



TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Angelica Infante-Green *A. Infante - Green*

SUBJECT: Revision and Implementation of New English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Standards

DATE: December 1, 2016

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SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Provide the Board of Regents with an update on the revision and implementation of the new New York State Learning Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Recognizing the need to continually improve the learning standards that guide education in New York State, the Department is conducting a revision process of the State's ELA and mathematics standards. Additionally, to ensure a successful implementation of the new standards, the rollout strategy will allow for professional development and curriculum development prior to when students take new assessments that measure the standards.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the December 2016 meeting.

Background Information

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) adopted the P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in January 2011. As with any set of standards, it is necessary for the Department to conduct a standards review periodically to ensure the learning standards are rigorous, appropriate, and represent what a student should know and be able to do in a specific subject area. Additionally, Section 305 of Education Law, subdivisions 53 and 54, authorize and direct the Commissioner of Education to

complete a comprehensive review of the education standards administered by the Education Department and seek input from education stakeholders. By statute, the review of standards must begin in the 2015-16 school year.

To date, the Department has engaged a wide variety of stakeholders, which includes educators, parents, and the community at large, through a survey (AIMHighNY) that allowed users to give feedback on each of the standards. The survey, which was available from mid-October until November 30, 2015, allowed all New Yorkers to provide feedback on both the ELA and mathematics standards. The Commissioner and NYSED staff have also been seeking out and listening to many stakeholders regarding State standards. New York State's AIMHighNY survey had thousands of comments and recommendations, with the largest percentage of the feedback coming from classroom teachers. More than 10,500 respondents provided feedback on one or more of the State's current learning standards. In total, survey participants submitted 246,771 pieces of feedback. More than 70 percent of the feedback was supportive of the standards; approximately 29 percent was in disagreement. The thousands of points of feedback included recommendations and comments about the standards, including specific changes to the wording and suggestions to move standards across grade levels.

Additionally, the New York State English Language Arts and Mathematics Content Advisory Panels (CAPs) reviewed the survey data and made initial recommendations for possible revisions and guidance. The CAPs, which have been meeting since 2011, include classroom teachers, school administrators, curriculum specialists, and members of institutions of higher education. The membership of the panels includes representatives from New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), Association of Mathematics Teachers of New York State (AMTNYS), New York State Association of Mathematics Supervisors (NYSAMS), New York State Reading Association (NYSRA), and New York State English Council (NYSEC). The following is a snapshot of the trends noted from the survey and initial recommendations made by the panelists

Phase 1: Standards Review Committees

The Department created two committees of New York State stakeholders, one for English language arts and one for mathematics. Recruitment for the committees was done through a statewide selection process hosted on the AIMHighNY website in March 2016. The Standards Review Committees represented various parts of the State with a wide range of expertise including classroom teachers, elementary specialists/coaches, English language learner/bilingual teachers, special education teachers, building-level leaders, district-level leaders, parents, students, higher education faculty, and business and community members. Importantly, the Standards Review Committees will collaborate with individuals with child developmental expertise to ensure the new standards are appropriate at all levels.

The Standards Review Committees met virtually in spring of 2016 and in person in summer of 2016 to develop guidance and provided recommended revisions to the English language arts and mathematic standards based on the AIMHighNY survey

results, recommendations from the Content Advisory Panels, and guidance from other stakeholder groups.

Recommended Changes to English Language Arts Standards

Five subcommittee groups (Prekindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12 and Literacy 6-12), all of which included parents and educators, discussed the current ELA standards to determine whether each standard meets the criteria for what a student should know and be able to do at a grade level (or grade-band) in English language arts and literacy. Committees also had an opportunity to recommend new areas to strengthen the standards.

Recommended changes include:

- **Streamline Reading for Information and Reading for Literature Standards** by merging them together, identifying the unique skills related to literature and informational text, and ensuring a healthy balance of both types of reading across all grades;
- **Refocus on Prekindergarten-Grade 2 Standards** with some grade-specific changes and additions to the ELA Standards, including a strong emphasis on the whole child and the importance of play as an instructional strategy. This includes the need for additional guidance for P-2 on how the standards are implemented in the classroom, including sample instructional strategies and activities, definitions and clear connections to teaching English language learners and students with disabilities;
- **Create a New York State Early Learning Task Force** to discuss concerns around the P-2 grades, including standards, program decisions, social emotional needs and how the content areas/domains work together in the early grades. This task force will be formed in the coming weeks;
- **Re-organize Writing Standards** so they are easier for educators to use for curriculum and instruction. In addition to regrouping the standards, grade-specific changes are recommended across the grades to clarify language and ensure writing expectations are clear;
- **Use a Variety of Texts** to balance literary and informational reading with clear guidance for teachers and to ensure students read both full-length texts and shorter pieces, as well as to encourage reading for pleasure; and
- **Provide Guidance on Text Complexity** for all standards in the introduction to underscore its importance.

To provide educator support in the new learning standards, the committees recommended the following:

- **Develop New York State Resources and Guidance for the Standards:** A set of learning standards cannot be properly utilized without the necessary guidance. The committees recommend developing a set of resources for standards, curriculum, and professional development. These resources would include strategies and supports for students with

- disabilities and English language learners, as well as instructional strategies that could serve as examples in the classroom;
- **Include Preface and Grade-Level Introductions** for the new set of English Language Arts Standards that explains the importance of the standards and their intended role in a school instructional plan. The preface and introduction would outline a belief statement that includes references to best teaching practices and learning strategies that aim to foster a love of learning for all students;
 - **Develop Clear Communications for Parents** about the standards, with an explanation about the connections among standards, curriculum and assessments; and
 - **Create a Glossary of Terms** that contains words or important terms used within the standards.

Recommended Changes to Mathematics Standards

Seven grade band/course subcommittees (PreK-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry and Plus Standards) comprised of New York State P-12 classroom teachers, special education teachers, English language learner teachers, parents, curriculum specialists, school administrators, and college professors discussed and made recommendations for possible revisions or additions to the standards.

Recommended changes include:

- **Clarify the Standards** so that educators, students and parents clearly understand the expectation, without limiting instructional flexibility. For example, recommended modifications would help better define the progression of skills and the transition of some of the 18 shared standards between Algebra I and Algebra II;
- **Strengthen Coherency of the Standards** to allow for a stronger connection of learning within and across grade levels. For example, one additional standard at the Kindergarten level would help solidify pattern recognition and creation from Pre-K to Grade 2. In addition, standards regarding time and money would be added and current standards would be changed to smooth the transition of building these skills at the PreK-grade 3 level;
- **Improve focus of major content and skills for each grade-level and course** while providing more time for students to develop deep levels of understanding. For example, to remove the parabola/directrix/focus standard out of Algebra II and place it in the plus standards with the study of conics;
- **Maintain the Rigor of the Standards** by balancing the need for conceptual understanding, procedural skill, and application. For example, clearly identify the fluency standards at the high school level; and
- **Create a Glossary of Verbs** associated with the mathematics standards. This glossary contains a list of verbs that appear throughout the revised standards recommendations.

Phase 2: Public Comment

The Standards Review Committees created a draft set of standards in English language arts and mathematics for all grade levels that was posted on AIMHighNY for public comment from September through November 14. Importantly, the new standards documents highlighted specific areas of revision and incorporated rationales for each revision. Through AIMHighNY, the Department will provide materials to BOCES, Teacher Centers, and regional leaders to help facilitate local dialogue and gather additional feedback around the draft standards.

The Department has sought out input from several researchers to provide additional guidance in the revision of the standards.

Phase 3: Final Standards Revisions

The Standards Review Leadership Committees and Content Advisory Panels will meet to review survey data and additional stakeholder and researcher feedback from Phase 2 and make necessary revisions to the draft standards. Final draft standards will be shared with the English Language Arts and Mathematics Content Advisory Panels before going to the Board of Regents.

Phase 4: Consideration by the Board

It is anticipated that the revised draft standards for English language arts and mathematics will be presented to the Board of Regents for consideration in spring 2017.

Phase 5: Curriculum Revisions Occur Throughout the State Beginning Spring 2017

Local districts will begin revising their curricular materials to reflect the new standards after Board of Regents approval. With the guidance of educators from throughout the State, the Department will provide guidance to districts to aid in the process of revising curriculum materials.

Phase 6: Professional Development and Initial Implementation of New Standards

To ensure educators are prepared to provide instruction aligned to the new standards, they will have two full academic years to engage in professional development, development of classroom instructional materials, and to learn about the new assessments. During the initial implementation phase, the Department will continually provide updates and guidance to assist districts.

Phase 7: First Year of Revised Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics Assessments

In the spring of 2019, students will take Grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics assessments that measure the revised standards.

Related Regent's Item

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/216p12d4.pdf>