



# Wyoming Department of Education

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## MEMORANDUM NO. 2013-099

**TO:** District Superintendents  
Principals

**FROM:** Julie Magee, Administrator  
Standards and Accountability Division

**DATE:** August 14, 2013

**SUBJECT:** WDE Produces Timeline on Process and Implementation of  
Common Core State Standards

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### INFORMATION TO SHARE

In response to inquiries regarding the process followed in the adoption of the current Wyoming math and language arts content standards, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has produced a timeline of important dates and information regarding their implementation.

The document may be seen here: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/sf-docs/standards/ccss-in-wyoming-081213.pdf>

The timeline starts in 2009 and outlines the original memorandum of agreement signed by then-Governor Dave Freudenthal and Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Jim McBride. The piece points to the fact that participation in the process by the state of Wyoming was voluntary and the state could leave the process at any time.

The timeline also offers dates and links to the opportunities provided by the WDE for public comment on the Common Core State Standards, the Wyoming content standards review process, as well as the seven public hearings on the process held around Wyoming.

The document ends with the State Board of Education's vote on adopting the revised standards in language arts and math and Governor Matt Mead's signing of the revised standards, putting them into effect on July 11, 2012.

District Superintendents  
Principals  
August 14, 2013  
Page 2

In June, the WDE put forth a set of frequently asked questions and answers addressing the CCSS. To access the FAQ sheet, click here: [http://  
edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/standards/common-core-state-standards-faq.aspx](http://edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/standards/common-core-state-standards-faq.aspx).

## **Important dates and information about the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in Wyoming**

**2009** – Wyoming State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Jim McBride, and Governor Dave Freudenthal sign memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and National Governors Association for Best Practices (NGA) regarding the CCSS. The MOA allows the state to participate a state-led process to draw on evidence to lead to a set of common core state standards (CCSS) in language arts and mathematics for students in grades K-12. This effort is voluntary, and states may leave the CCSS at any time.

Key points from MOA document:

- Individual states decide how to best align curriculum materials and instructional methods to CCSS. This has and will continue to be a local decision; curriculum and instruction in each of the nine content areas must align to those specific content area standards.
- Individual states decide how to align the statewide assessment (PAWS in Wyoming) to the CCSS. The statewide assessment has always aligned to the standards. When the standards change, the assessment changes to measure the new standards.
- Participating states, like Wyoming, were invited to “provide input into the drafting of the common core.” The timeline below includes opportunities the states had to submit feedback related to the CCSS initiative.
- Individual states chose *how* to adopt the CCSS. There were three options:
  - Adopt the CCSS in its entirety, as it was written and published on [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org);
  - Align at least 85% of a state’s “home-grown” standards to the CCSS; or,
  - Adopt the CCSS in its entirety with the option to “include additional state standards beyond the common core standards.”

In Wyoming, content review committees for math and language arts chose to adopt the CCSS in its entirety without adding additional standards. The content review committees included educators from K-12 and higher education, as well as parents.

- The MOA describes ways the USDE can support states that choose to adopt the CCSS. However, no state was required to adopt the CCSS, and every state had the option to pull out of the CCSS consortium – before or even after adoption of the CCSS. Additionally, no state is required to accept support from the USDE (i.e. Race to the Top funds) as a result of adopting the CCSS. States can choose to adopt and support the implementation of the CCSS on their own. Wyoming currently receives no federal dollars as a result of its adoption of the CCSS. The decision to adopt the CCSS in Wyoming was made following its state-initiated standards review process.

**September 25, 2009** – Wyoming Department of Education informs districts through a Superintendent’s Memo that the NGA and CCSSO have released the first official public draft of the college and career readiness standards in language arts and math. People were

encouraged to comment on this iteration of the CCSS by October 21, 2009. An FAQ document related to the CCSS initiative accompanied this memo and can be found here: [http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt\\_memos/2009/2009\\_150.pdf](http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt_memos/2009/2009_150.pdf)

**March 12, 2010** – NGA and CCSSO request additional public comment on the draft CCSS for language arts and math. Wyoming Department of Education sends a Superintendent’s Memo to the districts asking for public comments and feedback on a survey. The memo and accompanying request from NGA and CCSSO can be found here: [http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt\\_memos/2010/2010\\_052.pdf](http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt_memos/2010/2010_052.pdf) Another FAQ document related to the CCSS initiative was also provided by NGA and CCSSO and can be found here: <http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CoreFAQ.pdf>

**March 26, 2010** – The Wyoming Department of Education sends districts an online survey for educators to submit feedback regarding the first draft of the standards and their potential impact on Wyoming education. Wyoming Department of Education sends districts notification in a Superintendent’s Memo which can be found here: [http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt\\_memos/2010/2010\\_065.pdf](http://edu.wyoming.gov/PublicRelationsArchive/supt_memos/2010/2010_065.pdf)

**June 16, 2010** – The Wyoming State Board of Education gives approval for *consideration* of the Common Core State Standards in its next standards review process. This vote did not solidify an adoption of the CCSS in Wyoming; instead, it gave the Wyoming content review committees an avenue to consider the CCSS as an option during the standards revision process.

**Summer 2010 through Summer 2011** – Wyoming standards review committee revises its state content standards in the fields of math, language arts, and health (please note that health is not part of CCSS). Pursuant to W.S. 21-2-304, the State Board of Education reviews the standards every five years to ensure they are still meeting the needs of Wyoming students. The review process involves Wyoming educators; additionally, Wyoming business leaders, parents, legislators, and educational board members are invited to be part of the review process. In general, approximately 35 people participate per content area.

**September 23, 2011** – The Wyoming standards review committee presents the revised standards for math and language arts (CCSS), as well as health, to the State Board of Education. The Board approves the revised Wyoming content standards in language arts, math, and health. This date marks the completion of each review committee’s work. The affirmative vote gives authority to begin the rules promulgation process, which includes another opportunity for public comment. Board members require additional language stating no part of this action (affirmative vote) should be interpreted as any attempt to dictate curriculum at the national or state level. This statement is added to the rationale document that accompanies the standards.

**December 2011 through February 2012** – Rules promulgation takes place for standards revisions in math, language arts, and health.

**December 7, 2011** – Wyoming Department of Education posts proposed content standards in language arts, math, and health on WDE website. All of the content-area standards can be found on the WDE website:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/standards.aspx>

Included with each of the standards is a rationale written by each content-area committee explaining the reason for the current revisions. This rationale is included for the math and language arts standards, which are now the Common Core State Standards and can be found here: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/sf-docs/standards/final-2012-math-standards.pdf> (math), <http://edu.wyoming.gov/sf-docs/standards/final-2012-ela-standards.pdf> (language arts).

**December 12, 2011** – The Wyoming Department of Education begins accepting public comment on the content standards in math and language arts (which are now the Common Core State Standards). As part of the rules promulgation process, the general public is invited to comment on the revised standards. Announcements were posted on our website and distributed via memo to every school district, as well as through a press release. Additionally, all State Board meetings are open to the public, and people had the opportunity to comment on the CCSS in that forum as well. Finally, the WDE sponsored multiple public hearings across the state (see dates listed below).

**January 25, 2012** – Public Comment period for content standards in math and language arts closes.

**February 6, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on new content standards in Gillette.

**February 7, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on new content standards in Casper.

**February 8, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on new content standards in Thermopolis.

**February 9, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on content standards in Rock Springs.

**February 10, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on content standards in Cheyenne.

**February 13, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education holds public hearing on content standards over the Wyoming Equality Network (WEN) in Casper, Cheyenne, Laramie, Riverton, Rock Springs, Powell and Torrington.

**February 14, 2012** – Wyoming Department of Education reports to State Board on public comment received during statewide hearings.

**March 20, 2012** – State Board receives suggestions on rule promulgation for state standards as well as written feedback from public hearings and public comment period.

**April 27, 2012** – State Board of Education takes a roll call vote to decide whether or not to allow the revised standards in math, language arts, and health to move forward to the governor for his 75-day review. Eight out of 12 Board members voted in favor of the new standards (see below).

A roll call vote to adopt revised standards in health, language arts, and math (proposed standards for language arts and math are CCSS):

Scotty Ratliff-Yes

Pete Gosar-Yes

Matt Garland-No

Belenda Willson- Yes

Ron Micheli- No

Cindy Hill- No

Joe Reichardt-Yes

Sue Belish- Yes

Hugh Hageman- No

Kathy Coon- Yes

Walt Wilcox- Yes

Dana Mann-Tavegia- Yes

The motion is carried.

**July 11, 2012** – After a 75-day review following the State Board of Education’s vote to adopt the revised standards, Governor Matt Mead signs new content standards in math, language arts, and health into law.

## Q & A:

- What does the *common* in Common Core State Standards mean?
  - The standards are *common* in that a child in Wyoming will have the same expectations as a child in Massachusetts. A child in Massachusetts will have the same expectations as a child in Arizona. Standards define what a child should know and be able to do in a given content area within a given timeframe. For instance, “A student recognizes and names all letters of the alphabet by the end of kindergarten.” This is an example of a *common* expectation of students from state to state.
- Does *common* mean we treat all students as if they are the same?
  - No. Students enter the classroom with differences in background and ability. While the expectations of all students may be the same (i.e. students exiting kindergarten should be able to recognize and name all letters of the alphabet), the curriculum materials and instructional methods may vary to meet individual student needs. This is called differentiated instruction: the end goal is the same (*common*), but the path to reach that goal differs based on student need.
- Does *common* mean every district in every state has to use the same curriculum materials?
  - No. States have their own policies about curriculum (i.e. textbooks) adoption. In Wyoming, there is local control. That means individual school boards, districts, schools, and/or teachers choose the materials used to help students meet the standards (expectations). For example, if a standard says a student should be able to describe the way dialogue or actions in a story contribute to the plot, a teacher may choose a work of fiction s/he deems most appropriate to meet that expectation. These curriculum and instructional decisions are not made by federal or state government.
- If the curriculum materials are not *common* from state to state, and if curriculum decisions remain with individual school districts, why is there a list of texts and narratives on the CCSS website?  
(see [http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix\\_B.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf))
  - This list contains suggestions of exemplar texts and narratives that teachers may choose to use to deliver instruction toward the standards. Teachers may opt not to use any of the suggested materials in favor of choosing their own texts and narratives that align to the standards.
- Do the CCSS replace *all* of Wyoming’s standards?
  - No. The CCSS apply to math and language arts. Wyoming has nine content areas, each of which has its own standards: math, language arts, health, foreign language, fine & performing arts, science, social studies, career/vocational education, and P.E. Each content area goes through a review and revision process every five years per state statute. The State Board of Education has oversight of standards revisions.
- The CCSS for language arts include literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects in grades 6-12. Isn’t that replacing standards in those content areas?

- No. This section of the CCSS for language arts sets expectations for students to become literate in each of those content areas. For example, in a Wyoming History course, a student would be expected to understand visual information (i.e. maps, charts, photographs) and connect it to the information presented in the text. To read the complete set of 6-12 literacy standards described here, please visit <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy> and scroll down to **Grades 6-12 Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects** on the left-hand side.
- Does the existence of the literacy standards in 6-12 mean language arts teachers have to teach those subjects now?
  - No. The literacy standards in 6-12 are intended to be integrated into those specific content areas (i.e. social studies literacy will be integrated in the social studies classroom; science literacy will be integrated in the science classroom; etc.).

**Additional FAQ's related to Wyoming's adoption of the CCSS can be found here:**

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/standards/common-core-state-standards-faq.aspx>

(link)

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/sf-docs/standards/ccssfaq.pdf?sfvrsn=2> (PDF)

**Resources related to the CCSS for educators and parents can be found here:**

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/standards/common-core-state-standards.aspx>

Information and resources related to the CCSS in Wyoming are continually being added to our website, so please check back for updates. You may also contact the following WDE staff for specific questions:

- Julie Magee, Standards Division Administrator  
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