

Raising the Bar: New York State's Common Core Rollout

In order to shift to higher standards, New York State prepared early by focusing heavily on the support and preparation of educators.

Timeline

NY Identifies and Encourages Instructional Shifts Demanded by the Common Core

- The NYS Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State in 2010 and committed to new 3-8 ELA and mathematics assessments to be administered in 2013.
- In the summer of 2011, NYSED, in partnership with [Student Achievement Partners](#) (an organization founded by the lead authors of the Common Core State Standards), identified twelve changes in instructional practices (or [shifts](#)) demanded by the standards. These "shifts" helped to focus implementation — giving New York State educators a common language and framework around which to organize the transition.
- In the summer of 2011, NYSED, in partnership with PBS, published a [Common Core Video Series](#) featuring Commissioner King, David Coleman (one of the main authors of the Core), and Sr. Fellow Kate Gerson which further articulated the shifts but also explained how each shift could come alive in the classroom.
- In the summer of 2011, New York State launched a professional development institute called the Network Team Institute and the resource website EngageNY.org. Both were meant to provide tools, guidance, and support as educators made the transition to the Common Core.
- Throughout 2011 and 2012, NYSED released [early exemplars](#) of teacher lessons and [units](#) which exemplified the shifts in practice.
- Commissioner King, early and often (in the spring and summer of 2011), asked each New York State educator to work with the shifts and execute at least one Common Core unit per semester in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. It was then the understanding that full implementation would begin in all schools for the school year 2012-2013.
- Senior Department Staff are constantly and consistently visiting districts and schools, observing implementation, providing training, establishing a common vision and language, receiving feedback, and problem solving.

NY Helps Educators Identify Aligned, Rigorous Common Core Materials

- In 2012, the Tri-State Collaborative (composed of educational leaders from New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island and facilitated by [Achieve](#)) developed criterion-based rubrics and review processes to evaluate the quality of ELA and Math Common Core lessons and units.
- This [Tri-State Rubric \(now also referred to as the EQUIP Rubric\)](#) helps educators measure the quality, rigor, and alignment of curricular materials intended to be or labeled "Common Core."
- In 2012, NYSED also [released turnkey training materials](#) and [scored curricular samples](#) so that educators across the state could be calibrated in the use of the Tri-State Rubric and the evaluation of materials.

NY Publishes Instructional Resources and Curricular Modules

- Beginning in 2012 and now ongoing, New York State is creating optional and supplementary [free, comprehensive curriculum modules](#), for grades P-12 in English Language Arts and mathematics. Our partners on this curriculum project include Common Core Inc. (for P-12 mathematics), Core Knowledge (for P-2 Literacy), Expeditionary Learning (for 3-8 English Language Arts), and Public

Consulting Group (for 9-12 English Language Arts). NYSED is spending over \$30MM on the development of these materials.

- NYSED curricular modules are a complete set of curricular materials that include curricular maps, lesson plans, handouts, performance tasks, scoring rubrics, embedded texts, problem sets, teacher guidance, and scaffolds for ELLs and Students with Disabilities. The resources are not mandated, but can be adopted or adapted by districts and schools. Alternatively, local educators can purchase materials or create their own.
- Over the course of their development, these resources have been vetted (and in many cases co-authored) by national experts, authors of the Common Core State Standards, staff members of Student Achievement Partners, and NYS teachers and principals. These modules are an optional — not mandatory — resource. Teachers regularly adapt these materials to meet the diverse learning needs of their students. These materials continue to grow and will be updated and revised over time based on educator feedback.
- In the spring of 2013, NYSED released a set of [Bilingual Common Core Progressions](#) are available to support educators in their Common Core implementation with students who are learning a new language. For each standard at each grade, these Progressions articulate the learning needs and strategies for reaching students at each phase of linguistic acquisition.
- Launched in the winter of 2012 and now ongoing, a growing [video library](#) on EngageNY.org includes classroom videos which capture teachers teaching to the Common Core. The lessons in the videos have received high marks on the Tri-State rubric and can be used for self-directed or organized professional development.
- In the spring of 2012, NYSED released a set of [Evidence Collection Tools](#) clearly articulate “look-fors” (practices administrators should be able to observe) in classrooms to discover whether the instructional shifts are being implemented. These tools provide guidance and reminders as educators observe teacher practice. They are used as a way to infuse the Common Core in the observation and feedback of teaching.

NY Creates Vehicle for Delivery and Conducts Network Team Institutes

- In 2011, NYSED launches the [Network Team Institutes](#) (NTI), a series of robust, rigorous, and intensive learning experiences to provide professional development on
 1. The instructional shifts demanded by the Common Core
 2. A deeper dive into the content teachers teach (as demanded by the Common Core)
 3. The use of NYSED curricular and instructional resources
 4. Change Management
- Network Teams and Network Team Equivalents (NTEs) —the original and primary audience at NTI — are New York State's vehicle for implementing the reforms associated with Race to the Top and the Regents Reform Agenda. These teams are located around the state and work in close partnership with districts and schools to build the capacity of New York State educators. These teams are based in the BOCES and Big 5 districts and funded through Race to the Top. (Note: NYC has integrated their Common Core professional development into their other network activities.)
- NYSED has offered more than 20 institutes between July 2011 and November of 2013, which over the course of three years have served more than 10,000 educators.
- In 2012, NYSED launched the [Teacher and Principal Ambassador Program](#). This program extends the purpose, scope, and focus of NTI so that it is able to directly serve NYS practitioners who are nominated by their region to be lead learners in the transition to the Common Core.
- For every NTI, a [comprehensive set of turnkey training materials](#) are available so that NYS educators can duplicate or adapt the adult learning experiences provided through these institutes. In the summer of 2013, NYSED launched modular ["Make Your Own Institute" Kits](#) so that districts and schools might design their own "institutes" for local learning.

- Each summer (11,12, 13) NYSED releases a set of [Metrics and Expectations](#) to support New York Educators' focus and energy as they implement the Regents Reform Agenda with a focus on Common Core implementation. In the summer of 2013, NYSED included many additional roles in the system in that document: teachers, principals, local superintendents, Network Teams, and District Superintendents.

Developing, Integrating and Updating EngageNY.org

- In 2011, the state launched [EngageNY.org](#). The website serves as a key delivery mechanism for resources associated with the Regents Reform Agenda : The Common Core, Data Driven Instruction, and Teacher/ Leader Effectiveness.
- While local educational agencies have clear decision-making authority over the adoption of curriculum materials and instructional practices, NYSED has supported these local efforts by providing resources meant to support instructional practices and the transition to the Common Core(including [tools](#), [maps](#), [modules](#), [scaffolds](#), and aligned [professional development](#)) through EngageNY.org.
- By the fall of 2013, EngageNY.org had seen over 30 million page-views and over two million unique visitors. The site has as many as one million page-views and 100,000 unique visitors each week. We update EngageNY.org with new materials regularly.

Changing State Tests and Providing Resources to Support that Change

- In 2013, New York State changed its assessments in grades 3-8 for English Language Arts and mathematics.
- In 2012, NYSED launched the [Parent Supports Page](#) on EngageNY.org so that parents might have current and helpful information about the changes in their students' classrooms and assessments.
- Prior to the Assessment, in an effort to provide transparency and clarity about the direction of its testing program, NYS provided a comprehensive set of preparation materials so that New York State Educators would be able to see the instructional shifts through an assessment lens but also take a detailed look at the organization and design of the new tests.

Throughout 2012, NYSED released:

- [Sample Assessment Items](#)
- [Test Guides](#)
- [Assessment Design Materials](#)

- When the Assessment Scores were released in the summer of 2013, NYSED simultaneously released a comprehensive set of [Score Release Materials](#) which included annotated operational items, including scored student work and explanations of correct answers, annotated score reports, letters to parents, frequently asked questions, performance level descriptors and explanations of the cut score/ standard setting process.
- Beginning in 2014, NYSED will transition its High School Regents Exam Program to measure the Common Core. [Support materials for the Regents Transition](#), including Assessment Design Materials and Sample Regents Exams, are available to support educator planning and shifts in instruction.

More to Come

- In the coming months and years, NYSED will continue to release instructional resources and tools to support the implementation of the Common Core. These resources, with more coming each week, include:

- Additional curriculum modules, which are currently being produced and will be released to the field.
- Curricular Resources for ELL students with interrupted formal education, ESL classrooms, and Native Language Arts programs
- Translation of Math Modules
- Additional Scaffolds for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities
- Additional classroom videos
- Additional Professional Development materials, resources, and experiences
- EngageNY.org 2.0, which addresses upgrades based on educator feedback and includes state-of-the-art web functionality

National, Regional and Field Expert Reflections on the Common Core State Standards

- ❖ “Too many students graduate from high school unprepared for the challenges of college and work. New York has raised the bar for students with the Common Core State Standards, challenging those students to develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, learn how to think critically, and apply what they are learning to the real world. The newly released assessment scores give us a fair and honest look at the work we have to do and reflect the hard truth that students are struggling to meet these higher goals. New York has done a significant amount of work to develop a vast body of resources and tools to help principals and teachers prepare to help their students and remains committed to working with all educators and students to meet these higher goals. I applaud New York for their leadership and ensuring that students are leaving high school better prepared to succeed.” Chris Minnich, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers
- ❖ “Experience gives us confidence. The Common Core standards represent an unprecedented shift in our expectations for schools and the students they teach. Students who meet these new expectations will be better prepared for the demands of the world they will inherit. Over the past year, teachers and school leaders worked very hard to change instruction to match the new standards. With more time and resources, our schools will refine their practices and enable more and more students to reach the standards and surpass them — as we have when standards have been raised in the past. Overwhelmingly, superintendents see the Common Core standards as a step toward raising the quality of education in our state.” – Robert J. Reidy, Jr., Ph.D., Executive Director, NYS Council of School Superintendents
- ❖ “We've heard it said we're moving too fast to implement higher standards that reflect college and career readiness. That's wrong. Frankly, we're not moving fast enough. The 21st century economy is demanding the skills the Common Core Standards develop. It would be unfair to our students not to equip them with the knowledge they need to succeed in the world. We need a workforce ready to fill the jobs in the new economy. It's clear from the these results we have a lot of work to do to prepare our students for their future, but the Common Core will help us get there. A workforce that is well-prepared is an essential element of the vibrant business climate that The Business Council and my fellow New York business leaders are striving to create.” - Heather C. Briccetti, Esq., president and CEO, The Business Council of New York State, Inc.
- ❖ “Our staff members have adjusted our curriculum to better align with these new standards and will continue to do so based upon the assessment results. We are proud to have such a dedicated and excellent staff. Any decrease in student scores should not be interpreted as a decline in student learning or teacher performance. Instead, we view this as a new baseline for the skills students need to be successful after high school. Our society needs citizens well-versed in critical thinking and problem solving — which are stressed in the new standards. While these skill sets have always been

incorporated into our curricula, the changes we have made will better prepare our students for the ever-changing world that awaits them." - Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District Superintendent Corliss Kaiser.

- ❖ "We knew that our scores were going to look different. The Common Core is requiring students to learn differently because their future is different than the world we faced when we graduated from high school. This is a baseline for students and teachers. Our challenge is to have confidence in our teachers and support them as they continue to make the shift to these standards. This new baseline measure is not a reflection of our students learning less; in many instances they learned more and challenged themselves differently. Our teachers have a real sense of purpose, an ownership of the work, and a clear direction about what comes next. The modules on EngageNY.org are providing our teachers with clarity about what is expected and they know what they need to do to move their students forward." – Adele Bovard, Superintendent of Schools, Webster Central School District