

Rhode Island's Transition to the Common Core **Communication Plan**

Enclosure 2d
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Key Messages

- 1. Student and teacher empowerment are at the heart of the Common Core State Standards.** The CCSS were designed to help ensure that every student across the country has access to the same learning goals and expectations and, consequently, access to the knowledge and tools needed to succeed in a career of their choosing. Teachers benefit because there are more resources nationwide that are aligned to a set of shared standards.
- 2. The Common Core State Standards will prepare students for success in diverse, competitive environments.** Careers require more and different skills than in the past. The standards were developed with input from the business and higher education communities to ensure that students are prepared with the core academic knowledge and skills needed to succeed in whatever career they choose.
- 3. The Common Core State Standards serve to refine our educational focus, not redirect it.** Instructional goals stating what students should know and be able to do have existed long before the Common Core. The CCSS are fewer and clearer than previous standards, resulting in more freedom to engage students and develop the skills they need to succeed in college and careers.
- 4. The Common Core State Standards mark an investment in the future of Rhode Island and the future of Rhode Island students.** Local businesses and colleges will benefit from graduates who are ready to take on the projects and responsibilities of college and careers. Students will be able to apply the knowledge and skills to other subjects and in the real world.
- 5. Common Core State Standards are attainable for Rhode Island students and for teachers.** Rhode Island is a state that already embraces high educational standards and expectations for achievement. Implementation of the Common Core will shift instruction relating to those expectations more clearly within a framework guiding students through increasing complexity in understanding and application in literacy and numeracy skills.
- 6. Common Core State Standards provide learning goals, not standardization for classroom instruction or curriculum.** They reflect what students need to know and be able to do – how they get there and through what content is determined at the local level. The Common Core still embrace those educational foundations (e.g., multiplication tables, key reading and writing skills, literature, nonfiction) needed to prepare students across subjects, they just do so in a clearer, deeper way.
- 7. By 2014-2015, all Rhode Island students will take a new form of assessments that will require students to demonstrate their reading, writing, and math problem solving skills while using technology.** These tests will consist of multiple forms of testing, not only multiple choice questions, that more closely reflect the ways students will interact with texts and solving mathematics problems in college and careers.
- 8. All Rhode Islanders can help support Rhode Island successfully transition to the Common Core State Standards!** Resources have been developed to help everyone get informed, reach out, and take advantage of this opportunity to transform education in Rhode Island.

Transition Timeline – “Ready, Set, Go! Common Core”

2010-11 School Year: Adoption and Information Dissemination

- July 2010: Rhode Island Board of Education adopts the Common Core State Standards
- RIDE makes information about the Common Core available to the education community through field memo announcements, meetings, and support materials posted on its web site

2011-12 School Year: Preparation for the Transition (“Ready”)

- Districts / local education agencies (LEAs) begin developing curriculum based on the CCSS
- RIDE coordinates “Study the Standards” professional for teachers and administrators
- Districts develop transition plans to the CCSS
- PARCC overview information is shared statewide (e.g., purpose, timeline, goals)

2012-13 School Year: Deeper Engagement and Implementation (“Set”)

- Districts continue to engage in studying the CCSS and developing curriculum based on the CCSS
- Guidance and support materials are updated to assist administrators in transition planning
- PARCC resources (e.g., technology information, sample items, final version of the Model Content Frameworks)
- Interim assessments using CCSS-based items are available to schools statewide
- Communications materials are updated and promulgated through the web site and other media/forums

2013-14 School Year: CCSS Implementation (“Go!”)

- Curriculum based on the CCSS begins or continues implementation, making adjustments as necessary
- Teachers collaborate on instructional activities and sharing best practices
- Schools prepare for and participate in the PARCC field test in spring 2014
- Interim assessments using CCSS-based items are administered in many schools statewide
- RIDE develops additional communications materials and conducts outreach events with Common Core Ambassadors for all districts/LEAs to provide engage parents and communities in the Common Core

2014-15 School Year: CCSS Implementation and the PARCC Assessment

- All districts implement curriculum based on the CCSS, making adjustments as necessary
- Teachers continue to engage in professional development, resource development, and collaboration around the CCSS
- Schools utilize resources (e.g., PARCC practice test, sample items, model content frameworks, professional development) to prepare for the PARCC assessments in the spring and at the end of the school year
- RIDE shares information and resources about the Common Core and PARCC to the RI community

Support for Districts, Schools, and Educators

Instruction (Professional Development):

Goal: Teachers who are familiar with the structure and content of the CCSS and understand how the content and goals of the CCSS will impact how they teach.

To that end, RIDE has coordinated professional development workshops:

- Study the Common Core State Standards (5,750 educators)
- CCSS for ELA/Literacy – Critical Areas of Focus (four offerings, 1303 educators)
- CCSS for Mathematics – Critical Areas of Focus (two offerings but more upcoming, 270 educators)

Curriculum:

Goal: Districts/LEAs and schools develop and implement quality ELA and/or mathematics curriculum based on the CCSS, as well as aligning their other content area curriculum to the CCSS for literacy.

To that end, RIDE provided funding through Race to the Top and other grant programs to support curriculum development:

- CCSS ELA curriculum development: 3 cohorts, 14 districts
- CCSS mathematics curriculum development: 6 cohorts, 21 districts

Common Core Implementation and Educator Engagement Grants:

Goal: Districts/LEAs, schools, and teachers gain a deeper understanding of the Common Core through the development of resources that are aligned to the Common Core.

To that end, RIDE offers mini-grants to districts for projects relating to the CCSS:

- **2011-12:** Support the CCSS through curriculum projects: 6 awardees (4 districts plus 2 cohorts), 17 LEAs. Projects included alignment of common tasks for ELA, writing ELA curriculum for 11-district cohort, follow-up meetings post-intensive curriculum writing projects
- **2012-13:** Support the CCSS through assessment projects: 9 awardees (8 districts plus 1 cohort), 19 LEAs. Projects included common math assessments across 11 districts, aligning current assessments to CCSS, providing PD and technical assistance for CCSS implementation
- **2013-14:** Grant RFP to be released in fall 2013

Assessment:

Goals: Assessment practices change to mirror the expectations of the Common Core.

To that end, RIDE will develop tools and resources that replicate and support practices and capacity for the upcoming PARCC assessment:

- RI Interim Assessments Project: www.ride.ri.gov/Interims
- PARCC Educator Leader Cadre: www.ride.ri.gov/PARCC-ELC
- PARCC Technology Readiness Tool: www.ride.ri.gov/PARCC-technology
- Assessment Literacy Course

Communications and Outreach to the Education Community and General Public

General Information Resources

Goal: Relevant information in clear language that is readily available and usable by the general public.

To that end, online resources have been developed/collected and posted beginning in July 2010 and can be found at www.ride.ri.gov/Transition-CCSS

- What are the CCSS: how were they developed and why
- CCSS documents in multiple formats (PDF, XLS, DOC) and the CCSS appendices
- Myths and facts about the CCSS
- Rhode Island's adoption of the CCSS
- Timeline for the transition of instruction and assessment to the CCSS and the PARCC assessment
- "Get ready!" flyers and general resources handouts
- "Get set!" flyers and general resources handouts

Common Core Outreach to Parents and Communities – GE Grant

Goal:

To help parents and the community at large understand what the Common Core State Standards means for our students and our classrooms and how the CCSS prepares our students for college and for challenging careers.

Grant components and timeline:

- Development of a cadre of Common Core Ambassadors, drawn from experienced educators in RI and from our PARCC Educator Leader Cadre, to spread the word about the CCSS (August – September 2013)
- Develop materials for the Ambassadors for use during presentations/events and other opportunities, as well as materials that will be available through a variety of media (e.g., public forums, web sites, social media). (August – October 2013)
- Develop a series of high-energy, positive "CCSS videos" with support from local schools, teachers, and students that highlight and explain important messages about the CCSS and are readily accessible to the Rhode Island community (September – November 2013)
- Coordinate and conduct presentations at outreach events throughout the state, a minimum of one event for each district/LEA (October 2013 – June 2014).

CCSS Ambassadors

- Team consists of district and school administrators, teachers, and education professionals representing key education organizations and associations within Rhode Island
- Ambassadors will be supported through online and in-person training sessions

CCSS Outreach Materials

- Double-sided flyers for parents of elementary and middle/high school students
- Customizable PowerPoint presentations for various stakeholder groups
- Bookmarks and flyers to be printed and distributed at community events

CCSS Outreach Videos

- Themes for the videos have been set based on the key messages about the Common Core
- An interview with Commissioner Gist will be included as part of the footage
- The vendor will reach out to districts and schools to record footage of classroom instruction and educators (with appropriate permissions), as well as reach out to businesses and community organizations for their inclusion

CCSS Outreach Events

- The vendor will reach out to each district in the state beginning in October to schedule a Common Core Outreach event to take place prior to June 30, 2014
- The vendor will also field requests from organizations and communities for additional outreach events, confirming those requests with RIDE before responding
- RIDE intends to conduct a minimum of 100 outreach events throughout the school year

Communications- Additional Tools and Resources

Goal: All stakeholders are up-to-date on what Common Core and PARCC mean for Rhode Island and can readily access resources to provide them with the information they need.

To that end, RIDE has utilized various media in the following ways:

- Organization and posting of materials on web pages: www.ride.ri.gov/Transition-CCSS, www.ride.ri.gov/CCSS-ELA, www.ride.ri.gov/CCSS-math, www.ride.ri.gov/PARCC, www.ride.ri.gov/PARCC-ELA, www.ride.ri.gov/PARCC-math
- “Ready, Set, Go Common Core!” Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ReadySetGoCommonCore
- RI.CommonCore@ride.ri.gov email address
- CCSS and PARCC announcements via field memo
- Brochures and materials with CCSS information tailored to stakeholder groups (administrators, educators, higher education, families, businesses/community)
- Compilation of resources from national/outside organizations for parents/families
- Overview materials created and compiled providing a general introduction to the CCSS
- “CCSS Resources” flyers for all stakeholder groups
- David Coleman’s visit to Rhode Island (handouts, video of his keynote speech)