THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Ken Slentz

SUBJECT: Implementation of the Common Core Standards

DATE: November 7, 2011

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Statewide implementation of the NYS Common Core Standards.

Reason(s) for Consideration

The adoption and implementation of the NYS Common Core Standards is a central tenet of the Regents reform agenda, our Race to the Top commitment and the requirements of the ESEA Waiver request that the Department will be submitting in February 2012.

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the November 2011 meeting.

Procedural History

In July 2010, the Board adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and the CCSS for Mathematics to support the Regents Reform Agenda. In January 2011, the Board adopted additional K-12 expectations and prekindergarten standards.

Background Information

Classroom implementation - to better prepare teachers and principals for effective instruction aligned with the Common Core standards, the Department has committed to the development and provision of resources, tools and training.

1. Tools: the Department has developed and posted a number of curriculum modules that educators can access and replicate. These exemplars give a clear sense of what the Common Core requires. Additional modules will be added in the weeks ahead. Utilizing funding from our Race to the Top grant, the Department recently released an RFP for curriculum modules in P-12 ELA and math. These modules which include embedded performance tasks will become available starting in late summer/early fall 2012 and will constitute 50 percent of a year's worth of teaching with 100 percent available by the early fall of 2013. To further supplement the understanding of what Common Core instruction looks like and sounds like, a project designed to develop teacher and principal practice videos is underway. These best practice videos will include short, skill-specific clips, full-length lessons as well as reality videos which will document a teacher's evolution in implementing Common Core-based instruction. Another tool that the Department has recently posted is a professional development toolkit which includes a facilitator's guide, power point slide deck with key talking points, analysis of student work activities and Common Core readiness activities. Lastly, the Department will soon be posting a rubric for the evaluation of an instructional unit against the Common Core standards. This tool was developed by a tri-state consortium (NY, MA and RI) and is something that the field has requested with some frequency. This same consortium has committed to forming a jury process wherein model units could be submitted, evaluated and approved for use across all three states.

2. Resources: starting in April 2011 with a statewide webinar entitled "Bringing the Common Core to Life," the Department has continued to develop resources to assist the field in building an understanding of and capacity around the implementation of the standards. One of our most exciting resources, the engageNY.org website, is a one-stop shop for teaching and learning resources. The site is designed specifically for NY's teachers, principals, administrators and Network Teams and contains all things common core including 12 hours of video which explain the instructional shifts required by the standards as well as facilitation guides for viewing the videos. Our latest addition to the site is an Engage 1.1 which is a detailed step-by-step, screen capture view of exactly how to utilize the site in order to develop a more complete understanding of the shifts.

3. Training: through our Race to the Top grant, the Department created Network Teams which are the BOCES, district and charter-based teams made up of experts in curriculum, instruction and data analysis. These teams are charged with turn keying training received from the State back to their respective regions, districts and schools. The training takes place through Network Team Institutes which are training programs for representatives from school-based Network Teams and BOCES- based Network Teams. The NTI helps attendees learn how to implement the goals of the Regents reform agenda from leading experts in the field. NTI focuses on three assurance areas – the implementation of the Common Core Standards; Data Driven Instruction; and Teacher/Leader Evaluation - by providing specific tools, instruments and processes. Thus far, two institutes have been held with 550 and 350 participants respectively. Our third institute will be held on November 29 and 30.

Directly related to training, the Commissioner and staff charged with implementation of our Race to the Top initiatives have committed to a "road show" in which we travel across the State addressing and working directly with school boards, superintendents, principals and teachers to further develop the knowledge and implementation of the key initiatives that will help all students achieve college and career readiness upon graduation.

Aligned assessments – to better ensure that the students of New York achieve college and career readiness, the Department will be aligning State assessments to the Common Core beginning with the 3-8 ELA and Math assessments in the 2012-13 school year. This work as well as our work as a lead state in the PARCC consortium will raise the rigor of instruction across New York State.

Next Steps

Staff will provide periodic reports about implementation of all initiatives under the Regents reform agenda.