

Moving Forward

A National Perspective on States' Progress
In Common Core State Standards
Implementation Planning

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About this Report

Since the state-led Common Core State Standards Initiative released its standards for English/language arts and mathematics in June 2010, 47 states – including the District of Columbia – have stated their intent to put those academic frameworks in place. Today, these states are squarely focused on issues related to implementation, including the supports needed to help schools and educators ensure students can meet these new expectations. Most experts agree that the new standards are more ambitious than the standards that preceded them in many states and include important differences in the skills and knowledge expected from students at different grades.

This study serves as a follow-up to our January 2012 *Preparing for Change* report, which detailed state-reported survey responses about the status of CCSS implementation planning in 2011 overall and in three key areas: teacher professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher-evaluation systems. To again monitor states' progress in implementing the Common Core State Standards for this update, Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center examined planning activities in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia by surveying state education agency (SEA) representatives in summer 2012. This survey allowed states to update responses to survey questions initially fielded a year earlier. Coming two years after most states adopted common standards, this new report, *Moving Forward*, provides another snapshot of implementation progress for policymakers, SEA staff, technical-assistance providers, and other key stakeholders tracking states' activity.

The study's co-authors are staff of Education First and the EPE Research Center. We would like to extend our thanks to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for supporting this work. The conclusions presented here do not necessarily represent the views of the Foundation.

Education First is a national education policy and strategic consulting firm that specializes in helping education policy makers, advocates, and funders develop broad-based improvement and reform strategies that lead to greater learning and achievement for the nation's students. Its team includes former governor's advisors, state education agency leaders, advocacy organization CEOs, grantmakers, educators, and reporters. The firm specializes in developing bold policies, planning for implementation and building widespread, bipartisan support and understanding for change.

Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Md. Its primary mission is to help raise the level of awareness and understanding among professionals and the public of important issues in American education. EPE covers local, state, national, and international news and issues from preschool through the 12th grade. EPE publishes *Education Week*, America's newspaper of record for precollegiate education, *Digital Directions*, the online *Teacher* channel, and the TopSchoolJobs employment resource. The **EPE Research Center** conducts annual policy surveys, collects data, and performs analyses that appear in the *Quality Counts*, *Technology Counts*, and *Diplomas Count* annual reports. The center also produces independent research reports, contributes original data and analysis to special coverage in *Education Week*, and maintains the Education Counts and EdWeek Maps online data resources.

Executive Summary

With the ultimate success of the Common Core State Standards Initiative hinging on how well educators can teach to the new standards and how well students can master them, most states are now intently focused on the fidelity of implementation in classrooms. Building instructional capacity and adequately supporting educators making the “instructional shifts” called for by the Common Core represent a dramatic change for most states, districts, and schools.

To assess state progress toward implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center surveyed state education agency officials for insights into the status of states’ CCSS-related planning efforts. Our survey sought to examine how state leaders are moving forward with the new standards, by collecting information on their plans to support implementation in several key areas. In the survey, states report on the status of their implementation planning as of summer 2012. We are able to compare the 2012 responses to those from our 2011 survey – detailed in our report *Preparing for Change* – to assess states’ progress over the past year.

This report provides specific details about the status of state plans for CCSS-related changes in the areas of: teacher professional development, curricular resources, and teacher-evaluation systems. All 50 states and the District of Columbia – which is treated as a state throughout this report – are included in the study. Our major findings include:

- All 47 CCSS-adopting states reported having a formal implementation plan for transitioning to the new standards.
- Most CCSS-adopting states reported progress in planning since 2011:
 - Thirty-two states have made progress in their planning activities in at least one of the three specific categories examined: teacher professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluations.
 - Twenty-one states reported fully developed plans in all three categories, a substantial increase from only seven states reporting this level of progress one year ago.
 - Forty-four states indicated that they have fully developed implementation plans in at least one of the three specific categories, an increase from 28 states in 2011. Three states have not yet completed a fully developed plan in any category, compared with 18 states in 2011.
 - Six states indicated that they are further away from the goal of completing fully developed plans for a particular implementation area in 2012 than they reported a year earlier.
- As was the case in 2011, states are furthest along in their planning related to teacher professional development:
 - All but one state reported having either a fully developed plan to provide teachers with professional development aligned to the Common Core (37 states) or a plan in development (nine states).
 - Eighteen states have advanced their planning in this area since 2011.
- Since 2011, states have advanced their planning to align instructional materials with the CCSS:
 - Thirty states have fully developed plans for changing instructional materials to align with the CCSS, compared with 15 in 2011. Twelve states have plans in progress.
 - Eighteen states indicated they are now further along in this work than they reported last year; seven of these states did not have any plans to develop curriculum guides in 2011.
 - As of summer 2012, five states did not have a plan underway.
- Most states have plans in place or in progress for aligning their teacher-evaluation systems to the CCSS:
 - Forty-two states have either developed or are in the process of developing a plan to revise teacher-evaluation systems to hold teachers accountable for students’ mastery of the CCSS.
 - Eighteen states indicated they are further along in this work than they were in 2011.

The implementation plans we collected as part of this research also provide important details about the substance, depth, and nature of states’ planning efforts, which vary widely but overall include more information than they did in 2011. The results of the survey indicate that, over the past year, most states have moved forward to fully develop plans in key areas widely considered to be necessary for successful implementation of the new standards.

Introduction

Context

Led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-driven effort to craft common academic-content standards across states. Since its inception in 2009, the initiative has rapidly gained momentum across the country. In June 2010, the initiative released common standards for English/language arts and mathematics. In 2010, Kentucky became the first state to adopt the CCSS; by November 2011, 46 states and the District of Columbia had signed on. The shift toward common standards is widely recognized as a game-changing development for states and school districts, raising the bar for what students should know and be able to do and what and how educators are expected to teach.

To date, the number of CCSS-adopting states holds steady, with no state that had agreed to adopt the CCSS reversing its commitment to move forward with implementation. Likewise, none of the four states that had declined to adopt the initiative as of 2011 – Alaska, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia – has since signed on to the CCSS. Minnesota remains the only state to adopt the new standards in only one content-area, English/language arts.

The focus of national attention has turned from adoption to implementation of the CCSS. Indeed, the success of the CCSS initiative now hinges on the quality of its implementation in classrooms. With common assessments aligned to the standards scheduled to go online in 2014-15, the timeline for implementation is growing short. In most states, the

Six Key Shifts in Common Core State Standards

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

1. Informational Text: *Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts.*

At the elementary level, the standards call for a 50-50 balance between informational texts and literature. They shift the emphasis to 55 percent informational by middle school, and 70 percent by high school. Such reading includes content-rich nonfiction in history/social studies, science, and the arts. Informational text is seen as a way for students to build coherent general knowledge, as well as reading and writing skills.

2. Citing Evidence: *Reading and writing grounded in evidence from text.*

The standards place a premium on students' use of evidence from texts to present careful analyses and well-defended claims. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the standards envision students' answering questions that depend on reading texts with care. The standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades. The reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on evidence.

3. Complex Text: *Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary.*

The standards build a "staircase" of increasing text complexity to prepare students for the types of texts they must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. Closely related to text complexity, and inextricably connected to reading comprehension, is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as "ignite" and "commit").

MATHEMATICS

4. Focus: *Focus strongly where the standards focus.*

Rather than racing to cover topics in a mile-wide, inch-deep curriculum, significantly narrow and deepen the way time and energy are spent in the math classroom. The standards focus deeply on the major work of each grade so that students can gain strong foundations: solid conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency, and the ability to apply the math they know to solve problems inside and outside the math classroom.

5. Coherence: *Think across grades, and link to major topics within grades.*

The standards are designed around coherent progressions from grade to grade. Carefully connect the learning across grades so that students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years. Each standard is not a new event, but an extension of previous learning. Instead of allowing additional or supporting topics to detract from the focus of the grade, these topics can serve the grade-level focus.

6. Rigor: *In major topics, pursue conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity.*

The standards call for an emphasis on conceptual understanding of key concepts, such as place value and ratios. Teachers must help students to access concepts from a number of perspectives (so they see math as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures) and to build speed and accuracy in calculation. To do this, teachers are expected to structure class time and/or homework time for students to practice core functions like single-digit multiplication (so that they have access to more complex concepts and procedures) and to provide opportunities for students to apply math in context. Teachers in content areas outside of math, particularly science, will also ensure that students are using math to make meaning of and access content.

SOURCE: Adapted From Student Achievement Partners, 2012

switch from previous state content standards to these common-core standards will be more than superficial. Teachers will need a deep understanding of the new standards, access to aligned instructional materials, and new pedagogical approaches to deliver instruction in a fundamentally different way (see sidebar on page 3).

For example, in mathematics, the shift to new standards means students will be expected to learn and master many mathematical concepts earlier in their schooling than before. Teachers will also be expected to focus longer and more deeply on fewer concepts in each grade and to emphasize conceptual understanding and practical applications of mathematical ideas. In English/language arts, to help students build content knowledge and reading skills, teachers will now be expected to emphasize the importance of citing evidence from texts, especially informational and nonfiction sources. Since these literacy expectations cut across the curriculum, they will involve teachers from a variety of subjects, including social studies, science, and career-technical courses.

For many educators, such changes will represent a fundamental shift in what and how they teach. And yet, it is unclear if there is a full appreciation for the significant differences between the common core standards and most states' previous standards, the far-reaching changes the new standards will require, or the importance of planning out how the new standards will become a meaningful reality in the classroom.

To learn more about the status of early CCSS implementation planning, Education First and the EPE Research Center first surveyed state education agency (SEA) officials about the extent of the planning efforts underway in their own states in summer 2011. That study of state-level planning efforts for transitioning to the CCSS resulted in the joint report *Preparing for Change*, which was released in January 2012. We concentrated particularly on efforts related to aligning teacher professional development, curricular and instructional resources, and teacher evaluations to the CCSS, key implementation areas identified in an earlier 2011 study by the Center on Education Policy ([States' Progress and Challenges in Implementing Common Core State Standards](#)). A 2012 [report](#) from CEP noted that some states continued to view those implementation areas as major challenges. Focusing specifically on state planning activity, our research found that in 2011 only seven states had fully developed implementation plans in all three key areas. Eighteen states did not have fully developed plans in any of these areas. Most states were somewhere in between these extremes and were working to draft plans for CCSS implementation, although the intensity and depth of these efforts varied widely.

Now, one year after the release of our baseline study, this report examines progress in states' implementation planning efforts between 2011 and 2012. In summer 2012, we again asked state agency representatives about their implementation planning for the CCSS. Like last year's report, this study provides a barometer of where states believe they stand in this planning process and highlights the movement made over the past year. In several key implementation areas, we identify states that consider themselves to have fully developed implementation plans or plans in the process of development. This study also attempts to shed some light on the nature and depth of state planning activities.

In the sections that follow, we present findings based primarily on an analysis of self-reported data from education leaders in states that have signed on to adopt the CCSS and a modest analysis of the contents of these plans. Specifically, we provide state-by-state results on the scope of overall CCSS implementation plans, as well as information on any specific efforts to align teacher professional development, curriculum and instructional materials, and teacher-evaluation systems to the new standards.

In describing progress, we highlight how state survey responses have changed over time, by presenting key results from our 2012 *Preparing for Change* report to contextualize individual state efforts over the past year. This comparison helps to build a deeper understanding of state goals, challenges, and setbacks.

Methods

As a part of the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center's annual state policy survey, states were presented a series of questions about their efforts to implement the Common Core State Standards and asked to provide supporting

documentation regarding the status of their planning. Leaders in state education departments were asked the following five questions in the summers of 2011 and 2012:

1. Has your state formally adopted the CCSS?
2. Has your state developed any formal plans for implementation of the CCSS initiative?
3. Has your state developed a plan to change curriculum guides or instructional materials to align to the CCSS?
4. Has your state developed a plan to provide professional development to teachers to align to the CCSS?
5. Has your state developed a plan to create or revise teacher-evaluation systems to hold educators accountable for students' mastery of the CCSS?

In both years, the final three questions relating to specific aspects of implementation planning asked states to classify the status of their progress into one of the following categories: the state has a fully developed plan, work is underway to develop a plan, or the state has neither a fully developed plan nor a plan in the process of development. If a state indicated it had a plan or was in the process of developing one, respondents were asked to submit documentation describing the details.

Comparisons of states' survey responses from 2012 with their answers from 2011 are an important feature of the *Moving Forward* report. Because the same survey questions were asked in both years, we have a unique opportunity to analyze states' year-to-year progress in implementation planning. Based on changes in their survey responses from 2011 to 2012, we report whether states' implementation planning has changed since last year. In this analysis of survey data, a state indicating that it had neither a fully developed plan nor a plan in development in 2011 might have moved forward by initiating or completing planning – for one or more of the three critical aspects of CCSS implementation explored in our research – by 2012. Survey results might also show that the status of a given state's planning did not change since 2011 or that it reported it was further away from completing a fully developed plan for a particular implementation area in 2012 than it indicated in 2011.

The follow-up survey was sent to state education agencies on June 27, 2012. The survey instrument was not pre-populated with states' 2011 responses. We took this approach to increase the likelihood that states would provide a fresh perspective on their CCSS implementation planning without being influenced by their answers from the prior year. However, in cases where a state's response indicated a less developed plan than one year ago – which might suggest backward movement – we provided that state with its previous response and offered the state the chance to clarify its answer.

Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia (which we treat as a state in our analysis throughout this report) responded to our survey questions regarding CCSS implementation planning. Survey results were finalized across those states by October 31, 2012, with answers recorded as "not applicable" for the four states that have elected not to adopt the Common Core State Standards: Alaska, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia. One CCSS-adopting state (Montana) declined to answer the CCSS survey questions directly. The EPE Research Center used extant resources to complete these questions on the state's behalf, and offered the state's education agency the opportunity to review the determinations and provide any changes. At the time of our summer 2011 data collection, Montana had not yet adopted the CCSS; formal adoption came in November 2011. Because the state did not answer questions about CCSS implementation planning that year, we are unable to document Montana's year-to-year implementation planning progress.

Status of Overall CCSS Implementation Plans

Although states have varying governance and legal authorities over their public schools, they face the common challenge of ensuring that educators have the skills and resources to succeed in implementing the Common Core. Our survey asked state officials to describe any overall, formal plans their state education agency developed for implementation of the CCSS. Because of the broad and loosely defined scope of planning activities in which states might be engaged, our survey prompted respondents to consider a particular set of issues when reporting on their activities, including: descriptions of

anticipated changes, a timeline for implementation, task assignments and responsibilities for various state education agency departments or districts, and any additional resources that would be used to support CCSS implementation. Survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide information about any official, statewide plans that had been shared publicly with stakeholders and were asked to submit supporting documentation.

All 47 states that have adopted the CCSS report having developed a formal plan for CCSS implementation. States' plans related to implementing the Common Core typically encompass multiple planning processes across the areas of teacher professional development, curriculum and instruction, and assessments and accountability systems. Although the details and quality of those plans appear to vary greatly from state to state, the plans that states submitted this year generally include more detailed information – more activities, more explanation of activities, or a combination of both – when compared to last year.

Similar to survey results from 2011, most states cite implementation plans that include transition or implementation timelines. These timelines generally specify major CCSS-related implementation milestones over the course of a few years in critical areas (e.g., curriculum, assessments, teacher professional development), and often illustrate sequenced approaches to CCSS implementation for various grade bands each year. Approximately one-third of states have developed more comprehensive strategic plans that detail how they will work to support necessary changes in districts and schools. In states that self-identified as local-control states, survey results reveal a heightened sensitivity around the tension between local and state roles in the implementation of the CCSS. In such states, implementation plans are more likely to include guidance for local education agencies (LEAs) to develop their own transition plans and support tools for the various phases of implementation (e.g., process for reviewing, revising, and aligning standards, curriculum, and practice) than approaches with more prescriptive direction from the state level.

Perspective on Progress

In 2011, all states that had adopted the CCSS – except Wyoming – reported having some type of fully developed implementation plan. At the time, Wyoming indicated that work on its plan was underway.

Wyoming – which now details having a fully developed implementation plan – reports the only change from our 2011 results.

Specific Elements of CCSS Implementation Planning

To further investigate the focus of states' strategies for aligning their current systems with the CCSS, we asked SEA officials whether they had developed – or were developing – implementation plans in three key areas: teacher professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher-evaluation systems. Survey respondents were asked to provide official documentation on the primary elements of any plans in these areas, such as: descriptions of the plan and any anticipated changes to current policies and practices; timelines; assignments and responsibilities of state agencies, departments, or other agents; and resources being allocated to these efforts. Findings regarding state planning across all three areas are reported below, followed by details on each of the three separate implementation areas (Exhibit 1).

Compared with 2011, states have made substantial progress in developing plans across teacher professional development, curriculum guides and instructional materials, and teacher-evaluation systems. Forty-four of the 47 adopting states reported having fully developed implementation plans in at least one of the three specific categories (Exhibit 2), an increase from 28 states in 2011. Twenty-one of the adopting states have fully developed plans in all three categories, a large increase from the seven states that reported this status one year ago. Across the three specific implementation categories, only three states – Illinois, Maine, and Michigan – did not have a fully developed plan in any area in 2012.

Exhibit 1: Status of CCSS Implementation Plans for Specified Areas in 2012

	Teacher professional development	Curriculum guides or instructional materials	Teacher-evaluation systems
Alabama	Completed	Completed	In development
Alaska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Arizona	Completed	Completed	Completed
Arkansas	Completed	In development	In development
California	Completed	Completed	Not available
Colorado	In development	In development	Completed
Connecticut	In development	In development	Completed
Delaware	Completed	Completed	Completed
District of Columbia	Completed	Completed	Completed
Florida	Completed	Completed	Completed
Georgia	Completed	Completed	Completed
Hawaii	Completed	Completed	Completed
Idaho	In development	In development	Completed
Illinois	In development	In development	In development
Indiana	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported	Completed
Iowa	Completed	In development	No planning activity reported
Kansas	Completed	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Kentucky	Completed	Completed	Completed
Louisiana	Completed	Completed	Completed
Maine	In development	In development	In development
Maryland	Completed	Completed	Completed
Massachusetts	Completed	Completed	Completed
Michigan	In development	In development	In development
Minnesota	Completed	Completed	In development
Mississippi	Completed	In development	In development
Missouri	Completed	Completed	Completed
Montana*	Completed	Completed	No planning activity reported
Nebraska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Nevada	In development	In development	Completed
New Hampshire	Completed	Completed	Completed
New Jersey	In development	Completed	Completed
New Mexico	Completed	Completed	In development
New York	Completed	Completed	Completed
North Carolina	Completed	Completed	Completed
North Dakota	Completed	Completed	In development
Ohio	Completed	Completed	Completed
Oklahoma	Completed	Completed	Completed
Oregon	Completed	Completed	Completed
Pennsylvania	Completed	Completed	Completed
Rhode Island	Completed	Completed	Completed
South Carolina	Completed	In development	In development
South Dakota	Completed	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Tennessee	Completed	Completed	Completed
Texas	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Utah	Completed	Completed	In development
Vermont	Completed	Completed	In development
Virginia	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Washington	Completed	No planning activity reported	Completed
West Virginia	Completed	Completed	Completed
Wisconsin	In development	In development	Completed
Wyoming	Completed	No planning activity reported	Completed
U.S.	37 completed	30 completed	30 completed

*Montana did not provide survey response in 2012, but was given the opportunity to verify final answer recorded by the EPE Research Center based on analysis of available documentation.

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

Forty-six states have completed, or are developing, plans to provide professional development to teachers, with 37 states reporting fully developed plans (Exhibit 3). Forty-two states indicated that they have fully developed plans, or are in the process of developing implementation plans, for curriculum guides or instructional materials, with that planning work completed in 30 states. Forty-two states have at least started to develop plans to create or revise evaluation systems that hold educators accountable for students’ mastery of the CCSS; 30 of those states reported fully developed plans.

Exhibit 2: Completed CCSS Implementation Plans for Focal Areas

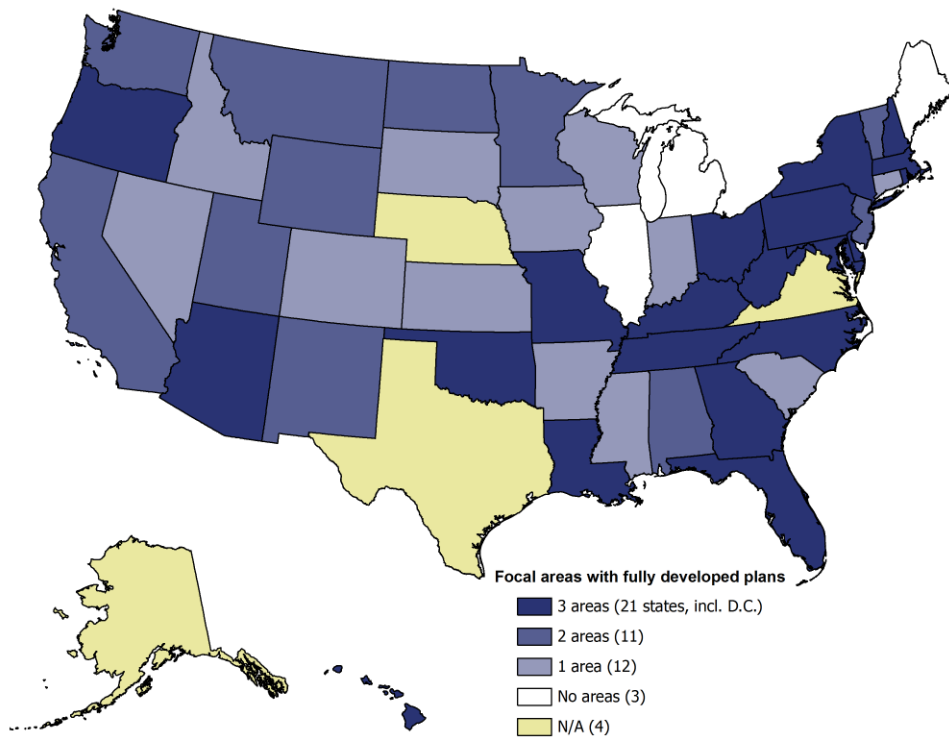
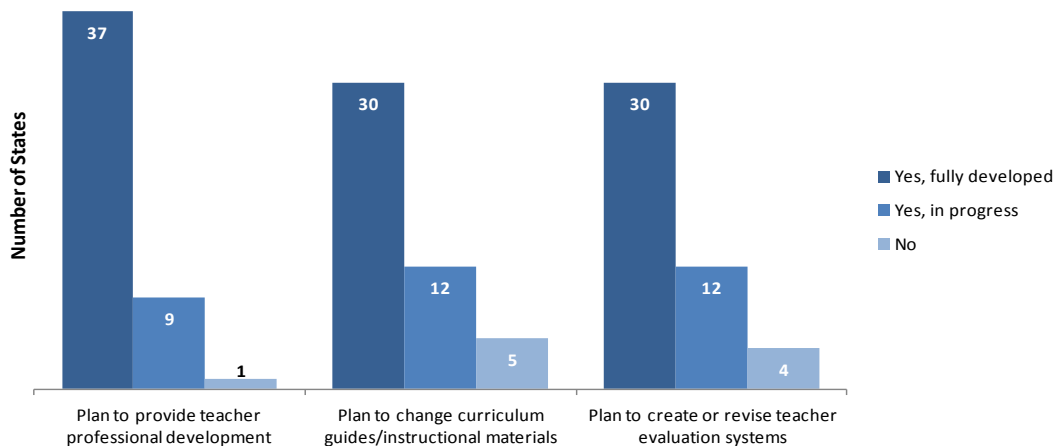


Exhibit 3: Status of CCSS Transition Plans by Implementation Area



Planning for Teacher Professional Development

Most education policy analysts and experts agree that professional development for teachers will be especially critical to the overall success of the Common Core. Our survey asked state officials about the status of plans to implement changes to teacher professional development strategies and to better align current systems with the CCSS. Respondents were asked to provide official documentation on the key elements of any such plan. Teacher professional development activities might include training or materials intended to inform educators about the CCSS and how they compare with the state's current standards.

As was the case in 2011, of the three key areas of implementation examined in this study, states continue to be most active in planning professional development for teachers to implement the new standards (Exhibit 4). With the exception of Indiana, every state that adopted the CCSS has either a fully developed plan (37 states) or is in the process of developing a plan in this area (nine states).

The details of the plans submitted by state officials reveal considerable variation across the states in the delivery of and venues for teacher professional development. In general, states are relying on a "train the trainer" model and intend to disseminate CCSS-related information by engaging teams of educators, such as network teams, school teams, coaches, and district implementation teams. However, we see a wide variety of state approaches to the mode of delivery for teacher professional development. Several states offer training at regional education centers or hold conferences, institutes, annual symposiums, and academies focused on the CCSS. Some states provide online learning and training modules or use live and recorded webinars. A majority of states have also compiled professional learning activities and resources on their own CCSS websites, with others planning to use and make available teacher professional development modules and materials developed by other states and organizations.

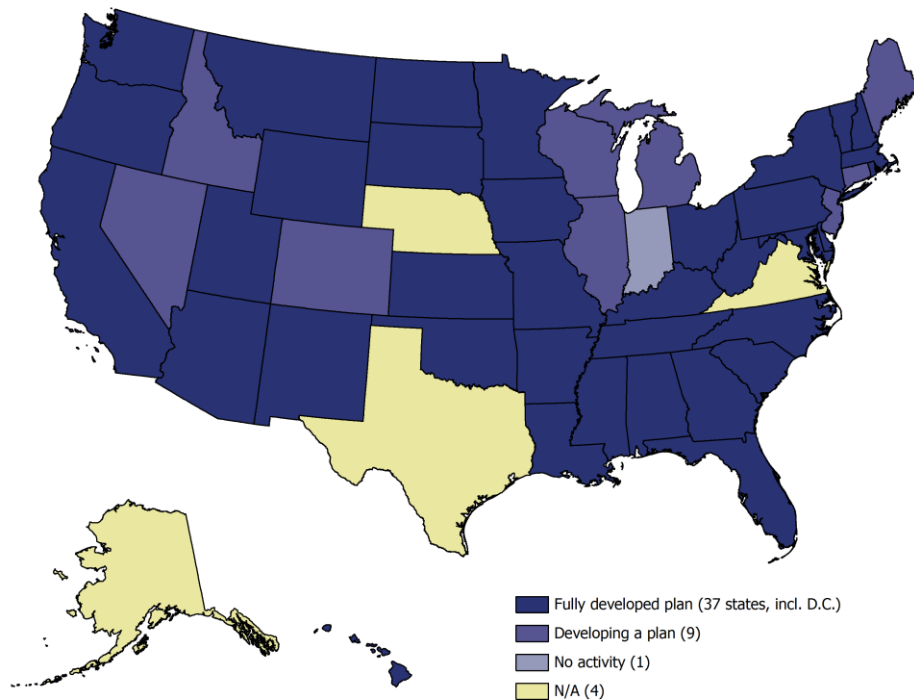
Perspective on Progress: Teacher Professional Development

Thirty-seven states have fully developed plans for teacher professional development, as opposed to 20 states last year. Plans vary widely from state to state, but in general contained more information (e.g., links to resources, descriptions of target audiences) this year than they did in 2011, as states continue to schedule more workshops and build more online modules.

Several states indicated that they are in the process of refining their teacher professional development plans, and expect to add CCSS-related teacher professional development offerings and resources in the coming months and years. One state – California – noted its SEA conducts a regular needs survey to determine what professional-learning activities and resources are most needed by school districts. A few states that cited teacher professional development as a local matter have opted to issue guidance regarding teacher professional development and offer technical assistance to LEAs as needed as opposed to providing districts with a more prescriptive plan.

Most of the teacher professional development and training offered by states places a primary focus on awareness-building and close analysis of the new standards by grade bands in both English/language arts and mathematics. Also, most state leaders reported offering or planning to offer additional training focused on instructional shifts and developing teacher capacity to implement effective instructional practices around those shifts (e.g., text-dependent questions, effective teaching of non-fiction text, using evidence in reading and writing).

Exhibit 4: Plans to Align Teacher Professional Development with the CCSS



Planning for Changes in Instructional Materials

To implement the new standards in their classrooms, teachers need access to curriculum and instructional materials (e.g., scope and sequence maps, lesson plans, textbooks, formative-assessment tasks) that are aligned with the Common Core. We asked state leaders to report on – and provide applicable documentation about – the status of their plans for changes to curriculum guides or instructional materials in response to the CCSS.

Thirty states indicated that they have fully developed plans for changing instructional materials to align with the CCSS, while 12 have plans in process (Exhibit 5). Examples of instructional materials that the majority of states reported having, or developing, include: crosswalks between the CCSS and previous state standards, concept maps, curriculum frameworks and guides, model curriculum units, and formative and summative assessment items. These materials are often accessible to educators via an online platform or repository. A few states also mentioned the adoption of new textbooks that are aligned with the CCSS.

States' 2012 responses about CCSS implementation planning in the area of curriculum development reveal a heightened sensitivity around the balance between local and state control. Twice as many states (16 in 2012, compared with eight in 2011) noted the limits of their role in curriculum matters. Nonetheless, many of these states mentioned some level of activity in this area, referencing plans to create model curriculum and sample lessons to help districts and teachers implement the CCSS. In fact, six of these states – Arizona, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Vermont – have progressed in their planning from 2011, and

Perspective on Progress: Curriculum and Instruction

Eighteen states indicated they have made progress in CCSS planning for curriculum guides or instructional materials, compared with last year (e.g., the state reported having a fully developed plan this year compared to a plan in development a year ago). Seven of these states did not have plans to develop curriculum guides last year.

now have fully developed plans around curriculum guides and instructional materials. Five additional states – Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, and Nevada – mentioned the importance of local control but also referenced some state-level activity around the development of voluntary curriculum guides, although they either held steady or scaled back a bit on the planning efforts reported a year ago. Five states – Indiana, Kansas, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming – cited local control and said they have no plan in the works. Overall, these findings underscore the technical and political complexities of state efforts to find an acceptable balance somewhere between imposing a standardized curriculum and leaving districts and teachers to find or develop their own materials. Our survey indicates that many states are offering instructional exemplars (e.g., aligned lessons, instructional videos) and technical assistance tools (e.g., transition action planning guides, templates to monitor implementation progress, alignment rubrics) that districts and schools can elect to use.

Planning for Revision of Teacher-Evaluation Systems

Revising teacher-evaluation systems so they align with the CCSS is a critical step states can take to ensure successful implementation of the new standards. Nationwide, many states are already working to restructure their teacher-evaluation systems to include annual evaluations for all educators on multiple measures of effectiveness; these measures often consist of student learning growth gauged against academic standards and observations of teacher instructional practices. To ensure that the new standards are being taught in the classroom, experts note that these new evaluation systems would need to take into account teachers' ability to deliver CCSS-aligned instruction.

Our survey asked state officials to indicate whether they have developed a plan to create or revise teacher-evaluation systems to hold educators accountable for students' mastery of the CCSS. States were also asked to provide documentation relating to any such plans. We defined aspects of teacher-evaluation systems as including rating categories, measures, scoring rubrics, and policies for using ratings for decisions related to teacher professional development, tenure, compensation, or placement.

Survey findings show that 42 states have either developed a plan (30 states), or are in the process of developing a plan (12 states) to revise teacher-evaluation systems to hold teachers accountable for students' mastery of the CCSS. Only four CCSS-adopting states indicated that they have no plans in development in this area (Exhibit 6).

Perspective on Progress: Teacher-Evaluation Systems

Thirty states' plans for aligning teacher-evaluation systems to the CCSS are now fully developed, as opposed to 15 in 2011.

Similar to 2011, most states' evaluation systems do not specifically address the CCSS, but do tie teachers' evaluations to student achievement measures.

An analysis of state plans reveals a considerable degree of state-to-state variation in the connections between CCSS implementation and state policies designed to incorporate student achievement growth and/or teacher observations into teacher evaluations. As in 2011, most of the teacher-evaluation plans states submitted to document alignment of their teacher-evaluation systems to the CCSS do not specifically address the new standards, referencing instead the fact that teacher evaluations will be tied to student academic growth. Several states indicated that their teachers will be held accountable for student performance on the Common Core as they transition to the new common assessments in the coming years; others indicated that teachers are beginning to be held accountable for students' CCSS mastery (for up to 50 percent of their evaluations), as their state standardized assessments are revised to align with the CCSS. A few states noted that their teachers will be held responsible for their mastery of the Common Core as they work to align their professional standards for teachers to the new standards and through other domains (e.g., planning and instruction) that are embedded in their new evaluation systems.

Several states noted that they are still in the process of developing (and some states are piloting) frameworks, guidance, and models for teacher-evaluation systems, and have yet to determine the specific components, measures, and weights of those systems. Ten states used their ESEA Flexibility Waiver applications as documentation for their survey responses in this area, suggesting that the teacher-evaluation changes required by the waivers may have influenced the development of plans for aligning teacher-evaluation systems to the CCSS in 2012.

Exhibit 5: Plans to Align Curricular Resources with the CCSS

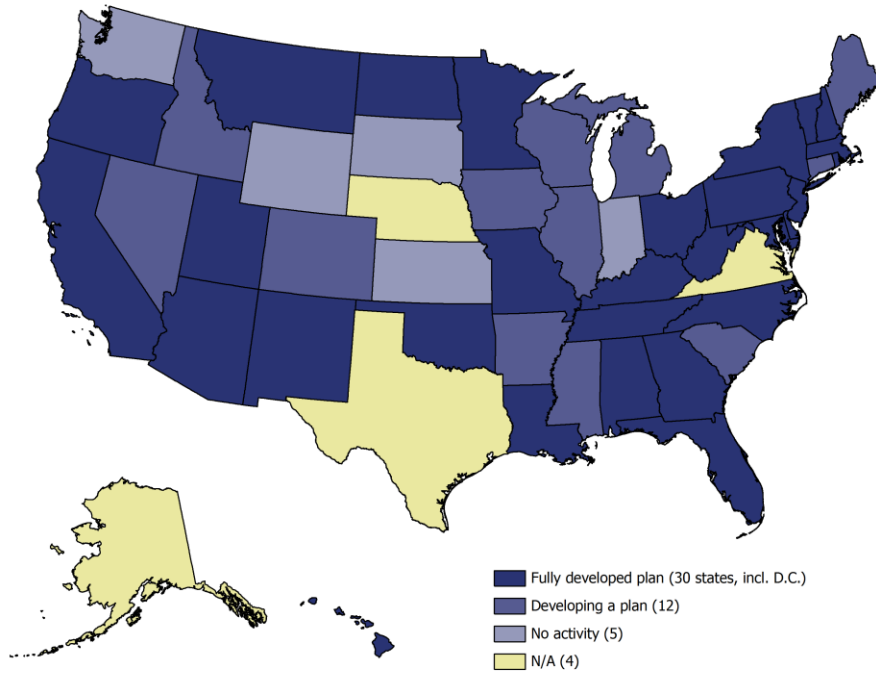
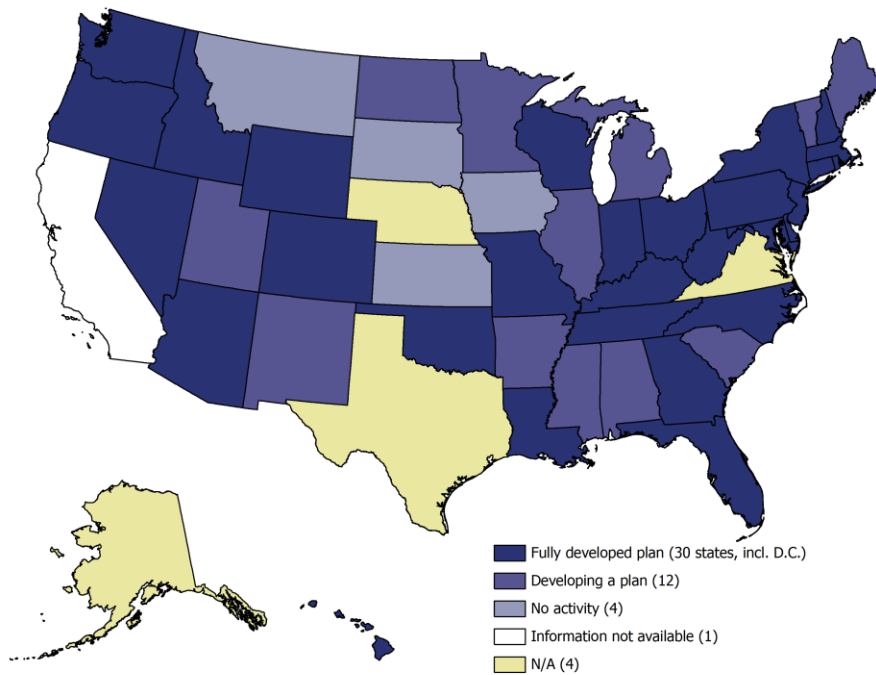


Exhibit 6: Plans to Align Teacher-Evaluation Systems with the CCSS



Progress in Implementation Planning Since 2011

Exhibits 7 and 8, respectively, provide state-by-state data and nationwide perspective highlighting changes in the status of CCSS implementation planning between 2011 and 2012. The information illustrates progress across the nation and shows the degree to which specific states are moving toward – or further away from – the goal of completing fully developed plans for the three central areas of implementation we examined.

As measured by states' own perceptions of progress reflected in our surveys, a majority of states have advanced their planning efforts to implement the CCSS during the past year. From 2011 to 2012, most states (32) reported forward movement on their planning activities in at least one of the three implementation areas tracked: teacher professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluations. Forward movement is defined as cases where a state has taken action to either complete or initiate work on an implementation plan. Eight states progressed in two categories and seven states moved forward across all three. However, four of the states that exhibited progress in at least one category also reported losing ground in another category.

Twelve CCSS-adopting states – including seven that had previously reported fully developed plans in all three areas – indicated that the status of their planning efforts had not changed since last year. In other words, in cases where there was room for forward movement, only five CCSS-adopting states reported holding steady across all three areas examined.

Six states reported being further away from completing plans in at least one category in 2012 than they were in 2011. Five of these states said they have more work to do with respect to curriculum guides and instructional materials than previously anticipated. Three states – Colorado, Connecticut, and Indiana – reported setbacks for both curriculum guides and teacher professional development. The remaining three states – Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin – reported needing additional work in only one area. The explanation for these year-to-year changes varied across states:

- Colorado and Wisconsin reported expanded planning activities in the past year, which widened the distance between their current status and their end goal.
- Connecticut responded that planning is a “continuous process” that will never be complete.
- Indiana felt the state’s response last year was “overly optimistic” and that it has further to go than it initially realized.
- In Iowa, the state legislature delayed plans for its teacher-evaluation system when it launched a task force to study educator evaluations rather than approving an initial blueprint.
- Michigan focused its 2011 response on completed crosswalk documents that highlighted the changes between the CCSS and the state’s current standards. In 2012, the state expanded the scope of its response.

While states remain at widely different points of progress, and face distinct challenges in pursuing their respective planning efforts, the overall trend in the past year points toward more fully developed implementation planning.

Exhibit 7: Changes in Status of State CCSS Planning 2011 to 2012

	Teacher professional development	Curriculum guides or instructional materials	Teacher-evaluation systems
Alabama	=*	>	=
Alaska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Arizona	=*	>	=*
Arkansas	>	=	=
California	>	=*	NA
Colorado	<	<	>
Connecticut	<	<	>
Delaware	=*	>	=*
District of Columbia	>	>	>
Florida	>	=*	=*
Georgia	=*	=*	=*
Hawaii	=*	=*	>
Idaho	=	=	=*
Illinois	=	=	=
Indiana	<	<	>
Iowa	=*	=	<
Kansas	=*	=	=
Kentucky	=*	=*	=*
Louisiana	=*	=*	>
Maine	=	>	=
Maryland	=*	=*	=*
Massachusetts	=*	=*	=*
Michigan	=	<	=
Minnesota	>	>	>
Mississippi	=*	=	=
Missouri	>	>	=*
Montana	NA	NA	NA
Nebraska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Nevada	=	=	>
New Hampshire	>	>	>
New Jersey	=	>	>
New Mexico	>	>	=
New York	=*	=*	=*
North Carolina	=*	=*	=*
North Dakota	>	>	>
Ohio	>	=*	>
Oklahoma	>	>	>
Oregon	>	>	>
Pennsylvania	=*	>	=*
Rhode Island	=*	>	=*
South Carolina	>	>	>
South Dakota	>	=	=
Tennessee	>	>	=*
Texas	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Utah	=*	=*	=
Vermont	>	>	=
Virginia	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Washington	>	=	>
West Virginia	=*	=*	=*
Wisconsin	=	<	>
Wyoming	>	=	>
U.S.	> 18	> 18	> 18

> State planning moved forward between 2011 and 2012

= State planning status did not change between 2011 and 2012

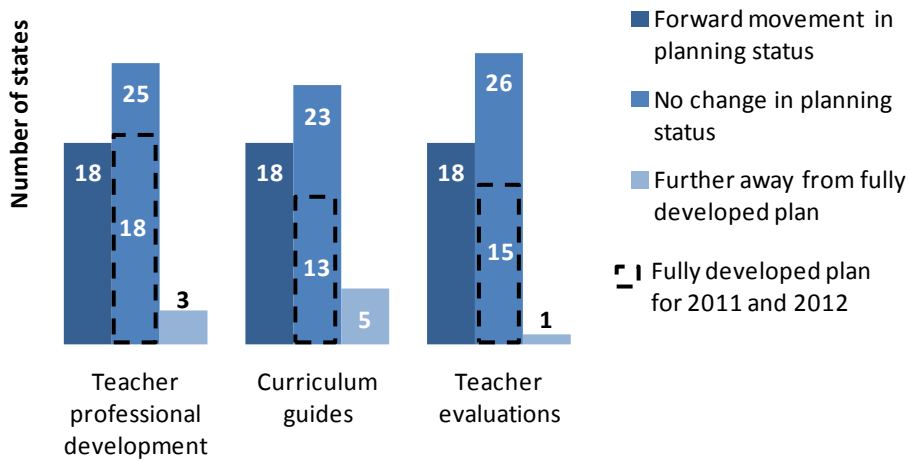
< State indicated that it is further away from a fully developed plan in 2012 than in 2011

* State had a fully developed plan in 2011 and 2012

NA Information not available

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2012

Exhibit 8: Change in Planning Status Since 2011



Conclusion

Though the ultimate impact of the transition to the Common Core State Standards remains to be seen, the survey results presented in this report suggest that most states are further along in planning for this change than they were a year ago. Since effective planning by state leaders will help educators navigate the shifting educational landscape and better prepare our nation's students to meet new academic expectations, this is welcome news.