



NJDOE News

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Public Feedback Sought for Final Draft of National Common Core Standards

The New Jersey Department of Education is providing opportunities for interested citizens and groups to comment on the final draft of the K-12 Common Core State Standards for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics released today by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

All comments must be received no later than April 2, 2010. Once the comment period closes, final revisions will be made and the standards will be submitted to the 51 participating states and territories and the District of Columbia for consideration.

"We are encouraging education professionals at all levels, parents, people in the business and higher education communities and the general public to examine these standards and give us their feedback," Acting Commissioner of Education Bret Schundler said. "All of us share the responsibility for educating our young people, and we value public input in this process."

Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer said that the document "has changed significantly from previous versions made available last year. The standards now proposed are fewer and clearer, and will require that concepts be taught to a deeper level of understanding."

The latest draft standards are available on line at www.corestandards.org. Public comment can be provided in four ways between now and the April 2 deadline:

- Online on the NGA/CCSSO web-site: www.corestandards.org (The New Jersey DOE will be provided with comments made to this site by New Jersey groups and individuals.)
- Via e-mail to the NJDOE at commoncore@doe.nj.gov.
- In person to the New Jersey State Board of Education at a public hearing to be held at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday March 17 at the DOE offices in Trenton. Those wishing to testify must register with the State Board office by 12:00 noon on Friday, March 12, either on line at <http://education.state.nj.us/sboe/> or by phone at 609-292-0739.
- In person at a series of professional development sessions about the standards that are being offered at various locations throughout the state. Remaining sessions are posted at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/21cnjs/phase2/pd/>; search for sessions entitled, *How do Fewer, Clearer, Higher Standards Affect My Classroom?* Space is limited and on line registration is required.

New Jersey has collaborated with other states in reviewing the Common Core Standards Initiative since its inception by the NGA and the CCSSO.

Deputy Commissioner Spicer noted that standards are often confused with curriculum.

"Standards are broad statements of expectation of what our students should know and be able to do in order to succeed in college and/or in the workforce," the Deputy Commissioner said. "Developing and delivering high quality curricula that reflect the standards remains the responsibility of our local school districts.

New Jersey and the other states could benefit from a national set of core standards through more efficient uses of resources, training and testing throughout the country, Spicer said, adding that the standards support New Jersey's current high school graduation requirements, which were updated last year by the State Board of Education.

NJDOE staff are planning to meet in the near future with higher education representatives to discuss the impact that the new standards could have in the schools of education in colleges and universities as well as encourage their participation in the review.

Comments received by April 2 will be reviewed by NGA and CCSSO prior to the release of the final standards.