Position on Common Core State Standards

The Issue
The SMARTER Assessment System, scheduled for implementation in 2014-2015, is based on the Common Core State Standards. There is much work that districts need to do to prepare their students to be successful.

Revised January, 2011

Tony Frontier, WASCD President

Why Now?

American education is in an increasingly competitive situation as global contenders invest heavily in education and are rapidly closing gaps or surpassing us. In order to preserve and expand our economic well-being, it is necessary to invest in a dramatically redesigned education system including international benchmarks.

Current Status

A set of standards has been developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association to align reading and mathematics curricula and assessment among states and with other nations. Forty-seven states are signed on to the Common Core State Standards Initiative. In Wisconsin State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted them as our state standards in June, 2010.

Proponents of the Common Core State Standards argue that they are critical for economic growth. They also believe that “benchmarking” (defined as finding out who is performing better than you, then emulating and eventually surpassing them) is only possible if our curricula and assessments are comparable or benchmarked to international standards.

We believe our efforts should be directed to the outcomes of the Common Core State Standards.

Want to know more?
www.corestandards.org
www.ascd.org  Join Educator Advocates
www.wascd.org
Wisconsin ASCD’s Position

Wisconsin ASCD will serve as a leader and source of information for the implementation of the Wisconsin State Standards. We envision a revised assessment system and eventual alignment of curricula, textbooks, and digital media with the Common Core State Standards. We aspire to foster an on-going discussion on how standards can be used to improve student achievement in Wisconsin. WASCD will help local districts determine how best to use the standards to improve teaching and learning. The Common Core State Standards reflect characteristics of quality standards in that they are sufficiently rigorous and align across core instructional areas and grade levels.

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACT FROM COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Wisconsin ASCD advocates for meaningful assessment and effective instruction

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<th>Meaningful Assessment:</th>
<th>Effective Instruction:</th>
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<td>Aligns with the standards, local curricula and instructional materials.</td>
<td>Includes authentic curricula based on application of knowledge and skills rather than on test preparation</td>
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<td>Provides timely and meaningful feedback to impact and inform classroom instruction.</td>
<td>Builds professional development in standards and assessment changes, alignment methods, and how changes affect classroom instruction must accompany standards implementation. Teachers and administrators need to understand the purpose, intent and appropriate use of standards in order to improve instruction.</td>
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<td>Utilizes multiple measures, both broad and balanced, to measure students’ attainment of standards.</td>
<td>Trains educators in effective instructional support mechanisms for underperforming subgroups.</td>
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<td>Are instructionally relevant for students, mirroring real world work.</td>
<td>Identifies and provides access to global and national experts consistent with the standards.</td>
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<td>Undergoes on-going evaluation for the optimization of student learning.</td>
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<td>Provides data with the ability to search and analyze multiple variables and with an option to input local data into the system for comparability and alignment.</td>
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Much work needs to be done in terms of modifying curriculum, providing professional learning, creating and validating formative assessment and providing feedback to teachers and other staff. WASCD will take a leading role in these efforts in Wisconsin through advocating and supporting best practices for all students.
Many Questions Remain

Questions for discussion and debate remain unanswered at this time

• What happens to local autonomy under the Common Core State Standards system?
• How will the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium ensure a useful assessment system that addresses learner, teacher, building and district information needed to improve student learning?
• How can large-scale assessments measure “21st century skills” with the concomitant need for professional judgment or interpretation in the assessment process?
• Can our instructional and assessment system be adapted to the rigor and intellectual demand of these standards?
• Can most districts manage the professional development, technology and curriculum retooling, given the serious resource constraints they are currently encountering.
• How does technology and the informational restructuring it demands link to these standards?
• In addition to raising standards, inequity between various schools and types of students is a significant problem in American schools. What mechanisms are proposed to meet the new standards and also reduce inequity?
• How can we ensure that the assessments associated with Common Core don't evolve into a National Curriculum at the expense of other disciplines

Attend the Wisconsin ASCD Fall Conference to learn more about what districts across the state are doing.

Oct. 6-7, 2011 • Waukesha

www.wascd.org