

**Common Core State Standards:
Implications for Students with
Disabilities**

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Topics

- ▶ Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
– What are They and Why Do They Exist?
- ▶ Perceived Benefits of CCSS
- ▶ Some Implications (and Opportunities) for Students with Disabilities



Martha Thurlow

CCSSO and NGA led effort to develop core set of ELA and Math standards for states:

- ▶ Standards are for (a) college and career readiness, and (b) K-12
- ▶ Standards are supposed to be research and evidence-based, reflective of rigorous content and skills, and internationally benchmarked.
- ▶ Standards are the basis for Race to the Top Assessments
- ▶ States are to formally adopt the standards (state boards, etc.)

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Status of State Adoption (9/10/10)



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Rationale for Need

- ▶ Every state with its own academic standards is a problem – result is that public education students in each state are learning to different levels
- ▶ Students must compete not only with peers in other states, but also with students around the world
- ▶ Expectations will be consistent for all students and not dependent on their zipcode!
- ▶ Critical for a mobile society, where students move from state to state

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Perceived Benefits

- ▶ Students will get knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and careers; clearer standards mean student will understand what is expected of them and allow for more self-directed learning
- ▶ Parents will understand what is expected and will better be able to support their children and educators
- ▶ Educators will tailor curriculum and teaching methods; allows for more focused pre-service and professional development
- ▶ States will have curricula aligned to internationally benchmarked standards; allows for development of a common assessment (and related policies) and creates potential economies of scale

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Nature of the Common Standards

- ▶ "Fewer, clearer, higher!"
- ▶ Internationally benchmarked
- ▶ Research and evidence based
- ▶ Expectations for what students should know and be able to do in each grade, and when they graduate from high school
- ▶ Ready for states to adopt (must comprise 85% of state standards)

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English Language Arts Standards

- ▶ Includes 3 strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening
- ▶ Reading example: "Determine both what the text says explicitly and what can be inferred logically from the text."
- ▶ Writing example: "Establish and refine a topic or thesis that addresses the specific task and audience."
- ▶ Speaking & Listening example: Select and use a format, organization, and style appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience"
- ▶ Document includes strands (2 sections – Standards for Range and Content; Standards for Student Performance), applications, and supporting materials.

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Mathematics Standards

- ▶ Includes a standard for mathematical practice, 10 standards for mathematical content, and example tasks
- ▶ Practice Standard: "Attend to precision; construct viable arguments; make sense of complex problems and persevere in solving them; look for structure; look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning; make strategic decisions about the use of technological tools"
- ▶ Content Standard: "**Number**. Procedural fluency in operations with real numbers and strategic competence in approximation are grounded in an understanding of place value. The rules of arithmetic govern operations on numbers and extend to operations in algebra."
- ▶ Other content standards address: Quantity, Expressions, Equations, Functions, Modeling, Shape, Coordinates, Probability, Statistics

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Visit
www.corestandards.com
for more information!



Also – search for information
on students with disabilities
– check to see how easy it is
to find!

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Commitment to Students with Disabilities Is Evident

Early FAQ:

"What does this work mean for students with disabilities and English language learners?"

"In the development of these standards, the inclusion of all types of learners was a priority. Chosen language was intended to be open and accessible to different learners."

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Commitment to Students with Disabilities Evident

Final Standards:

Separate document entitled "Application to Students with Disabilities"

"Students with disabilities...must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers."

What will it take?

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Commitment to Students with Disabilities Evident

ELA Standards – What is not covered:

"It is also beyond the scope of the Standards to define the full range of supports appropriate for ... students with special needs.... The Standards should also be read as allowing for the widest possible range of students to participate fully from the outset and as permitting appropriate accommodations to ensure maximum participation of students with special education needs."

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And, more....

"For example, for students with disabilities *reading* should allow for the use of Braille, screen-reader technology, or other assistive devices, while *writing* should include the use of a scribe, computer, or speech to text technology. In a similar vein, *speaking* and *listening* should be interpreted broadly to include sign language."

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Instruction

According to CCS:

- Supports and related services designed to meet unique needs of students with disabilities and to enable access to the general education curriculum
- IEP that includes annual goals aligned to grade-level academic standards
- Teachers and specialized instructional support personnel who are prepared and qualified to deliver high-quality, evidence-based, individualized instruction and support services

And. . . .

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To participate with success in the general curriculum, students with disabilities may need additional supports and services, such as:

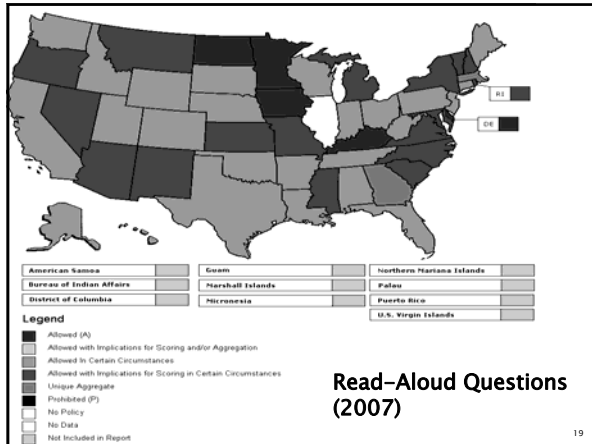
- Instructional supports for learning (UDL – engagement by presenting information in multiple ways and allowing for diverse avenues of action and expression)
- Instructional accommodations
- Assistive technology devices and services

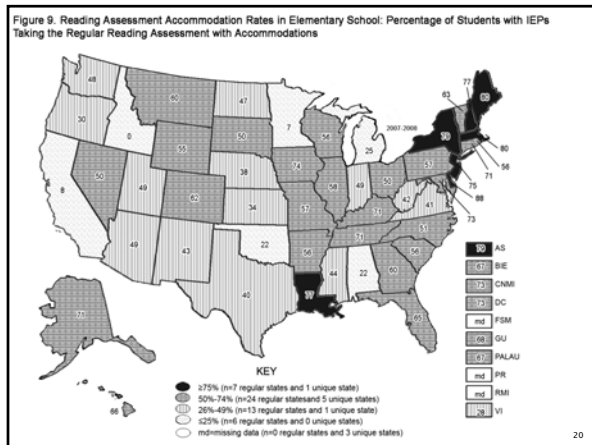
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Accommodations

- › Need to do more than just “provide accommodations”
- › If we have common core standards, we should be able to identify a common set of appropriate accommodation
- ✓ State data on accommodations policies and accommodations use suggest that this is an important next step for the Standards!

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Alternate Assessments

Statement in "Application to Students with Disabilities"

"Some students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will require substantial supports and accommodations to have meaningful access to certain standards in both instruction and assessment, based on their communication and academic needs. These supports and accommodations should ensure that students receive access to multiple means of learning and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, but retain the rigor and high expectations of the Common Core State Standards."

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Jan Sheinker

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The Dilemma for Students with Disabilities in the assessment of the CCS

- ▶ Making accessible for all Students with Disabilities the assessment of so many standards
- ▶ Linking to CCSS and determining achievement descriptors for AA-AAS

GLS	Mathematics	ELA	
K	34	43	
1	30	39	
2	32	38	
3	36	40	
4	33	42	
5	35	42	
6	36	42	
7	31	42	
8	39	42	
HS	75	GR 9-10	42
		GR 11-12	42

* Many standards incorporate multiple discrete content and skills.

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CCSS and Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Race to the Top Consortiums'

- ▶ **Comprehensive Assessment Systems**
 - Formative assessments
 - Interim assessments
 - Through-course assessments (PARCC)
 - Summative assessments
 - Alternate assessments
- ▶ **Access and inclusion**
 - Universal design/Access by Design
 - Computer-based assistive technology
 - Evidence-centered design (PARCC)
 - Common policies

*IN THE DRIVE FOR HIGHER STANDARDS
THIS TIME MAKING SURE
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
ARE NOT AN AFTERTHOUGHT*

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Comprehensive Assessment Systems and Students with Disabilities in the assessment of the CCS

- ▶ A comprehensive assessment system that provides greater access for students with disabilities:
 - Formative assessments?
 - Interim assessments?
 - Through-course assessments?
 - Summative assessments that are cumulative?
 - Alternate assessments that provide alternate ways to demonstrate proficiency?

THIS TIME MAKING SURE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE NOT AN AFTERTHOUGHT

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Multiple Measures and Students with Disabilities in the assessment of the CCS

- ▶ If multiple measures prove essential for measuring the increased rigor of the CCSS
 - Does this mean revisiting the language density (pitfall for SWDs) associated with constructed response and performance tasks?
 - Will innovative items/tasks increase or decrease access?
 - Will more complex items/tasks increase or decrease access?

Are performance assessments really better for students with disabilities?

*"... a decision or characterization that will have major impact on a student should not be made on the basis of a single test score."
(AERA, APA & NCME, 1999)*

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Formative Assessments and Students with Disabilities in the assessment of the CCS

- ▶ Institutionalizing formative assessments may:
 - Reduce their **Informality** in the course of instruction?
 - Reduce flexibility in **context, format, delivery, and setting** that allows teachers to customize to each student:
 - how the question is posed or
 - how the observation of performance structured
- ▶ Informal formative assessments, especially for students with disabilities:
 - Allow for **variance in learning progressions**
 - Allow for **variance in ways of understanding**
 - Allow for **variance in ways of responding**

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INTERIM ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- ▶ Advantages for Students with Disabilities
 - Closer to instruction
 - May better match how content is instructed with how it is assessed
 - Provide greater flexibility in testing conditions and timing
 - Provide information useful for corrective instruction

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INTERIM ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- ▶ Cautions:
 - May be
 - too adaptive/out-of-level (**not predictive** for how well SWDs are progressing toward the standards) or
 - too summative (**not diagnostic** enough to guide SWDs instruction in the standards).
 - Make assumptions that may not be true for SWDs
 - all students are taught in the same scope and sequence
 - learning progressions are common across all students

"Neuroscience has long confirmed that the way in which individuals learn is as unique as their DNA..." (CAST, 2010)

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ADAPTIVE/OUT OF LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

- ▶ Arguments **FOR**:
 - Provide more diagnostic information for shaping instruction
 - Provide more accurate estimates of what the student knows
- ▶ Arguments **AGAINST**:
 - Not useful in determining how the student is performing on grade-level standards
 - Deceptive in judging student progress toward grade-level standards
 - Inaccurate summative results intended to reflect achievement of grade-level standards
 - Possible deterrent to student opportunity to learn grade-level standards
 - Encourages continued instruction in basic skills as opposed to applied skills

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EMERGING MODELS FOR SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCSS

- ▶ Different tests are administered at several different times during the school year and results compiled for summative scores. (Wise, 2010)

BUT

Does curriculum driven test design administered through end of unit type tests that includes all content "covered" so far dictate a **uniform curriculum uniformly taught and uniformly timed**?

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THROUGH-COURSE ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- ▶ Advantages for Students with Disabilities
 - Standards assessed closer to time of instruction
 - Multiple chances for success: Cumulative design provides time for corrective instruction
 - Fewer standards assessed in the beginning
- ▶ Cautions:
 - Results must be available immediately for use in instruction
 - Result need to be applied immediately to instruction
 - No one yet knows the impact on students with disabilities of the many proposed designs
 - Possibility that students with disabilities will be assessed "later"

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TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

"The innovative approaches to assessment that TEAs make possible go beyond the limited representations of learning possible on traditional assessments and provide a window into cognition that traditional assessments cannot. This is especially critical for students whose disabilities have prohibited them from demonstrating what they know and can do on traditional paper and pencil tests." (Bechard et.al., 2010)

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TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- Potential Barriers for Students with Disabilities
 - Lack of familiarity with and fluency in the technology
 - Unknown impact of artifacts and technology tools (virtual versus real)
 - Divergent cognitive pathways and learning progressions

- Potential Access for Students with Disabilities
 - Accommodation tools at the student's fingertips
 - Built in flexibility in presentation and response modes
 - Interactivity to accommodate different learning progressions

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TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- Innovative item types
 - **Interactive/Dynamic items and tasks**
 - Allowing students to follow varying learning progressions (A project of *Children's Progress at Columbia University*)
 - **Immersive virtual performance tasks**
 - Through virtual environments that provide visual and auditory experiences (A project of the *Harvard Graduate School of Education*)

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TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- Innovative item types
 - **Scaffolding items/tasks** – for cognitive complexity and for difficulty
 - through "Assistent" (A project of the *Human-Computer Interaction Institute Carnegie Mellon University*)
 - through collections of inter-related items/tasks aligned with a standard (A *Montana GSEC project*)
 - From tasks that are easy to difficult
 - From deconstruction of a complex performance

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TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED ASSESSMENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CCS

- Challenges of building the platform
 - Incorporating accommodations and assistive technology
 - Building them into every assessment
 - Researching their efficacy in this new environment
 - Expanding the toolkit TEA makes possible
 - Building in flexibility while maintaining standardization
 - Changing the "externals" without changing the "construct"
 - Applying and expanding the definition of UDA
- Accounting for limitations of grid, hardware, and software

"A computer delivered assessment may be able to provide built-in flexibility and allow the use of assistive technologies students have everyday in the classroom." Dechart, 2010.

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ITEM/TASK DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN MIND

- Language challenges
 - For deaf/hard-of-hearing
 - For students with language delays or disabilities
 - When language density rather than task complexity interferes with performance
- Visual challenges
 - For visually impaired
 - For students who misperceive visually presented materials

**Are our traditional
UD Models
good enough?**

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The Ultimate Dilemma for Students with Disabilities and CCS

- Will the best possible standards and assessments matter:
 - If instruction, not just the IEP, doesn't align with the standards?
 - If teachers lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills to
 - scaffold instruction low enough to create access and
 - *high* enough to reach common core standards?
 - If *classrooms become larger?*
 - If *less time and resources* are available to meet the needs of individual students?

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