



NJDOE News

**For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:**

**Beth Auerswald**  
**Richard Vespucci**  
**Kathryn Forsyth, Director**  
**609-292-1126**

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### **New Jersey Joins 49 States and Territories in Common Core State Standards Initiative**

Governor Jon S. Corzine and Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy today joined the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a state-led process to develop common English-language arts and mathematics standards. The Common Core State Standards Initiative will be jointly led by the National Governors Assoc. Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

In addition to New Jersey, the following states and territories have also signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA): Alabama; Arizona; Arkansas; California; Colorado; Connecticut; Delaware; District of Columbia; Florida; Georgia; Hawaii; Idaho; Illinois; Indiana; Iowa; Kansas; Kentucky; Louisiana; Maine; Maryland; Massachusetts; Michigan; Minnesota; Mississippi; Montana; Nebraska; Nevada; New Hampshire; New Mexico; New York; North Carolina; North Dakota; Ohio; Oklahoma; Oregon; Pennsylvania; Puerto Rico; Rhode Island; South Dakota; Tennessee; Utah; Vermont; Virgin Islands; Virginia; Washington; West Virginia; Wisconsin; and Wyoming.

In the 26 years since the release of *A Nation at Risk*, states have made great strides in increasing the academic rigor of education standards. Yet, America's children still remain behind other nations in terms of academic achievement and preparedness to succeed.

By signing the MOA, Governor Corzine and Commissioner Davy join their colleagues across the country in committing to joining a state-led process to develop a common core of state standards in English language arts and mathematics for grades K-12. These standards will be research- and evidence-based, internationally benchmarked, aligned with college and work expectations, and include rigorous content and skills.

"As Education Secretary Arne Duncan has said, 'We have to educate our way to a better economy,'" said Governor Corzine. "Common standards will give us the opportunity to focus our efforts on ensuring that our students are learning the skills that will be required for success as 21st century global citizens and workers."

The Common Core State Standards Initiative will build directly on recent efforts of leading organizations and states that have focused on developing college- and career-ready standards and will ensure that these standards can be internationally benchmarked to top-performing countries around the world. The goal is to have a common core of state standards that states can adopt voluntarily. States can choose to include additional standards beyond the common core as long as the common core represents at least 85 percent of the state's standards in English language arts and mathematics. The second phase of this initiative is to ultimately develop common assessments aligned to the core standards developed through the process.

"New Jersey's graduates no longer are competing for jobs against students from neighboring states; the global economy requires that they be prepared to meet the international standards to which students around the world are being taught," said Commissioner Davy. "Our participation in the common core standards initiative will help us achieve our goal of preparing *all* children for college and the workforce."

The NGA Center and CCSSO will coordinate the process to develop the standards and will create an expert validation committee to provide an independent review of the common core state standards, as well as grade-by-grade standards. This committee will be composed of nationally and internationally recognized and trusted education experts who are neutral to – and independent of – the process. The college- and career-ready standards are expected to be completed in July 2009. The grade-by-grade standards work is expected to be completed in December 2009. States also will have the opportunity to review the standards throughout the development process.