

Common Core Academic Standards: Public Engagement Efforts

Consistent with commitments outlined in Pennsylvania's Phase I and II Race to the Top applications, the State Board of Education has conducted a thorough and public vetting of the Common Core Academic Standards developed through a partnership of 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia. Efforts to inform and engage the public have included:

- Commissioning an independent study by the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education on the degree of alignment between the public draft (March 10 version) of Common Core and Pennsylvania's academic standards. The study – informed by the expertise of educators from across the state – examined both similarity of *content* between Common Core and state-level standards and the *cognitive depth* (rigor) of the standards.
- Holding four public meetings – May 6 (Harrisburg), May 21 (Pittsburgh), May 27 (State College) and June 9 (Philadelphia) – that included presentations of the alignment study results. Nearly 100 stakeholders – educators, parents, and education journalists among them – have attended these sessions. While testimony has been largely positive, stakeholders have emphasized the need for thoughtful implementation of the standards if the Board votes to adopt. For example, testifiers have underscored the importance of clear eligible content guidance and high-quality professional development to support any transition to Common Core.
- Briefing education stakeholders – including state-level education association leadership, Intermediate Unit executive directors, and legislators and staff – on adoption plans. The Board testified before the Senate Education Committee on May 4th.
- Posting Common Core standards to the State Board of Education's website for public review and comment.
- Engaging higher education leaders and employer organizations in discussions of Common Core. This step is critical, given Common Core's goal of ensuring academic readiness for college and career.

The State Board of Education will consider adoption of Common Core at its June 30 and July 1 meetings at 333 Market Street, Harrisburg. Members of the public who wish to submit written testimony are invited to do so by June 28, 2010 to ensure materials can be distributed to Board members. The Board also welcomes testimony during the public comment segments of its June 30-July 1 agenda.