Common Core State Standards

Lineage – Substance – Assessments
What should higher education do?

WICHE Commission Meeting
November 8, 2010
Paul Lingenfelter; President, SHEEO
Sputnik

The Soviet Union launched Sputnik on October 4, 1957

http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap071004.html
1983:
New Standards – 1989-90

- The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) released *America’s Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*.

- The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) released *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics*.

- In 1989, as a response to President George H.W. Bush’s discussion on education goals, NGA established The National Education Goals Panel.
1991:

Time For Results
THE GOVERNORS’ 1991 REPORT ON EDUCATION
No Child Left Behind

- **Accountability plans** — state assessment systems and accountability plans, decision letters, enhanced assessments, peer review
- **Adequate yearly progress** — calculating participation rates
- **Differentiated accountability pilot program** — helps states create nuanced approaches to underperforming schools
- **Growth models** — letters, guidance, state applications
- **National Technical Advisory Council (NTAC)** — to advise on state standards, assessments and accountability systems
- **Regulations and guidance** — Title I reporting, students with disabilities, English language learners, schools in need of improvement, and more
- **Report cards guidance**
One Critic of NCLB has said:

NCLB got it exactly backwards:

- Flexible on the standards;
- Prescriptive on everything else.
Common Core State Standards

COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE
PREPARING AMERICA'S STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE & CAREER

CCSSO
Council of Chief State School Officers

National Governors Association
Common Core State Standards
A response to:

- The critique of NCLB
- States spending large sums on standards and assessments that differ slightly among states
- The recognition that other nations seem to benefit from clear standards
- The desire to avoid federally developed and mandated standards
Premises

• For math and English high school graduation standards, college and career readiness are identical
• Standards should be higher, fewer, and clearer than the status quo
• Standards should be evidence based and internationally benchmarked
• Standards for each grade should reflect the learning progression toward career and college readiness
• No state should have to lower its standards to adopt the common core state standards
State Responses to Standards

- 48 states, (not AK and TX) the District of Columbia, and two territories “signed on” to the Common Core State Standards Initiative.
- 38 states have formally “adopted” the Common Core Standards. Six not formally adopting yet are WICHE states.
In July 2009 the SHEEO Executive Committee wrote to NGA and CCSSO in support of the initiative.

In addition, the committee advised that:

- Assessments for the standards are indispensable.
- Math and English standards are vital, but no substitute for a full college preparatory curriculum.
- Wide and deep postsecondary involvement in design and implementation is essential.
Assessments – 2010

Two consortia funded by USDoE to develop assessments to make standards meaningful:

- PARCC, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
- SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium
PARCC Theory of Action

- Reporting achievement results based on a clear definition of college and career readiness will improve outcomes for students
  - Assessments will identify whether students are ready for and prepared to succeed in entry-level postsecondary courses by the time they graduate from high school
- The common assessment system will help make accountability policies better drivers of improvement
- Classroom teachers will have an assessment system that functions as an integrated element enabling them to adjust instruction, individualize interventions, and fine-tune lessons throughout the school year
- The common assessment system will help education leaders and policymakers make the case for improvement and for sustaining education reforms
PARCC Assessment System Design

Advantages of Through Course components

- Reflect and support good instructional practice
- Signals received throughout the year, nearer in time to when key skills and critical knowledge are addressed
- Components together address the full range of the CCSS
- Multiple measures of student performance throughout the year, including in-depth assessment of writing and mathematics problem-solving skills
  - Actionable data that teachers can use to plan and adjust instruction
  - Ability to measure the performance of students across the ability spectrum
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

**Summative assessments using online computer-adaptive technologies**

- Efficiently provides accurate measurement of all students, better than a “one size fits all” approach
- Assesses full range of CCSS in English language arts and math
- Describes both current achievement and growth across time, indicating progress toward college- and career-readiness
- Scores provide reliable state-to-state comparability, with standards set against national and international benchmarks
- States and districts have option of giving the summative tests twice a year
Assessment Design

The Consortium will provide the following by the 2014-15 school year:

1. *Formative tools and resources*
2. *Responsible flexibility*
3. *Distributed summative assessment*  
   - Content clusters throughout a course  
   - Most appropriate time for each student  
   - Scores rolled up
Responsible Flexibility

Formative Tools and Processes
Interim/Benchmark
Summative Achievement
Summative Growth

Flexibility
Balance
Standardization
What do the critics say?

- The Common Core State Standards are a top-down national (Trojan horse federal) strategy – diversity among the states is a better approach.
- Math and English language skills are not enough. We need science, civics, standards, etc.
- Standards are not sufficient – the curriculum is the key.
- Standards don’t really matter, and standardization is a danger.
- Teaching to tests is counterproductive in education.
What do I think?

- Confusing, multiple standards have been an obstacle to educational progress in the U.S.
- The Common Core State Standards are a superior product – worthy of support
- Math and English language skills are fundamental to everything else in education – consensus on standards is possible and highly desirable
- USDoE support for assessment development sets the stage for a substantial leap forward
- Good, common standards are necessary tool not a panacea
What should Higher Ed Do?

- Participate in development of assessments
- Work for postsecondary adoption and use of the standards and assessments in placement and admission – not automatic, but transparent guidance
- State level efforts to improve curriculum and teaching in order to help current and new teachers and school leaders enable students to become college ready
- Authentic partnerships between K-12 schools and colleges and universities – aligned expectations, professional development, and data feedback systems
Lest we forget

Reports on improving postsecondary educational attainment
2004-07:
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SHEEO, the national association of state-wide higher education executives, focuses on public policy for higher education in the U.S. It was founded in 1954.