Realizing that this work means engagement at many levels of a system – from curriculum and instruction to professional development to resource allocation – it has been a multi-year endeavor for many schools and districts, including the Evansville Community School District (ECSD).

Evansville has a long standing tradition of teaching from state standards, and adding local standards as deemed necessary. In response to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, the ECSD created alignment documents that outlined what students should know and be able to do across all grades and in all content areas. These alignment documents were approved by the school board throughout 2002-2003, and have been periodically updated as educators used student achievement data from state assessments to improve their instructional content and practices. (See enclosures for documentation)

Evansville staff and administrators followed the development of the Wisconsin draft standards throughout 2009-10, and began to study these standards in preparation for curriculum realignment. In July 2010, when we learned that the new Wisconsin draft standards for mathematics were being replaced by the Common Core State Standards, all curriculum development work was put on hold until the CCSS were finalized and adopted by the state. With state approved standards to work with, the re-alignment work began anew. Since July 2010, our K-12 mathematics teachers have “unpacked” the standards (separated each standard into teachable chunks), created a “scope and sequence” to teach the standards (determined where in the curriculum the teachable chunks are taught), identified “Critical Learning Targets” (standards that leverage the development of other skills), and continue to develop units and lessons that address the rigor of the standards so that students can perform to meet the higher expectations set by the state. As with all change, our system’s capacity was such that the math and English language arts and reading standards alignment could not be addressed at the same time. English language arts (ELA) and reading alignment work was begun in 2011, and continues this year. The alignment process for ELA and reading was similar to math. The standards were unpacked and a scope and sequence was created, critical learning targets were identified, and now teachers and principals are working together to create units and lessons that address the rigor of the CCSS in English language arts and reading.

Throughout the unpacking process, teachers had the opportunity to learn the new standards – making sense of them through discussion and visualization of the standards enacted in the classroom setting. Over and over again, I heard teachers say “we don’t *do* this in my grade!” But as the discussion became more involved and they had time to discover what the standard really meant and how it could be taught, they began to say “Oh... we don’t *do* this in my grade...(and we *need* to!)” Our staff unanimously agreed that the CCSS in mathematics and ELA/reading were more rigorous, concise, and clearly articulated across grade levels than their predecessors, the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards.

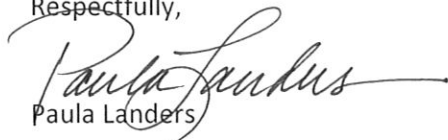
Some content that was previously a part of the standards (e.g. teaching money values in the early grades) were noticeably missing from the CCSS (replaced by skip counting by 5's, 10's). Our approach to a situation such as that, is to include local standards that address content and skills we believe are important. Such standards are included in our scope and sequence maps and are addressed in classroom instruction along with the CCSS.

Adoption of new standards for content and instruction requires engagement of all staff and requires reallocation of resources to support professional learning, curriculum development, and materials purchase. We used professional development resources and summer curriculum funds to unpack the standards and develop the standards scope and sequence. We have allocated resources to purchase K-12 mathematics materials that are aligned with the CCSS, and we have purchased a universal screening assessment and progress monitoring tool to track student achievement relative to the CCSS. Additional resources will need to be allocated for the purchase of K-12 materials aligned to the CCSS in ELA and reading, and professional development and materials to support the CCSS for disciplinary literacy. As a district of 1757 students, the ECSD's financial resources to support professional development and materials purchase are scarce. Federal funding supports over 90% of our professional development activities, and our local budget for textbooks is \$20,000. To purchase K-6 mathematics materials, which came in at just under \$85,000, funds had to be strategically reallocated. Even with the shift of funds to purchase math materials, we do not have enough money to purchase K-12 materials in mathematics and ELA all at the same time. Alignment and adoption of the standards necessarily takes place over time.

The Evansville Community School District, like many others in Wisconsin, has embraced the challenge of teaching to higher expectations and the increased rigor of the Common Core State Standards. We have begun the hard work of examining our current practice and defining a challenging curriculum with the standards as guidelines. If the state were to have a formalized process to review academic standards every 5-7 years, and if this process would yield a routine and predictable outcome, alignment work would be easier and less costly in man-hours and materials purchase. Districts could plan for alignment work every 5<sup>th</sup> year after the standards are reviewed, which would make planning for materials purchase and professional development predictable and cyclical. The current unpredictability of the status of standards and standards revision makes planning for curriculum and instruction reform a challenge.

Thank you for your careful consideration of the Common Core State Standards and for seeking input from those of us who work daily with students to develop their skills and knowledge. Education is a helping profession – the true joy in our work comes from supporting others to reach their goals, discover a new perspective, and be successful in their life. Help us to be successful in our work by providing the resources and creating policies that strengthen public education in Wisconsin.

Respectfully,



Paula Landers

Enclosures:

Evansville Community School District Agendas – May 13, 2002; October 14, 2002; November 11, 2002; December 9, 2002; January 13, 2003; March 10, 2003; April 14, 2003; May 12, 2003; June 30, 2003; July 14, 2003; June 12, 2006; June 27, 2011

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, May 13, 2002  
Evansville High School L.M.C.  
420 South Fourth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                               Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                       Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                          Donna Haakenson                            Timothy Rooney  
                          Michael Larson
- II. Public Presentations.
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Band/Choir Field Trip Request.
  - B. Community Programs Planning.
  - C. Building Project Progress Report:
    - \* Schedule       \* Budget       \* Construction Progress
  - D. 2002-2003 Preliminary Budget and Personnel Report.
  - E. ESL Program Plan.
  - F. Academic Excellence Report.
  - G. Second Reading of Policies: #354-Graduation Requirements; #446-Student Use of Alcohol and/or Other Drugs; #461-Student Insurance Program; #463-Accident Reports; #657A-Student Fee Schedule.
  - H. Recognition of Mr. Vince Maloney.
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of Community Education Documents.
  - B. Approval of Intermediate School Name.
  - C. Approval of 2002-2003 School Year Calendar.
  - D. Approval of Early Release for Students on Wednesday, June 5, 2002.
  - E. Approval of Additional ½ Time ESL Teacher Position.
  - F. Approval of Co-Curricular Resignation.
  - G. Approval of Teacher and Co-Curricular Contracts (Fall, Winter, and All Year).
  - H. **Approval of Math Alignment Document.**
  - I. **Approval of Social Studies Document.**
  - J. Appointment of Representative to 2002 CESA 2 Convention.
  - K. Approval of Policies: #382-Activities When School is Cancelled or Not in Session; #383-Student Organizations; #387-Student Activity Funds Management; #389-Interscholastic Athletics.
  - L. Set Date for Annual Meeting.
  - M. Approval of Minutes.
  - N. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
- VI. Committee Reports.
- VII. Financial Report.
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f) to Discuss Negotiations, Considering Strategy for Crime Detection or Prevention, and Personnel Issues.
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodations should call 882-5224 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224.*

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, October 14, 2002  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                           Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                 Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                          Donna Haakenson                     Timothy Rooney  
                          Michael Larson
  
- II. Public Presentations.
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Building Project Progress Report:
    - \* Schedule       \* Budget       \* Construction Progress
  - B. Presentation of K-12 Music Standards.
  - C. Energy Report.
  - D. Music Boosters Report – Grand Piano and Future Capital Project Purchase Priorities.
  - E. Community Programs Discussion.
  - F. Strategic Planning – *Great Schools In A Growing Community*.
  - G. First Reading of Policies: #831-Use of School Facilities; #831A-Facility Use Agreement; #831B-Key/Access count Checkout Form; #831C-Request for Kitchen Use; #835-Community Supervisor.
  - H. Meeting Date for Tax Levy Certification.
  - I. Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) Convention.
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of New High School Group.
  - B. **Approval of K-12 Science Performance Standards.**
  - C. Approval of Maternity/Paternity Leave Requests.
  - D. Approval of Co-Curricular Resignation.
  - E. Approval of Staff and Co-Curricular Contracts.
  - F. Approval of Parent Transportation Contracts.
  - G. Approval of Ratification of Teamsters Local Union No. 579 Agreement (Custodians).
  - H. Approval of Minutes.
  - I. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
- VI. Committee Reports.
- VII. Financial Report.
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(a)(c)(e)(f) to Discuss Negotiations and Administrative Contracts.
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodations should call 882-5224 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224.*

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, November 11, 2002  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                           Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                 Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                          Donna Haakenson                    Timothy Rooney  
                          Michael Larson
  
- II. Public Presentations.
  
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
  
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation of K-12 Library Media Technology Standards.
  - B. Community Programs Discussion.
  - C. School Board Election Information.
  - D. American Education Week.
  - E. Curriculum Map/Course Descriptions.
  
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. **Approval of K-12 Music Standards.**
  - B. Approval of Pepsi/Coke Proposal.
  - C. Approval of Policies: #831-Use of School Facilities; #831A-Facility Use Agreement; #831B-Key and Access Card Checkout Form; #831C-Request for Kitchen Use; #835-Community Supervisor and Key Holders.
  - D. Approval of WASB Search Services Agreement.
  - E. Approval of Delegate for WASB Delegate Assembly.
  - F. Approval of Minutes.
  - G. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
  
- VI. Committee Reports.
  
- VII. Financial Report.
  
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(a)(c)(e)(f) to Discuss Negotiations and District Administrator Search.
  
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodations should call 882-5224 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224.*

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, December 9, 2002  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                               Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                   Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                          Donna Haakenson                         Timothy Rooney  
                          Michael Larson
  
- II. Public Presentations.
  
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
  
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation of K-12 English Alignment Standards.
  - B. Home School Report.
  - C. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget, Personnel, and Enrollment Report.
  
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. **Approval of K-12 Library Media Technology Standards.**
  - B. Ratification of Food Service Contract.
  - C. Ratification of EEAA Contract (Support Staff).
  - D. Approval of 66:30 Agreement.
  - E. Approval of Minutes.
  - F. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
  
- VI. Committee Reports.
  
- VII. Financial Report.
  
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(c)(f) to Discuss District Administrator Search.
  
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodations should call 882-5224 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224.*



AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, January 13, 2003  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                               Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                     Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                          Donna Haakenson                         Timothy Rooney  
                          Michael Larson
  
- II. Public Presentations.
  
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
  
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation From Discovering Youth Arts.
  - B. Presentation of enGauge Report.
  - C. Presentation of No Child Left Behind.
  - D. Honors English 9 and 10 Proposal.
  - E. Report on School Board Election.
  - F. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget, Personnel, and Enrollment Report.
  - G. First Reading of Policies: #221-District Administrator (Job Description); #237-School Volunteers; #237A-Volunteer Agreement; #237B-Background Check Information Form; #416-Use of School Facilities; #655A-District Fee Schedule.
  - H. Discussion of WASB Policy Resolutions.
  
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of K-12 English Language Arts Performance Standards.
  - B. Approval of Co-Curricular Contract.
  - C. Approval of Interim District Administrator Contract.
  - D. Approval of Interim Deputy District Administrator Contract.
  - E. Approval of Minutes.
  - F. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
  
- VI. Committee Reports.
  
- VII. Financial Report.
  
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g) to Discuss Personnel, Contract or Negotiation Matters and District Administrator Search.
  
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodations should call 882-5224 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224.*

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, March 10, 2003  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:30 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                               Jeff Conn  
                              Georgia Duerst-Lahti                       Ruth Ann Montgomery  
                              Donna Haakenson                           Timothy Rooney  
                              Michael Larson
- II. Public Presentations.
- III. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
- IV. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Discussion of Emotional Health Week.
  - B. Presentation of Maintenance Report.
  - C. Discussion of Community Use of Facilities.
  - D. Discussion of Pianos in the District.
  - E. Discussion of High School Courses With Enrollment Under 12 Students.
  - F. Presentation of K-12 Vocational Technical Performance Standards, Agricultural and Business Standards.
  - G. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget, Personnel, and Enrollment Report.
  - H. First Reading of Policies: #423-Residency, Non-Residency, Tuition and Tuition Waiver (Admission of Non-Resident Students); #423A-Enrollment Form (Non-Resident Request Form); #423B-Residency Determination Form; #423C-Tuition Agreement; #456-Electronic Communication Devices on School Premises; #821-Open Records Policy and Procedures for Access to Public Records (Public's Right to Know).
  - I. Second Reading of Policies: #383-Animals in School; #534-Substitute Teacher Employment.
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of Contract Addendum.
  - B. Approval of K-12 Family and Consumer Education Standards.
  - C. Approval of Consultant Contract.
  - D. Approval of Public School Open Enrollment Applications.
  - E. Approval of Donations.
  - F. Approval of Staff Resignation.
  - G. Approval of Policies: #221-District Administrator (Job Description); #237-School Volunteers; #237A-Volunteer Agreement; #237B-Background Check Information Form; #416-Use of School Facilities; #655A-District Fee Schedule.
  - H. Approval of Minutes.
  - I. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
- VI. Committee Reports.
- VII. Financial Report.
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(b)(c)(e)(g) to Discuss Personnel, Contract or Negotiation Matters, and District Administrator Search.
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodation or more specific information about the agenda items should call 882-5224, Ext. 3387 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.*



AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, May 12, 2003  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:00 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:           Dennis Hughes                           Jeff Conn  
                          Georgia Duerst-Lahti                 Arthur Phillips  
                          Timothy Rooney                        Todd Campbell  
                          Michael Larson
- II. Public Presentations.
- III. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Student Request to Form Club.
  - B. Parent Request Regarding Pom Pon Selection.
  - C. Presentation of World Languages - Spanish Standards.
  - D. School Board Committee Assignments.
  - E. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget, Personnel, and Enrollment Report.
  - F. First Reading of Policies: #381-Evening, Wednesday, and Weekend Activities; #554-Network Computing and Telecommunications Evansville School District: Faculty and Staff; #657A-Student Fee Schedule
  - G. Second Reading of Policies: #356-Assessment of Student Learning (Testing Programs); #356.1-Competency Based Testing; #456A-Electronic Communications Device Use Request Form.
- IV. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of Panama Trip.
  - B. Approval of High School Courses With Enrollment Under 12 Students.
  - C. **Approval of K-12 Health Standards.**
  - D. Approval of Teacher Contract.
  - E. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement for Job Sharing.
  - F. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement for Athletic Director's Secretary.
  - G. Approval of Policies: #423-Residency, Non-Residency, Tuition and Tuition Waiver; #423A-Enrollment Form; #423B-Residency Determination Form; #423C-Tuition Agreement; #456-Electronic Communication Devices on School Premises; #821-Open Records Policy and Procedures for Access to Public Records.
  - H. Approval of Minutes.
  - I. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
- V. Principals'/Administrators' Reports.
- VI. Committee Reports.
- VII. Financial Report.
- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(b)(c)(e)(g) to Discuss Personnel and Contract or Negotiation Matters.
- IX. Adjourn.

*Persons needing special accommodation or more specific information about the agenda items should call 882-5224, Ext. 3387 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.*

Special Meeting Agenda  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, June 30, 2003  
High School Media Room  
640 S. Fifth Street  
7:00 p.m.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:       Dennis Hughes                   Jeff Conn  
                      Georgia Duerst-Lahti        Arthur Phillips  
                      Timothy Rooney            Todd Campbell  
                      Michael Larson
  
- II. Information & Discussion:
  - A. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget.
  - B. Presentation of Physical Education Performance Standards.
  - C. First Reading of Policies: #321-Students With Disabilities; #321A – Administrative Rule, IDEA Team Process Summary; #410-Non-Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying of Students; #831-Use of School Facilities; #831A-Facility Use Agreement; #831B-Key and Access Card Checkout Form.
  - D. Second Reading of Policies: #124A – Student Representative to the Board of Education; #352.2 – Academic Honors; #354 – Graduation Requirements; #414 - Enrollment of and Services Available to District Students Who Attend Private, Parochial or Home Based School; #432 – Attendance Responsibilities; #432A – Administrative Rule, High School Attendance/Tardy Procedure; and #432.1 – Elementary Guidelines For Attendance and Tardy.
  
- III. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Approval of Teacher and Staff Resignations.
  - B. Approval of World Languages – Spanish Standards.**
  - C. Approval of Changes to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Band.
  - D. Approval of Final Bills for 2002-2003 Fiscal Year and Fund Balances Designation.
  - E. Approval of 2002-2003 Budget Adjustments.
  - F. Approval of Policies: #381-Evening, Wednesday, and Weekend Activities; #554- Network Computing and Telecommunications Evansville School District: Faculty and Staff; #657A-Student Fee Schedule; #821-Open Records Policy and Procedures for Access to Public Records.
  - G. Set Annual Meeting.
  
- IV. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(b)(c)(e)(g) to Discuss Personnel and Contract or Negotiation Matters.
  
- V. Business (Action Items):
  - A. Discussion/Approval of 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget Recommendations.
  - B. Consideration of Changes in Personnel and Contract Matters.
  
- VI. Adjourn.

*More specific information about agenda items may be obtained by calling 882-5224, ext. 3387.*

AGENDA  
Board of Education Evansville Community School District  
Monday, July 14, 2003  
High School Media Room - 640 S. Fifth Street  
7:00 P.M.

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm](http://evansvilleschools.org/schoolbdcal.htm), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call:       Dennis Hughes                   Jeff Conn  
                      Georgia Duerst-Lahti       Arthur Phillips  
                      Timothy Rooney            Todd Campbell  
                      Michael Larson
- II. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(b)(c)(e)(g) to Discuss Personnel and Contract or Negotiation Matters.
- III. Public Presentations.
- IV. Principals’/Administrators’ Reports.
- V. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation of District Curriculum Goals.
  - B. Presentation of enGauge Needs Assessment Results.
  - C. District Administrator’s Budget Recommendations.
  - D. 2003-2004 Preliminary Budget, Personnel, and Enrollment Report.
  - E. First Reading of Policies: #153–Public Notice; #172–Definition, Adoption, Amendment and Termination of Policy; #532.3–Off-Campus Graduate Credits For Movement on Salary Schedule; #532.3A–Steps for Salary Schedule Advancement; #532.3B–Graduate Credit Approval Form; #532.3C–Salary Schedule Movement Form.
  - F. Second Reading of Policies: #321–Students With Disabilities; #321A–Administrative Rule, IDEA Team Process Summary; #410–Non-Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying of Students; #831–Use of School Facilities; #831A–Facility Use Agreement; #831B–Key and Access Card Checkout Form.
- VI. Business (Action Items):
  - A. **Approval of Physical Education Performance Standards.**
  - B. Approval of Supervisor and Administrative Support Contracts.
  - C. Approval of Co-Curricular Contracts.
  - D. Approval of Teacher Contracts.
  - E. Approval of Consideration of Changes in Personnel and Contract Matters.
  - F. Approval of Policies: #124A–Selection of Student Representative to the Board of Education; #352.2–Academic Honors; #354–Graduation Requirements; #414–Enrollment of and Services Available to District Students Who Attend Private, Parochial or Home Based School; #432–Attendance Responsibilities; #432A–Administrative Rule, High School Attendance/Tardy Procedure; and #432.1–Elementary Guidelines For Attendance and Tardy.
  - G. Approval of Minutes.
  - H. Approval of Bills and Receipts.
- VII. Committee Reports.
- VIII. Financial Report.
- IX. Adjourn.

**Board of Education Evansville Community School District**

**Regular Meeting Agenda**

**Monday, June 12, 2006**

**High School Media Room - 640 S. Fifth Street**

**5:30 P.M.**

*Note, public notice of this meeting given by posting at the District Office, Levi Leonard Elementary School Office, Theodore Robinson Intermediate School Office, J.C. McKenna Middle School Office, High School Office, Evansville School District Web Site: [www.evansville.k12.wi.us](http://www.evansville.k12.wi.us), and by forwarding the agenda to the Evansville Review, M&I Bank, Union Bank & Trust and Eager Free Public Library.*

- I. Roll Call: Michael Pierick    John Willoughby    Tina Rossmiller  
                  Dennis Hatfield    Arthur Phillips    Mariah Haberman, H.S. Student Rep.  
                  Mike Larson    Dennis Knudson
- II. Public Announcements/Upcoming Events.
  - A. K-12 District Wide "Back to School Days" – August 17 and August 23, 2006.
- III. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation by Taher on Food Service Program.
- IV. Public Presentations. Regarding Items Not on the Agenda. Items Related to the Agenda May be Presented at This Time.
- V. District Administrator Report – Progress on Goals 2005-06.
- VI. Principals'/Administrators' Reports – Progress on Learning Goals, Celebrate, and End of Year Goals.
- VII. Information & Discussion:
  - A. Presentation of Reading Pilot.
  - B. Advanced Placement Classes.
  - C. Teaching Positions for 2006-07 Social Studies, Spanish and Math.
  - D. Applied Population Laboratory Study.
  - E. First Reading of Policies: #211-Administrator Ethics; #223-Administrator Professional Development Opportunities (Evaluation and Development of Professional Staff); #223.1-Guidelines for Attendance at Meetings, Workshops and Conventions; #253.1-Development and Review of Administrative Rules; #253.2-Development and/or Approval of Handbooks; #260-Temporary Administrative Arrangements; #334-Curriculum/Instructional Program Evaluation; #537-Professional Development Opportunities; and #538-Evaluation of Faculty and Staff.
  - F. Second Reading of Policies: #211-The Management Team; #343.2-Class, Program and School Size; #423-Form-Enrollment Form; #657.1-Student Fee Schedule; #723.3-Emergency Closings; and #762-Food Service Management.
  - G. Change in Health Insurance.
  - H. Update on Preliminary Budget.

- VIII. Executive Session – Under Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(c)(e)(f) to Discuss Offering of Employment Contracts for Coaching or Classroom Positions, Negotiations on Health Insurance Contract and Contracts for Middle School Principal and Administrative Assistants.
- IX. Business (Action Items):
- A. **Approval of Art Curriculum Alignment Document.**
  - B. Approval of CESA #2 Service Contract.
  - C. Approval of Middle and High School Student Handbooks.
  - D. Approval of Change in Health Insurance.
  - E. Approval of Positions Impacted by the 2006-07 Budget Process: Social Studies, Spanish and Math.
  - F. Approval of Principal Contract.
  - G. Approval of Teachers Contracts.
  - H. Approval of Co-Curricular Contracts.
  - I. Approval of Special Contracts and Administrative Assistant Contracts.
  - J. Approval of Maternity/Paternity Leave Requests.
  - K. Approval of Waiver of \$500 Penalty.
  - L. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing Participation in the 2006 Wisconsin School Districts Cash-Flow Management Program, the Borrowing of Funds for the 2006-07 School Year, and the Issuance of Related Tax and Revenue Anticipation Promissory Notes in One or More Series.
  - M. Approval of July Board Meeting.
  - N. Approval of Policies: #224-Board-Administrator Relationship; #231-Recruitment and Appointment of District Administrator; and #372-Student Publications.
  - O. Approval of Applied Population Laboratory Study.
  - P. Approval of Minutes.
  - Q. Approval of Bills.
- X. Committee Reports.
- XI. Financial Report.
- XII. Set Next Agenda.
- XIII. Adjourn.

This notice may be supplemented with additions to the agenda that come to the attention of the Board prior to the meeting. A final agenda will be posted and provided to the media no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting or no later than 2 hours prior to the meeting in the event of an emergency.

Persons needing special accommodations or more specific information about the agenda items should call 882-5224, Ext. 3387 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Posted: 6/8/06



## **WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE – 10-30-13**

- 1) Since 1977, Wisconsin law has required each school board to adopt academic standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history. Wis. Stat. 118.30(1g)(a). School boards may adopt the Department of Public Instruction's model standards or adopt their own. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards? Please provide a copy.

**We adopted DPI model standards officially as stated in WSD policy 6216, attached.**

- 2) State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core model standards for the State of Wisconsin in 2010. These standards have also been adopted by many school districts and are sometimes augmented and/or strengthened by local officials to better meet the needs of their individual district. Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? Has your district augmented those standards in any way? How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?

**We adopted CCSS May, 2010 and augmented them in July, 2010.**

**The WSD Education Department and Leadership Teams, after careful analysis feel the CCSS are much more rigorous than previous standards. They provide Grade by Grade specific targets that were lacking in the previous Wisconsin Standards. We find that the standards are based on research and best practices and provide the alignment for educating graduates who are college and career ready.**

- 3) What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June of 2010?

**The Wausau School District has a continuous cycle of curriculum review and adoption, therefore new curriculum purchases have been aligned with periodic materials rotations. We also maintain an on-going plan for professional growth and development and therefore chose to widely utilize funds to advance professional knowledge and capacity. The Common Core Standards were not a vast consideration when we developed our plan and implementation of our digital footprint.**

- 4) Many states, such as Minnesota, Iowa and Massachusetts, have a formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not?

**The Wausau School District supports a review of the Common Core State Standards every 5-7 years. We assert that it is always good to reassess where we are with student learning and progress in meeting the Standards. We are constantly asking:**

**What do we want our students to know and be able to do?**

**How will we know if they have learned?**

**What will we do if they have not learned?**

**What will we do if they already know it?**

**These questions will help us answer the questions:**

**Are they rigorous enough?**

**What needs to be changed?**

**What are our assessments telling us?**

## WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

**Dean Knudson– 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, Paul Farrow– 33<sup>rd</sup> Senate District, Michael Schraa– 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District, Don Pridemore- 22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District, Jeremy Thiesfeldt- 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District, Alberta Darling- 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District, Tom Larson- 67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, and Jim Steineke- 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly District.**

Since 1997, Wisconsin law has required each school board to adopt academic standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history. Wis. Stat. 118.30(1g)(a). School boards may adopt the Department of Public Instruction's model standards or adopt their own. Prior to June of 2010, had your district formally adopted academic standards? Please provide a copy.

**The *Academic Standards* in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography, and history, pursuant to section 118.30 (1g)(a), Wisconsin Statutes was approved and adopted by the School District of Maple Board of Education on June 8, 1998 (attached). Our K-12 Essential Skills Curriculum was then reviewed, revised, and aligned to the Wisconsin Academic Model Standards.**

State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core model standards for the state of Wisconsin in 2010. These standards have also been adopted by many school districts and are sometimes augmented and/or strengthened by local officials to better meet the needs of their individual district.

Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? **Yes**

Has your district augmented those standards in any way? **No**

How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards?

**There has been numerous professional staff development days scheduled and designed for the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) through CESA #12 and our local school district. Initial sessions were designed for staff to investigate and build an understanding of the standards by grade level using a method process that could be duplicated by department, teacher teams, and building-level staff. During each of the investigation sessions the staff explored underpinnings, connections, and the context of the CCSS; organizational aspects; specifics on the standards; vertical connections; and action steps for local roll-out. The sessions were designed to evaluate the current local curriculum and to develop curriculum aligned to the CCSS. The sessions began the development of local formative and benchmark assessments aligned to the CCSS as well as alignment of the high quality instructional strategies, practices, and resources to support student achievement. The professional staff development workshops and training started in October 2010 and although curriculum revisions and realignments were completed in math and English Language Arts, curriculum writing continues.**

If your district has adopted Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?

**The CCSS are more rigorous than the Wisconsin Academic Model Standards.**

What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc., as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core model standards in June 2010?

**The School District of Maple has invested \$70,000+ preparing, developing, and implementing various aspects of the CCSS. The focus of our professional staff development days and other training opportunities was modified to specifically address and to accommodate the CCSS both in and out of district. In addition, our district purchased the services of CESA #7's "Curriculum Companion" to assist staff with the writing phase, alignment, and future implementation of the CCSS.**

Many states, such as Minnesota, Iowa and Massachusetts, have a formalized process whereby their academic standards are reviewed every 5 to 7 years. Would you support the adoption of a similar process in Wisconsin? Why or why not?

**If we are serious about critical thinking skills, increased rigor, higher expectations, personalized learning, accountability, and practical application as well as complying with the ESEA Waiver requirements of: college- and career-ready expectations for all students, state-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support, supporting effective instruction and leadership, and reducing duplication and unnecessary burden it certainly makes sense to formally review and evaluate the status or progress of such standards over a prescribed period of time.**

--

Gregg H. Lundberg, Ed.S.  
District Administrator  
School District of Maple  
P.O. Box 188  
4751 South County Rd F  
Phone (715) 363-2431  
Fax (715) 363-2191

# A

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# New

APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD  
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MAPLE  
Date: 6-8-98

# Policy *of importance to* the SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MAPLE

Reported by the **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**POLICY NO. 98.2**

**Replaces one dated: NEW**

**FILE NAME: STUDENTS**

**TITLE: Academic Standards Adoption**

**Pursuant to section 118.30 (1g)(a), Wisconsin Statutes:**

By August 1, 1998, each school board shall adopt pupil academic standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing, geography and history. If the governor has issued pupil academic standards as a executive order under s. 14.23, the school board may adopt those standards.

## Introduction

The Federal legislation, Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1994, requires each state to establish subject content standards which are challenging to all students. As a result of IASA, the above Wisconsin legislation has become law.

To comply with the Wisconsin statute, the School District of Maple examined its options. After discussion at the committee, administrative, and school board levels, the decision was made to adopt the state's academic standards in reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies in lieu of the district developing its own standards. There were three primary reasons for this decision:

1. The state standards are already aligned with the state testing system (WSAS).
2. In order to use the state's graduation test, which is to be administered starting in 2000-01, a school district must adopt the state academic standards. If a district develops its own standards, it must also develop its own graduation test, which can be costly and holds legal ramifications.
3. The August 1, 1998 adoption date does not permit for adequate time for such a large task.

## **Objective**

To align curriculum and instruction with the state standards so that all students will achieve at a high level of proficiency on the WSAS.

## **Structure**

The district curriculum and instructional methods will align with the adopted state academic standards at all grade levels K-12.

## **Operational Procedure**

The process of aligning the curriculum with the state academic standards began during the 1997-98 school year. Various activities which focused on staff awareness were conducted during the inservice days in January and April.

Toward the end of the 1997-98 school year, voluntary Standards and Assessment Planning Meetings were held for the elementary, middle school and high school staffs. Peggy Smith, Standards and Assessment Coordinator for CESA #12, gave a more in-depth overview of the standards process and how it relates to the WSAS and the graduation test. The state "Achievement Expectation" and "Adequate Yearly Progress" was also discussed. Teachers then developed plans that would lead to the implementation of the standards. Various activities resulting from this planning meeting will take place during the summer of 1998. Funding for the planning meeting and implementation activities was provided through a grant from CESA #12.

The school district's Staff Development Plan for 1998-99 calls for additional work and training in the implementation of the standards.

Regarding the letter received inquiring about the common core:

The Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District has adopted the common core standards and support the additional rigor they provide compared to those our district previously used. The costs associated with this change has been relatively minimal as we provide our own investigation into and augmentation of the standards to best fit the needs of our students.

--

Garrett Rogowski  
Superintendent  
Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District

As submitted by: Thomas Steward  
Director of Instructional Services  
Sparta Area School District  
201 East Franklin Street  
Sparta, Wisconsin 54656  
608-269-3151

- 1) The School District had adopted standards prior to June of 2010. Those standards initially adopted were known as the "Twenty Standards," and then the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards (WMAS).
- 2) Our district has adopted the Common Core Standards. I would not say that they have been augmented. They have been deconstructed so that educators and parents understand why they are stronger than the previous standards, what the expectations are, how the standards scaffold from grade level to grade level. This has assisted staff and administration in developing better vertical academic alignment. The impact has been very little. We have added new resources such as texts etc. but we are not purchasing new materials outside of our regular purchasing cycle. We do not believe resources should drive curriculum, curriculum determines resources! From a professional development standpoint it has changed. Our PD is more focused and has created a culture of collegial sharing between content areas that may not have taken part before. Because of content reading standards, areas such as CTE, Physical Education etc. are supporting reading and writing. Science, CTE and Math are more engaged together and are looking at ways to create integrated or contextual learning environments. We would consider the standards more rigorous as there are specific expectations (goals) and objectives that a student is expected to meet. The previous standards were so ambiguous that one did not know what the expectation was. Previously it was easy for people to pass off meeting certain standards to another grade as the standards were written at grades 4, 8 and high school. Now there are some specifics based on learning theory at various chronological points along the way. So yes the new standards seem to have greater rigor.
- 3) Our cost has been no different than in the past. As we have developed our programming it has actually assisted in giving clarity and direction to our professional development. It has allowed us to not only plan our professional development for one year but our summer work as well as for future years as we get into a regular curriculum cycle with review and revision. It has permitted us to have conversations as to what we are teaching, what parents can help with and in turn what to expect as their child moves to the next grade due to the greater connections between grades. As students transfer from one attendance area to another it permits parents



to know that there should be similar expectations and standards in that school in the Sparta Area School District. As we work at this across our CESA similar expectations should be found throughout the region. We also have a unique perspective because of Fort McCoy being inside our boundaries. With numerous children attending our school that are military connected, having similar standards from state to state is helpful educators in our district as well as the district the students are coming from or going to as well as the parents. While resources may change having similar high standards do not. While we are attempting to build a stronger educational system in Wisconsin and most especially in Sparta, we are also building a stronger nation because of our connectivity. So from our perspective this has been NO additional cost. The greatest cost would be both in human as well as fiscal resources if we went backwards support the archaic standards that were adopted in the 1990's.

- 4) Certainly we would support this. Why? We have a regular curriculum review that we do in our school district. It would only make sense to do it at a more global level like the state as well. The thought of the standards are here and now live with it is unethical. We should take time to make adjustments to strengthen those standards that need to be strengthened, to remove standards that are redundant and to adjust standards if they are so challenging that no one can master them at the grade level they are at.



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BLACK RIVER FALLS  
Inspiring Excellence

## School District of Black River Falls

November 4, 2013

To whom it may concern;

The School district of Black River Falls has also been having discussions regarding the Common Core State Standards; the conversations have been initiated by a small, yet very vocal group within our community. We have recently done a survey of our entire professional staff to gauge their comfort with the rigor, the amount of professional decision making they feel they have, as well as their level of alignment to the common core within their content area and classroom. I have attached the results of this survey as it speaks loudly to the administration in regards to our future direction.

1. The School District of Black River Falls had adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. I did not provide a copy, as the standards books were published through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and are quite comprehensive.
2. What we have done with the common core state standards, as well as our process with the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards prior, is to work with our staff to familiarize themselves with the standards. We begin by working as a full grade level, and then work with a group of teachers from across several grade levels to ensure vertical articulation of our curriculum, and finally to work with the local district adopted resource materials to see where we need to augment with additional resources. The standards continue to provide a framework from which the teachers support and deepen student understandings. As a district, the framework remains consistent, it is the foundation from which classroom instruction is built. As far as augmenting them, that happens in each classroom, and typically different in each classroom. The teachers are asked to teach the group of students in front of them, there are no two groups that will have the exact same needs. We ask our teachers to use their professional knowledge and skill to develop lessons that are at the "next level of challenge" for their learners. What that content is cannot be mandated by standards, as the teacher needs to respond to the learners within their classroom. The common core standards have thus far proven to have raised the bar for the majority of our students. Teachers are having to differentiate their instruction in order to provide the foundation for some, while still growing the depth of knowledge for others.

301 N Fourth Street  
Black River Falls, WI 54615  
715-284-4357  
Dr. Shelly Severson - Superintendent

3. Our district has had a department review cycle that asks each academic department to do a thorough analysis of their content, assessments, and instructional delivery strategies on a five year cycle. This review cycle has been utilized in the district for at least 20 years, it was not initiated because of standards, but because we want to ensure that all teachers know what we expect students to know and to be able to do. We have continued this review cycle as our model for aligning our curriculum to the common core. This work by the staff is not a new expense to the district due to the standards, but instead is good practice in ensuring we are being reflective practitioners, we work collaboratively, and we continuously evaluate our assessment data in relation to our programming needs.

We have undertaken a HUGE initiative in teaching Literacy in Black River Falls. The decision was made because our data continuously told us that our students were not scoring as successfully as we believed they were capable of. It was not that we needed more interventions, but instead that we needed to adjust our core instruction. We researched many models and adopted the Literacy Collaborative Framework because we are convinced it is the most effective way to teach students to read, write, and be literate. We made that local decision before we worked through the alignment of the Literacy Collaborative Framework to the Common Core State Standards. In the end, what the research says is effective in Literacy Collaborative aligned very nicely with the newly adopted standards. We have invested a considerable amount of money in training our teachers to effectively teach literacy, not to teach standards.

4. Our district already has a process for complete curriculum review on a five year cycle. I would prefer that it remain our decision. The current competitive market that surrounds public education already has districts scrambling to meet too many mandates. If a district is committed to continuous improvement, they will undertake these efforts. If they are not committed to continuous improvement, the amount of legislation surrounding schools will be damaging enough. I would never want our staff working toward increased rigor and alignment to a set of standards that they believe may be changing every 5 to 7 years based on the views of people NOT in the classroom. A full alignment to new standards takes most districts 5 years.

If you have any additional questions, or would like to talk further about the School District of Black River Falls and its implementation of the common core state standards, please feel welcome to contact me.

Your partner in education,



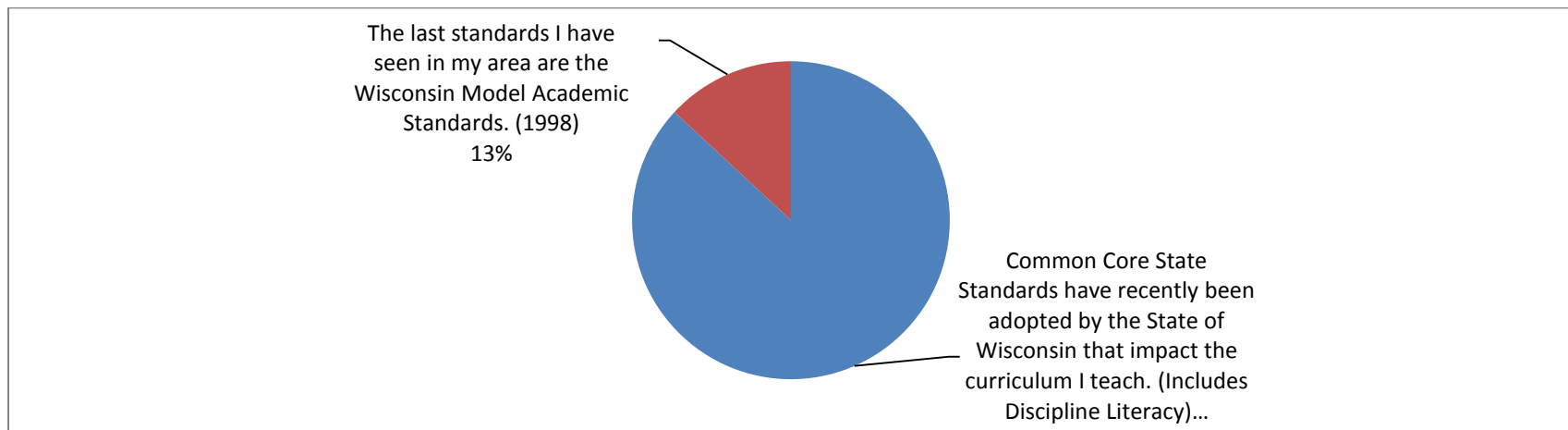
Dr. Shelly Severson

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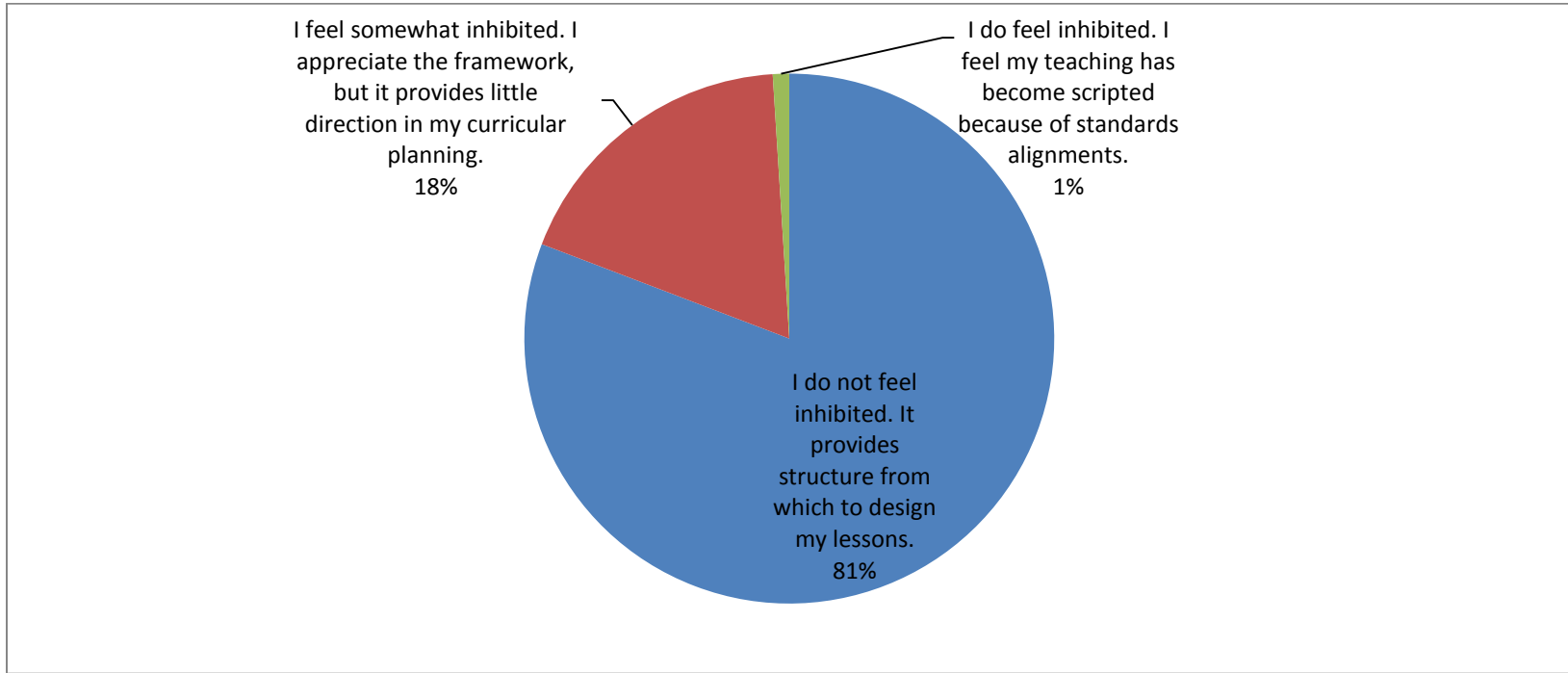
# Common Core Teacher Survey

This survey was given to all professional staff. We had 82% participation in this survey, which is an extremely significant response. Below are the results of the survey along with comments from teachers that volunteered their additional thoughts.

- In an effort to get a composite picture of the viewpoints of the teachers in the School District of Black River Falls, we are asking everyone to fill out this survey. We recognize not all of you have had Common Core State Standards released and adopted in your content area. We also recognize that in some cases, depending on your teaching role, you might reinforce or assist in the delivery of instruction that is related to the Common Core Standards. We'd like to be able to sort our results by this fact. We are seeking your honest responses, names will not be collected.**

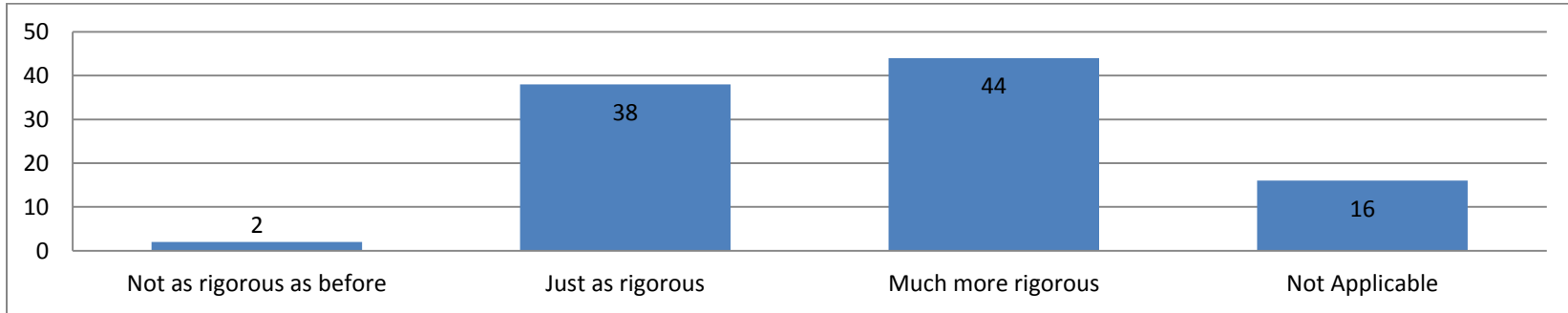


**2. When thinking about the curriculum you deliver within your classroom, do you feel the standards inhibit your instructional decision making?**

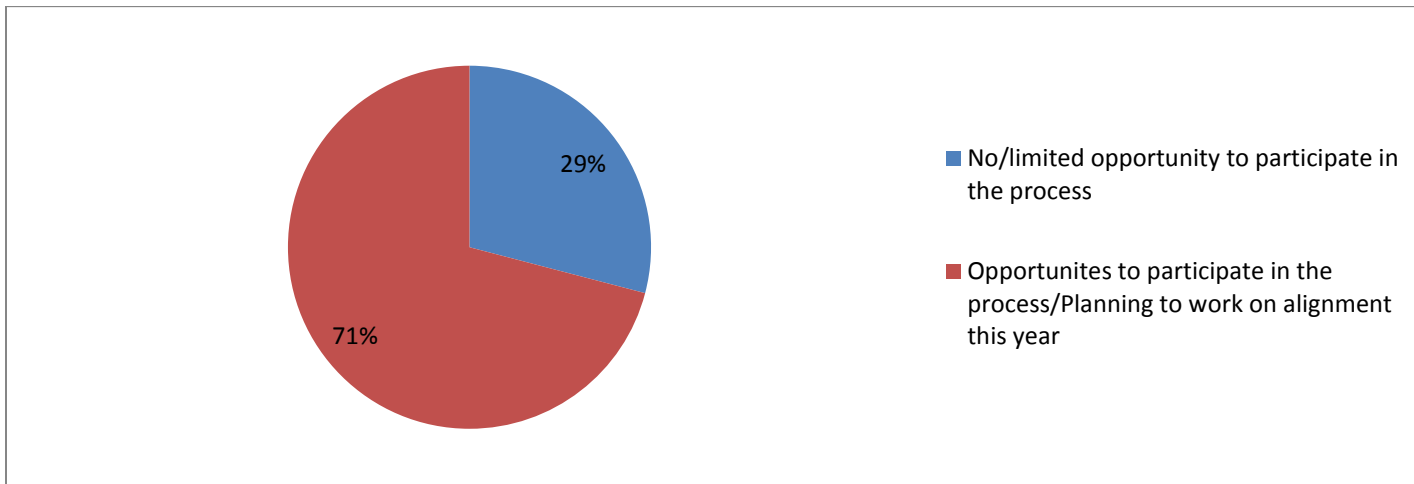


**Teacher Comment:** In no way do I feel the CCS inhibit my teaching. I am still fully able to create and teach lessons in my own way. Nobody is putting words in my mouth and telling me what to teach students. I am a professional and trusted by administration to perform the job I was educated to do.

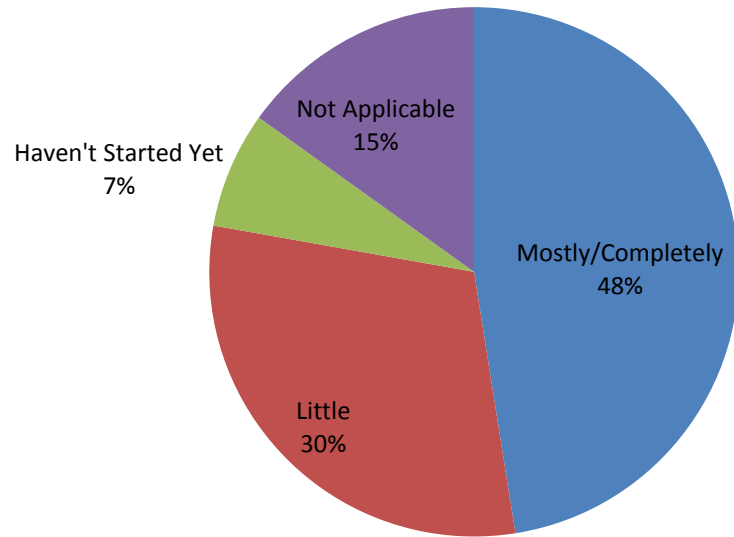
**3. In your personal experience, has the alignment to the Common Core impacted the rigor expected in your content area and grade level?**



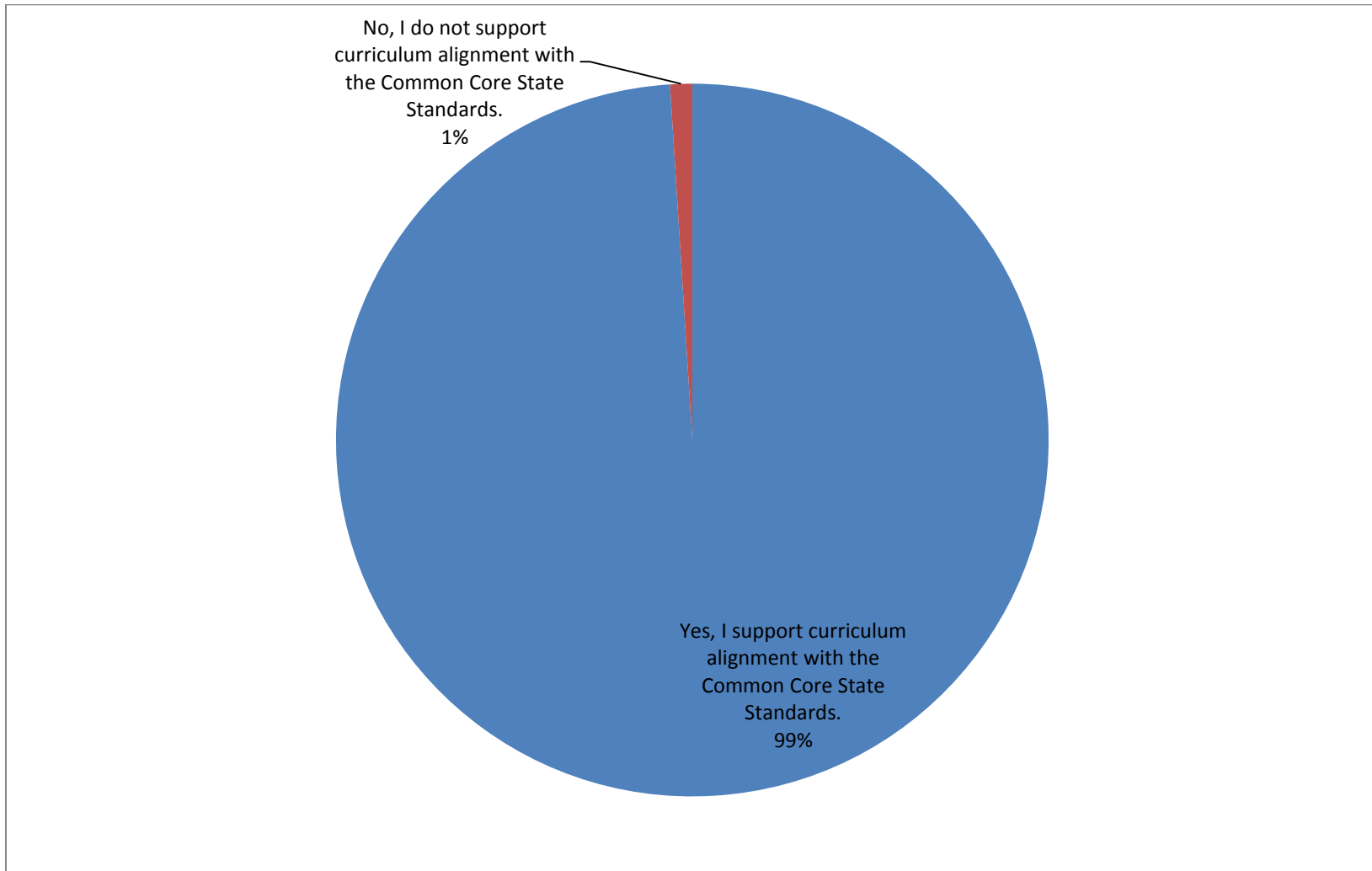
**4. If Common Core State Standards exist in your area, do you feel you have had opportunities to be involved in the process of creating and writing curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards? (Or, is your department planning to work on this in the near future?)**



5. When reflecting on your personal teaching, to what extent has your curriculum and instruction been influenced by or aligned to the Common Core State Standards?



**6. What is your current stance on aligning our local Black River Falls curriculum to the Common Core State Standards?**





## **Comments from Teachers:**

### **7. What do you feel are the district's next best steps regarding the Common Core State Standards?**

In 32 of the 49 comments, teachers requested additional work time to move forward in their curriculum writing work based on the Common Core State Standards.

In 5 of the 49 comments, teachers noted the importance of educating the public and parents about the Common Core State Standards and how they are used within our educational system.

### **8. Please provide any further comments you would like to share regarding the Black River Falls School District and the Common Core State Standards.**

We all set high standards for our students. The CC helps make sure we don't "miss" anything critical, while still allowing the opportunity to "add in" other things that are important. I can still teach using my teaching style and the students can still learn using their learning style.

I am concerned that with our younger students the common core standards are not always developmentally appropriate. They are rigorous but not to the benefit of our little ones. I think they can be a guideline for us, but as with anything should be treated as such as guidelines. I would hate for them to be the hard and fast rule with no room for interpretation re: how to teach to the students and to do it based on development.

This is my 19th year teaching. We have always made sure the BRF curriculum aligned to the Wisconsin Standards. I feel this is the same expectation.

Although I am frustrated with CCSS being implemented at the same time as the Teacher Effectiveness evaluation model, this is not under the district's control.

Common Core Standards are a guide for teaching just like guidelines like the DMV uses, for example. The curriculum that I teach aligns with the common core I really do not feel is any different than the guidelines for driving a car. Every four years when I need to renew my license I need to follow the new guidelines and regulations in order to comply. I am still able to drive the routes I want to drive I just have to follow the guidelines.

I am saddened and disheartened that a small, but vocal group of individuals in our area have chosen to bring this [ ] political propaganda to our school district. We have so much important work to do and this is an unnecessary distraction right now.

I believe as both a parent and a teacher that these standards are very rigorous and appropriate for the students at each level.

1. Lake Country approved the 4th and 8th grade Standards over ten years ago.
2. We have worked the last two summers aligning and making changes for math and LA.
3. Roughly \$20,000 in staff development funds.
4. No more processes that takes weeks of preparation to have a bureaucrat come from Madison to check our standards. The WKCE and new Smarter Balanced assessment will inform our taxpayers how we are doing.

Thanks  
Mark Lichte  
District Administrator



November 5, 2013

To: Joint Legislative Committee on Common Core State Standards

From: Ron Russ, Superintendent, Merton Community School District

Re: Answers regarding formal questions surrounding Common Core

Dear Joint Committee,

Thank you for asking detailed questions surrounding Common Core State Standards and how the Merton Community School District has begun to implement these standards into our district. Here are my responses to your questions:

1. Prior to 2010, the Merton Community School District adopted the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards set forth by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in the areas of Math, Reading, and Language Arts/Writing.

2. There are several sub questions:

- Has your district adopted the model Common Core standards? **Yes we have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as a minimum of what we expect all of our kids to achieve.**
- Has your district augmented those standards in any way? **No, we have not. When we investigated and compared the CCSS to the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, the difference in student expectation and clarity was great. These standards were found to be very rigorous and a huge increase in student expectations.**
- How has your district been impacted by the department's adoption of these model standards? **So far, our district has spent an enormous amount of time, energy, and money in adopting the Common Core in the areas of Math, Reading, and Language Arts/Writing. We had a committee spend an entire year meeting regularly to review, compare, and prepare our staff and students for the new increased expectations. Our district has adopted new Curriculum in all of these areas to meet the new standards.**



**This curriculum was chosen by our staff and adopted by the Board of Education. So far, we have seen that many of our students who we thought were on the path for college and career readiness, are failing to meet the new minimum standards and our new curricular benchmarks to achieve these standards. That has been very impactful to me as our district feeds into Arrowhead Union High School, one of the most high performing school districts/high schools in the state of Wisconsin.**

- If your district has adopted the Common Core, would you consider the Common Core model standards more or less rigorous than whatever standards your district had used previously?  
**YES, MUCH MORE RIGOROUS!!!**

3. What costs has your district incurred associated with curriculum updates, teacher training, etc... as a result of the Department of Public Instruction's adoption of the Common Core standards in June 2010? **It is very difficult to completely quantify how much money the district has spent on adopting the standards. In substitute costs for committee members, collaborative team meeting times to review the new standards and curriculum, across all three disciplines I would estimate it to be around \$30,000 just in substitute costs. For curricular materials to support the standards, the district probably spent about \$20,000 in new materials to support teaching and learning of the Common Core Standards. Since 2010, the district has had on average about 6 professional development days per year, representing approximately 3% of their total contract. For all teachers 4K-6, and 7th and 8th Grade English and Math teachers (a total of approximately 40 teachers in the district), all of those professional development days have been devoted towards Common Core Standards and the new curriculum to support these standards. If an average teacher makes an estimate of \$50,000 (not including benefits), that is about \$1500 per teacher, or a total of \$60,000 per year total. The district has been focusing on this the past three years for a total of a minimum of \$180,000 in staffing resources have gone towards Common Core implementation. There also has been several conferences that have been attended, and consultants brought in totalling approximately \$10,000 over the past 3 years. I would say the Merton Community School District has spent a minimum of \$240,000 (not including administrative time) in moving towards the Common Core State Standards. It has been money well spent as the professional development and the awareness of increased expectations for both students and staff has been great.**



4. The process the department went through was just fine. In the education community, our prior standards were considered very low. These standards were aligned and created by people who understand and have the expertise to look at standards and assess their worth. I have reviewed the standards thoroughly since 2010, and these are much improved and much more rigorous than the previous Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. In this administrator's opinion, the Department of Public Instruction got this right when they adopted the Common Core State Standards.

Thank you again for considering my input as you move forward and decide what direction the legislature chooses to go. Our district will continue to educate kids at a high level and move all kids towards College and Career Readiness. As you can see, the Merton Community School District has been very proactive in preparing its staff, students, Board of Education, and the community for the new standards. I feel our students and staff are ready for the new SMARTER Balanced Assessment and newly created ACT assessments that students in high school will take. We are looking forward to the challenges of Common Core. If you would like to talk further or have clarifying questions, please feel free to contact me at (262) 538-2828 or [russr@merton.k12.wi.us](mailto:russr@merton.k12.wi.us).

Sincerely,

Ronald D. Russ  
Superintendent  
Merton Community School District

Dear Legislators,

This is in response to your request for information on the Common Core. Thanks for asking.

I am not a wholesale supporter of the Common Core. I have concerns about an overly standardized curriculum, an over reliance on standardized testing and the rise of a "Testing Industrial Complex," a narrow focus on the role and purpose of K-12 education, and a lack of attention on the #1 problem impacting the educational experience of too many young people today- poverty.

If the Wisconsin Legislators were raising these types of concerns about the Common Core, I would be with them. However, the concerns I've heard from legislators have been quite different. At least one legislator chose to show an alarmist video in their local office that spewed lies and distortions about the Common Core. I would expect this sort of nonsense from an interest group or a private citizen, but not from an elected official.

Then, we moved to the hearings. The hearing I attended in Fond du lac left much to be desired. It did reveal some true colors, as it served as a platform for riling up the types of folks who think it is appropriate to distribute detestable packets of information- including a pamphlet entitled "20 reasons why Christian parents should get their children out of Wisconsin's WEAC-run government schools." Open the pamphlet up and the first thing you see is a verse from Matthew 18:6: "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drown in the depths of the sea." Then, just for good measure, there's a picture of a millstone. Get it?

Truly Horrible. And yet, sadly, this type of garbage was very much in line with the prevailing sentiment of the anti-Common Core crowd at the Fond du lac hearing. I will state with a high degree of confidence that most of the people who attended that hearing to oppose the Common Core have no connection to a public school.

Why does that matter? The core of opposition is made up of people who feel comfortable distributing or receiving pamphlets like the one mentioned above. The legislators they support are not raising concerns out of a deep-seated concern for public schools or public school children. The legislators who are leading the opposition are doing so in order to placate a constituent base of private school and home school families who are openly hostile to public schools. These people are concerned about what the adoption of the Common Core might mean for them, they couldn't care less what it means for public schools.

That's a bold statement. I might be wrong. If a legislator has evidence to the contrary- I will stand corrected.

Dr. Stotsky was asked who paid for her expenses. Her answer was "grass-roots organizations and sometimes we pass the hat." A few days later, there was an article in the Milwaukee Journal showing ties between the John Birch Society and some of the more prominent anti-Common Core speakers; including Dr. Stotsky. Why wouldn't she just say that the John Birch Society paid her expenses? Maybe the good doctor simply forgot who sponsored her trip. Maybe she didn't know. Or maybe, a lady capable of making statements like "the United States Department of Education wants to redistribute our most effective teachers, just like they do in the Soviet Union," knew full well who sponsored her and who her target audience was, but was too shrewd to say so openly.

I believe most of the outrage being expressed is manufactured outrage, fomented by national fringe groups like the John Birch Society and given legislative support by politicians who are beholden to individuals and groups that are, in some cases, openly antagonist towards public schools.

My dad and I once went on a guided trip for Redfish in Florida. The guide said that the Redfish feed on the bottom in shallow water, and he's looking for the tip of the tail sticking just above the surface. As we moved slowly over the flats, we both excitedly exclaimed "There's a Redfish!!" After multiple false sightings, the guide told us to shut up. *He* would let us know when *he* saw a Redfish- as we clearly didn't know a Redfish from a... well, you get the idea.

Some of the legislators are trying to say that the hearings have revealed controversy over the Common Core Standards. Their evidence is a few dozen people showing up at their hearing to speak against the Common Core Standards. A couple dozen people at a few regional hearings does NOT equate to a controversy. Go to a school board meeting where they're discussing new turf for the football field, or redistricting, or cutting the orchestra program, or closing a school. That's what controversy looks like. The legislators crying "controversy" over the Common Core remind me of me, looking for Redfish.

I don't support the Common Core as the greatest thing ever, perfect in every way. I support them as something obviously better than what we currently have in place.

Here's what I do know:

The parents in my district were overwhelming in their support for Representative Pridemore in the last election for the State Superintendent of Schools. They were also highly supportive of Walker for Governor and McCain and Romney in the Presidential elections. Blue may be one of our school colors, but politically we bleed a deep shade of RED.

We have had Common Core information prominently displayed on our website for a long time. We have parents in our classrooms every day. We have parents monitor and sign off on assignments every day. We have not had one concern, not one complaint, about Common Core. Where is the outrage from the conservative parents who are hip deep in the daily instructional practices of Friess Lake School? There is no outrage. There is no uproar.

The Common Core Standards are more rigorous than the old Model Academic Standards. Over time, I expect that our district will find intentional and specific ways to augment the standards but, to date, we have not done so. We've spent virtually every professional staff development opportunity, in and out of district, on Common Core related training and material. We've invested tens of thousands of dollars AND immeasurable sweat equity in this effort.

I have attended numerous legislative breakfasts and the Common Core Hearing in Fond du lac. In both of those settings, district official after district official has extended wide open invitations to visit their schools. Why? Because there is nothing to hide, there is nothing to be ashamed of, and there is nothing that doesn't stand up to open scrutiny.

Respectfully submitted,

John Engstrom

District Administrator

Friess Lake School