

Report of the
Educators'
Common Core Implementation
Task Force



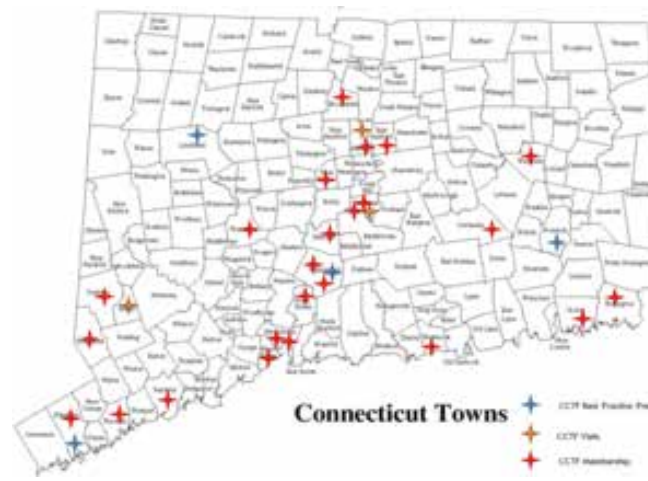
Established by Executive Order 41
State of Connecticut
Governor Dannel P. Malloy

June 2014

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COMMON CORE TASK FORCE (CCTF) MEMBERSHIP



Name	Role	Home District
Jim Accomando	Parent	Fairfield
Liz Brown	Board of Education Member	Waterbury
Diana Burns	Elementary Teacher	Westbrook
Ken Daly	High School Teacher, Language Arts	Wallingford
Anthony Ditrio	Principal	Norwalk
Patti Fusco	Elementary Teacher	West Haven
Don Harris	Board of Education Chairman	Bloomfield
Juanita Harris	School Counselor/Special Education Teacher	Danbury
Anne Jellison	Principal	Meriden
Barbara Johnson	Librarian/Teacher; Pre-K–Grade 6	Colchester
Edith Johnson	Principal	New Haven
Sue Loud	Department Head English & Social Studies	Hamden
Sean McKenna	Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	Groton
William McKinney	High School Teacher	New Haven
Andrea Middlebrooks	Middle School Teacher, Life Sciences	Cromwell
Elizabeth Misiewicz	Middle School English Teacher	Ridgefield
Nathan Quesnel (co-chair)	Superintendent	East Hartford
Victoria Reed	Principal (K–2)	Wallingford
Dianna Roberge-Wentzell	Chief Academic Officer	State Department
Susan Schmidt	Middle School Literacy Teacher	New Britain
Paula Talty	Superintendent	Cromwell
Ivelise Velazquez	Director of Reading & Social Sciences	Windham
Erin Wilson (co-chair)	Instructional Coach	Hartford
Bruce Yarnall	Middle School Teacher, Special Education	Stonington
Candy Yeager	Parent	Stamford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the recommendations generated by the Governor-appointed Common Core Task Force (CCTF) that was initiated through Executive Order 41 in March 2014. The Task Force was convened at the request of Governor Dannel P. Malloy based on feedback from educators and parents regarding the amount of change occurring in Connecticut's classrooms. Much of this change stems from reform efforts included in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This Task Force was specifically charged to review state implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), study best practices in that implementation effort and make specific recommendations as to implementation improvements moving forward.

Through a series of workshop activities, the Task Force worked to develop recommendations that would provide a road map for educators, policy leaders, and community members to improve the process of state and district implementation. The Task Force recommendations are grounded in the lessons learned regarding strong leadership, clear strategic planning, quality professional development, strong communication, and a continued commitment of state and local resources. These recommendations recognize the complex nature of change and the ongoing iterative process that must be the hallmark of effective and lasting change.

The specific recommendations the Task Force generated fall under the umbrella of these five, broad recommendations. They address actions that can be taken by all stakeholders, including the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), each individual school district and the community. These are recommended:

1. Develop clear and consistent knowledge of Common Core State Standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. This knowledge is defined as an awareness of the standards and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction that are required by shifting from the old standards to the new Common Core State Standards. In addition, this knowledge speaks to the development of leadership and importance of strategic planning necessary to implement the standards effectively.
2. Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the Common Core State Standards into district-defined curricula.
3. Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the instructional shifts that the standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as professional learning communities or time reserved for a focus on instructional improvement and change.
4. Engage all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the Common Core State Standards that is marked by multiple points of interaction; jargon-free communication; and a commitment to keep teachers, parents and community members informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process.
5. Provide the necessary resources to support effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all state districts and schools. Resources defined in this recommendation are money, time, and technical support that are key and vital elements for educators to make an effective and positive transition to the standards.

These recommendations are intended to affirm and strengthen the good work currently happening in the state while providing a structure for districts that are not as far along with the transition to the new standards. The implementation of these standards is ongoing, and it is clear that collaboration among all stakeholders is necessary for success in our classrooms.

As a cornerstone principle of this work, the Task Force insisted on a child-centered approach to all Task Force discussions and decisions. As you review this report, we urge you to “remember why you started” and keep Connecticut kids front and center.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 41

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DANNEL P. MALLOY
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 41**

WHEREAS, improving the education level of Connecticut's population is a basic and fundamental obligation of state government;

WHEREAS, Connecticut's economic growth depends upon a well-educated workforce, prepared for the challenges of a global economy;

WHEREAS, Connecticut has one of the widest and most persistent educational achievement gaps in the nation;

WHEREAS, providing a quality education for students requires rigorous instruction and a wide range of experiences, benchmarked to college and career readiness standards, from kindergarten through 12th grade;

WHEREAS, in May 2009, Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell and Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan signed a memorandum of agreement on the Common Core State Standards and the State Board of Education passed a resolution to adopt such standards on July 7, 2010;

WHEREAS, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council allowed school districts to exclude the Smarter Balanced assessment from teacher evaluations for the school years 2013–14 and 2014–15, and the State Department of Education requested a waiver allowing for flexibility from federal education requirements on February 28, 2014;

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has committed funds to support professional development and investments in new technology in order to help school districts prepare for implementation of the Common Core State Standards;

WHEREAS, Connecticut teachers and education professionals have raised legitimate concerns that preparations for the implementation of Common Core State Standards and the incorporation of Common Core State Standards into the teaching curriculum have been uneven across the state; and,

WHEREAS, I respect and understand the concerns raised by Connecticut teachers and education professionals and believe that the implementation of Common Core State Standards can be improved by establishing a task-force to share lessons-learned, and that Connecticut teachers and students alike will benefit;

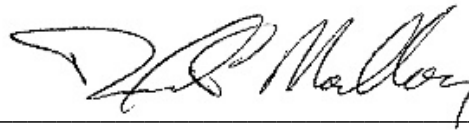
NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANNEL P. MALLOY, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of the State of Connecticut do hereby **ORDER AND DIRECT**:

1. There is established an Educators' Common Core Implementation Taskforce (the Taskforce), composed of education professionals and other stakeholders, that shall examine gaps in existing common core implementation at the school, district and state level, and identify opportunities to share best practices across schools and school districts.
 2. The Taskforce will be administered through the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Governor and the State Department of Education will jointly provide staffing support.
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3. The Taskforce shall:
 - a. Identify challenges and gaps in Common Core preparation and make recommendations for improving the quality and consistency of Common Core implementation efforts;
 - b. Consider ways to advance the translation of Common Core State Standards into curricula;
 - c. Consider ways to strengthen the professional development opportunities available to classroom teachers and school leaders;
 - d. Identify and highlight best practices and lessons learned by teachers, schools and school districts across the state and nation; and
 - e. Deliver recommendations on how Common Core implementation can be improved to the Governor, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education no later than June 30, 2014 for the 2014–15 school year.
4. The Taskforce shall be comprised of 25 individuals as follows:
 - a. Twelve practicing teachers or education professionals who teach in elementary, middle or high school, and represent the geographic diversity of Connecticut,
 - b. Four principals from either an elementary, middle or high school, and represent the geographic diversity of Connecticut,
 - c. Four Superintendents or district curriculum leaders,
 - d. Two parents, each from a different school district within Connecticut,
 - e. Two members of local boards of education, each from a different school district, and
 - f. The Chief Academic Officer of the State Department of Education.
5. The Governor shall appoint two co-chairs of the taskforce from among its membership.
6. The Taskforce shall terminate no later than June 30, 2014.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut this ____ day of March, 2014.



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

By His Excellency's Order



Denise Merrill
Secretary of the State

TASK FORCE OVERVIEW

Common Core State Standards Definition/Background

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are expectations of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. These college- and career-ready standards were drafted by experts and teachers from across the country and are designed to ensure that students are prepared for today's entry-level careers, freshman-level college courses and workforce training programs.

The standards were developed under the leadership of governors and chief state school officers with participation from 48 states. The process included the involvement of state departments of education, districts, teachers, community leaders, experts in a wide array of fields and professional educator organizations.

The Common Core focuses on developing the critical-thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills students will need to be successful. The standards also provide a way for teachers to measure student progress throughout the school year and ensure that students are on track to meet grade-level expectations. The Common Core is not a curriculum but a standards-based approach to measuring student growth on the K–12 continuum of learning that emphasizes the importance of learning concepts and skills.

The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the standards on July 7, 2010. Following adoption, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), local boards of education, school administrators and teachers have worked together in the process of implementing these standards in Connecticut's classrooms. These efforts include major legislation to support school reform and funding, the reorganization of the CSDE, the revision of local district curriculum to align to the Common Core State Standards, and significant training and support programming for teachers. While these significant efforts across the state must be recognized and celebrated, much work remains to be done.

Task Force Rationale

In response to concerns voiced by stakeholder groups, the Task Force was charged with the responsibility to develop recommendations that would serve as a resource and guide to the state, school administrators, teachers and parents to improve and build on current practice of implementation. To this end, the Task Force focused its work on a careful review of implementation practices that had been enacted following the July 2010 adoption. To ensure the development of comprehensive, actionable recommendations to improve implementation in the coming school year, the work and discussion focused deliberately and exclusively on the implementation of the standards across Connecticut per the charge of the Governor's Executive Order 41. Task Force members actively participated, listened with respect, focused on solutions and, most importantly, were driven by doing what is best for Connecticut's children. Throughout Task Force meetings, conversation and discussion focused on both the strengths and gaps of implementation with a desire to replicate what works throughout the state.

Task Force Selection

Following the guidelines set forth in Executive Order 41, a diverse team of parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, board of education members and state department representation was selected through the Office of the Governor with the purpose of closely examining Connecticut's process of implementing the Common Core State Standards. This team was selected through recommendations made by various stakeholder groups across the state. These stakeholder groups included the Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (CT-PTA), the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut (AFT-CT), the Connecticut Education Association (CEA), the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), the Connecticut Association of School Administrators (CASA), the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL), the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council and the Connecticut State Department of Education. Through its diversity, the Task Force intentionally represented an extensive and collective knowledge of standards implementation from 21 different school districts in Connecticut with vast experience critical to identifying implementation strengths and concerns from the ground level.

TASK FORCE PROCESS

Overview of Process

Beginning in March 2014 and continuing into June, the Task Force engaged in a weekly series of meetings (10) that were designed to promote investigation, discussion, analysis and an actionable plan to improve implementation. Included in the process was a focus on capturing community and educator understanding and knowledge. The Task Force also hosted visiting school teams representing four local districts within the state to share best practices regarding CCSS implementation. These presentations were viewed through the lens of how these successful structures could be brought to scale and to better understand missteps, implementation flaws and lessons learned moving forward. Beyond the presenting districts, the Task Force also sent visiting teams to three districts within the state with the continued goal of identifying “what was going well” and “what might be done better.” Finally, the Task Force reviewed implementation data collected in surveys, including one by AFT-CT/CEA, and one by CAPSS. With this collection of data (both quantitative and qualitative), the Task Force developed a series of recommendations designed to improve and enhance the implementation of the college- and career-ready standards across Connecticut.

Task Force Actions

Core to the premise and mission of the Task Force was the belief that through the eyes of practitioners, implementation of the standards could be improved and made more efficient for educators, students and parents. As part of this fact-finding mission designed to lead to meaningful recommendations, the Task Force engaged in multiple activities intended to develop a data set that represented the “eyes on the ground.”



Initial Gap Analysis

The 25 Task Force members, representing 21 different school districts and the Connecticut State Department of Education, incorporated lessons learned from their own districts, guest presenters and from the state to conduct a gap analysis of the implementation process. The Task Force members constructed a timeline of implementation steps within their own districts and matched it with a timeline of state actions the CSDE provided. Several gaps emerged as a result of the analysis:

1. The state's actions to implement the Common Core State Standards and the actions taken by some districts to implement were not always in sync. The state adopted the standards in July 2010 and immediately began working on suggested English language arts and mathematics curriculum with content experts and began the professional development transition. While some districts began their curriculum writing in 2011, many waited until 2012 with the process continuing well into 2014. The CSDE continues to sponsor the design of Common Core-aligned curriculum and professional development; however, individual districts are implementing new curriculum and professional development at varying paces.
2. Significant variance exists among districts in their preparedness for the standards and in their adoption of best practices exhibited by many of the most successful districts. While successful districts began to undertake the transition early, other districts have followed different timelines regarding their implementation of the new college- and career-ready standards. Some districts have taken advantage of new resources through a variety of sources, such as grants, state funding and local budget support, while others have worked within existing resources to prepare for the standards. That variance in preparedness, planning and resources has resulted in the unevenness that the Task Force observed in district adoption of the standards.
3. While successful districts benefited from established benchmarks and strategic plans mapped out over several years, the realization of uniform implementation would have benefited from a strong, benchmarked implementation plan provided by the state.
4. Through a survey commissioned by both teachers' unions, AFT-CT and CEA, their members expressed concerns about the lack of time that they had to learn, develop and implement the new standards since they were adopted. Teachers expressed a desire for more examples, guides and preparation time to develop units and lessons. In addition, they expressed a desire for more school-based instructional support and training on the new standards. Again, wide variance emerged across the state between teachers in districts with resources allocated for Common Core State Standards and those with fewer available resources.
5. The successful introduction of a new, comprehensive set of grade-level expectations requires clear, consistent communication. The communication effort between the state and local districts and between local districts and their communities has room to improve. Strong, continuous communication between successful districts and their teachers, support staff, students, parents and communities was crucial to their success. The state also engaged in ongoing communication efforts with educators and district leaders, but did not fully realize the potential of their position to support the districts' efforts to raise public awareness regarding the new college- and career-ready standards in their local communities.

TASK FORCE LOGIC FRAMEWORK

One of the major structures developed early in the Task Force process was a logic framework designed to provide the Task Force with a tool to organize data, guide analysis and provide a starting point for developing recommendations. The logic framework outlined five specific categories called “buckets” that were designed to center our conversations and provide a clear framework for our pending recommendations. The Task Force Logic Framework was used throughout the three-month process to ground and facilitate Task Force member discussions and provide a foundation for all Task Force activities.



The five “buckets” were created based on the following categories: Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards, Curriculum Writing and Integration of the Common Core at the Local Level, Developing Instructional Competencies, Community Engagement and Resource Commitment.

Knowledge of the CCSS	Curriculum Writing/ Integration at the Local Level	Development of Instructional Competencies	Community Engagement	Resource Commitment
The process of developing state, district or community understanding of the CCSS	The process of moving the CCSS into district curriculum documents	The process of training teachers to teach to the standards of CCSS (instruction)	The process of engaging community stakeholders in CCSS implementation	The resources committed by both the State Department of Education and districts to implement the CCSS

- Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards** is a prerequisite to successful implementation of the standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. The Task Force prioritized this bucket with the understanding that successful implementation stemmed from a clear understanding of the standards. Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards is defined as awareness of their content and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction and materials that support the implementation of the standards. In addition, knowledge of the standards was also determined by closely examining a district’s commitment and strength in leadership as evidenced by strategic implementation planning.
- Curriculum Writing and Integration of the Common Core at the Local Level** is an essential implementation function of any set of academic standards. The Task Force closely reviewed this bucket by looking at the process and progress of local districts to revise and rewrite their curriculum documents in alignment with the new college- and career-ready standards. In Connecticut, curriculum is developed and approved at the district level. New standards in any academic discipline prompt a realignment and possible revision of district curriculum in that area. Curriculum is the plan for what students will learn and how teachers will help them learn it. Curriculum documents generally organize the learning into yearlong plans. Yearlong curriculum plans are frequently organized into units of instruction. Teachers design lesson plans based on these yearlong plans and instructional units to deliver the curriculum on a daily basis.

- **Developing Instructional Competencies** is necessary for implementing Common Core State Standards with fidelity across Connecticut classrooms. This bucket provided an opportunity for the Task Force to look closely at the districts' efforts to build the capacity of their staff to master the required instructional shifts that the standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as data-focused instructional teams or time reserved for instructional improvement and change.
- **Community Engagement** is a necessary focus for the implementation of any change in our schools. This bucket allowed the Task Force to look closely at how a district engaged each stakeholder during the implementation process. Community engagement speaks to the efforts of an organization to keep stakeholders informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process. An engaged, informed and focused community is a critical asset to improving outcomes for our students and supporting our teachers and leaders. An engaged community provides support for its teachers, students, staff and administrators, thereby greatly increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.
- **Resource Commitment** provides a focus on the state, district and local stakeholder commitments in terms of providing the finances, staff, time and materials necessary to support effective implementation. This bucket allowed the Task Force to carefully review how resources were identified, sought out, accessed and deployed throughout the implementation process across the state.

TASK FORCE LESSONS LEARNED

Over the three-month period of Task Force meetings, rich discussions, information collection and analysis, the Task Force members had a unique opportunity to learn many valuable lessons regarding the characteristics of successful implementation across the state since the adoption of the new standards in 2010. As the Task Force performed its Initial Gap Analysis, a significant level of variance across the state in terms of implementation effectiveness was clearly noted. In response to this lesson, the Task Force focused its attention on districts that had been successful vs. less successful over the past three years to understand best practices better. The Task Force is fully aware that the focus and scope of this Task Force did not include a detailed study of why other districts did not find success. However, the Task Force's goal was to carefully examine the roadmaps that successful districts provided and to develop actionable recommendations that could bring these spotlighted areas to scale and consistency in districts across the state. With this lens, the Task Force lessons learned captures similarities between districts that can provide the state with an example of how a district might act to improve efficiency for implementation of the new standards. It should be noted that while the Task Force made an effort to cast a wide net of observation across the state in terms of geographic location, demographic conditions and district size, these lessons learned do not tell the story of every school district. These lessons learned, vetted through a variety of discussions and angles, provide an important and summative story for Connecticut as we look toward the next steps of implementation.

The lessons learned, organized into larger categories below, were gathered from membership input, best-practice presentations, team observations from local district visits and from the qualitative surveys' data points. The Task Force urges policymakers, educators and all stakeholders to review the lessons learned carefully with the mindset of "success breeds success." These lessons, presented in the format of "what matters," speak to successful implementation and beg for further steps to be taken to reduce the variance that was evident across the state. By learning from each other and working to bring "good ideas to scale," Connecticut will unleash expertise, innovation and the technical competence needed to accomplish this substantial shift.

Leadership Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all had strong leadership at both the district and school level. This leadership was characterized by a commitment to the standards and the technical capacity to lead its schools towards the shifts and changes necessary to make sure the standards became a part of the school community culture. Strong leaders included superintendents, principals and teachers who possessed both a developed understanding of the standards and clarity of vision to support the work needed to get the job done. Strong leadership was demonstrated through articulated and strategic district/school plans for implementation; coherent, ongoing communication to all stakeholders; and a willingness to adjust and maintain flexibility when changes needed to be made. Strong leadership involved teachers, built stakeholder ownership and developed a systematic approach to the work necessary for successful implementation. Strong leaders got on board early and stayed the course through challenges.

Strategic Planning Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all developed strategic plans that carefully addressed all aspects of the work. These plans specifically addressed each of the “buckets” of the Task Force Logic Framework and provided a scripted roadmap for district staff to follow. The plans all included a sequential “phase in” process where specific actions were taken, benchmarks established and pace determined. The plans also included references to how resources would be procured and applied to support district work. Central to the plans was an emphasis on the development of district capacity for college- and career-ready standards implementation. Most often mentioned was high-quality professional development in a variety of formats, but usually including “Common Core Specialists/Coaches” that provided district staff with professional learning opportunities during the school day. Strategic plans included a dynamic plan to communicate shifts and changes to a variety of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students and the larger community. Finally, the strategic plans all showed a commitment to flexibility and continual adjustment based on unknown or previously determined conditions. This commitment to remaining nimble in the face of challenge was cited as a major strength to the success of district strategic plans.

Professional Development Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all shared a stakeholder-wide commitment to improving and growing staff capacity at all levels. From successful districts, it was noted that significant time and resources were devoted to developing an understanding of the standards, as well as working with teachers specifically to adjust to the shifts needed in daily classroom instruction. Professional development in successful districts included a commitment to working with the CSDE, outside partners and internal experts to carefully map out the implementation plan prior to moving ahead. Professional development typically followed the format of developing leadership teams within the district and then using these teams to train the entire staff. In addition, successful districts invested significant resources in professional development positions, such as “Instructional Specialists, Common Core Coaches or Theme Coaches.” Teacher sabbaticals or significant release time were also provided to allow the necessary time, focus and quality of skills to help all district staff manage the change. On a logistical side, while all districts demonstrated an insistence on finding time for staff to learn, collaborate and work together, there was variance and uniqueness in the manner in which this time was reserved. To this end, some districts used time in the school day, after school, on weekends or during the summer to ensure that their staff received both the knowledge and the know-how to execute the standards successfully.

Communication Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation of the new standards all shared an advanced awareness and prioritization for the importance of communication with stakeholders regarding the adoption and implementation of the standards. Of note, in the collected notes from best-practice presentations, the common quote of “we made an effort to communicate throughout the process and that is why we have not experienced widespread resistance,” was captured in nearly all presentations. Communication plans from successful districts focused first on communicating internally within the district, and then each included an external focus that engaged the board of education, parents, policy leaders, business community, senior community, etc., and, most importantly, students. Channels for communication across districts varied based on resources and availability, but all included the trends of mass communication and individual communication. Internally, successful districts prioritized the importance of the educator voice, valued their input and feedback on the adoption and implementation of the standards and meaningfully engaged teachers in “the work.” For external communication, districts spent considerable time developing materials to educate parents both through workshops, “Parent Academies,” or school-based events through mediums and in languages that made this communication accessible to all parents in the district. In all districts, a pattern of transparency, customer service, and a method to provide accurate information to incorporate all stakeholders and get buy-in from parents and the community were critical factors to their success.

Time Matters

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation of the standards all devoted enough time for teachers to learn, develop and implement the standards in their classrooms. These districts provided time for teachers to prepare units and lessons individually, working with fellow teachers and with the support of coaches and designated curriculum writers. School-based instructional support and training for all staff was found to be most helpful. Teachers felt that they benefited the most when provided time to work with other teachers at their grade level as well as those teaching the grades immediately preceding and following theirs. Successful districts found a variety of ways to provide the necessary time for the development of these important instructional competencies. Districts provided early release days, late start days and paid time during the summer for curriculum writing, professional development and teacher collaboration. The Task Force learned that it is equally important for administrators and principals to have dedicated time for professional development to best support those that they work with in implementing the standards. Finally, successful districts also benefited from time investments made by parents and other community members. In successful districts, students, parents and the community took the time to learn about the standards. In one district, administrators solicited student and parent time in reviewing curriculum based on the standards, and their feedback enriched curriculum implementation. The business community, local leaders and seniors gave their time to learn about the changes taking place in classrooms and engaged in a dialogue about what was important from their point of view.

Resources Matter

Districts that demonstrated successful implementation all shared a commitment to the procurement and allocation of resources to support implementation of the standards. These resources, described as financial, technical assistance and beneficial partnerships, provided the backbone and necessary support for districts to implement the changes in this initiative. The successful districts demonstrated a clear understanding that this change would require additional funding, assistance and partnerships that their standard operating business did not require. In light of this shared understanding, all districts mapped out a strategic budget to seek and deploy resources that supported their aforementioned strategic plan. A wide variety of examples emerged from Task Force members' feedback and best-practice presentations regarding resource acquisition. These examples ranged from reallocations of the local budget, significant grant funding and the use of state funding through the Alliance District

grants. Resources supported a variety of procurements including materials that would align to the standards, professional development, additional staffing and technology needed to deploy the new state assessment system. In purchasing resources, multiple districts urged caution in the purchase of new “Common Core-aligned” materials and felt it more relevant to have staff develop and build the needed resources. Finally, successful districts all demonstrated various ways to leverage resources to support implementation with an emphasis on various funding sources. These districts demonstrated a shared commitment of district and local policy leaders to make the investment necessary to accomplish the district’s strategic goals.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommendation Overview

The Task Force developed recommendations based on evidence gathered from its members, their study of effective practices in Connecticut school districts, and the surveys AFT-CT/CEA and CAPSS provided on teacher and superintendent perceptions, respectively. The recommendations are organized in alignment with the Logic Framework and are intended to provide educators and policymakers with a concrete structure for decisions regarding next steps in supporting successful implementation.

Task Force Recommendation Criteria

As a guide for developing quality recommendations, the Task Force developed recommendation criteria, through consensus, that was used to measure and weigh the recommendations that were developed. The Task Force felt strongly that all quality and meaningful recommendations must be evidence based, actionable, inclusive of all stakeholders and measurable. By challenging and refining all recommendations to meet these criteria, the Task Force believes that the following recommendations provide a clear path forward for implementation of the new standards.

Task Force recommendations regarding implementation of the Common Core State Standards must be:			
<p>Evidence Based</p> <p>Recommendations must stem from an identified challenge/concern in implementation substantiated by data.</p>	<p>Actionable</p> <p>Recommendations must be obtainable, actionable, and grounded in solid educational practice. Recommendations must be specific and targeted. Recommendations must be sustainable over time.</p>	<p>Inclusive of All Stakeholders</p> <p>Recommendations must include opportunities for participation by multiple stakeholder groups. Recommendations must focus and provide solutions that improve learning for students.</p>	<p>Measurable</p> <p>Recommendations must be measurable in regard to their effectiveness. Recommendations must provide a clear deliverable/measure regarding their long-term impact/success.</p>

Task Force Recommendations

1	Develop clear and consistent knowledge of Common Core State Standards at the classroom, school, district and state level. This knowledge is defined as an awareness of the standards and an understanding of the associated changes in instruction that are required by this shift. In addition, this knowledge speaks to the development of leadership and importance of strategic planning necessary to implement the standards effectively.
CSDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear and consistent messaging and information for districts and communities regarding the standards through a variety of channels (professional development workshops, print, media and digital platforms). • Develop and fund differentiated leadership-training modules, including the use of digital platforms that incorporate various stakeholder groups (superintendents, principals, teachers, school governance leaders, etc.) that focus on developing skills and abilities for effective standards implementation.
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop comprehensive, strategic, coherent and time-bound implementation plans that include benchmarks, deliverables and plans for differentiated professional development and communication to all stakeholders. • Provide professional development for district and school leaders and teachers on both the knowledge base of the standards as well as the skills required to develop a strategic action plan for district implementation. • Engage students, where age appropriate, regarding how the standards have affected their learning and how districts can better support this transition.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members should be encouraged to attend and participate in state- and district-provided workshops that deliver information about the standards.
2	Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the Common Core State Standards into district-defined curricula.
CSDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multiple opportunities for districts to collaborate and share best practices in terms of developing standards-aligned curriculum. These opportunities should include both traditional professional development workshops and online learning. Provide and continuously expand an online library of Common Core-aligned units/lessons that can provide models for teacher use across content areas. • Provide funding and guidance for consultation at the district level to support the revision and development of standards-aligned curriculum.
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that curriculum maps are vertically and horizontally aligned to standards and developed with the collaboration of all stakeholders. Create (or adopt) district-specific standards-aligned curriculum and corresponding assessments, paying close attention to learning progressions across grade levels. • Engage teacher voice in a needs assessment of current curricular alignment to standards as well as develop a plan for next-step revisions and improvements. This may include the identification and establishment of exemplar certified Connecticut teacher-leaders to write standards-aligned curriculum and standards-based assessments at the district level. • Engage in shared collaborative discussions with other districts in curriculum review and development.

Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and engage the community in learning about the new standards and the instructional shifts involved in those standards. • Enable students to participate in a variety of opportunities to showcase their learning aligned with standards with parents, teachers, principals, administrators and members of the school community.
3	<p>Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the instructional shifts that the Common Core State Standards necessitate. Capacity building is frequently achieved through professional development, but also occurs through ongoing job-embedded activities, such as professional learning communities or time reserved for a focus on instructional improvement and change.</p>
CSDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate funding for differentiated, high-quality professional development as determined by each district's Professional Development and Evaluation Committee. This professional development should include a series of modules for teachers focused on the required instructional shifts of the standards and be provided across the state at multiple times and venues. • Provide training and support for the development of an instructional coaching model throughout the state that provides the resources, training and funding for staffing of exemplar certified Connecticut teachers who can support colleagues to build instructional competencies related to implementing the standards.
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create multiphase professional development plans that reflect a commitment to ongoing, differentiated professional development based on individual district needs. These professional development plans may emphasize job-embedded instruction, collaborative sharing and opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction, both vertically and horizontally aligned, along with other research-based strategies. • Develop and pursue talent-development strategies that support instructional leaders within the district. This talent-development strategy may include implementing an instructional coaching model within K–12 schools.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and encourage community members to use tools and resources provided by teachers, schools, districts and the state to support learning outside of school.
4	<p>Engage all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the Common Core State Standards that is marked by multiple points of interaction; jargon-free communication; and a commitment to keep teachers, parents and community members informed, knowledgeable and participating in the process.</p>
CSDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in a comprehensive communication plan designed to inform, clarify and educate Connecticut on the rationale behind the standards as well as current implementation steps. This communication plan should provide a toolkit to districts for best practices in engaging the community and provide clear and concise communication for communities. The communication plan should provide clear, jargon-free and customer-friendly communications about the standards in multiple languages. • Provide a state-level umbrella and organization for efforts made to support implementation of the standards that provides a way to access areas of best practice. This umbrella would provide educators and local districts with a clear sense of what was going on within the state and align efforts without duplication. This umbrella would provide opportunities for the CSDE, local school districts and teacher groups to work together to ensure effective implementation.

District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ active community engagement strategies with all members of the school community as defined by students, parents, business community and senior citizens. In this communication strategy, multiple venues and channels should be used to ease accessibility and improve outreach. Communication strategies may include college- and career-ready standards workshops, parent academies, media engagement, presentations to business community leaders and forums to better understand community concerns or questions. Communication must be clear, jargon free as well as provided in multiple languages. Engage students, where age appropriate, with teachers regarding their perceptions and understanding of the standards in classroom activities. Students should be an active voice for districts and schools in how the process of implementation can continue to be improved.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and community members should be encouraged to attend events and seek engagement with district leaders to build understanding of the standards.
5	Provide the necessary resources to support effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all state districts and schools. Resources defined in this recommendation are money, time and technical support that are key and vital elements for educators to make an effective and positive transition to the Common Core State Standards.
CSDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue and expand funding for implementation of the standards at the district level. This support could mirror the process developed in the Alliance District grant process of conditional funding. Continue to provide and fund a variety of opportunities for staff to convene and receive professional development, including funding the use of digital platforms, libraries, summer institutes and webinars to enhance collaboration and sharing. Provide technical assistance to districts to ensure necessary time is allotted, first, during the school day and, second, outside of school hours for writing curriculum and developing instructional competencies for standards implementation. Provide districts with vetted recommendations for standards-aligned resources (textbooks/ programs).
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support standards implementation by continuing to access both operating-budget funding as well as using state and private grant opportunities. Prioritize standards implementation in the local budget process and develop a clear district strategy for how funding will enhance implementation. Analyze and review current building schedules and focus on finding ways to increase teacher opportunities to engage in high-quality professional development and peer-to-peer collaboration. Focus on the use of time first within the school day and second beyond the school day as opportunities for staff to engage and participate in implementation. These opportunities should include cross-grade and cross-curriculum collaboration.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities should be keenly aware of the financial impact on their district in order to support the district and its effort to target funding toward standards implementation. This support could be demonstrated during the local district budget process by supporting programming, staffing and resources needed to support effective standards implementation.

CONCLUSION

Change is challenging; however, change is the promise of something new, something hopeful and something bright for the future of our children. In the face of change, Connecticut is moving forward, committed to the process of making good great, and better the best. We are resolute in our core belief that under the stressors of difference, we all do our best work when we are working together. Guided by this important principle, our 25-member Task Force crafted these recommendations to ensure a continued, thoughtful and coherent implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

We believe our recommendations serve as a next step in the ongoing journey for our state as we continue to move forward, making progress and working hard to improve the lives of our children. We recognize that our document is neither the beginning nor the end, but rather a small piece of the continuum of learning that makes our state a leader in our great country. In light of this acknowledgment, we recognize that future work and focus (outside the charge of our Task Force) needs to occur to help and support children and educators. We embrace and celebrate how far we have come—we know the next step awaits.

Next Steps

As Connecticut continues to grow, improve and succeed, more work and learning needs to be done by all stakeholders in the areas of the Common Core State Standards implementation, specifically in their relation to the following:

- Instructional support necessary for students with special needs to access the standards
- Developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and standards to engage students of all grade levels
- Formative and summative assessment, including Smarter Balanced Assessments
- Simultaneous and interdependent initiatives, such as teacher evaluation
- Continuing evaluation of the standards

This document will be shared with policy leaders, superintendents, principals, educators and the community and viewed in the spirit in which it was written through both effective implementation and appropriate funding. This document will help continue this important work and foster collaborative partnerships and communication throughout the state.

We hope that the children we represent speak loudly through this document and encourage us all to keep their future *front and center*.

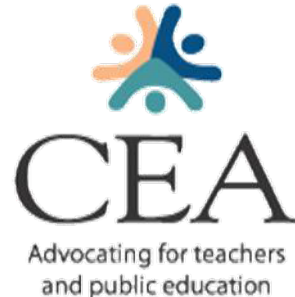
APPENDIX 1

**Survey of American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut (AFT-CT)
and Connecticut Education Association (CEA) members**



*Strategic Research
Polling
Focus Groups*

Priorities And Concerns Among Connecticut Teachers Responsible For Implementing CCSS



May 21, 2014

136 West Street · Northampton · Mass · 01060 · 413-727-8664
www.AbacusAssoc.com

Research Design

- Survey of 500 CEA & 100 AFT-CT members who are responsible for implementing Common Core State Standards:
 - Data weighted to match population distribution of school level among CT Teachers (58% Elementary, 19% Middle School, 23% High School)
 - Data weighted to reflect balance of CEA & AFT implementers (79% CEA & 21% AFT)
- 9 minutes in length.
- Margin of error is +/-4.0%
- Fielded April 3-8 (CEA) and April 29-30 (AFT), 2014

Teachers Are Concerned About Many Aspects Of CCSS; Most Concerned About Having Enough Time

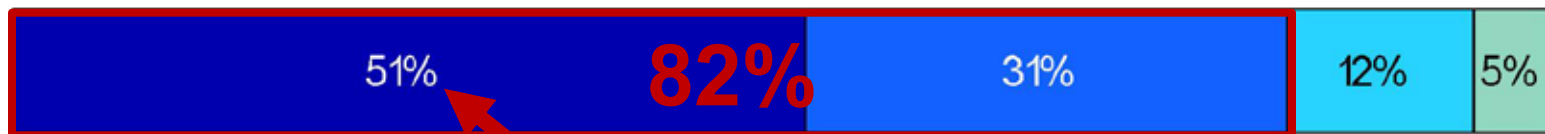
All Members

Concern



How would you characterize the...

...amount of time that you have to adequately learn, develop, and implement common core standards?



...support and materials — such as adequate technology for assessment, and curriculum unit or lesson plan examples and guides — available to you to help learn, develop, and implement common core standards?



...the professional learning and training opportunities available to you to help learn, develop, and implement common core standards?



Remainder "Not sure."



Teachers In Towns With Lower Wealth Are Much More Concerned About All Aspects Of Implementing CCSS

Town Wealth Factor (from member list)

Concern



How would you characterize the...

...amount of time that you have to adequately learn, develop, and implement common core standards?



...support and materials — such as adequate technology for assessment, and curriculum unit or lesson plan examples and guides — available to you to help learn, develop, and implement CCS?



...the professional learning and training opportunities available to you to help learn, develop, and implement common core standards?



Remainder "Not sure."



Of The Ways In Which Time To Implement CCSS Can Be a Factor, Time To Prepare Units & Lessons Is Most Important

Question

Q6. Which of these four aspects of the implementation of common core standards do you consider to be most/2nd/3rd/least important?

■ Most important ■ 2nd most important ■ 3rd most important ■ Least important

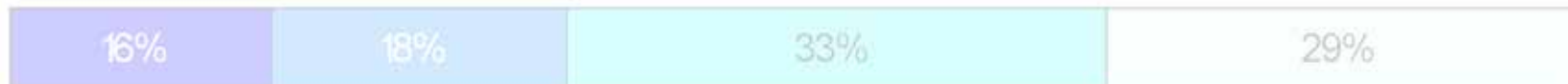
More time to prepare units and lessons



More time to collaborate with colleagues about incorporating the standards into instruction



More time to prepare the scope and sequence of the new curricular framework



More time for teachers to learn the standards

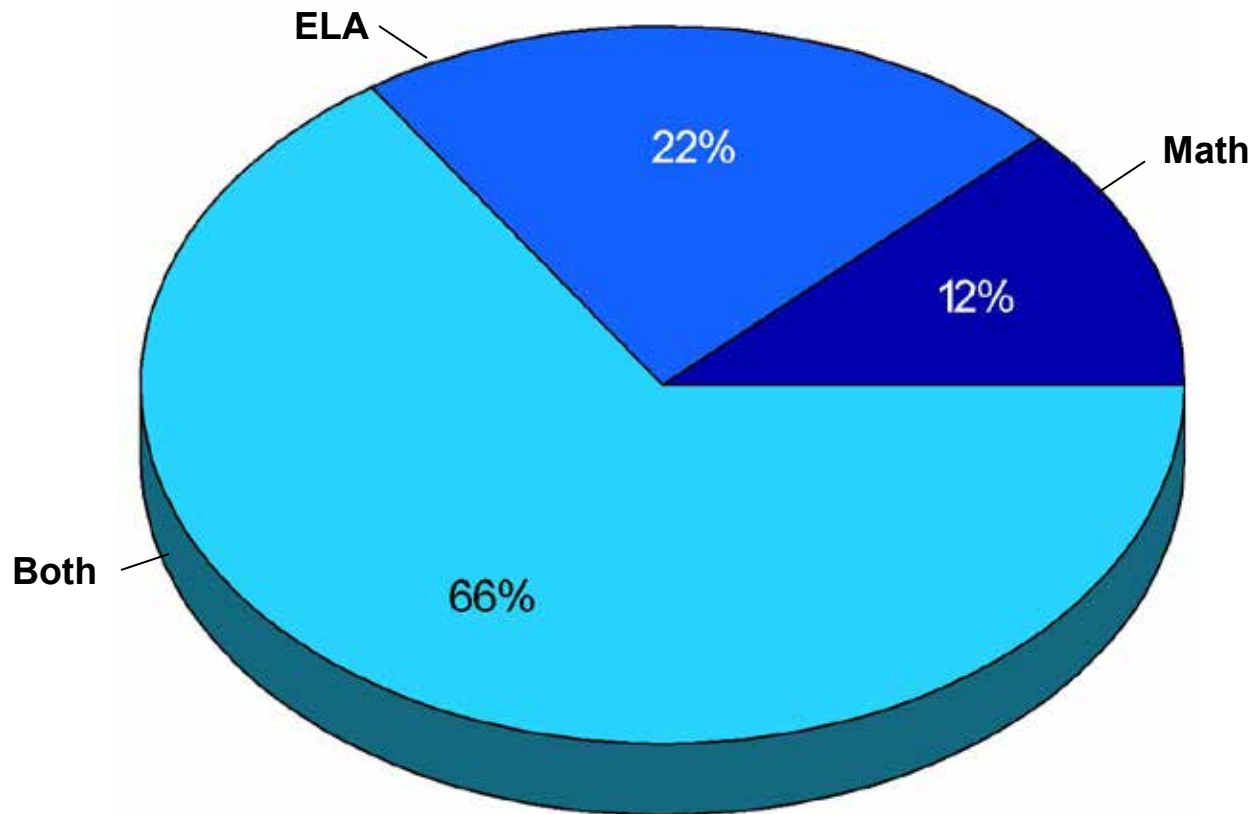


Remainder "Not sure."

Of Teachers Responsible For Implementing Both Math & ELA, 2/3 Say The Time Needed Is Equally An Issue For Both

Question

Q7. Is the time needed for implementation of common core state standards more of an issue for the Math standards, the ELA standards, or is it equal for both?



Asked only of teachers who are responsible for implementing both math and ELA CCSS.

Most Important Materials & Support: More/Better Curriculum Unit & Lesson Plan Examples; Guides For Teachers

Question

Q8. Which of these three types of materials and support needed for implementation of common core standards is the most/2nd most/least important?

■ Most important ■ 2nd most important ■ Least important

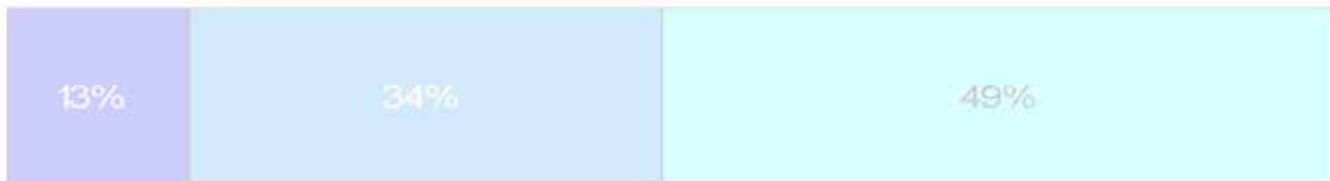
More or better curriculum unit and lesson plan examples and guides for teachers



Better technology to administer the computer-based assessments



An effective district communication plan so that parents and communities receive information about the changes in standards and their impact on schools and students



Remainder "Not sure."



For Most Important Professional Learning: More School-Based Instructional Support & Training For New Standards

Question

Q9. How important is each of these priorities for implementing common core standards for you?

■ Topmost important ■ Very important ■ Somewhat important ■ Not important

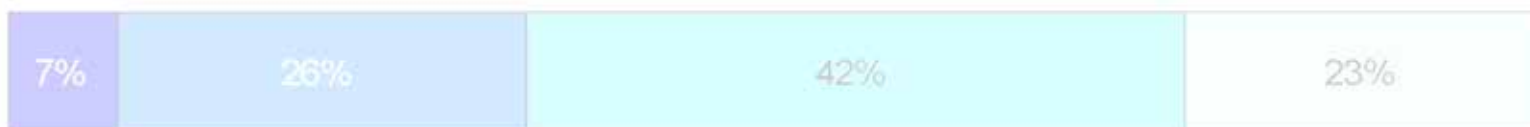
a. More school-based instructional support & training for teachers to learn how to teach new standards



c. Opportunities to participate in out-of-district activities to learn how to teach the new standards



b. Training to administer the computer-based assessments



Remainder "Not sure."



Teachers Divide Over Unit/Plan Examples & Guides, Time, & Support & Training; Plurality See Former As Most Important

Question

Q10. Which of these three needs for learning, developing, and implementing common core standards is the most/ 2nd most/ least important?

■ Most important ■ 2nd most important ■ Least important

More or better curriculum unit and lesson plan examples and guides for teachers ←



More time to learn, develop, and implement the new standards



More or better instructional support and training for teachers to learn how to teach the new standards



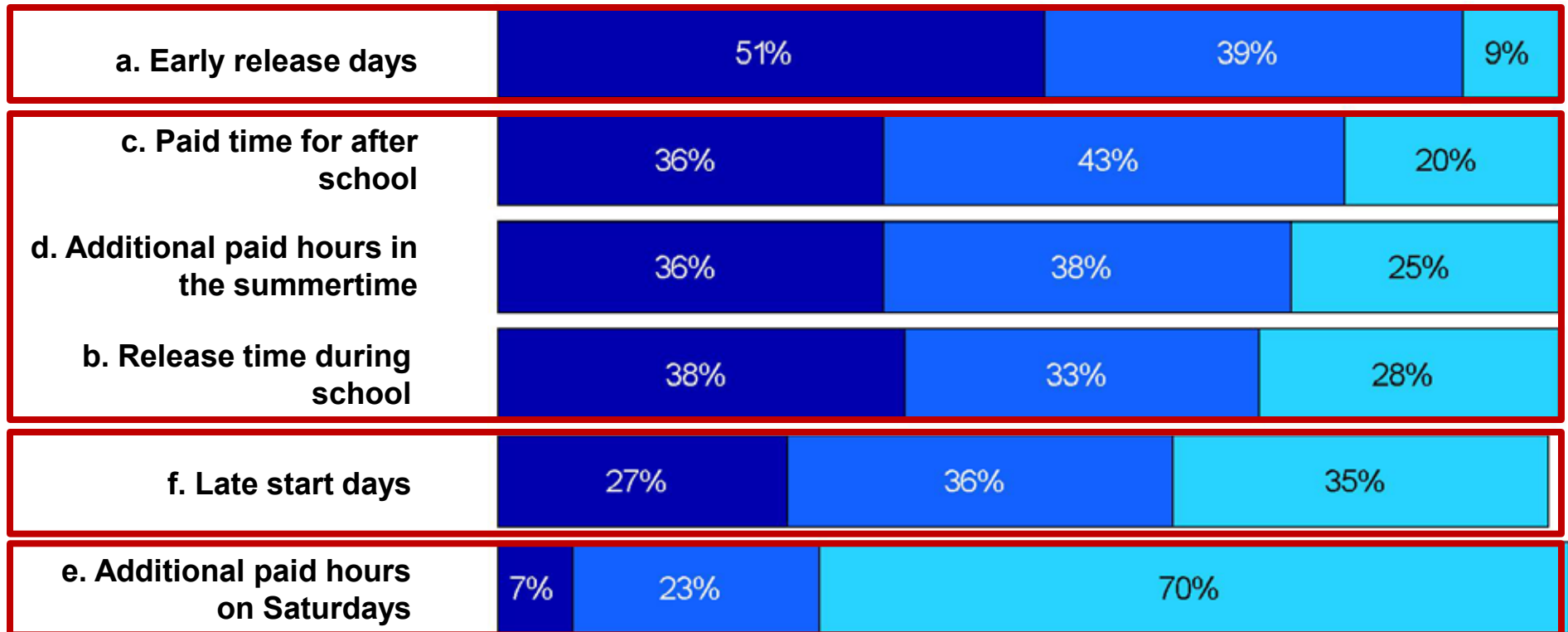
Remainder "Not sure."

Early Release Days Are The Most Preferred Option For Creating More Time To Implement CCSS

Question

Q11. How much do you prefer this option for creating more time or contractual hours that a teacher could opt to choose?

■ Strongly prefer
 ■ Somewhat prefer
 ■ Not interested



Remainder "Not sure."



Summary

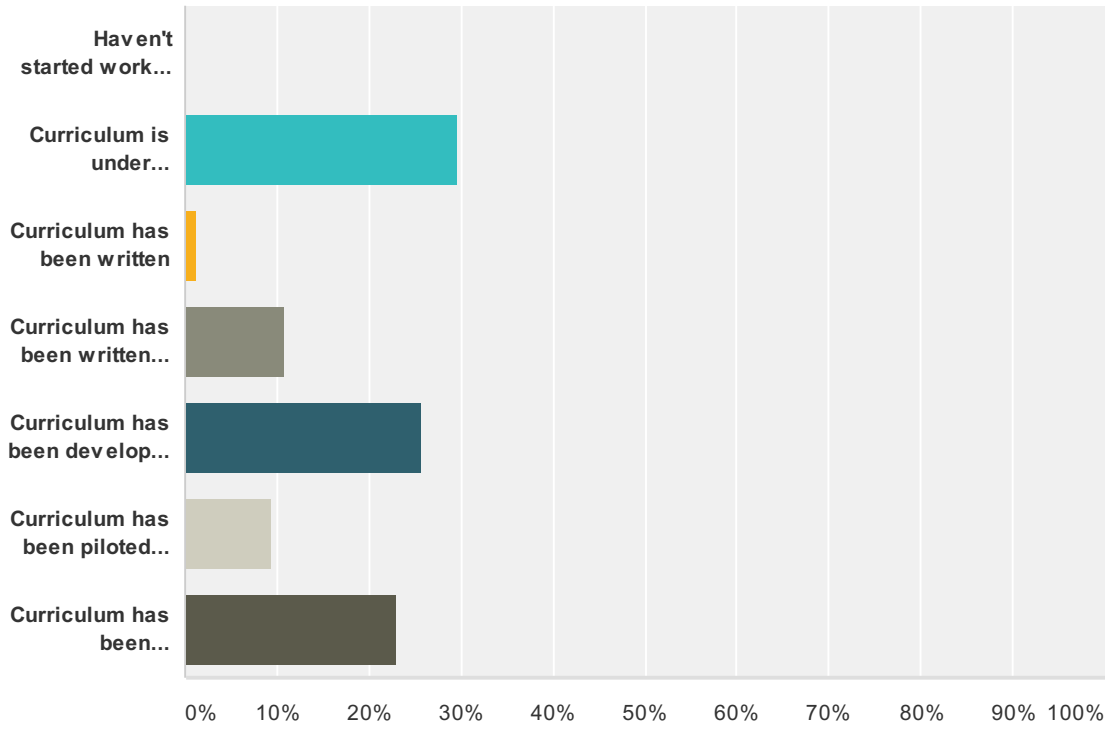
- Teachers are concerned about all aspects CCSS implementation
- Concerns are greatest in low wealth school districts
- Time and more or better curriculum unit and lesson plan examples and guides for teachers are biggest concern
- Teachers strongly prefer early release days to alleviate the problem of finding more time
- Teachers strongly oppose paid Saturdays as a way to create more time

APPENDIX 2

Survey of Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)

Q1 How far along is your district with the implementation of CCSS in English Language Arts?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
Haven't started work yet	0.00% 0
Curriculum is under development	29.73% 22
Curriculum has been written	1.35% 1
Curriculum has been written and teacher training is underway	10.81% 8
Curriculum has been developed and teachers have been trained and are now piloting	25.68% 19
Curriculum has been piloted and we are completing implementation	9.46% 7
Curriculum has been implemented assessments under development	22.97% 17
Total	74

#	Comments	Date
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CCSS Implementation Progress Survey

1	<p>Common Core East Hartford Public Schools began work on revising and writing curriculum that address the ELA standards of the Common Core upon state adoption in 2010. The initial work centered on developing district expertise regarding the state standards and a critical look at our existing curriculum to identify where the changes needed to be made. This involved members of our district leadership team participating on key groups at the State Department as the changes and shifts were laid out and reviewed. Over the past four years, we have worked hard as a district to make the transition and while work continues (especially at the secondary level) we are proud of the progress we have made. Teacher training regarding this process followed slightly behind curriculum development. Our most intensive training focused on school year 13 and has continued in to the current year. With the onset of our new Teacher Evaluation model, we have found that performance evaluation based on the rubric has significantly changed and deepened the conversations regarding practice. This year (SY14) our continued work regarding CCSS implementation are priority focus areas in our district improvement plan. We believe deeply in the opportunity to raise the standards of expectation for our students and recognize that this shift in plan and practice will not be without the challenge that significant change creates.</p>	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
2	<p>1. We continue to refine our curriculum to be sure it aligns with the CCSS. 2. We continue to work with the consultants from Columbia University's Reading/Writing Project to implement the language arts standards through a workshop model. 3. Performance based assessments continue to be developed.</p>	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
3	<p>The process is more fluid and less sequential than implied by the questions above. For example, teacher training has been on-going for the past few years. This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through teacher negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time is spent on CCSS-related topics. Curriculum writing really depends on the grade level; it is a process - some grade levels need more revising/updating or adding new than others. Also - the aspects of reading, writing, and listening/speaking are sometimes developed separately from one another. Elementary Teacher training on-going. Curriculum has been developed, teachers have been trained, and are now piloting. Assessments are being piloted. We are building on Readers and Writers workshop model to adapt CCSS standards. Addition of literacy coaches. Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics. Middle School Teacher training is on-going, curriculum development varies between grade levels - it is evolving, - we are revising/adding/deleting/shifting - Middle school curriculum development is somewhat behind elementary/high school at this point in time. Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics. High School Teacher training on-going. Curriculum is both being developed and piloted; and is now being piloted; assessments are being developed and piloted. Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics.</p>	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
4	<p>As a small district we have no Curriculum Director/Coordinator. We have taken advantage of our RESC's offerings etc and have hired an outside consultant to work alongside teachers. We use a formative assessment product, STAR, but my concern is its alignment with SBAC tests and the CCSS. Teachers in this district work hard to implement programs despite the failings of SDE and local funding. I don't see any attempt statewide to show the links between the standards, the curriculum that needs to be developed and the assessment practices. This is not a one year implementation phase. What exists out here are some districts planning, some implementing on a "pilot-type" basis and some in a close to full implementation phase. No wonder teachers are not onboard. Beside the work that was done in 2009/10 prior to adoption of CCSS in CT, that brought together practitioners from a variety of districts to align CCSS (ELA & Math) with existing CT Curriculum standards, the state has been negligent in promoting curriculum development and implementation. We have been on our own, largely. (Except for Alliance Districts)</p>	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
5	<p>Common assessments are also being developed and piloted across the district.</p>	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
6	<p>We began this process in 2011 and have made steady progress. We began with ELA because historically our reading performance has been lower than mathematics. We did this with no support from the CSDE.</p>	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
7	<p>Crafting CCSS-aligned units.</p>	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
8	<p>The K - 12 curriculum has been implemented in all grades and assessments have been developed also.</p>	2/27/2014 9:28 PM
9	<p>Units have been completed in K-8. Almost all reading teachers in grades in K-8 have been training in text complexity, close reading, writing rubrics, and performance tasks that include multiple sources. High school teachers have begun work but have been in denial.</p>	2/27/2014 8:02 PM

CCSS Implementation Progress Survey

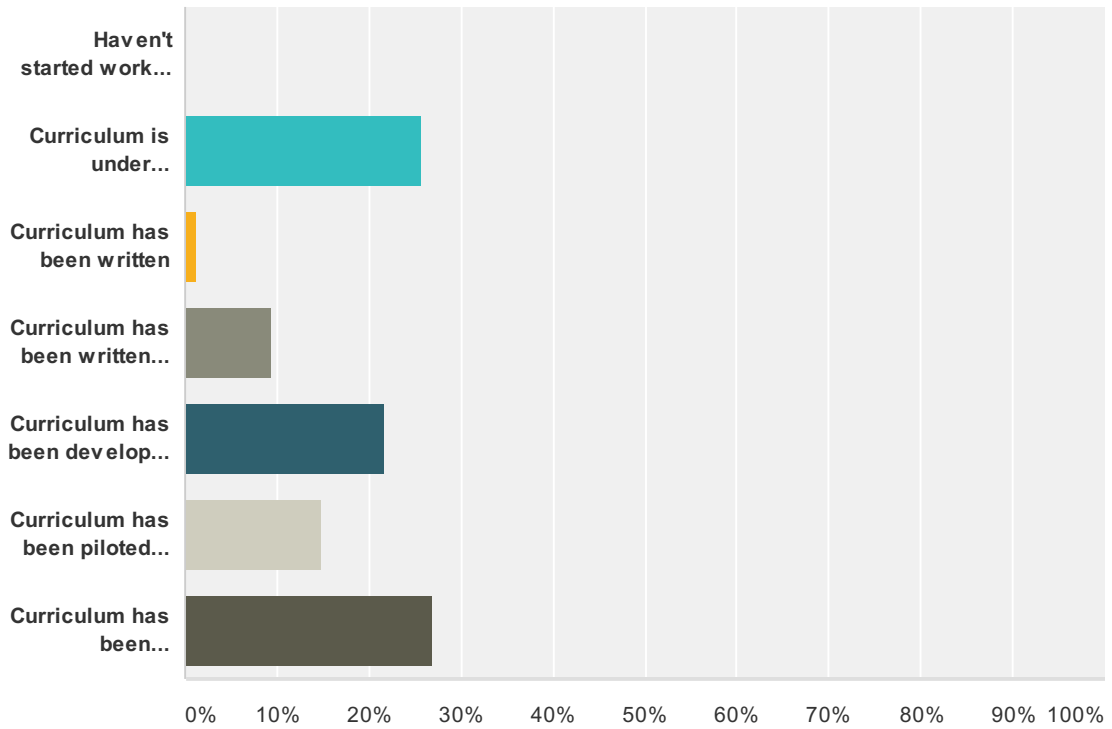
10	None of the answer choices really convey our reality. We are farther along at some levels (elementary and middle school) and in some disciplines (math). We had to make choices about where we would place our most valuable resources, money and certified staff time because it could not be addressed well in all subject areas at once.	2/27/2014 4:55 PM
11	Language Arts CCSS have brought a positive contribution to our curriculum and instruction. We are achieving much better vertical and horizontal alignment among grades and teachers, plus the level of instructional challenge is boosted.	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
12	Some grades complete- training under way.	2/27/2014 3:31 PM
13	LA K-12 has been written last and this year the district has developed an online tool to monitor implementation. Performance assessments aligned with the CCSS and SBAC specs will be developed this spring and throughout next year.	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
14	We are in our second full year of implementation, including CFA's and lesson development. We are in a full revision cycle based on what we learned last year. there were 45 teachers involved in the initial writing and there are now over 50 teachers involved in revisions Pre K - 12 Windsor Locks	2/27/2014 1:34 PM
15	comment is accurate for math, L.A. is further behind	2/27/2014 1:23 PM
16	We have implementing the following model for curriculum development: map standards at each grade level/department; develop unit of study (including standards for instructional focus, performance assessment, essential questions, lessons that develop skills and competencies that will be assessed in the unit, academic vocabulary, instructional strategies, materials and resources); implement unit; evaluate effectiveness; revise as needed. At this point, our goal is to be at least a third of the way towards having curriculum fully developed, K-12, by the end of this school year.	2/27/2014 1:16 PM
17	Only the core subjects of ELA, Math, Science and social studies has begun the transition to and integration of CCSS	2/27/2014 1:05 PM
18	Selecting just one option for this question does not accurately reflect our district's progress with CCSS implementation. Our district has spent this school year training teachers on the instructional shifts required by the CCSS and assessments by providing both in-house staff development and outside consulting. We are currently in the ELA Program Adoption phase. We have developed and administered several performance task assessments at each level to support CCSS instruction and in preparation of Smarter Balanced Assessments. We are aligning our instruction at this time to our standards based report cards.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
19	Began implementation of the Common Core beginning last school year.	2/27/2014 12:19 PM
20	This whole change has been hard to implement as we just seem to finish and understand the New CT State Standards which are not OLD? The press on this change has not been good and seems to be getting worse. The SDE has not been very helpful in getting us assistance in a timely fashion. Hard to with new SEED and SBAC going on at same time. We cannot shut down schools or departments as industry would do when changing widgets.	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
21	Actually several of these apply: Curriculum is underdevelopment Teacher training is underway We are now piloting two programs Some assessments have been developed. (Unfortunately, you have the survey set so that the respondent can only pick one, instead of 'click all' that apply)	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
22	The majority of our K-12 curriculum has been revised to CCSS. We have performance assessments and tasks for units and teachers have been piloting them this year and giving us feedback to improve and further revise the units.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
23	Teachers at every level have been involved in the curriculum development since 2011. Units were piloted in 12-13, revised and implementing this year.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
24	It would be more appropriate to allow multiple responses to this question. Each grade and course is on a different continuum.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
25	Assessments have been developed, all curriculum and assessments are being reviewed and refined based on teacher and curriculum leader input. Next steps include development of rubrics and calibration of rubrics.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
26	We are moving along and have begun to implement changes.	2/27/2014 10:57 AM

CCSS Implementation Progress Survey

27	My answer really needs to be a combination of those above. We have been engaged in the development of units of study by teachers aligned with the common core. Teachers are developing lesson plans as well. Some units have been implemented, some performance tasks have been developed. We are still working on these aspects of the curriculum development and implementation process. To date, we have had very little support in this effort from the State or anyone else. We do expect to have curriculum fully aligned in English Language Arts and Math for initial implementation in 2014-15 although some of the later sequenced material may still need some work early in 2014-15.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
28	Varies with content.	2/27/2014 10:30 AM
29	K-4 full implementation underway.....5-12 curriculum being piloted this year	2/27/2014 10:27 AM
30	ELA is in good shape. We are piloting the revised curriculum this year and there have been various training sessions for teachers. We have a Literacy Coach from Teachers College working with grades 3-5 teachers.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
31	The CCSS Curricular revisions are far from complete. The process we have decided upon is to develop CCSS aligned units of study in grade levels. Teachers are receiving some training and implementing. At the end of units, curriculum teams are reviewing data and adjusting. Much work still to do.	2/27/2014 10:18 AM
32	Began this year	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
33	This response is only for the writing implementation Reading will begin next year.	2/27/2014 10:11 AM
34	Colebrook started working on ELA beginning the 2011-12 school year. We are 2.5 years into the effort and our well on our way to full implementation. Working on assessments	2/27/2014 10:10 AM
35	We are progressing through a series of rounds where we pilot units of study at each grade level then revisit and modify them as necessary. This process has been underway since CT adopted CCSS in July of 2010.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
36	We have worked with EASTCONN to provide teacher training and PD for the Common Core; in tandem with that work we have developed units of instructions for Common Core ILA	2/27/2014 10:06 AM

Q2 How far along is your district with the implementation of CCSS in Mathematics?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
Haven't started work yet	0.00% 0
Curriculum is under development	25.68% 19
Curriculum has been written	1.35% 1
Curriculum has been written and teacher training is underway	9.46% 7
Curriculum has been developed and teachers have been trained and are now piloting	21.62% 16
Curriculum has been piloted and we are completing implementation	14.86% 11
Curriculum has been implemented assessments under development	27.03% 20
Total	74

#	Comments	Date
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CCSS Implementation Progress Survey

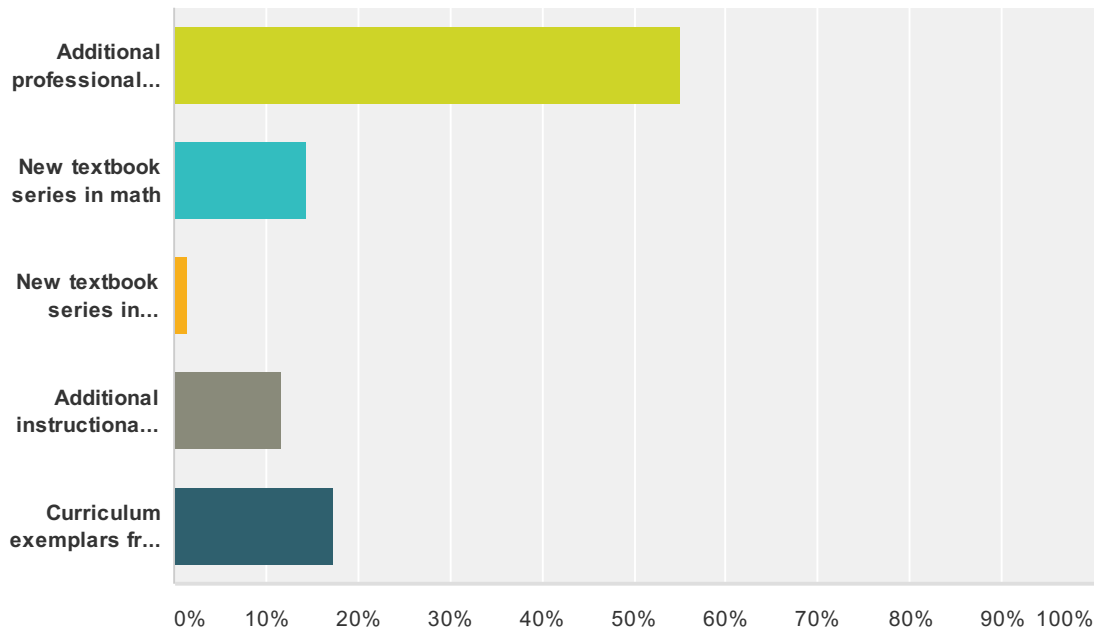
1	<p>See previous comment: East Hartford Public Schools began work on revising and writing curriculum that address the Mathematics standards of the Common Core upon state adoption in 2010. The initial work centered on developing district expertise regarding the state standards and a critical look at our existing curriculum to identify where the changes needed to be made. This involved members of our district leadership team participating on key groups at the State Department as the changes and shifts were laid out and reviewed. Over the past four years, we have worked hard as a district to make the transition and while work continues (especially at the secondary level) we are proud of the progress we have made. Teacher training regarding this process followed slightly behind curriculum development. Our most intensive training focused on school year 13 and has continued in to the current year. With the onset of our new Teacher Evaluation model, we have found that performance evaluation based on the rubric has significantly changed and deepened the conversations regarding practice. This year (SY14) our continued work regarding CCSS implementation are priority focus areas in our district improvement plan. We believe deeply in the opportunity to raise the standards of expectation for our students and recognize that this shift in plan and practice will not be without the challenge that significant change creates. We acknowledge that that our Math implementation lags our literacy implementation and the sequential nature of the content area has provided a greater issue in regards</p>	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
2	<p>1. Curriculum is implemented and assessments are being developed. 2. In the primary grades there is clearly less of a gap because all instruction has been focused on the Common Core. There was no need to transition. 3. Assessments continue to be developed, used and refined.</p>	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
3	<p>Please see comments above: the process is more fluid than sequential. Again, teacher training has been on-going for the past few years. This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through contract negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time is spent on CCSS-related topics. For math, textbook adoption also has played a major role at the elementary and middle school level in terms of aligning texts and materials to curriculum. Elementary All teachers being trained, existing texts/materials adapted as practicable, new textbook roll-out being phased in Grades 3 - 5 - adoption of new text (Math in Focus) with extensive training Addition of math leaders (stipends for classroom teachers to lead the new text implementation) Assessments being piloted We are using structures from Readers' Workshop model to assist with math Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics Middle School Teacher training is on-going, existing texts/materials adapted as practicable, new textbook roll-out being phased in Grade 6 - adoption of new text (Math in Focus) with extensive training New courses/sequences in process of BOE-approval (Grade 6 last year; Grade 7 this year) Assessments being piloted Addition of one-hour/week professional development time that can be focused on CCSS-related topics High School Teacher-training is on-going; emphasis on "shifts" in instruction; texts and materials adapted; curriculum being revised - depending on grade level/topic. Course sequences under examination.</p>	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
4	<p>See above in ELA</p>	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
5	<p>Math common assessments are in the process of being developed.</p>	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
6	<p>K-5 is completing the piloting this year and then the rest of the K-5 teachers will implement next year...there wasn't a bubble that really matched that. 6-8 is just beginning development. High school is completed.</p>	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
7	<p>Crafting CCSS-aligned units</p>	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
8	<p>We began revising units two years ago in grade K-8. We have created assessments and revised our scope and sequence last year. High school curriculums have also been revised and we began participating in the Algebra I SDE curriculum.</p>	2/27/2014 8:02 PM
9	<p>Mathematics CCSS have brought a positive contribution to our curriculum and instruction. We are achieving much better vertical and horizontal alignment among grades and teachers, plus the level of instructional challenge is boosted.</p>	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
10	<p>Some grades complete and training under way.</p>	2/27/2014 3:31 PM
11	<p>Math K-12 has been written last and this year the district has developed an online tool to monitor implementation. Performance assessments aligned with the CCSS and SBAC specs will be developed this spring and throughout next year</p>	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
12	<p>We are in our second full year of implementation, including CFA's and lesson development. We are in a full revision cycle based on what we learned last year. there were 45 teachers involved in the initial writing and there are now over 50 teachers involved in revisions Pre K - 12 Windsor Locks</p>	2/27/2014 1:34 PM

CCSS Implementation Progress Survey

13	Two years ago, our district provided professional development on the Math instructional shifts required by the CCSS and standardized tests. We completed a two year Math Program adoption process and selected Math Expressions which is tightly aligned to CCSS. We provided staff development to our teachers presented by both our in-house staff using a train the trainers model and by contracting with outside consultants recommended by the publishing company. We administer district benchmark assessments including performance tasks. Math instruction is aligned to our Math program, assessments and to our standards based report cards.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
14	Not sure a choice above captures our status. The district continually updates curriculum and part of this work has been to study and integrate as appropriate new standards, be they ccss or science or ss..... our curriculum work, training and development of assessments are ongoing...if have to capture I would put well underway to extent we have standards available in stable format. It is problematic when this is described as a linear and not cyclical process and there is a difference between being well underway with standards integration vs prepared for a set of new state assessments. People are using CCSS as an umbrella term and it is misleading.	2/27/2014 12:42 PM
15	Same as in comments for number 1	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
16	We are actually beyond the choices here. We are in the second year of curriculum implementation, but our assessments have already been developed and we have a standards-based report card in Math.	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
17	The majority of our K-12 curriculum has been revised to CCSS. We have performance assessments and tasks for units and teachers have been piloting them this year and giving us feedback to improve and further revise the units.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
18	Grade 5 has received some training; curriculum materials will be implemented in 2014-15. All other grades revised and implemented new curriculum either in 2012-13 or 2013-14.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
19	It would be more appropriate to allow multiple responses to this question. Each grade and course is on a different continuum.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
20	Assessments have been developed, all curriculum and assessments are being reviewed and refined based on teacher and curriculum leader input. Next steps include development of rubrics and calibration of rubrics.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
21	Again, we are taking this slowly and trying to work with students as we implement the change.	2/27/2014 10:57 AM
22	For K - 8 curriculum has been piloted and teachers have been trained and are now completing implementation. Curriculum is under development 9 - 12.	2/27/2014 10:45 AM
23	My answer really needs to be a combination of those above. We have been engaged in the development of units of study by teachers aligned with the common core. Teachers are developing lesson plans as well. Some units have been implemented, some performance tasks have been developed. We are still working on these aspects of the curriculum development and implementation process. To date, we have had very little support in this effort from the State or anyone else. We do expect to have curriculum fully aligned in English Language Arts and Math for initial implementation in 2014-15 although some of the later sequenced material may still need some work early in 2014-15.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
24	K-8, Algebra I , II and Geometry curricula has been developed and is being being piloted. Teachers at all levels have been receiving training. We have a Mathematics Coach from CREC working with grades 6-12 teachers on performance tasks.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
25	Same as above...	2/27/2014 10:18 AM
26	Began this year	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
27	We starting working on Math the beginning of 2012-13. We are implementing the new program this year. Working on assessments.	2/27/2014 10:10 AM
28	We are progressing through a series of rounds where we pilot units of study at each grade level then revisit and modify them as necessary. This process has been underway since CT adopted CCSS in July of 2010.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
29	The District has worked with EASTCONN to evaluate the instructional units in EVERYDAY math to determine alignment with the Common Core. We have developed a scope and sequence for instruction and have begun evaluating supplementary text	2/27/2014 10:06 AM

Q3 Which of the following were or are necessary to ensure the successful implementation of CCSS?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses
Additional professional development for teachers	55.07% 38
New textbook series in math	14.49% 10
New textbook series in reading	1.45% 1
Additional instructional materials	11.59% 8
Curriculum exemplars from the State	17.39% 12
Total	69

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	All of the above	3/5/2014 2:32 PM
2	To ensure the successful implementation of the CCSS, the state needs to continue the support the district has received through the Alliance Grant. Specifically, all of the bulleted items including professional development, new text resources and exemplars will be necessary. Of note the state needs to be vigilant regarding any intent of municipalities to use these grant funds to supplant the local board budget. This funding has provided the opportunity for districts to focus on reform work that is so necessary in the Alliance districts and must be preserved as such.	3/5/2014 1:11 PM
3	The radio button does not permit multiple responses in this category. It should. In addition to pd, the following also are necessary: new texts for reading additional instructional materials	3/4/2014 7:17 PM

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4	Other: 1. We need continued professional development in the area of mathematics, because mathematics instruction has been transformed. 2. Exemplars from the state would be beneficial for all administrators and teachers. A set of exemplars would provide a framework for developing rubrics. 3. There is so much change coming from the state at the same time, e.g. (a.) Educator Evaluation accompanied by massive amount of time needed for training; (b.) implementation of SBAC in a random fashion; (c.) major work in Common Core. 4. We recommend that the state improve the implementation process. All 3 of the above should not be happening at the same time. We suggest focusing on the Common Core first. SBAC can follow.	2/28/2014 6:11 PM
5	All of the above (except we are not adopting a textbook series for reading). Curriculum materials come from a range of sources Exemplars come from a range of sources Professional development has been on-going for the past few years focused on CCSS standards and shifts in instructional practice - there is a wide-range of sources for PD, from presenters to on-going job-embedded coaching We have incorporated CCSS into Readers' and Writers' workshop model from K-5 ELA We have borrowed from Readers' and Writers' workshop model to help deliver CCSS math standards This year, district-wide, an hour of professional development time each week has been added to the teacher schedule through teacher negotiations. Much, although not all, of the time has been focused on CCSS-related topics.	2/28/2014 12:25 PM
6	Whatever PD is developed must be specific to the needs of the district. We are all in different places in development and/or implementation. The RFP that I have seen from SDE and awarded to the RESC Alliance and an out of state group looks to me to be a "cookie-cutter" approach. Certainly not what we need. Better to allocate the funds to each of the RESCs and have them work directly with their districts in developing quality, meaningful support. The CALI model would have been the ideal vehicle for this approach. Are we going to repeat this process for Science & Social Studies?	2/28/2014 12:07 PM
7	Actually, all of the above with the exception of a new text series in reading.	2/28/2014 11:49 AM
8	I was not able to check more than one, we also needed a new textbook series in math and additional instructional materials.	2/28/2014 9:07 AM
9	In many instances materials are needed, more non-fiction materials and mathematics materials. Greatest need is professional development at all levels - reading across the content-area and conceptual understanding of mathematics.	2/27/2014 11:53 PM
10	Professional development for administrators and teachers.	2/27/2014 9:28 PM
11	Assessment truly drive instruction. Teachers are only beginning to take the CCSS seriously because the SBAC is year. We need to stay the course and we'll get there!	2/27/2014 8:02 PM
12	All of the above.	2/27/2014 6:30 PM
13	I am only able to check one box but I think ongoing professional development for teachers AND administrators as well as exemplars and more time would be helpful.	2/27/2014 4:55 PM
14	The survey design only allowed one check of the 5 choices above. However, in addition to choice 1 above, I would also have liked to have checked choices 4 & 5, too.	2/27/2014 4:15 PM
15	also additional PD for teachers	2/27/2014 3:52 PM
16	Time and money for curriculum development.	2/27/2014 2:48 PM
17	Brooklyn is in need of new textbook series in math and reading as well as additional instructional materials. We also need curricular exemplars from the state.	2/27/2014 2:39 PM
18	The question only allows one to be checked. In addition to professional development, we have new math text and additional instructional materials.	2/27/2014 2:08 PM
19	We also purchased a new math series and purchased additional instructional materials.	2/27/2014 1:45 PM
20	We're progressing without support and are happy at this point to be left alone. If exemplars are available we would love to see them. We have actually had inquiries to purchase our curriculum.	2/27/2014 1:34 PM
21	wereceived more direction in math.>inELA.publishers have not developed a basal program for reading which makes it more difficult for tchs.to implement	2/27/2014 1:23 PM
22	Our biggest obstacle has been lack of time for teachers to collaborate on this work. With so much focus on teacher and administrator evaluation, we feel that curriculum development has been neglected - resources and support from the SDE have been minimal.	2/27/2014 1:16 PM
23	We would have checked all of the above had the system permitted us to do so!	2/27/2014 1:14 PM

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24	The box does not allow you to click multiple indicators. Additional PD for teachers and curriculum exemplars are also necessary	2/27/2014 1:05 PM
25	All of the above, I wish I could have selected several of these options. New programs are definitely needed. Ones that are closely aligned to CCSS and support an instructional model that promotes rigor, higher order thinking skills and the gradual release of responsibility to students. Professional development is paramount and needs to be customized and individualized based on district needs. A one size fits all model of instruction or PD is wanted nor needed.	2/27/2014 12:49 PM
26	All of the above were necessary but I am unable to select that as an option.	2/27/2014 12:44 PM
27	The district continually updates materials so we did not buy significantly more materials but let our customized integration of CCSS help inform resource selection. The state materials have not been particularly helpful with exception of science and current work being produced re cross walks etc.	2/27/2014 12:42 PM
28	I think additional PD for teachers is necessary but as I mentioned we are working with SEED and SBAC too. We are looking a new textbooks for math and maybe reading as well as additional instructional materials. The SDE could do exemplars but it better be quick!!	2/27/2014 12:17 PM
29	(Unfortunately, you have the survey set so that the respondent can only pick one, instead of 'click all' that apply) We have needed the first four of these: 1. PD 2. New series in math 3. New series in LA 4. Additional materials	2/27/2014 12:15 PM
30	I would check multiple items here but the tool does not allow it.	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
31	There is also the need for exemplars and instructional materials to support the implementation and shifts needed in instruction	2/27/2014 11:58 AM
32	Ongoing PD for teachers will be needed. Exemplars from the state will be helpful.	2/27/2014 11:46 AM
33	multiple answers should be allowed here.	2/27/2014 11:42 AM
34	With the anticipated approval of new science & social studies standards we need to consider how to align to CT Core Standards and related PD and materials. PD will continue to focus on improved instructional strategies relative to the standards/curriculum/assessments. We look forward to using the SBAC interim assessment bank and other digital tools to further enhance our in-district work.	2/27/2014 11:22 AM
35	Certainly #1 and #5 apply. The remaining items may apply, but it is too soon to know.	2/27/2014 11:12 AM
36	All but curriculum exemplars from the state were necessary and have been implemented in Bristol. I could only check one of the options. Thank you - Ellen Solek	2/27/2014 11:01 AM
37	You should allow me to answer more than one. We need PD and new text and additional materials. We do NOT need exemplars!!!!	2/27/2014 10:57 AM
38	ALSO, NEW MATH TEXTS, ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT WRITING TIME AND TRAINING, UNITS OF STUDY TRAINING.	2/27/2014 10:52 AM
39	Additional instructional materials and professional development for teachers are both necessary to ensure successful implementation of CCSS as well.	2/27/2014 10:45 AM
40	The survey only allowed for one selection above. It is actually all of the above for us. We are still waiting for any type of support from the State. It is just now beginning to be available. Better late than never I suppose but really not enough, soon enough.	2/27/2014 10:44 AM
41	All of the above	2/27/2014 10:29 AM
42	you need to be able to check more than one of these off for us we needed PD, new math program, instructional materials in ELA	2/27/2014 10:27 AM
43	Funding is always an issue - especially for smaller districts- when there are major revisions in multiple areas . Teachers need lots of support in the form of training, however instructional materials also need a major overhaul order to support implementation.	2/27/2014 10:20 AM
44	Actually exemplars, materials and more PD are all needed for a successful implementation.	2/27/2014 10:14 AM
45	Since only one can be checked above, I checked the most important. We also need addition professional development for teachers. We have a new math series being implemented and supplimented materials in ELA.	2/27/2014 10:10 AM

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46	Question 3 should allow the respondent to check more than a single choice. We have provided a significant amount of PD for staff. Not simply on the standards and the shifts required, but also the mathematical practices, and changes in classroom design required to address College and Career standards. We have purchased new texts for mathematics, added new instructional materials including mobile technology devices, and are piloting the state Algebra I curriculum.	2/27/2014 10:08 AM
47	ALL OF THE ABOVE!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We are sorely lacking in support from the CTSDE, instructional materials, while labeled as Common Core are often not; professional development to support true understanding and thorough implementation will take time and money and we need from the CTSDE assessments truly linked to CCSS which will guide instruction....this work cannot be left to the District level	2/27/2014 10:06 AM
48	And PD and new math textbooks	2/27/2014 10:05 AM