

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Background

Academic content standards were developed in order to encourage the highest level of achievement by our students. These standards defined the knowledge and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. California first adopted statewide standards for English-language arts and mathematics in 1997. Since that time we have adopted state standards in many other areas. We are now in the process of transitioning to the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The new CCSS contain standards for the following:

1. English Language Arts
2. Mathematics
3. Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

The CCSS were adopted by the State Board of Education at the beginning of this year, will eventually replace our current standards, and will prove to be more useful and aligned. These standards were founded upon the best state standards and are internationally benchmarked to the top performing nations. Over ten thousand individuals, mostly educators, participated in the development and revision process. Our current standards and the CCSS share many similarities and some notable differences. As we continue to move forward we will learn more about these comparisons.

We are committed to providing an aligned systemic approach to this transition process. The current timeline for full implementation appears to be 2014-2015. Full implementation would include state summative assessments aligned to the CCSS. We are commencing the transition to CCSS with an awareness phase that is starting with the information provided within this document and on our website. For the remainder of this year we will be doing the following activities in order to begin the transition process:

1. Informing the VUSD community regarding resources and links to various materials.
2. Developing a bank of information resources in the document locker as well as on our district website.
3. Providing learning opportunities through grade/department level leader trainings followed by grade/department level discussions.
4. Discuss the implementation at all pacing guide meetings.

Resources

The following resources will be available on the document locker, within our district website (specifically in the Educational Services Department), or by accessing (www.vacavilleusd.org/ccss).

1. The first resource is a link to the California Department of Education CCSS website (www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cc/). This website contains a great deal of

information. At this time I will highlight a few items to review. These items will also be on our VUSD sites as well. Additional items and resources will be highlighted later in the year.

- a. California's CCSS for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects.
 - b. California's CCSS for Mathematics.
 - c. ELA Appendix A: a document that provides research supporting the key elements of the standards and a glossary of terms.
 - d. ELA Appendix B: a document that provides text exemplars and sample performance tasks by grade level.
 - e. ELA Appendix C: a document that provides samples of student writing by grade level.
 - f. Mathematics Appendix A: a document that on math courses based on CCSS.
 - g. Frequently Asked Questions document.
 - h. CCSS powerpoint overview. This is found on the CDE website by clicking on the "Webinars and Presentations" link, then click on the CTA 2011 Summer Institute, then choose the CCSS Overview.
2. A second resource is some grade level documents developed by the Napa-Solano-Contra Costa Educational Support Team. These documents align some of the ELA standards, specifically the reading and writing standards. As you read these documents you will notice that the standards are placed in order of importance and that the red lettering denotes an addition to the standard from the previous grade level. This allows us to see the changes to specific standards as we read from K through 12th grade.

Learning Opportunities

Additional learning opportunities will be made available through the following activities:

1. CCSS will be reviewed and discussed at the pacing guide meetings through the remainder of the year.
2. Professional development will also be provided for grade level representatives at each elementary site during the month of May (May 29th and 31st). Specific details will be provided later.
3. Department and grade level representatives will then be able to facilitate discussions during collaborative time at respective sites during this year and into next year.

Questions/Comments

Please send any questions or comments to Kim Forrest or Mark Frazier. We will summarize questions and comments and then provide further information in future communications. Future communications will also provide information on additional aspects of the CCSS implementation.

