



# e-NEWS UPDATE

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## **WASCD ALERT: National Standards Coming Soon**

by Michael Zellmer, Director of Assessment and Learning, Franklin Public Schools  
Wisconsin ASCD Influence Committee, ASCD Legislative Policy Committee

In a rapidly developing movement called the *Common Core Standards Initiative*, [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) national standards in mathematics and English language arts are scheduled to be made public by the end of July. (Yes, this month!) With support from President Obama, 49 states and several national education organizations have signed on to this project, Wisconsin included. Because this is such a fast-moving initiative, Wisconsin ASCD is providing this important information as a starting point in helping members to learn about and keep up with this project and what it might mean for all of us at the district and school levels.

The watchwords for the development of the *Common Core Standards* are “fewer, clearer, higher.” They will be internationally benchmarked, research- and evidence-based and ready for states to adopt. The *Initiative* noted that “deliberations will be confidential throughout the process (but) states and national education organizations will have an opportunity to review and provide evidence-based feedback on the draft documents.” What is known at this time includes the following:

- The lead partners in this project are the [National Governors Association](#) (NGA) and the [Council of Chief State School Officers](#) (CCSSO) of which former state superintendent, Libby Burmaster, is a past president. The other key organizations involved include: [The American Diploma Project](#), [Achieve, Inc.](#), [ACT](#), and the [College Board](#).
- The actual benchmarks being used were developed by the American Diploma Project.
- A first draft of the college and career readiness *Common Core Standards*, based on the premise that meeting these standards will allow a student to be able to take a college entry-level course and earn a “C” or better, has been completed and the standards development committees are currently [reviewing](#) the critiques of the feedback groups. The committees, which are noticeably weighted with higher education representatives, are expected to release the standards for public review at the end of July, 2009.
- K-12 *Common Core Standards* in mathematics and English language arts are scheduled to come out in January, 2010. Project leaders said more K-12 representation would be added later to work on these K-12 standards in mathematics

and English language arts.

- Once the K-12 standards are released early next year, the project envisions it will take up to three years for states to adopt them given the states' natural policy cycle, the need for new assessments, and modifications to professional development. *Initiative* leaders expect and want a cyclical review of the standards once they are put in place.
- The *Initiative* recognizes that the standards will only be as good as the tests. The leaders will be working with Secretary Duncan to develop the RFP for the \$350 million (from the \$5 billion Race to the Top Fund) he is making available to states to enhance their assessments. Only states that adopt the standards will be eligible for this test money.

As of this writing, there are as many questions as answers about this national standards movement. What is not known about the national standards movement at this time includes:

- How it will blend with states' standards. Will all states have the same standards?
- How it will affect testing. Will all states have the same test and/or assessment system?
- How it will affect test score cutoffs. Will there be national cutoffs?

At their annual summer retreat in June, the WASCD Board of Directors held an informational video conference on this topic with Paul Sandrock, DPI's Assistant Director of Content and Learning. As you know, drafts of Wisconsin's revised *Model Academic Standards* in both mathematics and English language arts have been under review since March, 2007. They are expected to be in alignment with the *Common Core Standards* because DPI worked closely with The American Diploma Project in their development. Sandrock reported that the goal of Wisconsin's revised standards is deeper understanding. He referred to the upcoming end-of-summer release of the revised *Wisconsin Model Academic Standards* as Version 6 and said that Version 7 will most likely come after the release of the *Common Core Standards* in mathematics and English language arts scheduled for January, 2010.

There will be many more questions as the national standards movement unfolds. Until new standards are fully developed and disseminated, our best practice will be to use the ones that we have and to watch for further communications from WASCD to help to sift through the information on this important topic.

The following link provides the latest information on the [national standards movement](#):

The following link provides more detailed information on [Wisconsin's revised Model Academic Standards](#).

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## Register Today!

This year, more than ever, you won't want to miss the Wisconsin ASCD Annual Fall Conference. Our preconference presenter (Sept. 30), Ian Jukes, will help you understand 21<sup>st</sup> Century demands and skills for success. You will learn why traditional teaching practices are becoming increasingly out of sync with our rapidly changing world and come away with an understanding of how to meet the new realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Our conference keynote speaker (Oct. 1) is Ken Kay of the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. You surely have heard of that by now! Let's change the conversation about learning, teaching and leadership in today's schools as we focus on the whole child and ensure that our students are prepared for success in our interdependent global society and workforce. The Partnership has developed a framework of skills necessary for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Check it out at [Route 21](#), an all-encompassing source of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills information.

Afterwards you can choose from over 20 sectional sessions presented by Wisconsin school leaders willing to share their expertise and experience along with seven sectionals from DPI. And there will be plenty of time for networking with your colleagues from around the state.

WASCD will continue to monitor the national standards movement and integrate that information into our Fall Conference program. Both of our featured presenters will enlighten us on this national standards issue and WASCD will help localize the information.

Click [here](#) for a registration form.

Visit [here](#) for a good two-minute break: