



Common Core State Standards Implementation Board Update July 2, 2015

In our February 2015 Board Report on D97's Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Implementation, we detailed the status of our CCSS implementation within the district, specifically in terms of curriculum, teacher professional learning, and implementation challenges. This Board Update will discuss our progress in addressing these issues, as well as this summer's curricular work on our ELA and Math Calendars.

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Implementation

This section will provide a status update on ELA Common Core implementation in the elementary schools, including progress made on ELA Calendar revisions, professional learning plans, and implementation challenges.

Elementary ELA Calendar Revisions

Tasked with revising the K-5 ELA Calendars, a team of thirteen teachers met over six days in June with Diana Carry and Rebecca Daly of Thinking Core. The K-5 ELA Calendar Team consisted of teachers in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade (at most two teachers per grade level), one Special Education teacher, one Teacher Librarian, and one Language Arts Specialist. Keshia Warner, Principal of Whittier School, as well as Helen Wei, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, were present to provide support in the process.

Teachers on the K-5 ELA Calendar Team first participated in three days of professional learning, to deepen their understanding of the ELA Common Core State Standards, underlying premises, and connections with one another. Revisions for the first trimester were completed by the team, and were reviewed for vertical alignment from Kindergarten through fifth grades, as well as quality assessment questions. Another goal from the revision process was to provide authentic, complex texts for teachers to use for assessments *during* learning (formative), as well as *after* learning (summative). Each trimester will also have multiple formative and summative assessments, built around text sets.

The K-5 ELA Calendar Team will reconvene in early July for three days, with the addition of two first-grade teachers, during which they will continue the revision process for second and third trimesters, again under the guidance of Dr. Carry and Ms. Daly. On our third day of planning, Thinking Core teacher leaders (from other school districts) will join us, teaming up with our teachers by grade level, to finalize revisions to the second and third trimester calendars, as well as to plan for the revised K-5 ELA Calendar roll-out on the August 27th Institute Day.

Elementary ELA CCSS Professional Learning Plans

In an effort to create a sustained approach to K-5 ELA CCSS implementation across in the district, we have created an ELA CCSS professional learning plan over the 2015-2016 school year, which will continue to build teacher and administrator capacity within the district.

During the August Institute Days, Dr. Carry will present to all K-5 teachers, to explore more deeply the ELA Common Core State Standards and their implications. Thinking Core teacher leaders, alongside of our D97 K-5 ELA Calendar Team teachers, will then roll-out the revised ELA Calendars within their grade level meetings during a half-day session.

During the school year, we will continue working with Dr. Carry, who will lead monthly after school professional learning sessions with K-5 Grade Level Team Leaders (K-5 teacher leaders per grade level from each elementary school). Language Arts Specialists will also be invited to these sessions. School administrators will also continue their professional learning with Dr. Carry, so that principals, assistant principals, and student support specialists may provide instructional leadership in their buildings.

Elementary principals may also elect for their schools to work with Dr. Carry, who will personalize her support according to each school's needs. Possible support from her includes teacher coaching, professional learning sessions/workshops, study groups, and planning sessions.

District-level professional learning in the elementary schools will focus on K-5 Grade Level Team Leaders, Language Arts Specialists, and school administrators--these leaders will provide support to others within their schools. At the school-level, principals who elect to work with Dr. Carry will tailor professional learning to their specific school needs and goals. By this multi-pronged approach, professional learning around CCSS ELA implementation will permeate our school-level understandings of the Common Core standards at a deeper level.

Elementary CCSS ELA Implementation Challenges

In the February 2015 Board Report, we discussed the implementation challenges identified by K-5 teachers through a teacher survey. The top challenges identified, by grade level band, were:

- Grades K-2
 - Need for more aligned textbooks and materials (60%)
 - More time to collaborate with my colleagues (42%)
 - Need more summative assessments aligned to Common Core Standards (36%)
- Grades 3-5
 - Need for more aligned textbooks and materials (63%)
 - More time to collaborate with my colleagues (46%)
 - Need more formative assessment aligned to the Common Core Standards (30%)
- Elementary-Special Education
 - Need more time to help all students really learn the standards (59%)
 - Need more aligned textbooks and materials (53%)
 - Need more time to collaborate with my colleagues (24%)

The K-5 ELA Calendar revision process and plans for professional learning will address a number of these challenges, including the need for more aligned instructional materials, more assessments, and more time for students to learn the standards.

First, we will address the need for more aligned instructional materials, by providing authentic, complex texts for each grade level that teachers may use both formatively and summatively, as identified in the revised calendars. In addition, at the August Institute Day, all K-5 teachers will receive a Teacher Guide, CCSS Graphic Organizer book, and a Teacher Blueprint of questions that may be used during instruction, aligned with the ELA Common Core State Standards.

Second, each classroom teacher will also receive a classroom set of Student Blueprints, which will help guide students in their understanding of the ELA CCSS. These Student Blueprints provide students with sentence stems and terminology that will facilitate classroom discussions and ways of talking about skills and concepts that are covered by the ELA CCSS.

Third, both the number of formative and summative assessments have been increased for each grade level for the first trimester, and we will continue with revisions for second and third trimesters. These assessments and accompanying texts will be provided to K-5 teachers, and common summative assessments will allow grade level teachers across the district to discuss and analyze student work during grade level meetings.

We believe the fourth top implementation challenge, the need for more collaboration with colleagues, will be addressed through new professional learning structures outlined by the OPTA agreement, such as through additional grade level/department meetings.

Middle School CCSS ELA Calendars Revisions and Professional Learning Plan

During the 2015-2016 school year, the middle school Language Arts teachers will use their department meetings to revise the 6-8 ELA calendars. The top priorities for the 6-8 ELA Calendar revisions are:

- 1) Reorganize ELA Calendars into trimester-level calendars (rather than monthly)
- 2) Use the PARCC Model Content Framework as a guide in determining the number of texts and text types per trimester
- 3) Incorporate the existing IB units into the 6-8 ELA Calendars and continue to develop additional IB units
- 4) Ensure vertical alignment from grades K through 8

Middle School Language Arts teachers will attend the August Institute Day session with Dr. Carry to further deepen their understanding of the ELA Common Core State Standards. During the school year, Dr. Carry will provide further professional learning to the department during an Institute Day, and professional learning will be embedded into the 6-8 ELA revision process.

Common Core State Standards: Math Implementation

This section will provide a status update on Math Common Core implementation in the district, including progress made on Math Calendar revisions, professional learning plans, and implementation challenges.

Elementary and Middle School Math Calendar Revisions

In March 2015, K-5 teachers applied to participate in revising the current K-5 math calendars. Beginning in May 2015, grade-level teams began revising, and in some instances creating, common pre-assessments, mid-unit performance tasks, and unit summative assessments. Links to these assessments (stored in Google Drive) are linked in a grade-level trimester calendar for teachers and principals to access. This summer, middle school math teachers are creating similar common assessments and assessment calendars for their courses.

For 2015-2016, a primary goal for K-8 math instruction is for grade-level/course alike teachers to analyze student work from common assessments. This student work analysis will occur during our district grade-level department meetings. Teachers will use student work analysis protocols to guide the discussion and keep it focused on understanding student learning as it relates to the assessed standards. Through this process, teachers will have an opportunity to give feedback on our current assessments for future revisions.

Elementary and Middle School Math CCSS Professional Learning Plans

District 97 will continue participating in the UIC/West Suburban Math Initiative (WSMI)-Mathematics Professional Development Consortium. 31 K-8 teachers are participating in the 2015-2016 school year. Teachers in grades K-5 will participate in at least four full-day professional learning sessions and 6-8 teachers will participate in four full-day professional learning sessions. These sessions will focus on the increased cognitive demand required by the CCSS math standards and implementing the Standards for Mathematical Practice. Teachers who are new to the program will receive coaching on their mathematics instruction with an emphasis on using Math Talks to uncover student thinking and integrating MARS performance tasks into their instruction.

Middle school math teachers will have an opportunity to build their instructional capacity and collaborate with District 90 and District 200 teachers on 6-12 math articulation through our work with UIC/WSMI. The proposal is still being finalized, but it will likely include three sessions that will focus on 6-12 math paths and placement, assessment literacy, and formative assessment practices.

Elementary CCSS Math Implementation Challenges

As noted above, elementary teachers named the need for more aligned textbooks and materials as a challenge to implementing CCSS math standards. All teachers, regardless of whether or not they are part of the UIC/WSMI math program, will have access the MARS performance tasks that are aligned to CCSS. The district will also conduct a formal math curriculum review process during 2nd trimester in order to address the need to have one common district core math resource.

The OPTA contract calls for nine grade-level department meetings, which will be an increase of collaboration time. Grade-level and department chairs will need direction and support in order for these meetings to serve as opportunities for teacher collaboration that is focused on student work analysis, instructional design, and CCSS implementation. This support will come from the Directors of Curriculum and Instruction.

The creation of common math assessment calendars is the first step in addressing the need for more access to formative and summative assessments. If we move forward with MasteryConnect, teacher

teams will have access to assessment banks that can be used to make classroom-level and grade-level assessments. Teacher created assessments will be able to be shared easily with other teachers in the district.

Middle School CCSS Math Implementation Challenges

In Spring 2015, a representative team of middle school math teachers participated in a situation analysis of the middle school math program. Through the situation analysis, teachers identified 3 key issues in the middle school math department: 1) the need to identify supports/intervention for non-IEP students, 2) lack of common course assessments, 3) the need for common prioritized standards for each course and a common course instructional sequence. Issues 2 and 3 are being addressed this summer.

In May 2015, 8th grade teachers convened to create common course calendars and common course assessments. Our two teachers currently teaching Advanced Algebra 8 are working with their District 90 counterparts and District 200 Geometry teachers to create a middle level Geometry course that will be offered to advanced 8th grade students in the 2016-2017 school year. 6th and 7th grade teachers will meet the last week of July to complete similar work.

The issue regarding supports and interventions for non-IEP students will be addressed during professional learning in the 2015-2016 school year. Given our 1-1 technology, we have an excellent tool that can support personalized and small group learning. An area to address will be how to plan and implement effective small group instruction, so that teachers can address students' needs in a smaller setting.

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