Implementation of the Common Core State Standards
A Transition Guide for School-level Leaders

Developed by the Aspen Institute Education and Society Program, Education First, Insight Education Group, Student Achievement Partners and Targeted Leadership Consulting

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

INDICATOR #3:

Ongoing professional learning, including feedback and coaching systems, is focused on deepening educator knowledge of and facility with the CCSS.

What It Means

Effective implementation of the CCSS is tied to deep understanding of the standards and the instructional shifts they require, as well as the understanding of and ability to make those shifts in classroom practice. Professional learning should focus on practices that help students meet the new standards, such as teaching them to conduct close reading of complex texts, publicly struggle with difficult mathematics problems, and communicate their thinking through speaking or writing. These expectations necessitate robust professional learning experiences and systems for teachers that prioritize the CCSS and include high-quality content, multiple delivery modes (such as workshops, feedback systems, and coaching), and enhanced opportunities for teachers to collaborate and reflect as they look at student work, plan for instruction, and observe each other.

HIGH-IMPACT ACTIONS

• The leadership team develops a plan for professional learning that supports all teachers in understanding and implementing the CCSS.

• The leadership team develops a plan for professional learning that:
  ➢ Incorporates multiple modes of delivery (such as workshops, peer observation, study groups, and coaching) and prioritizes ongoing teacher collaboration and reflection.
  ➢ Creates opportunities for teacher voice and leadership in planning for and delivering professional learning experiences.
  ➢ Includes a system for gathering and addressing teacher feedback and data on classroom impact.

• The leadership team and other school staff design professional learning opportunities that meet the expectations of the CCSS.

MEASURES

• What percentage of professional learning resources (dollars and time) is spent deepening educator understanding of the CCSS and the instructional practices that support them?
  ➢ Is it sufficient? And how do you know?

• What percentage of teachers articulate increased knowledge of the instructional shifts as a result of participating in professional learning opportunities?

• How does the school determine which professional learning opportunities are the most effective?

TOOLS

Modules for CCSS-aligned professional learning:

• **CCSS Professional Development Modules**, Student Achievement Partners: These are flexible, ready-to-use modules intended to support educators in understanding and effectively implementing the CCSS and to support leaders in delivering PD. The modules include materials for teachers to strengthen their understanding of the CCSS.  
  www.achievethecore.org/PD

• **Professional Learning Units**, Learning Forward: These school-based resources train leadership teams as trainers, preparing them to deliver PD to colleagues about CCSS-aligned instruction.  
  www.learningforward.org/publications/implementing-common-core/professional-learning-units

• **Tools for Teachers**, The Aspen Institute: These modules help educators learn and practice key changes in the CCSS in English language arts and literacy. These modules on academic writing, text complexity, close reading, and text-dependent questions include a PowerPoint presentation, guide for trainers, and supplemental exemplars and activities.  
  www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/toolsforteachers