



MBAE Fact Sheet: Common Core State Standards

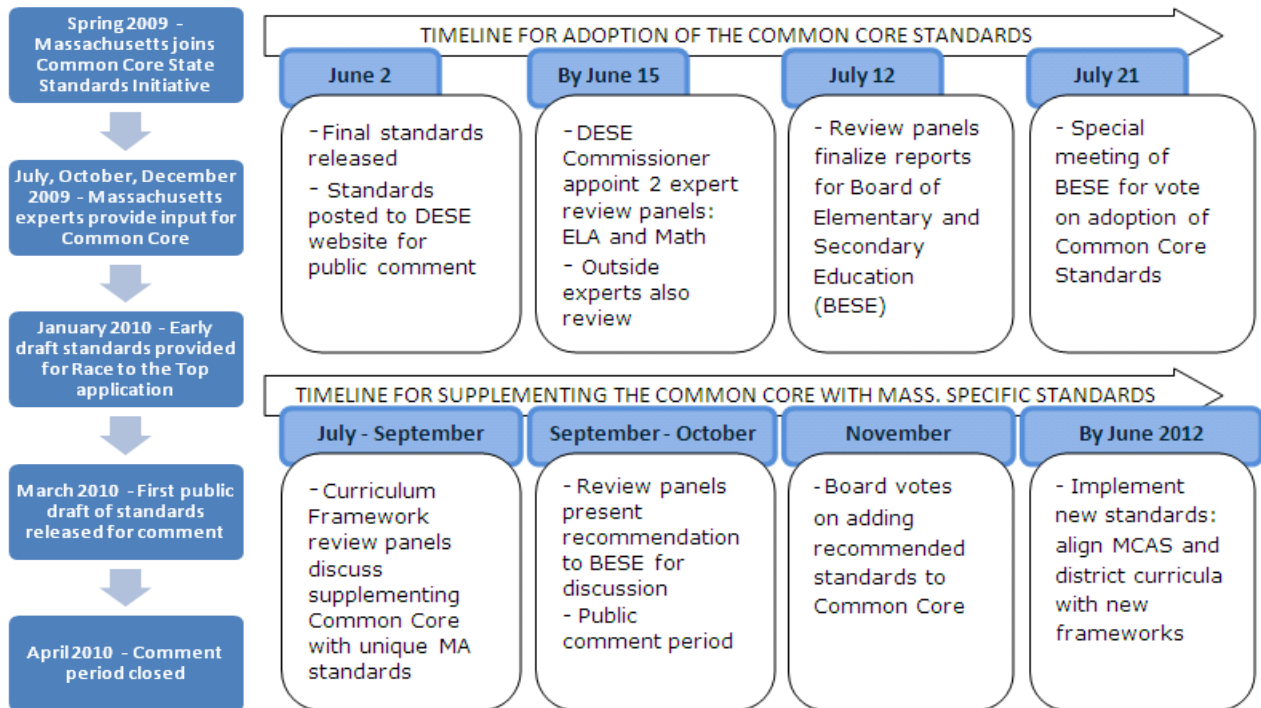
- **What are the Common Core State Standards?**

The Common Core State Standards (Common Core) are K-12 English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards designed, on the basis of research and evidence, to prepare students for college and career in an internationally competitive society.

- **What are “College and Career Readiness” Standards?**

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards define the skills, proficiencies, and knowledge that students should be able to demonstrate by the time they graduate from high school so they are ready to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. In the course of developing the Common Core specific CCR standards were developed first and then incorporated into the K-12 Standards.

- **What is the development and adoption process for the Common Core in Massachusetts?**



- **Who developed the Common Core?**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative has been led by the 48 participating states through their membership in the National Governor’s Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). An advisory group, made up of Achieve, ACT, the College Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education, and the State Higher Education Executive Officers provided advice and guidance. Working and Feedback Groups

made up of experts and educators worked closely with Massachusetts and other states to develop the standards.

- **How do the standards prepare students for college and career?**

The Common Core State Standards focus on those skills and content knowledge that students must master to be successful in either post-secondary education or employment. These are based on the best practices of our international peers, as well as research on college entrance exam requirements, a survey of college professors, and research requirements for sustainable wage jobs.

- **What is the federal government’s role in the Common Core?**

Although the federal government had no role in the development of the Common Core, the administration has twice signaled its support for the project. First, in the Race to the Top competition, states must commit to adopt the Common Core by August 2010 to receive full credit in the “Standards and Assessment” section. Second, the administration’s blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act would require that states certify that their standards are “College and Career Ready” – adoption of the Common Core would fulfill this requirement. Further, the administration is also holding a competition for consortia of states to develop common assessments, which will be based on the Common Core.

- **What issues have been raised around Massachusetts potentially adopting the Standards?**

REASONS

RISKS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Massachusetts standards were already in need of, and undergoing revision by Curriculum Frameworks review teams - Common Core presents opportunity to create standards that truly prepare students for college and career - The Race to the Top program gives more points to states that commit to adoption by August 2010 - Increased emphasis on important skills such as reading of complex texts and mastery of core mathematical concepts - Greater leverage and economies of scale in negotiating with textbook publishers - States have flexibility to supplement the Common Core with 15% state specific standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Massachusetts standards are already amongst the best in the nation, Common Core is not a carbon copy - Implementation of new standards is challenging especially given difficult fiscal situation - Process has been, at times, opaque, with only a three week period for public comment - In math, emphasis is on focus and shifts some topics from the grades they appear in Massachusetts - In ELA standards describe text complexity and offer example reading materials without an explicit list - While the standards reference some forms of content (e.g. mythology, Shakespeare), they do not detail all content that students should learn |
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