

Recommended Response to Dr. Chris Kuster
Respectfully submitted by Superintendent Scott D. Kuffel

At the regular August school board meeting, held on August 13, 2015, Dr. Chris Kuster addressed the Board of Education and presented questions seeking a response from the Board of Education. (Note: A copy of the letter is included with this report.)

He referenced concerns that were lodged by parents at the regular June 2015 board meeting, and then supplemented those with some of his own comments and questions. I will attempt to outline those below and provide responses below each comment/question.

1. *"The material being taught in the situation referenced above was defended by both the teacher and the principal as legitimate resources, since they supported the learning objectives included in the state curriculum. They made it clear that while the teacher had choices in individual selections, the ones she chose were within the guidelines provided by the state. Does the board agree that while these resources may not be their personal choices and could be replaced in Geneseo schools with more appropriate material, that they nevertheless were consistent with the state learning standards and range of resources at least accepted if not suggested by the state?"*

At the meeting Dr. Kuster was introduced to the high school principal, and according to the high school English teacher in question, he has not met her. It appears then that he has shared information he heard from those who presented in June, or information he heard from someone else, but it was not from a conversation with either the principal or the teacher related to whether or not they "defended" either the resources or the learning objectives.

There are three distinct issues at hand here. The first is whether or not the learning objectives and materials are state mandated or state guided. The second is whether or not the principal and teacher defended the use of the resources. The third asks for whether or not "does the board agree...."

To the first question, many of the resources that were used in this Language Arts 3 course have been used previously in this and other courses. The use of many of these materials pre-dates any Common Core Standards Initiative work, and certainly any review of these materials by the GHS English Department. There is not a state mandated set of resources, and while the Illinois State Board of Education and the Common Core State Standards Consortia have proposed inventories of resources that may be available, these are used at the discretion of faculty across Illinois. The primary point made by the arbiters of Common Core State Standards and Illinois Learning Standards has been that while the State has adopted the "what" students should learn and be able to do, local school districts are empowered to address the "how" for this work.

To the second question, I have provided some of the information that the English Department at GHS provides to the students and parents related to the materials to be used. Specifically, you have been provided a copy of the Parent/Guardian letter for use of "*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*" with a forewarning of some of the mature content. Also included is a document that discusses the "Process for Self-Selecting Alternative Texts". This two page guideline is meant to focus the student and his/her parents who wish to 'opt out' of texts they find offensive, and to continue to align their academic work with the big ideas and essential learning objectives of the particular unit. In my opinion, the English Department has fulfilled any expectation to provide alternatives and in fact, they have done their diligence in being in a position to defend their resources. It may be interesting to note, that currently in Language Arts 3, students are studying literature from the Puritans. There will be discussion about God, and for some students this may strike questions about the separation of church and State. Some may find this as distasteful as those who were upset about other curricular choices. But from an equanimity standpoint, the English Department will still allow for self selection of alternative text choices, though this may be challenging given the topics and text of that literary period.

The third question is one that only the Board of Education can answer as to whether or not material is appropriate. It is my recommendation that the Board of Education endorse the ability for the classroom teachers, the administration, the students and parents to determine the appropriateness and that the Board of Education not engage in censorship, certainly not without hearing from all parties. We also have Board Policy for Uniform Grievance Procedures that should be implemented before there is a need for school board scrutiny of overall curriculum. The Board of Education, in my recommendation, should be promoting policy that enables mature communication that provides a forum when disagreement occurs. Said forum allows for alternate choices that still meet the curricular standards and expectations as is currently implemented. This allows for appropriate involvement of student, parent and classroom teacher empowerment.

2. *Distinctions have been made between optional resources and the mandatory curriculum those resources support. Regarding the general term "state curriculum", would it be accurate to identify the "state curriculum" as Common Core Standards (CCS) or curriculum aligned with CCS?*

I have included information from the Illinois State Board of Education's website, specifically from their perspectives on "Realizing Illinois", which provides the possible resource links. The ISBE has for decades provided suggested materials for instructional use as a service, not a mandate, in all curricular areas. There is a clear link between the Common Core State Standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics with the "WHAT" expected to be taught in Illinois schools. As recited earlier, local districts have autonomy in the "HOW". What is more important to note is that we have no choice as a district, but to administer the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Many parents would expect us to do our part in helping prepare their students to perform well on this

assessment. You will recall that last spring we endorsed the authority of a parent to choose for their student(s) to not participate in the PARCC assessment.

When our teachers worked to develop the curriculum maps that determined what students should know and be able to do, and listed that as learning standards and learning objectives in the first stage of Atlas, there was a review of the Common Core State Standards as well as other state and national standards for learning in disciplines beyond English and Math. It would be fair to say that much of what our teachers implement instructionally is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. I support our teachers in the belief that they chose the learning standards and strategies that they believe best prepare our students for their academic and civic futures. We also make these transparent to parents, and I have included a copy for your review of the Language Arts 3 current unit map. There is certainly alignment with the Geneseo CUSD 228 curriculum with the state curriculum and Common Core Standards, however, it would be unfair to characterize our curriculum as "pure" Common Core Standards.

3. Have the elected school board members performed a comprehensive impact assessment to determine how compliance with CCS will affect students and their teachers in this district, and how best to comply with state mandates while maintaining excellence in the education of district 228 students?"

Educational research would generally dictate that a comprehensive impact assessment of a particular curriculum would be predicated, at least in some part, on the results of student performance on some type of summative or criterion-referenced test. Since District 228 students (and only approximately 70% of those eligible) sat for the PARCC tests last year for the first year, we have yet to receive any data, it is premature to determine the performance results of new curriculum. Again, anecdotally, I can only share that I support the process that District 228 implemented to allow the classroom teachers to collaboratively use their professional expertise, research available, and resources from a number of different areas-- Regional Office of Education, universities, professional discipline associations, etc.-- to choose what they believed was most essential learnings for students and would continue to foster and grow the educational excellence that has been enjoyed in this District. Just as scientific research often is dependent upon repetition of trials, which builds accuracy and reliability in predictability, new curriculum takes some time to: a) increase the efficacy of instructional practices and to allow for review quarterly of curriculum successes and roadblocks, and b) to build a data set for analysis of student performance that either indicates curricular deficiencies, instructional deficiencies, or perhaps some other variable not considered in the evaluation of the program.

4. "In closing, I acknowledge that the State of Illinois has mandated that all local districts within the State choose curriculum aligned with Common Core Standards, leaving the teachers, Administration, elected board members, parents, and students with no option to opt out, an unprecedented attempt to remove meaningful parental control over their own children's public school education for the first time in the history of our Republic. What do you intend to do about it?"

Again, I cannot speak for the Board of Education regarding Dr. Kuster's last question, but I would reiterate that we believe that our teachers have done yeoman's work in trying to pull together their best professional knowledge to pull together learning standards and instructional objectives together to do more than just cobble together a compliant curriculum. We believe that our students receive high quality instruction that promotes thinking, reflection, learning, practical skills, and a sense of responsibility that prepares them at a high level for whatever future they dream. The administration and faculty intend to continue to work together to create learning and growth opportunities for students that provide both a structure of academic rigor balanced against the demands for flexibility for which our dynamic political and economic environment call.

I would like to thank the school board members and administrators for this opportunity to speak, and for all the time you invest in the children of the Geneseo community.

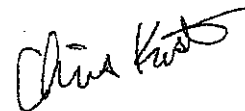
Please allow me a brief introduction to provide context to my questions. My name is Chris Kuster, and I am a tax payer in District 228 as well as a parent of two children currently attending Geneseo schools, with another of pre-school age. My great Uncle, Martin Hepner, served as a school board member and President of the Kewanee School board for many years. My family counts several high ranking past and present Administrators in the Kewanee district as personal friends, and Superintendent Kuffel was my Jr. High track coach. I graduated Valedictorian of my high school class, and attended the University of Illinois, accumulating four degrees, including two earned doctorates (DVM, PhD). Anyone who really knows me will confirm that I don't go about flashing my academic credentials, but since some may attempt to reframe what I am about to ask in a negative light, I thought it appropriate to point out that I am no stranger to education, I hold my children to a high standard, and I expect them to be equipped to further their educations in ways that best fit their individual natures when they graduate from this district. Since this is a small community, I will preface my remarks by acknowledging that Board Member Olson is my Mother-in-law, that she did not know I would attend this meeting nor is she aware of the content of my statement.

At the July meeting of the Geneseo school board, concerned parents presented this board with offensive material their children were being exposed to in a required course, English Language Arts. It is not my intent to review the specific concerns of those parents for their children, but to ask more general questions that affect all parents of all students attending district 228 schools. Words mean things. As those parents expressed their concerns in an earlier meeting at the building level, the teacher and principal described the offensive material as "resources" that were not explicitly required to be taught as a structural component of the curriculum, but were defended as an acceptable way to teach the learning objectives that were part of the curriculum. Further, the "curriculum" was excused as not a local district choice, but mandated by the state. I have only three questions. They can each be answered with concise "Yes" or "No" responses. If you feel the need to justify the yes/no with further explanation, that is your choice, but I would appreciate a straightforward answer to each.

- 1) The material being taught in the situation referenced above was defended by both the teacher and the principal as legitimate resources, since they supported the learning objectives included in the state curriculum. They made it clear that while the teacher had choices in individual selections, the ones she chose were within the guidelines provided by the state. Does the board agree that while these resources may not be their personal choices and could be replaced in Geneseo schools with more appropriate material, that they nevertheless were consistent with the state learning standards and range of resources at least accepted if not suggested by the state?
- 2) Distinctions have been made between optional resources and the mandatory curriculum those resources support. Regarding the general term "state curriculum", would it be accurate to identify the "state curriculum" as Common Core Standards (CCS) or curriculum aligned with CCS?
- 3) Have the elected school board members performed a comprehensive impact assessment to determine how compliance with CCS will affect students and their teachers in this district, and how best to comply with state mandates while maintaining excellence in the education of district 228 students?

I will look forward to your responses to those specific questions.

In closing, I acknowledge that the State of Illinois has mandated that all local districts within the State choose curriculum aligned with Common Core Standards, leaving the teachers, Administration, elected board members, parents, and students with no option to opt out, an unprecedented attempt to remove meaningful parental control over their own children's public school education for the first time in the history of our Republic. What do you intend to do about it?



Dear Parent or Guardian,

This quarter English III (American Literature) will be using *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* by Sherman Alexie as the primary text. I will also be supplying various pieces of fiction and essays from across time and cultures. The design of this quarter is to explore the writing styles, thoughts, and modes of expression of other writers who are American but not included in the traditional lists of American literature. In studying the works of others, your student will gain the necessary skills to look at his or her own writing and critical thinking process with an analytical eye.

Some of the material we will be exploring this semester contains mature content and language. While not everyone may find the material tasteful, as a class we will discuss and defend the worth of such pieces while examining the relationship between the writer and the reader. If at any time you or your student have questions or concerns about the material we are reading please do not hesitate to voice them. I will be happy to ease concerns and find alternatives if needed.

Please return by **Monday, January 12, 2015** only if you have objections to your student reading this text.

Student's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Thank you for your time,

Emily Ericson
English Teacher
Geneseo High School
eericson@dist228.org

Process For Self- Selecting Alternative Texts

When considering opting out of reading a text presented to you in the classroom, it is important to consider what the purpose of the text is, and how you can still meet educational expectations and standards through reading/using an alternative text of your own choosing. You will have 3-5 days to complete this process. If you do not find something within that time, the teacher will select an alternative text for you. Please use the following process when evaluating other texts.

Answer the following questions about the classroom text you do not want to read:

-What are the learning standards being addressed by this text? By classroom practice associated with this text?

-What are the learning objectives being addressed by this text? By classroom practice associated with this text?

-What type of text is this? (i.e. fictional narrative, essay, novel, non-fiction book, short story, source document, etc.)

-What theme or themes are presented in this text?

-How does this text support the "big idea," or the over-arching essential question of the course?

Please take this selection guidesheet (with the front side completed) to Mrs. Brucher and ask her for help in selecting alternative texts.

The text you ultimately select must match the criteria on the front. That is to say that the self-selected text must align with the following:

- Standards
- Objectives
- Type/style
- “Big Idea,” addressing essential question(s)

Please list the titles recommended by or discovered in the library:

To assure that you are selecting a rigorous alternative, please identify the following elements in your self-selected text.

-What type of text is this?

-How does this text fit into the “big idea” of this unit of instruction?

-What is the over-arching theme of this text?

-What standards/objectives will this text support? How will it support these standards/objectives?

-What text did you select? Why is this the best text from all of the others you looked at?

The House on Mango Street Guided Reading

While reading the vignettes (a brief evocative description, account, or episode) in the book, please respond in your reading logs to the guiding questions. In answering these questions, you will demonstrate your interaction with and understanding of the text. **You must include textual evidence in your responses. You must write in complete sentences.** I will be responding to your responses 1-2 times a week. I would like you also include questions you may have about the text in your reading logs.

There are some vignettes that have adult themes. I am not requiring you or expecting you to read these. Please, only read the pieces I have selected on this guide sheet.

Evaluation Questions—Your thoughts (using explicit textual evidence)

- What is your initial response to each of these pieces? Why do you feel that way?
 - “The House on Mango Street”
 - “Hairs”
 - “Boys & Girls”
 - “My Name”
 - “Cathy Queen of Cats”
 - “Our Good Day”
 - “Laughter”
 - “Gil’s Furniture Bought & Sold”
 - “Louie, His Cousin & His Other Cousin”
 - “Marin”
 - “Those Who Don’t”
 - “Alicia Who Sees Mice”

Analysis Questions—Delving deeper, and exploring metaphors, figurative language, and theme.

- “There Was an Old Woman She Had So Many Children She Didn’t Know What to Do”
 - What happens at the end of this story?
 - What commentary is the last sentence making about society?
- “Darius & the Clouds”
 - This story is not suggesting that God is a literal cloud. Instead, Cisneros is using figurative language to say something special about Darius. What is this story saying about Darius and his perception of the world? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- “The Family of Little Feet”
 - What is this story suggesting about female image and expectations in society? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

- “The First Job” “Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark”
 - What do these stories suggest about working in America, and the idea that “if you work hard, you will get ahead?” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- “Born Bad”
 - What is this story about?
 - What does the metaphor “Born Bad” mean?
- “No Speak English”
 - What does this suggest about multi-culturalism?
 - What conflicts could young people, coming from different cultural communities encounter?
 - Is this fair? Why or why not?
- “A House of My Own” “Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes”
 - What do these stories suggest about the importance of personal stories?
 - What do these stories suggest about personal space and ownership?
 - Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Synthesis Questions—Putting thoughts and themes together (include several pieces of textual evidence when responding to these questions. Must be complete paragraphs [quote sandwiches])

- What impact does the vignette style of writing have on the reader?
- Why did the author choose to write in vignettes?
- How do you think Sandra Cisneros would respond to the Quarter 3 Essential Questions? What makes you say this?
- Do you agree or disagree with the ideas Cisneros is presenting?



Contact the English Language Arts Content Specialists in your area with questions and assistance regarding Common Core.

Illinois State Board of Education English Language Arts Content Specialists

[Sarah McCusker](#), ISBE Principal Consultant

[Erik Iwersen](#)

Area I [Amy Robinson](#)

Area II [Jill Brown](#)

Area III [Katy Sykes](#)

Area IV & V [Kathi Rhodes](#)

English Language Arts Common Core Standards Resource Listing

Reading Resource Links

<http://www.folger.edu/>

This may be old hat for everyone who has taught Shakespeare, but this has always been an inexhaustible resource with some great stuff on it. There are loads of unit and lesson plans, as well as printable downloads, primary source documents, and much, much more.

<http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>

Poetry 180 is a site that changes posted poems daily. It is geared for the high school student and designed by the Library of Congress. A resource tab also contains links to a virtual tour of the Library's Poetry Room and featured webcasts.

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/subject/literature-language-arts>

This is a site put up the National Endowment for Humanities, with strategies, lessons, and unit plans for teachers of Humanities, literature, history, and Fine Arts. There are lots of great ideas for teaching non-fiction, and drawing connections between content areas.

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/subject/literature-language-arts>

This is a site put up the National Endowment for Humanities, with strategies, lessons, and unit plans for teachers of Humanities, literature, history, and Fine Arts. There are lots of great ideas for teaching non-fiction, and drawing connections between content areas.

<http://www.literacyleader.com/>

Teachers and learners will find resources and can share best practices for teaching students to effectively read, write, listen, speak, and think.

<http://www.superteacherworksheets.com/full-ela.html>

This site includes sample reading texts and printable poems for different grade levels along with practice sheets for grammar.

http://www.learner.org/inorth/tm/InstrucStrats_40Best.html

Journey North's lessons and activities provide teachers with resources engaging students in real-world investigations and incorporating content area reading strategies.

Writing Resource Links

www.readwritethink.org

Teachers can find lessons and student graphic organizers. The lesson plans provided incorporate mini lessons as well as unit lessons that align to Common Core Standards. Also, parent activities are listed.

<http://www.nwp.org/>

The National Writing Project website lists the sites of the project in Illinois colleges as well as other state colleges. There is also a section that posts video clips of educators talking about digital writing. The sites work to provide professional development to area schools. They generate research and develop resources to improve the teaching of writing and learning. In Illinois, the Writing Project can be found at the following universities: University of Illinois at Chicago and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Eastern Illinois University, Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and National-Lewis University.

www.writingfix.com

Daily prompts are generated for journal writing. Lesson plans are listed as well as samples of student work. The website gives examples of writing genres and samples of each genre. Mentor texts are suggested and graphic organizers are provided for each genre.

<http://www.ttms.org/>

Teaching That Makes Sense is a website that provides a writing strategy guide including charts to organize student writing. Student writing samples and an explanation of the writing workshop are presented. Writing posters for teachers are available as well.

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/teachwriting/>

Scholastic has a section of examples of writing prompts and mini-lessons, lesson plans, posters, reproducibles, and professional articles available for teacher use.

<http://thewritesource.com>

The Write Source posts writing topics for students as well as student examples of the multiple writing genres.

http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hme/k_5/brightideas/

Houghton Mifflin English published some free online writing prompts with pictures for student use.

<http://www.theteacherscorner.net/daily-writing-prompts/>

Writing prompts are listed by months of the year.

<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/writingbeliefs>

The National Council of Teachers of English position statement about writing can be found at this site.

Text Complexity Resource Links

<http://www.textproject.org/topics/common-core-state-standards>

This site offers a wealth of research based articles and resources that focus on the Common Core Standards and Text Complexity.

Language Arts Resource Links

www.vocabulary.com

After scrolling down through the site, the bottom menu allows a visitor to search out current vocabulary lists that others have made, create their own set of vocabulary lists, research certain historical documents and offer test preparation guidance. Certain literature titles have also been designed.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/>

This website is run by NCTE and the International Reading Assoc. This is probably the best existing resource for teachers who are looking for strategies and lessons plans in the High School or Middle School English classroom. There are links and downloads galore, as well as webinars for common core and ideas for implementing it.

www.englishpage.com

Grammar and mechanics pages for teachers and students to use as well as tutorials.

Science/ Social Studies Resource Links

<http://www.amnh.org/education/resources>

Resources for Learning is a collection of activities, articles, evidence and analysis and more, for educators, families, students and anyone interested in teaching or learning about science.

Digital Literacy Resource Links

<http://tilesig.wikispaces.com/Cool+Tools>

Tools to enhance literacy is from The Technology In Literacy Education-Special Interest Group which is affiliated with the International Reading Association.

www.readwritethink.org

Read, write, think has lesson plans for digital literacy for teachers for grades k-12

www.naturalreaders.com

Assistive technology for special needs students can be found at naturalreaders.com and bookshare.org

www.thescriptorium.net

The scriptorium is a webzine for writers.

www.bitstrips.com

Bitstrips is a comic strip creator for students.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/valsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.cfm>

Incorporates graphic novel booklists from the American Library Association

<http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/homepage>

Skype is a place to video call that might help students to do projects collectively even when they don't live next door to each other.

www.clrn.org/fdti/

Digital textbooks

<http://www.digitalpromise.org/>

Digital Promise-national center created by Congress. Their goal is to identifying breakthrough technologies, learn faster what is working and what is not, and transform the market for learning technologies.

<http://www.schooltube.com/videos>

A site that has royalty free music, videos and lesson plans for video production and digital storytelling

<http://www.teachertube.com/>

Includes videos, audio clips and photos

<http://www.curriki.org/>

Content area information for teachers, parents and students

<http://www.adlit.org/>

Adolescent Literacy-resources for teachers including book lists, teaching strategies as well as research reports for parents and teachers of grades 4-12.

<http://www.khanacademy.org>

K-12 grade library of videos of lessons for students, parents and teachers

<http://wwii.ltc.k12.il.us/portal/wwii/WWIIClassroomProjectVideos/TabId/81/CategoryId/11/WWII-Classroom-Projects.aspx>

Illinois WWII veteran project has full length videos with veterans talking about the war

Other Helpful Links

<http://betterlesson.com/>

This site has cross curricular lesson plans for free. Registration is required to access parts of the site.

<http://freeology.com/graphicorgs/page/12/>

Nearly 100 free, printable graphic organizers for a wide variety of topics can be accessed.

<http://www.washingtonco.k12.nc.us/siteimages/images/uploads/Graphic%20Organizers%20for%20Reading.pdf>
*

Graphic organizers can be accessed that connect to specific reading skills with a focus on informational strategies in upper elementary and middle school.

<http://www.achievethecore.org/>

This is a new site developed to share materials and ideas for implementing common core that was set up "by teachers, for teachers." It could turn out to be a great resource in the long term.



Illinois State Board of Education

James T. Meeks, Chairman
Tony Smith, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Education



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new Illinois Learning Standards - Math/ELA Resources

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Parent Resources (8/27/15)

ISBE Hot Topics - School Year 2015-16

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Assessment Information Page for Families (National PTA)

Assessment Fact Sheet - Moving Beyond the Bubble

PTA Position Statements on Assessments

Parents' Guide to Student Success

Common Core Standards Overview (9/13)

Frequently Asked Questions (9/13)

Frequently Asked Questions (ISBE) (8/13)

Common Core Standards Overview (9/13)

Council of Great City Schools Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core

IL PTA and ISBE Parent Guides

Kindergarten Spanish

Grade 1 Spanish

Grade 2 Spanish

Grade 3 Spanish

Grade 4 Spanish

Grade 5 Spanish

Grade 6 Spanish

Grade 7 Spanish

Grade 8 Spanish

High School: ELA ELA Spanish Math Math Spanish

PARCC Resource and Website Guide (8/15)

Parent Information on Common Core Standards

Webinar/Presentation Archive

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General Resources

[Achieve, Inc.](#)

[Achieve, Inc. - Review of Illinois Learning Standards](#)

[Common Core Fact Sheet \(8/13\)](#)

[Common Core Professional Learning Series – Over fifty topics with over two hundred associated strategies, tools, and materials for teachers.](#)

[Common Core Standards Overview \(9/13\)](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions \(9/13\)](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions \(ISBE\) \(8/13\)](#)

[Guide to New Assessments \(PARCC and Smarter Balance\) for the Common Core State Standards](#)

[How the New Common Core Standards Address College and Career Readiness](#)

[Illinois Common Core: At a Glance](#)

[Illinois Common Core: Facts vs Myth](#)

[Illinois Learning Standards](#)

[I-SAIL Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries](#)

[ISBE Hot Topics: Fall 2013 Standards and Assessment Update](#)

[SY14 Assessment Updates PPT \(8/13\)](#)

[Growth Model Value Table Implementation Webinar \(9/13\)](#)

[Join the ELA or Math Listserv](#)

[New Illinois Learning Standards - A Primer](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

[The New Illinois Learning Standards...An Overview of Design and Content Presentation PDF Format](#)

[Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma That Counts](#)

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ELA Educator Resources (1/28/14)

[A First Look at Common Core ELA & Literacy in Illinois \(ACT\)](#)

[Capture the Core Newsletter for Teachers](#)

[Common Core Professional Learning Series – Over fifty topics with over two hundred associated strategies, tools, and materials for teachers.](#)

[Common Core Teaching and Learning Strategies for English & Language Arts](#)

[Reading Informational Text](#)

[Grades 6-12 \(7/12\)](#)

[Grades K-5 \(7/12\)](#)

[Reading Literature](#)

Grades 6-12 (12/12)

Grades K-5 (12/12)

Data and Assessments: ISBE Recommended Resources for Common Core Standards

Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) Rubric: ELA/Literacy (1/14)

ELA Shift Kits (1/14)

English Language Arts: ISBE Recommended Resources for Common Core Standards

Fact Sheet: Illinois Schools Implement New English Language Arts Standards (11/13)

I-SAIL Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries

Publishing Criteria for Literacy

Grades K-2

Grades 3-12

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Math Educator Resources (3/24/15)

A First Look at Common Core Mathematics in Illinois (ACT)

Capture the Core Newsletter for Teachers

Common Core Professional Learning Series – *Over fifty topics with over two hundred associated strategies, tools, and materials for teachers.*

Data and Assessments: ISBE Recommended Resources for Common Core Standards

Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) Rubric: Math (1/14)

Fact Sheet: Illinois Schools Implement New Math Standards (11/13)

Illustrative Mathematics

Mathematics: ISBE Recommended Resources for Common Core State Standards

Math PARCC Model Content Frameworks

Mathematics: The Common Core Toolbox

Math Works

Publishers' Criteria for Math

K-8

High School

Teacher to Teacher Professional Development Series

Creating High Quality Mathematics Assessments (49:00) (3/24/15)

Also available on Go-to-Webinar Cloud (MAC and PC)

Integrated Math: Lesson Examples and Student Samples from the 9-12 Classroom Webinar Video (48:25) (1/26/15)

Also available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/120843105>

Using Backward Design in Planning Math Lessons (49:35) (1/24/15)

Also available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/121033749>

[Tools for the Common Core Standards](#)

[University of Arizona Progressions Document](#)

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PARCC Assessment Resources (8/27/15)

[ISBE PARCC Assessment Page](#)

[PARCC Website](#)

[PARCC Resource and Website Guide](#) (8/15)

This four-page document highlights and explains features on the [PARCC website](#). Get quick links to such resources as technology guidance documents, PARCC Model Content Frameworks, and more.

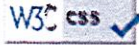
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Agency General Information

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Illinois State Board of Education

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www.isbe.net

Gery J. Chico
Chairman

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State Superintendent of Education

April 2013

Common Core State Standards Q and A

Q. What will the Common Core State Standards cost the taxpayer? Where will this money come from in our already struggling state?

A. There is no additional cost associated with implementing the Common Core State Standards as the process uses existing resources. The state sets learning standards, which outline the content and skills students must master at each grade level in order to be on track for high school graduation and postsecondary success. School districts then implement curriculum to meet these standards. The implementation of the Common Core standards is included in curriculum costs already incurred by local school districts. No line item in Illinois's current education budget proposal, which is available at <http://www.isbe.net/budget/FY14/FY14-budget-request.pdf>, is devoted to implementing the Common Core. Over time, the standards may even result in cost savings for Illinois as the Common Core will allow states to share curriculum materials, items on state tests, best practices and experiences. Therefore, each state does not have to separately invest time and money in these often expensive undertakings. It is also important to note that Illinois' education budget has been reduced by nearly \$900 million since Fiscal Year 2009, and the state's contribution for education is ranked the lowest of all 50 states.

Q. What if the Common Core State Standards do not work for our students? Will parents' voices be heard if they are unhappy with the way standards are being implemented?

A. The standards establish *what* students need to learn, but do not tell teachers *how* to teach. Teachers will continue to create lesson plans and tailor instruction to the unique needs of the students in their classroom. The best understanding of what works in the classroom comes from the teachers who are in them, which is why the standards allow each teacher in each classroom to figure out what works best. Implementation decisions will remain local. Teachers and school leaders will determine how the standards are to be taught and will establish the curriculum, just as they currently do, allowing for continued flexibility and creativity.

Q. Did the public have an opportunity to discuss the Common Core State Standards before they were implemented? How were teachers involved in the standards' development?

A. Illinois was in the process of updating standards in English Language Arts and Math, which had not been updated since 1997, when our state joined an initiative spearheaded by governors and state education chiefs from across the nation to develop common standards. The Common Core State Standards drafting process relied on teachers and standards experts from across the country. Additionally, many state experts came together to create the most thoughtful and transparent process of standard setting. This was only made possible by many states working together. Illinoisans had the opportunity to provide feedback on the Common Core during two public comment periods, one in September 2009 and the other in March 2010. Teachers, parents, higher education representatives, and community members from Illinois offered their comments on the standards. Illinois contributed to development of the Common Core as well by having Illinois State Board of Education staff provide feedback on multiple drafts of the standards throughout the development process.

Q. Why was there no legislative action for this massive change in education? Did the legislature know this was taking place?

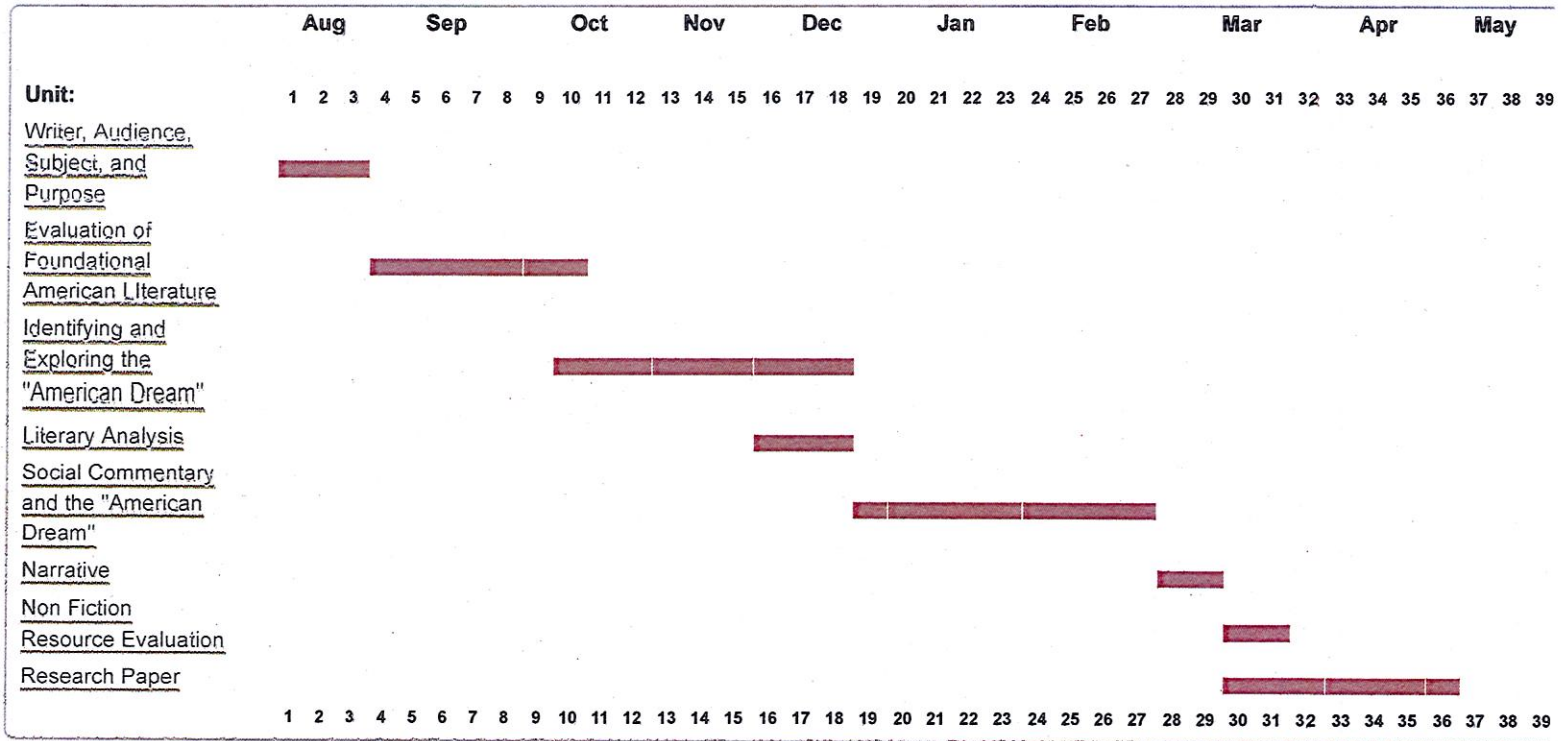
A. The Illinois State Board of Education initially reviewed the standards on June 24, 2010. The standards were also published in the *Illinois Register* on July 9, 2010, which initiate a 45-day public comment period. The Board adopted the rulemaking on Sept. 24, 2010, and the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, a bipartisan legislative oversight committee, issued a Certification of No Objection on Oct. 19, 2010. The rulemaking incorporating the standards took effect on Oct. 28, 2010 and was published in the *Illinois Register* on Nov. 12, 2010.

Q. Does the implementation of the Common Core State Standards give the federal government control over our state's curriculum?

A. The federal government was not involved in the development of the Common Core standards, and it will not govern the initiative. Implementing the Common Core has been a state-led and driven initiative from the beginning. States will voluntarily adopt the standards based on the timelines and context in their state. The Common Core does NOT amount to a national curriculum for our schools as the standards are not a curriculum. The standards are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for what knowledge and skills will help our students succeed. Local teachers, principals, superintendents and others will decide how the standards are to be met.



Geneseo District > High School > English Language Arts





Illinois State Board of Education

James T. Meeks, Chairman
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Follow us:  

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

new Illinois Learning Standards - Math/ELA

[Model Math Curriculum](#)

[ELA/Math PLS: Tools/Materials](#)

[Resources](#)

[Webinars/Workshops](#)

Illinois joined more than 40 states in a collaborative effort to raise learning standards and improve college and career readiness for all students regardless of where they live. The new Common Core State Standards establish clear expectations for what students should learn in English language arts and mathematics at each grade level. The standards are high, clear, and uniform to ensure that students are prepared for success in college and the workforce.

By emphasizing depth over breadth, the Common Core ensures that students have comprehensive understanding of key concepts. Illinois adopted the Common Core in 2010 and teachers and administrators across the state fully implemented the new standards during the 2013-14 school year. Many schools have already begun to incorporate elements of the new learning standards into their curricula. The Common Core determines what educators should teach, not how they should teach. Teachers will continue to have the freedom to tailor lesson plans to the individual needs of students. The Common Core's higher standards and emphasis on applying knowledge to real world situations will better prepare Illinois students for the challenges facing them after high school graduation.

Illinois has developed The Professional Learning Series (PLS) which is a repository for professional development resources and tools to assist the various aspects of common core implementation. There are more than fifty topics with over two hundred associated strategies, tools, and support materials.

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Twenty-six states are working together in the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. The new assessment system will greatly increase the number of graduating students who are ready to succeed after graduating. Illinois is one of 11 states serving on PARCC governing board, helping to lead the way.

These 26 states have adopted the new K-12 Common Core State Standards in English and math and are pooling their resources for an internationally benchmarked assessment system. New standards in other subjects are being developed, too. Students who score proficient on assessments will be on track for success in college and the workplace. Younger schoolchildren will demonstrate they are on pace for high school.

The new online assessments, which will be ready for states to administer by the 2014-15 school year, will be better aligned with higher education demands. More than 200 higher education institutions across the 26 states have committed to participate in the partnership and will contribute to the design of the high school assessments.

Compared to traditional tests, the online assessments will aim to engage students in more meaningful demonstrations of their knowledge and understanding. The New Learning Standards incorporate more real-world situations so students can learn important skills to utilize in the work and higher education.

The online assessments will also provide teachers and administrators more feedback on student progress from K-12, allowing for them to better target and adjust instruction. Students and parents will also benefit from more information about performance compared to achievement standards as well as state comparisons.

PARCC Resources

[ISBE PARCC Assessment Page](#)

[Illinois PARCC Home Page](#)

For more information on the Common Core State Standards, log onto www.corestandards.org.

- Fewer, clearer, higher
- Internationally benchmarked
- 21st Century Skills
- Evidence-based



Geneseo Community Unit School District 228
Language Arts 3



Geneseo District > High School > English Language Arts > Language Arts 3 > Week 4 - Week 10

Last Updated: Wednesday, March 4, 2015 by
Emily Ericson

Evaluation of Foundational American Literature

Collaboration

Stage 1: Desired Results

Learning Standards

CCSS: English Language Arts 6-12

CCSS: Grades 11-12

Reading: Informational Text

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- RI.11-12.3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- RI.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- RI.11-12.5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- RI.11-12.9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

21st Century Skills

P21: 21st Century Student Outcomes

P21: K-12

Learning & Innovation Skills

Work Creatively with Others

- Develop, implement and communicate new ideas to others effectively

Make Judgements and Decisions

- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis

- W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- W.11-12.2c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
- W.11-12.2f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- W.11-12.9b. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses]").

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- SL.11-12.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Essential Questions

What does it mean to be an American?

What are the foundations of America?

How do immigrants build America?

How does literature shape the idea of an "American"?

How do Americans shape literature?

Instructional Objectives

- Read and annotate documents from early America; i.e. Christopher Columbus and John Smith. (RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.5, RI.11-12.9)
- Read and annotate documents from Puritan era America; i.e. William Bradford, Edward Taylor, Anne Bradstreet, and Jonathan Edwards. (RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.5, RI.11-12.9)
- Read and annotate documents from Revolutionary War era America; i.e. Tomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Patrick Henry. (RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.5, RI.11-12.9, W.11-12.9b)
- Read and annotate documents from early American philosophers; i.e. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. (RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.5, RI.11-12.9)
- Illustrate author's purpose by making claims. (W.11-12.1, W.11-12.2c, W.11-12.2f, W.11-12.10)
- Compare and contrast early American literature through class discussion. (SL.11-12.1a, SL.11-12.1c, SL.11-12.1d, SL.11-12.2)

Skills

Bloom's Taxonomy

- **Identify** the main idea of writings
- **Deconstruct** authors' arguments
- **Explain** how connotations and denotations of words and expressions affect readers' understanding of main ideas
- **Compare and Contrast** early American writings through writing argumentative claims and providing textual support as evidence of these claims
- **Explain** authors' subject by **creating** claims and supporting claim by citing textual evidence
- **Argue** authors' purpose by **creating** claims and supporting arguments by citing textual evidence
- **Explain** how connotations and denotations of words and expressions affect readers' understanding of main ideas
- **Combine** background knowledge with textual support to **create** inductive and analytical questions that serve as the basis for in-class discussion

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Assessment

Weekly Whole Class Discussion




Formative: Oral: Discussion

Every Friday students come to class with an inductive and an analytical question over the week's reading. Students then lead class discussion.

Analysis of Foundational American Literature

Summative: Test: Common

This is the quarter one assessment. The prompt asks students to think about the themes that have existed throughout all of the first quarter texts. Students must analyze what it is they have read and write an argumentative essay that includes textual evidence.

-  Weekly Whole Class Discussion Rubric
-  Analysis of Foundational American Literature
-  2013 ELA3 Q1 Assessment Rubric

Stage 3: Learning Plan

Learning Activities

Direct Instruction

- Structured overview
- Lecture
- Compare and contrast
- Guides for reading, etc
- Higher order thinking questions (Bloom's Taxonomy, Open-ended questions, Pseudo open-ended questions)

Instructional Strategies

Resources and Tech Integration