

Preparing for Change

A National Perspective on Common Core
State Standards Implementation Planning

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Education First

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About this Report

The emergence—or resurgence—of a robust common-standards movement represents one of the most important developments in the education policy world in recent years. The most visible and influential strand of this movement has been the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative, a state-led effort to develop a voluntary set of rigorous, shared academic standards for mathematics and English/language arts. To date, 46 states and the District of Columbia have joined the CCSS initiative.

To gain insight into the steps states are taking to implement the Common Core State Standards, Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center examined state planning activities in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. This report presents results from a summer 2011 survey of state education agency (SEA) representatives. This study is intended to inform state policymakers, SEA staff, and other stakeholders interested in better understanding the progress states have made toward implementing common standards. This work should also be of particular use to those providing technical assistance or resources to states regarding CCSS implementation.

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 *Teacher Professional Development Sourcebook*, and the Top School Jobs 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

The early stages of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative were largely occupied with debates over the merits of the standards and the feasibility of their adoption by the states. As the movement has matured, the focus of attention has shifted toward issues related to practical implementation, such as the readiness of teachers to actually enact the new standards in the classroom. To gauge state progress toward implementing the CCSS, Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center surveyed state education agency officials to gain their insights on the status of transition planning efforts. Recognizing that the movement toward a new set of standards could constitute a dramatic shift for many educators, administrators, and policymakers, our survey sought to examine how state leaders are preparing for this change, by collecting information on the steps involved in developing the capacity of their school systems to face challenges in several key areas.

In the survey, states reported on the status of their implementation planning as of fall 2011. This study provides specific details about the status of their plans for changes in the areas of: teacher professional development, curriculum, and teacher-evaluation systems. All 50 states and the District of Columbia—which is treated as a state throughout this report—were included in the study.

Our major findings include:

- All but one of the 47 CCSS-adopting states reported having developed some type of formal implementation plan for transitioning to the new, common standards. Wyoming indicated work on its plan is underway.
- The majority of states reported that they have at least begun the process of developing plans to align their systems to the CCSS by: providing professional development to teachers (45 states), changing or devising curriculum guides and other instructional materials (35 states), and revising their teacher-evaluation systems (38 states).
- Every state that has adopted the CCSS—except New Hampshire—has a fully developed plan to provide teacher professional development aligned with the CCSS (20 states) or is in the process of developing such a plan (25 states).
- Seventeen states have fully developed plans for providing CCSS-aligned instructional materials to teachers, and another 18 states are developing a plan. Eleven states report no progress toward developing a plan.
- All but eight of the states that have adopted the CCSS say they are at least working on a plan for their teacher-evaluation systems that will include holding teachers accountable for students' mastery of the new standards.
- Seven states indicated they have fully developed plans for each of the three main implementation areas examined in our survey: teacher professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher-evaluation systems. Most of these states are recipients of federal Race-to-the-Top funds.
- Eighteen states lack fully developed plans in all three of these implementation areas.

Responses to our survey offer a barometer of where states say they are in the CCSS-implementation planning process, as of this past fall. The implementation plans we collected also provide important details about the substance, depth, and nature of these planning efforts. The results of our survey suggest that states are working intently to develop plans that would make new, common standards a classroom reality. However, few states have completed their planning, even though most intend to start measuring student performance against the new standards by the 2014-15 school year.

Whether the pace and quality of state planning efforts will be strong enough to ensure a smooth transition to the CCSS remains an open question. To address this issue more directly, Education First plans to release two subsequent reports: first, a rubric for assessing the quality and comprehensiveness of state implementation plans; and second, a report on state progress toward meeting the benchmarks articulated in the rubric, with respect to teacher professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher-evaluation systems.

Introduction

Context

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI)—a state-led effort to craft common academic-content standards coordinated by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers—was formally launched in spring 2009. The following year, in June 2010, the CCSSI released its standards for English/language arts and mathematics. These standards are intended to provide states a new framework for the knowledge and skills students need to develop in grades K-12 to be prepared for success in college and the workplace.

Kentucky was the first state to adopt the CCSS; by January 2012, all but four states—Alaska, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia—had agreed to adopt these standards in English/language arts or mathematics. Minnesota is the only state to adopt the CCSS in only one content area, English/language arts. To date, no state that formally agreed to adopt the CCSS has backed out of its commitment to move forward with implementation. Throughout this report, we treat the District of Columbia as a state for the purposes of analysis.

With most states now having joined the CCSS initiative, the focus of attention has shifted from the feasibility and merits of adopting the standards to the readiness of teachers within states to actually implement them in their schools and classrooms. Most of the states engaged in enacting the new expectations embedded in the Common Core are also actively working to develop and implement a set of related common assessments by the 2014-15 school year. All CCSS-adopting states, with the exception of Minnesota, have joined one or both of two federally financed state consortia working to develop common assessments aligned to the Common Core: the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (or PARCC). The CCSS implementation planning that is underway now, as well as the roll-out of those plans in districts and schools, is geared toward preparing students to demonstrate mastery of the CCSS within a few short years.

Education analysts have suggested that the new common standards appear to deviate from what has been the expectation for student learning in at least some states. Anecdotal evidence indicates that state leaders have, for example, increasingly focused attention on instructional changes that would accompany new expectations for student learning. However, since the content, sequencing, and rigor of prior standards has varied significantly across states, the differences between state standards and the CCSS are not uniform.

Recent education news coverage frequently highlights examples of policymakers and education leaders discussing the nuts-and-bolts implementation process they expect will be needed to make a smooth transition from their current academic-content standards to the CCSS. Yet, comprehensive and nuanced information on the progress of state implementation has been limited. State-by-state data on the status of transition planning efforts can play an important role in understanding how states compare in significant areas.

To shed light on the status of transition planning efforts, Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center surveyed state education agency representatives and analyzed their responses. Recognizing that the movement

What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

The Common Core State Standards Initiative—according to its organizers—is a state-led effort to establish a shared set of clear educational standards for English/language arts and mathematics that states can voluntarily adopt. The standards have been informed by the best available evidence and the highest state standards across the country and globe and designed by a diverse group of teachers, experts, parents, and school administrators, so they reflect both our aspirations for our children and the realities of the classroom. These standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to go to college or enter the workforce and that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The standards are benchmarked to international standards to guarantee that our students are competitive in the emerging global marketplace.

SOURCE: Common Core State Standards Initiative, "Frequently Asked Questions," www.corestandards.org, accessed on December 19, 2011.

toward common standards—which their developers bill as “fewer, clearer, and higher” than previous standards in most states—will constitute a significant shift for many policymakers and educators, we sought to examine how state leaders are planning to help schools and educators meet these new expectations. We collected data on the steps states are taking to strengthen the capacity of their school systems to take on key challenges. This report provides a barometer of where states, themselves, believe they currently stand in this planning process. In several key implementation areas, the report tells us which states consider themselves to have fully developed implementation plans, which have plans in the process of development, and which do not have any plans underway. This study also sheds some light on the nature and depth of these 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 extent of implementation plans generally, as well as information on any plans in the areas of teacher professional development, curriculum and instructional materials, and teacher-evaluation systems.

Forthcoming reports by Education First will more systematically analyze the state plans, articulating a rubric for assessing the quality and comprehensiveness of state planning and highlighting promising approaches in key implementation areas.

Methods

As a part of the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center’s annual state policy survey in summer 2011, states were asked to respond to questions about their efforts to implement the Common Core State Standards and to provide supporting documentation regarding the status of their planning. Specifically, the survey posed the following questions regarding CCSS implementation planning to state leaders:

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?

For the final three questions related to specific aspects of implementation planning, states were asked to classify the status of their progress into one of the following categories: the state has a formal plan, work is underway to develop a formal plan, or the state has neither a formal 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 of that plan. The survey was sent to state education agencies on June 27, 2011. After reviewing survey results and—as necessary—consulting with respondents, state responses were finalized by October 24, 2011.

At the time of data collection, Montana had not yet adopted the CCSS, although its chief state school officer had recommended adoption to the state board of education. Formal adoption came in November 2011, after our survey process had been completed. We were able to document Montana’s CCSS adoption and the existence of a formal state plan for implementation on the SEA’s Web site. However, we lack details about the status of Montana’s planning efforts specific to professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluations. As a result, all findings presented in this report specific to these three implementation areas cover only the 46 states that had adopted the CCSS as of October 2011.

Gauging State Progress

In January 2011, the Center on Education Policy (CEP) published a report—*States’ Progress and Challenges in Implementing Common Core State Standards*—which presented findings from a fall 2010 survey of 42 states and the District of Columbia,

which was conducted by Policy Studies Associates. (The report is available online at www.cep-dc.org.) Of the responding states, 36 provided information about their expectations for making various changes to align their systems to the CCSS. All of these states indicated that they would be aligning various education policies and practices to the Common Core. Specifically, all 36 reporting states anticipated altering their assessments; 33 states expected to update curriculum materials; 33 planned to modify professional-development programs; and 30 expected to change their teacher-evaluation systems. The majority of states reported that they would not fully implement these changes until after 2013, although they expected to implement changes related to professional development more quickly.

To a certain degree, the current report serves as a status-check on states' progress toward these planned changes at the start of 2012, one year after the release of the CEP study. Our survey questions, for example, have been designed to closely follow three key areas of planned change tracked by CEP: professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluation. We sought to gauge the degree to which states have developed implementation plans in those three specific areas. To provide a perspective on state progress, we will highlight key results from the 2011 CEP report, as a way to contextualize our own findings on the pace of state efforts in the past year.

Despite some similarities, our study was conducted independently and differs from CEP's work in several important respects. First, our survey asked states whether they had developed—or were in the process of developing—formal plans for implementation of changes in three key areas: professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluation. In contrast, CEP asked whether and when the state expected to make changes in those same areas (and a few others); it did not ask whether the specifics of those changes had been formally mapped out. Although the difference here may at first appear to be a subtle one, it is important. We asked about the status of the planning process itself, while CEP asked states when changes were expected to occur. For example, states may have reported to CEP that they would be revising curricular guides, even though they may not have done any concrete planning work to prepare for this change. Second, in addition to asking states about the status of their plans, we also collected documentation of those state plans for additional analysis. Third, we gathered data on all 50 states and the District of Columbia, while the CEP study included data on 43 states. Finally, our report presents survey responses by state, while CEP provided only aggregate data.

Status of Overall CCSS Implementation Plans

States' detailed implementation plans for putting the CCSS into effect could potentially encompass multiple planning processes across a wide array of topics. Before asking state officials to delineate the specific components of their plans, we sought to determine whether they had outlined plans for *any* of the issues that might be involved in transitioning from their existing standards to the CCSS. For that reason, our survey first asked state officials to describe any overall, formal plans their agency developed for implementation of the CCSS initiative. They were also asked to provide applicable documentation—such as official reports or Web pages—about those plans.

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 state plans, 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.

Our inquiry into state planning revealed that all states that have adopted the CCSS have developed a plan to implement the new standards, with the sole exception of Wyoming, which is in the process of developing such a plan (Exhibit 1). Forty-five states and the District of Columbia can point to implementation plans that include at least a basic timeline identifying dates by which key steps in the transition to the CCSS should take place or a description of the particular implementation activities planned by the state. Although Wyoming reported working on such a plan, at the time of our survey, it was unable to provide a timeline or detailed description about its anticipated process for transitioning to the CCSS.

Exhibit 1: Summary of CCSS Implementation Plans

	State has formal implementation plans	State has no formal implementation plans	State has not formally or provisionally adopted the CCSS
Alabama	X		
Alaska			X
Arizona	X		
Arkansas	X		
California	X		
Colorado	X		
Connecticut	X		
Delaware	X		
District of Columbia	X		
Florida	X		
Georgia	X		
Hawaii	X		
Idaho	X		
Illinois	X		
Indiana	X		
Iowa	X		
Kansas	X		
Kentucky	X		
Louisiana	X		
Maine	X		
Maryland	X		
Massachusetts	X		
Michigan	X		
Minnesota	X		
Mississippi	X		
Missouri	X		
Montana	X		
Nebraska			X
Nevada	X		
New Hampshire	X		
New Jersey	X		
New Mexico	X		
New York	X		
North Carolina	X		
North Dakota	X		
Ohio	X		
Oklahoma	X		
Oregon	X		
Pennsylvania	X		
Rhode Island	X		
South Carolina	X		
South Dakota	X		
Tennessee	X		
Texas			X
Utah	X		
Vermont	X		
Virginia			X
Washington	X		
West Virginia	X		
Wisconsin	X		
Wyoming		X	
U.S.	46	1	4

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2011

Exhibit 2: Status of CCSS Implementation Plans for Specified Areas

	Teacher professional development	Curriculum guides or instructional materials	Teacher-evaluation systems
Alabama	Completed	In development	In development
Alaska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Arizona	Completed	No planning activity reported	Completed
Arkansas	In development	In development	In development
California	In development	Completed	No planning activity reported
Colorado	Completed	Completed	In development
Connecticut	Completed	Completed	In development
Delaware	Completed	In development	Completed
District of Columbia	In development	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Florida	In development	Completed	Completed
Georgia	Completed	Completed	Completed
Hawaii	Completed	Completed	In development
Idaho	In development	In development	Completed
Illinois	In development	In development	In development
Indiana	In development	In development	In development
Iowa	Completed	In development	In development
Kansas	Completed	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Kentucky	Completed	Completed	Completed
Louisiana	Completed	Completed	In development
Maine	In development	No planning activity reported	In development
Maryland	Completed	Completed	Completed
Massachusetts	Completed	Completed	Completed
Michigan	In development	Completed	In development
Minnesota	In development	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Mississippi	Completed	In development	In development
Missouri	In development	In development	Completed
Montana	Not available	Not available	Not available
Nebraska	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Nevada	In development	In development	In development
New Hampshire	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported	In development
New Jersey	In development	In development	In development
New Mexico	In development	In development	In development
New York	Completed	Completed	Completed
North Carolina	Completed	Completed	Completed
North Dakota	In development	In development	No planning activity reported
Ohio	In development	Completed	In development
Oklahoma	In development	In development	In development
Oregon	In development	In development	In development
Pennsylvania	Completed	No planning activity reported	Completed
Rhode Island	Completed	In development	Completed
South Carolina	In development	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
South Dakota	In development	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
Tennessee	In development	In development	Completed
Texas	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Utah	Completed	Completed	In development
Vermont	In development	In development	In development
Virginia	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted	CCSS not adopted
Washington	In development	No planning activity reported	No planning activity reported
West Virginia	Completed	Completed	Completed
Wisconsin	In development	Completed	In development
Wyoming	In development	No planning activity reported	In development
U.S.	20 completed	17 completed	15 completed

SOURCE: EPE Research Center, 2011

The majority of state implementation plans include the following elements:

- **Implementation or transition timelines**—These typically brief, one-page documents provide a high-level overview of the sequencing and focus of transition activities for each school year through 2014-15, in such areas as standards and curriculum alignment, assessments, and professional development.
- **Strategies for teacher training**—These documents outline a series of topically focused approaches intended to support educators in teaching to the new standards over the next few years.
- **CCSS resource listing**—These online listings provide educators with access to informational resources intended to improve their understanding of and ability to enact the new common standards. Such resources might include: crosswalks of the state's old standards to the CCSS, curriculum guides, or online professional-development modules.

Perspective on Progress

At the start of 2012, all states that have adopted the CCSS—except Wyoming—have developed some type of formal implementation plan. Wyoming indicated that work on its plan is underway.

In January 2011, CEP reported that most states expected to change significant policies and practices as part of implementing the Common Core. However, many states anticipated it would take until 2013 or later to fully implement the more complex changes.

Though these transition plans tend to include similar features, the level of detail provided within those broad elements varies substantially across states. Some plans provide detailed breakdowns of sequenced activities by grade and by year, while others include little more than basic timetables for major milestones. Additionally, some states have developed clear frameworks that explicitly connect the components of their plans and convey the way the system as a whole will work together to support the necessary changes in districts and schools. Other states, however, provided relatively few details about how the elements of their plans relate to one another.

Specific Elements of CCSS Implementation Planning

To further investigate the focus of state strategies for aligning their current systems with the CCSS, we asked SEA officials whether they had developed—or were developing—transition plans in three key implementation areas: teacher professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher evaluations. Survey respondents were asked to provide official documentation on the key elements of their plans, such as: a description 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 immediately below, followed by details on each of the three separate implementation areas (see also Exhibit 2).

Our survey revealed that only seven states—Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, and West Virginia—reported having fully developed implementation plans in place for each of the three major areas central to the CCSS transition process: professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher evaluations (Exhibit 3). Eighteen states indicated having no completed implementation plans in *any* of the three categories examined by the study.

As early leaders in CCSS implementation, the experiences of the seven states with plans in all three areas may offer important guidance to other states still working on plans on these topics. Five of the seven states—Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, and North Carolina—have received federal Race-to-the-Top (RtT) dollars, a finding consistent with the Jan. 2011 CEP report, which suggested that winners of that competition would be likely to implement changes associated with the CCSS more quickly than their peers.

Exhibit 3: Completed CCSS Implementation Plans for Focal Areas

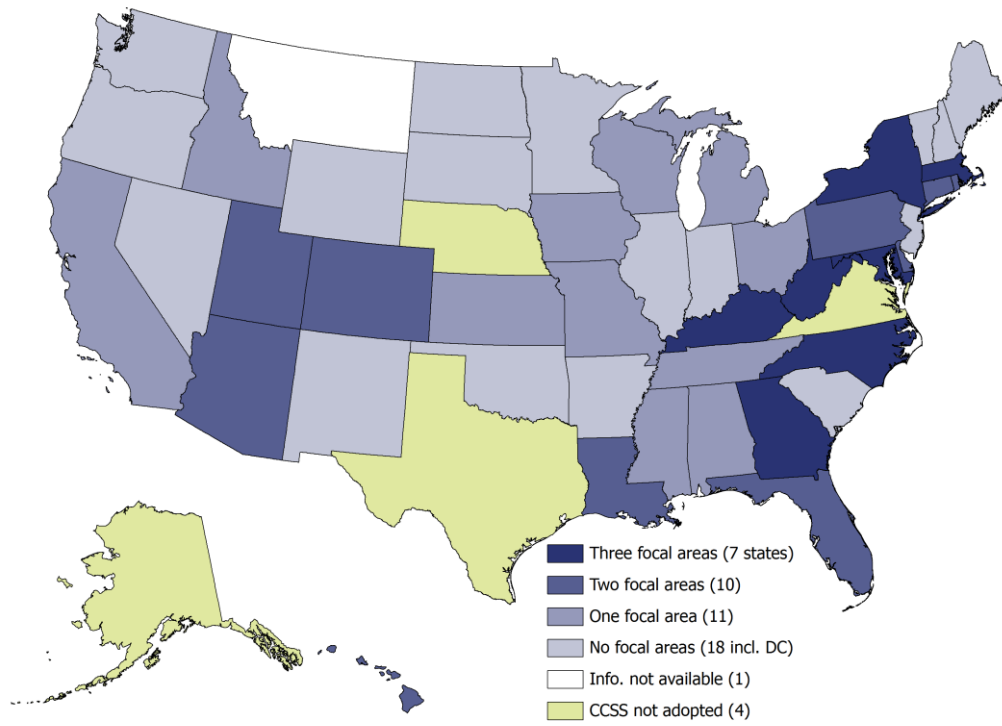
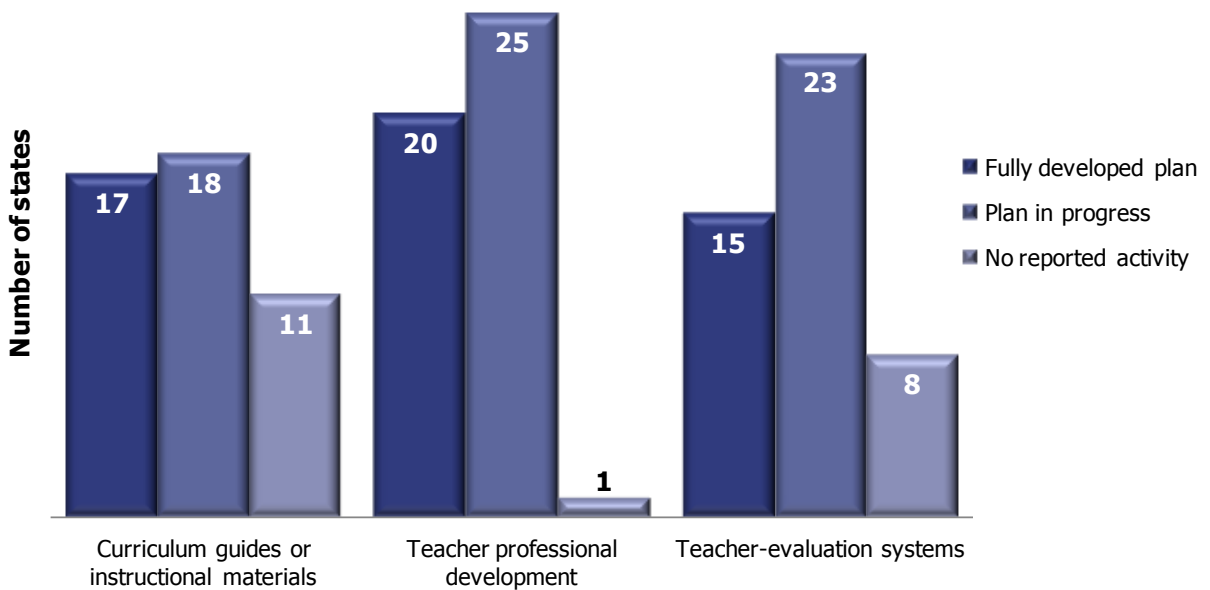


Exhibit 4: Status of CCSS Transition Plans by Implementation Area



The majority of CCSS-adopting states have also, at a minimum, started to develop plans in each of the major implementation areas (Exhibit 4). Forty-five states have completed, or are developing, plans to provide professional development to teachers, with 20 states reporting fully developed plans. Thirty-five states have at least started to develop transition plans for curriculum guides or instructional materials, with that planning work completed in 17 states. Thirty-eight states have at least initiated the development of plans to create or revise evaluation systems that hold educators accountable for students' mastery of the CCSS; 15 of those states report fully developed plans.

Planning for Professional Development

Our survey asked state officials about the status of plans to implement changes to teacher professional development strategies, in order to better align current systems with the CCSS. Respondents were asked to provide official documentation on the key elements of any such plans. Professional-development activities might include training or materials intended to inform educators about the CCSS and how they relate to the state's current standards.

The pace of professional-development planning—which focuses on ensuring teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to teach to the new CCSS standards—may be of particular interest to policy-watchers because educators will be instrumental in implementing a wide array of CCSS-related changes, particularly as relate to a new set of common assessments expected for 2014-15.

Of the three key areas of implementation that examined in this study, states have been the most active in planning professional development for teachers to implement the new standards. With the exception of New Hampshire, every state that has adopted the CCSS has either completed or is developing a plan to align delivery of its teacher professional development with the CCSS (Exhibit 5). Most of these states, however, are currently at the earlier end of the implementation spectrum.

Twenty-five states are developing their plans, compared with 20 that have completed their transition plans. Once plans are fully crafted, states will be under pressure to execute them by the time teachers are expected to make the switch from current standards to the CCSS in their own lesson plans. These findings suggest that, despite signs of progress, some states will likely face daunting timelines for preparing teachers to translate the new standards into effective classroom instruction and student achievement.

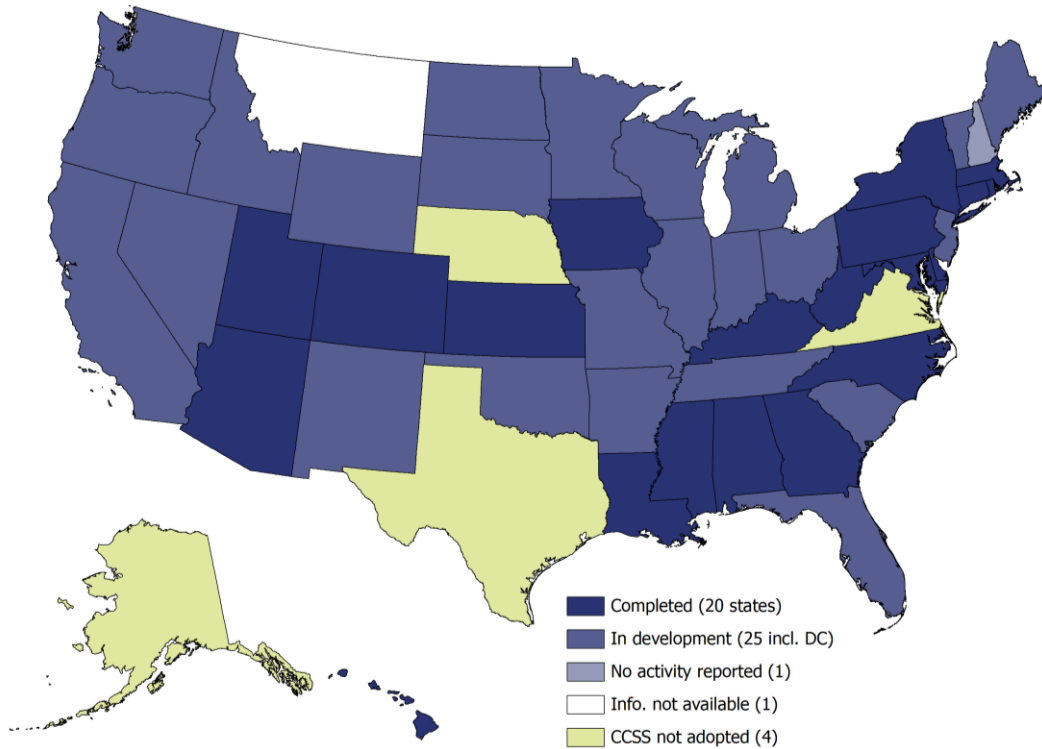
Our survey results also show that modes of professional-development delivery vary from state to state. The most commonly planned ways for providing professional development to teachers regarding the CCSS include: conferences and workshops, online modules, and webinars. Among the other tactics states plan to use to disseminate information to educators are: teacher networks, statewide or regional academies, and regional education service centers.

Perspective on Progress

At the start of 2012, we find that 20 states have completed transition plans that align their teacher professional development programs with the CCSS, with work underway in an additional 25 states.

A year earlier, a CEP study found that 33 states reported planning to make changes to their professional development systems in response to the CCSS. Twenty-one of those states expected to have finished implementing those changes by 2012.

Exhibit 5: Plans to Align Teacher Professional Development with the CCSS



Planning for Changes in Instructional Materials

Another key step in implementing the CCSS involves providing educators with additional guidance and tools—such as model instructional materials aligned with the common standards—as they begin to implement the new standards in their classrooms. Our survey asked states 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. These aligned resources might include: curriculum frameworks, textbooks, model lesson plans or units, syllabi, sequencing or pacing guides, formative assessment items, item banks, and scoring rubrics.

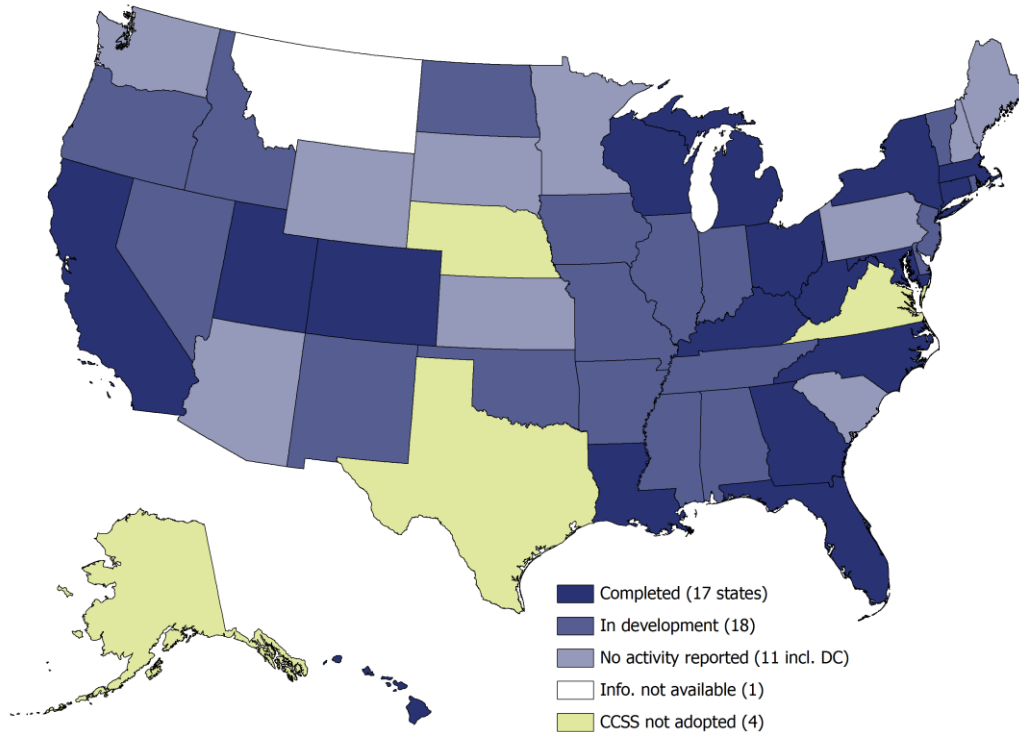
Compared with other implementation areas examined in this study, we find a greater amount of variation in the status of state plans to change curriculum guides or instructional materials in response to the CCSS (Exhibit 6). Seventeen states report fully developed plans to align instructional materials to the CCSS, with another 18 states in the process of developing such plans. Eleven states report no progress in this area.

Perspective on Progress

At the start of 2012, we find that 17 states have fully developed plans for aligning curricular materials with the CCSS.

In early 2011, a CEP study found that 33 states reported planning changes to curriculum guides or materials. Twelve of those states expected to have finished implementing those changes by 2012.

Exhibit 6: Plans to Align Curricular Resources with the CCSS

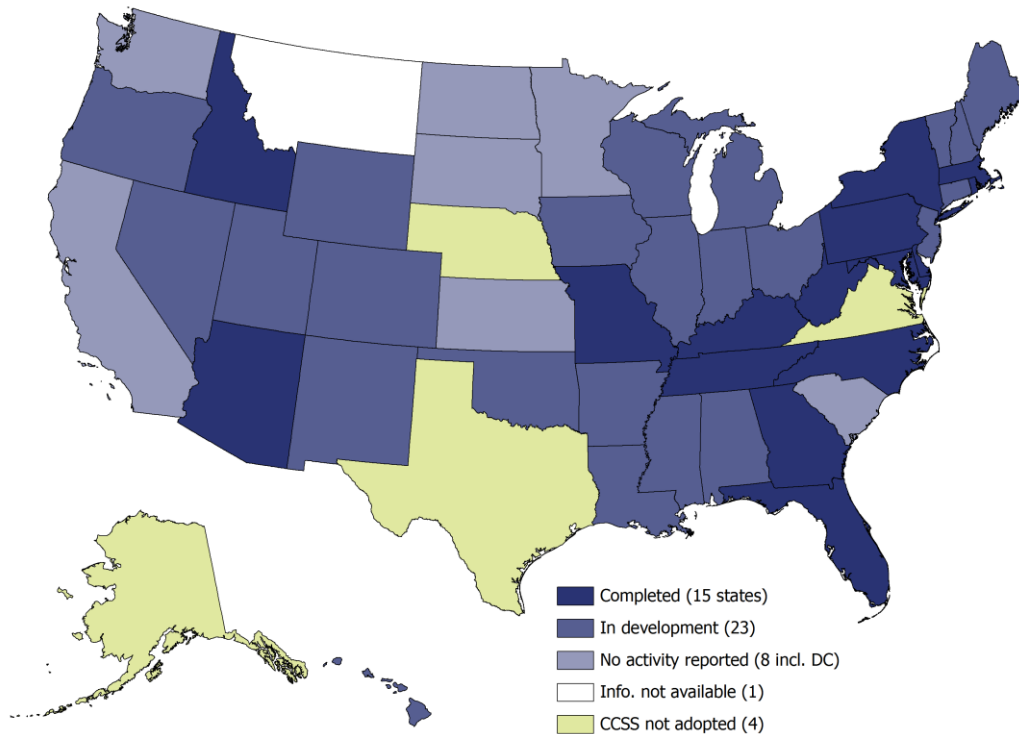


In survey responses, some of the states that are not working to develop plans related to instructional resources cited local control as a consideration, indicating that most curricular decisions are left up to individual school districts. However, in other cases, some states with strong histories of local control did report activity on plans to support districts and schools in aligning curriculum and instructional materials. One such state, for example, plans to help build a repository of models and tools for schools to access on a voluntary basis.

Planning for Revision of Teacher-Evaluation Systems

Aligning teacher-evaluation systems to students' mastery of the CCSS represents another step states might take to ensure the new standards are being taught in the classroom. The timing of such initiatives may be particularly fortuitous, as many states are already working to redesign evaluation systems to include student learning as a measure of teacher effectiveness. In many states, CCSS adoption coincided with a spirited debate among policymakers over how best to utilize information from longitudinal data systems to link individual teachers to their students' test results. Many of the primary factors state leaders have considered in determining whether or how to incorporate student test scores into teacher evaluations may be unrelated to, or predate, the movement toward common academic-content standards. However, the *timing* of adoption of the CCSS does correspond with the implementation of new teacher-evaluation systems in many states. This might lead states to draw explicit connections—in their CCSS implementation plans—between the new standards and efforts to use student test scores as a factor in teachers' evaluations.

Exhibit 7: Plans to Align Teacher-Evaluation Systems with the CCSS



In our survey, states were asked 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. Additionally, we asked states to provide documentation on any plan on this topic. Teacher-evaluation systems include: rating categories; measures; scoring rubrics; and policies for using ratings for decisions related to professional development, tenure, compensation, or placement.

We find that 38 states that have adopted the CCSS have completed—or are working on—a plan to create or revise teacher-evaluation systems to hold teachers accountable for their students' mastery of the new standards (Exhibit 7). Fifteen of those states report that fully developed plans are in place, while 23 states indicate they are at varying stages in the process of constructing such plans.

Of the 15 states with a completed plan to revise teacher-evaluation systems, nine are Race-to-the-Top winners: Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Tennessee. This finding suggests that states with successful RttT bids are at the national forefront in mapping out strategies for next-generation teacher-evaluation systems and may offer some of the first opportunities to evaluate CCSS implementation in this area.

A preliminary analysis of state plans submitted with survey responses reveals a considerable degree of state-to-state variation with respect to the connections between CCSS implementation and state policies designed to incorporate student achievement growth into teacher evaluations. Some states, for example, are in the process of adding a student-growth component to their existing teacher-evaluation systems. Others, however, have adopted new teacher standards making

instruction of the new CCSS a part of their teacher-evaluation processes. Still other states are in the process of developing frameworks, guidance, and models for teacher-evaluation systems and have yet to decide on the details of their approaches.

The research conducted for this report did not delve into the specific interconnections between adoption of the CCSS and development of plans to change teacher evaluations. For example, we did not attempt to determine whether CCSS adoption is directly prompting states to pursue changes in the area of teacher evaluation, or whether such initiatives simply happen to coincide with teacher-evaluation changes that were already underway. However, regardless of the impetus for change, the results of our survey indicate most states are developing plans to evaluate teachers based, at least in part, on how well their students are acquiring the skills and knowledge outlined in the CCSS.

In describing their plans to hold teachers accountable for students' mastery of the CCSS, a number of survey respondents pointed to their states' efforts to tie teacher evaluations to student achievement on statewide assessments that measure students' mastery of state content standards. As states fully implement the CCSS as their official academic standards, ongoing efforts to link teacher evaluation to the students' (standards-based) assessment results will—by extension—increasingly hold teachers accountable for students' mastery of the new common standards.

Perspective on Progress

At the start of 2012, we find that 15 states have fully developed plans to align their teacher-evaluation systems with the CCSS.

In early 2011, a CEP study found that 30 states reported planning changes to curriculum guides or materials. Nine of those states expected to have finished implementing those changes by 2012.

Conclusion

Many analysts suggest that state leaders will need to work intently to help schools and educators succeed with the expectations of the new CCSS. Implementation planning represents a first step—and an important early indicator—for state strategies to incorporate the new, common standards into their policies and practices.

Responses to our survey provide a barometer of where states say they are in the CCSS-implementation planning process and what supports and aligned policies they are considering. Likewise, the implementation plans collected across states yield initial insights about the content, depth, and nature of this planning.

The results suggest that a handful of states are particularly far along in their plans to implement the CCSS. These states may offer useful insights and guidance to others about what they are planning to do and how. Most states, however, still have a long way to go in their planning efforts.