



UPDATE FOR DISTRICT CONTACTS FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL ISSUES

APRIL 2013

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A PARAPROFESSIONAL'S GUIDE TO COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Overview of Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of K-12 expectations for English language arts and mathematics designed to ensure all students are able to compete and succeed globally. In spring 2009, Governors and state Commissioners of Education from 48 states, including Connecticut, committed to developing a CCSS for K-12 English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. On July 7, 2010, the Connecticut State Board of Education officially adopted the CCSS as Connecticut's standards in English language arts and mathematics. All educators, including paraprofessionals, must work together to achieve the goal of full implementation statewide.

Why do we need educational standards?

Educational standards provide teachers with clear goals for student learning to ensure that their students have the skills and knowledge needed to be successful. The CCSS will help ensure that students are receiving a [high-quality education](#) consistently from school to school and state to state.

Standards help students and parents by setting clear and realistic goals for success. Of course, standards are not the only thing that is needed for our children's success, but they provide an accessible road map for our teachers, parents and students (www.corestandards.org).

Standards Help Support the Writing of Curriculum

Curriculum is a guaranteed course of study and learning objectives that integrates standards, instructional strategies, materials, and assessments to ensure all students are able to achieve standards. The CCSS do not and cannot include all or even most of the content students should learn. Therefore, they must be complemented by a well-developed, content-rich curriculum.

Assessment

In 2012, 31 states including Connecticut joined together to form the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to develop assessments aligned with the CCSS that will replace current state assessments in ELA/literacy and math in the 2014-15 school year. Connecticut is a governing state in the SBAC and is taking an active role in consortium through representation on several workgroups.

The new assessment will replace the current Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and provide new tools to monitor student progress and resources to meet each student's unique needs. Teachers will be able to use these reports to inform instruction.

Key Points of ELA Standards

The ELA Standards are divided into reading, writing, speaking and listening. Standards require that students systematically acquire knowledge in literature and other disciplines through reading, writing, speaking and listening. The Standards set requirements not only for ELA but also for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects. Just as students must learn to read, write, speak, listen and use language effectively in a variety of content areas, so too must the Standards specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines.

Key Points of Mathematics Standards

In mathematics, the Standards lay a solid foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and decimals. Taken together, these elements support a student's ability to learn and apply more demanding math concepts and procedures. The middle school and high school standards call on students to practice applying mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and challenges; they prepare students to think and reason mathematically.

Resources:

[Achievethecore.org](http://achievethecore.org): Assembled by Student Achievement Partners, this Web site includes free resources useful for implementation of the CCSS. Resources include articles, sites, research, professional development modules, and voices of teachers doing the work of the Common Core.

[Corestandards.org/resources](http://corestandards.org/resources): Resources from the CCSS Initiative coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Connecticut Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/cali/guidelines_paraprofessionals.pdf.

Connecticut State Department of Education Common Core State Standards Web page: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=322592>. The CSDE's CCSS Web page includes units of study to provide a framework for ongoing instruction and assessment.

[Engageny.org](http://engage.org): Engage NY is an evolving, collaborative platform for educators to access and share resources.

[Smarterbalanced.org](http://smarterbalanced.org): Smarter Balanced is a state-led consortium developing assessments aligned to the CCSS in ELA and math. Resources include an FAQ, publications, and webinars.

Taken from, Connecticut Paraprofessionals Guide to Common Core State Standards, published by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the State Education Resource Center (SERC). Available on SDE's Paraprofessional Information and Resources page, titled "Paraprofessional Brief: CCSS": www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali.

The State of Connecticut Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (including, but not limited to, mental retardation, past or present history of mental disability, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director, Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, State of Connecticut Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457, 860-807-2071.
