



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Director

SUBJECT: Common Core State Standards Available for Comment

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have released the first official public draft of the college- and career-readiness standards in English language arts and mathematics as a first step in the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a process being led by governors and chief state school officers in 51 states and territories. The NGA Center and CCSSO are next beginning the process of developing the K-12 standards that will enable students to meet the validated college- and career-readiness standards.

Michigan is one of the states participating in the initiative and will seriously consider adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Michigan's current K-8 Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) for English Language Arts and Mathematics, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2004, are based on the Michigan Curriculum Framework, a set of standards and benchmarks adopted in 1995. A next step in the standards development process in Michigan includes aligning the K-8 standards and expectations with those for success beyond high school. The K-12 Common Core Standards will provide vertically aligned standards and expectations for English language arts and mathematics in Michigan.

An initial review of the draft Common Core college- and career-readiness standards indicates alignment with Michigan's HSCE for English Language Arts and Mathematics at the standard level, allowing for reorganization of the HSCE under the proposed new standards. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

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The NGA Center, CCSSO, and the Michigan Department of Education are encouraging those interested in the standards to provide feedback, which must be supported by research and evidence, by October 21, 2009, at www.corestandards.org.

After the feedback period, the standards are subject to review by an expert Validation Committee composed of national and international experts on standards. This group will review the standards development process and the substance of the standards to ensure they are research- and evidence-based.

The college- and career-readiness standards have been informed by input from education and content experts and feedback from participating states. They were developed based on the following guiding considerations:

- **Fewer, clearer, higher:** It is critical that any standards document be translatable to and teachable in the classroom. As such, the standards must cover only those areas that are critical for student success.
- **Evidence:** Each document includes sources of evidence for the standards. Evidence informed what was included in the standards.
- **Internationally benchmarked:** These standards are informed by the content, rigor and organization of standards of high-performing countries and states.
- **Special populations:** In the development of these standards, the inclusion of all types of learners was a priority.
- **Assessment:** The standards will ultimately be the basis for a system of high quality assessments.
- **Standards and curriculum:** Standards are not curriculum. The curriculum that follows will continue to be a local responsibility (or state-led, where appropriate).
- **21st century skills:** The draft English language arts and mathematics standards have incorporated 21st century skills.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Deborah Clemmons at 517-241-4285 or clemmons@michigan.gov.

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