



Doc H's Blog

Kentucky Education Commissioner
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Common Core – Part 2

In last week's [blog](#), I discussed some of the misinformation that is circulating about [Common Core State Standards](#) that Kentucky adopted in 2010. This adoption was based on the requirements of [Senate Bill 1](#) (2009) that required new standards, assessments and an accountability system for Kentucky that would improve the college- and career-readiness rates of our graduating high school seniors. I provided factual information to show that the standards were not part of a federal mandate and that the development of the standards was definitely driven by states with full and open participation by teachers and college professors.

This week, I would like to briefly review how the Kentucky Board of Education adopted the standards as the [Kentucky Core Academic Standards](#) and how test items were developed that measure student performance against the standards.

All during the development of the common core standards, the state's teachers and professors were heavily involved in providing feedback and edits. The final product reflected Kentucky feedback.

Once we had the final draft of the common core standards, we formalized a model to ensure teachers from every school district were involved in translating the standards into teacher- and student-friendly language. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) worked closely with every school district in the state and the eight regional education cooperatives to establish a math, language arts and leadership network in each region that was staffed by coordinators both from KDE and also colleges across Kentucky. Every school district was asked to send three math teachers, three language arts teachers, three principals, and three central office leaders who would be charged with developing a plan to implement the standards in their district and schools. Special care was taken to ensure we had representation from teachers of special education and English Language Learners. These networks met monthly to translate the standards and develop models for implementation.

The network members then returned to their schools and districts and helped plan for implementation at the local level. These networks have continued to meet to develop resources for teachers and leaders to use as they implement the standards. Kentucky has been recognized at the national level by many sources as having an excellent model for implementation of the standards. Many states have utilized the model that we developed in Kentucky. The key driver of the model was the continued collaboration of teachers and professors to ensure alignment of expectations for college and career readiness from K-12 through postsecondary.

Once teachers translated the standards, Kentucky procured the services of Pearson through a competitive bid process to develop grades 3-8 assessments in English/language arts and mathematics aligned to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards. In addition, ACT had an existing product that we procured for high school courses. From the bid to writing test items, teachers in Kentucky were involved and continue to be engaged in the process of refining standards implementation.

I am extremely proud of Kentucky teachers and leaders for their work. They have shown the nation that Kentucky is focused on college- and career-readiness for all students and the results are certainly starting to show great promise. Look at scores for ACT, NAEP, WorkKeys, and any other assessment of college/career-readiness and you will see our children are making progress.

Do we have a ways to go? Absolutely. However, I know Kentucky educators are up to the challenge and will stay the course on the Kentucky Core Academic Standards and fully implementing Senate Bill 1.

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