Common Core and the Utah Education Transformation Plan

(College, Career, and Citizenship Ready)

Utah State Board of Education
In order to compete in the world marketplace, by 2018, 66% of Utah jobs will require postsecondary training.¹

As of 2012, only 43% of Utah adults had a postsecondary certificate or degree.²

On average, only 58.5% of Utah high school graduates enroll in college.³

An educated workforce is critical for a prosperous economy. “The message is clear – investing in our children today, benefits all of us tomorrow.”

Governor Gary Herbert
Utah’s ranking decreased significantly in 2012 when ACT participation increased from 71% to 97%.

* NAEP is not used to determine College & Career Readiness because the standard deviation makes the test statistically flawed. Stoneberg, “Please Don’t Use NAEP Scores to Rank Order the 50 States” (Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, Vol 10, No. 9, Aug 2005).
The State Board of Education, Governor, and Legislature are partners in the governance of Public Education in Utah.
PUBLIC EDUCATION GOVERNANCE
Article X, Utah Constitution

Utah Legislature (School system, Budget, and Programs)

Utah Governor
- Veto Power
- Bully Pulpit
- State Board Election Process

Utah State Board of Education
Executive Authority (General Control & Supervision)

Utah State Superintendent
Chief Executive of Public Education

Federal Government
- Reduced Lunch, NCLB, Title I & IDEA

Utah State Office of Education (Staff)

Local District School Boards

Public Schools Operations

Local Superintendents

State Charter School Board

Charter Schools

Establish School System

Funding & Programs

General Control & Supervision (Educational Standards, Licensing, Programs & Funding Administration)
The Solution: Education Transformation

- The Utah State Board of Education has a Strategic Plan to solve the problem.

- Since 2009, the Utah State Board of Education has worked cooperatively with the Governor and the Legislature on this Strategic Plan.
By 2020, increase percentage of Utah high school graduates that have a postsecondary certificate or degree to 66%.

By 2020, increase percentage of students proficient in reading and math in the third, sixth and eighth grades to 90%.

By 2020, increase high school graduation rates to 90%.

By 2015, fully implement the Utah Core Standards (completion of five year phase-in plan).

By 2015, adopt Computer Adaptive Assessments.

By 2014, fully implement the ACT battery of assessments (EXPLORE—8th grade; PLAN—10th grade; ACT—11th grade).
How do we get there?

Standards

- Established by State Board
- UCA §53A-1-402.6
- Utah Const, Art 10, §3; USBA v. USBE, 17 P.3d 1125 (UT 2001)
- Original standards set in 1984 & reviewed every 5 – 7 years
- Common Core adopted – Aug 2010

Curriculum

- Local School Districts decide
- UCA §53A-3-402(1)(a)
- UCA §53A-1-402.6(5)
- Textbook publishers aligning to Common Core (no more living with large states dominating the textbook market)

Assessments

- 2008 Computer Adaptive Testing Pilot Programs (R277-405)
- 2011 - Pilot Programs reported significant success (i.e. Sevier School District)
- Formative and summative assessment that tells teachers the academic strengths and weaknesses of each student in real time

ACT/SAT

- SB 175 (2013) -- 100% participation of HS Juniors on the ACT test
- Educational Planning and Assessment System (ACT battery of tests)
- ACT, Statewide Administration of the ACT: A Key Component of Improving Student Access to College and Work (2009)
- ACT/SAT constitute the “Gold Standard” in College & Career Readiness – they are the gatekeepers to college entrance

College

- State Board Graduation Initiative – upgrading the graduation requirements (Increasing High School Rigor & Ensuring College & Career Readiness (March 2013))
- Limit remediation in freshman year of college

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ACT/SAT constitute the “Gold Standard” in College & Career Readiness – they are the gatekeepers to college entrance.

State Board Graduation Initiative – upgrading the graduation requirements (Increasing High School Rigor & Ensuring College & Career Readiness (March 2013))

Limit remediation in freshman year of college
The ACT and SAT College Entrance Exams will be aligned to the Common Core (the New “Gold Standard”)

- ACT, Inc., Alignment of Common Core and ACT’s College & Career Readiness System (June 2010)
## Common Core State Standards Initiative

### What it is:
- **State led effort to reform educational standards for English Language Arts and Math (began in 2008).**
- **National Governors Assoc. (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) partnered with 48 states in bringing together the most diverse group of public and private entities ever assembled to develop the standards – conservatives, moderates and liberals, from the US Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, Governors Jeb Bush and Chris Christie to the Gates Foundation.**
- Internationally bench marked.
- Steeped in “best practices.”

### What it is not:
- **Not federal standards or a federal take over of public education (federal government does not own the copyright).**
- **No federal funds used in development of the standards.**
- **No involvement by Obama Administration’s USDOE.**
- **Not a curriculum.**
- **Not a student database.**
- **Not part of FERPA (Privacy law).**
- **Not part of No Child Left Behind.**
- **Not part of Race to the Top.**
- **States are not required to adopt the Standards (voluntary).**

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The Utah Core Standards are a significant upgrade in both rigor and quality

Conservative Think Tank Fordham Institute rated Utah’s previous Core Standards as a C in English and an A- in Math. Common Core received a B+ in English and an A- in Math.

Math Work Team
52 math and educational professionals
18 University Mathematics/Statistics Professors (Yale, Arizona State, UC Berkley, Georgia, Missouri, Minnesota, Vermont, LSU, Arkansas, Maryland, Arizona, Florida)

Math Feedback Group
22 math and educational professionals
9 University Mathematics/Statistics Professors (Harvard, Texas, Johns Hopkins, Cal Poly, Arizona State, Michigan, Wisconsin, Northwestern)

English Language Arts Work Team
50 English and Educational Professionals
11 University English and Education Professors (Stanford, Northwestern, Ohio State, Illinois, UC Davis, Michigan, Georgia, Pittsburg, Brown)

English Language Arts Feedback Group
12 English and Educational Professionals
5 University English and Education Professors (Emory, Oregon, Florida State, Illinois, Wyoming)

Fordham concluded that “Common Core provides admirable focus and explicitly requires standard methods and procedures, enhancements that would benefit Utah’s standards.”
Were the Common Core State Standards subject to peer review?

**YES**

- NGA and CCSSO brought together educational experts in content, teaching and research to conduct an intensive review of the Standards. This Validation Committee was composed of 28 education professionals, which, among others, included:
  - 5 University Mathematics Professors (e.g., Delaware, Georgia, Stanford, Taiwan, Michigan State)
  - 7 University English and Education Professors (e.g., Harvard, UC Berkley, New York, Oregon, Pittsburg, Arkansas)
  - 5 Educational Research Scientists (North Carolina State, Rutgers, Wisconsin, Oregon)
  - 3 Elementary and Secondary School Teachers (Virginia, Arizona, New York)

Thomas B. Fordham Institute found that the Common Core State Standards were comparable or superior to the existing standards in 48 states, including Utah. Carmichael, “The State of State Standards – and the Common Core – in 2010,” *Fordham Institute* (July 2010)
But do **Utah** Literacy and Math experts support the standards?

The following **Utah** professionals & organizations have voiced their support for the new math and English/language arts standards:

- Dr. Peter E Trapa, Chair, Department of Mathematics, University of Utah
- Dr. David Wiley, Director of Research, Center for Improvement of Teacher Education, Brigham Young University
- Dr. Hugo Rossi, Director of the Center for Science and Math Education, University of Utah
- Dr. Emina Alibegovic, Professor of Mathematics, University of Utah
- Dr. James Cangelosi, Professor of Mathematics, Utah State University
- Dr. Janice A. Dole, Professor of Literacy, University of Utah
- Dr. D. Ray Reutzel, Distinguished Professor of Early Literacy Education, Utah State University
- Dr. Gary Dohrer, Professor of English, Weber State University
- Liz Herrick, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Westminster College
- Christine Walker, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Utah Valley University
- Keith White, Associate Professor, Developmental Mathematics, Utah Valley University
- Utah Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Utah Board of Regents
Unfounded Criticisms of the Common Core

• Two national experts don’t support the standards.
What about the criticisms from Dr. Stotsky and Dr. Milgram?

- The Common Core State Standards Validation Committee brought together 28 education content experts, university professors, teachers, and researchers to conduct the final review of the Common Core State Standards.

- Out of these 28 educational professionals, 4 dissented, including Dr. Stotsky and Dr. Milgram, who have toured the country criticizing the Common Core State Standards.

**Dr. Stotsky** is credited with spearheading the 2001 revisions to the Massachusetts educational standards. In doing so, Dr. David Driscoll, Commissioner of Education for Massachusetts (1999 – 2007) has stated “[d]uring the time I was Commissioner, Massachusetts chose NAEP performance standards . . . as our guides in developing our own curriculum frameworks, state assessments and performance standards.” ([In Defense of NAEP](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/education_iq/in-defense-of-naep/2012/02/17/gIQAOGvH_story.html), Washington Post, Feb 17, 2012). Dr. Stotsky sits on the NAEP Steering Committee for the “Reading Framework for the 2013 NAEP (October 2012).” **NAEP continues to be the only mandated federal standards and assessments in the country.**

**Dr. Milgram** helped author the California Math Standards. However, Dr. Hung-Hsi Wu, Professor of Mathematics, UC Berkley, who also helped author those same California Math Standards, has stated that the Common Core Math Standards are “at least comparable to the best state standards, such as those of California and Massachusetts.” R. Hess, *Education Week* (Oct 5, 2011).
Unfounded Criticisms of the Common Core

• Two national experts don’t support the standards.
• The Gates Foundation is involved.
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has contributed funding to the Common Core Initiative. What is the Gates Foundation?

“In the United States, our primary focus is on ensuring that all students graduate from high school prepared for college and have an opportunity to earn a postsecondary degree with labor-market value. Our approach is to play a catalytic role – to support the development of innovative solutions in education that are unlikely to be generated by institutions working alone and that can trigger change on a broader scale.”

- Largest private philanthropic organization in the world, with an endowment of over $36 billion. While the Gates Foundation leans left, on education they have a surprisingly conservative twist:

  - A leading proponent of charter schools.  
  - A leading proponent of performance pay for teachers.
Unfounded Criticisms of the Common Core

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- Massachusetts and California have higher standards.
Are the Massachusetts and California Standards better than the Common Core State Standards?

Massachusetts doesn’t think so

“The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education cited the increased academic rigor and stronger expectations for student performance when it voted 8-0 to adopt the Common Core Standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics on Wednesday, making Massachusetts the 27th state to adopt the internationally benchmarked academic standards that promise to keep the Commonwealth's students national leaders in education.”

Neither does California

“This work will take our state's already world-class standards to a new level, emphasizing a deep understanding of English-language arts and mathematics to ensure our students complete high school, ready to thrive in college and careers.”
Unfounded Criticisms of the Common Core

- Two national experts don’t support the standards.
- The Gates Foundation is involved.
- Massachusetts and California have higher standards.
- This is just the unsuccessful “Investigations Math” approach.
- This will kill the reading of classic literature.
“Its Investigations Math all over again”

Standards are not curriculum. Utah’s integrated approach favors a combination of the traditional/algorithm and the constructivist methods. Good teachers use elements of both, as recommended by the National Math Panel.

An example of a highly successful integrated approach is Singapore Math.

“It marks the death of reading great literature”

Literary works are still required reading in Common Core ELA. Informational texts are also emphasized because such texts are the hallmarks of both college achievement and real world experience.
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Is the State Board free to customize the Common Core Standards to Utah values?

YES

“The NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) hereby grant a limited, non-exclusive, royalty-free license to copy, publish, distribute, and display the Common Core State Standards for purposes that support the Common Core State Standards Initiative. These uses may involve the Common Core State Standards as a whole or selected excerpts or portions.” Common Core State Standards, Public License (2010). The Public License supersedes the May 2009 MOA between the CCSSI and the State of Utah (the 15% rule did not make it into the Public License).

There is no 15% rule in the USDOE flexibility waivers.

“The standards are owned by the states to do with what they wish.” Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director, CCSSO, USBE Meeting Minutes, 3 Aug 2012
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Common Core Time Line

May 2009 – State Board approves MOA to participate in CCI

August 2009 – NGA & CCSSO kick off the Common Core Initiative

April 2009 - NGA & CCSSO introduce the Common Core concept

June 2009 – CCI presented to Education Interim Committee

July 2009 – Race to the Top unveiled

2008 – NGA & CCSSO, “Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World Class Education” (introduces Common Core concept)

August 2009 – State Board adopts “Promises to Keep”

September 2009 – CCI Public Comment Period

January 2010 – State Board approves SBAC MOU

March 2010 – Utah does not receive a RTTT Grant (round 1)

May 2010 – CCI Public Comment Period

March 2010 – Utah does not receive a RTTT Grant (round 1)

May 2010 – State Board submits RTTT Application (round 1)

June 2010 – CCI issues Common Core State Standards

Summer 2010 – State Board provides for Utah Core Standards public comment (UCA §53A-1-402.6). Board of Regents v. Roth, 408 US 564 (1972) (“due process” only implicated where there is a property interest)

August 2010 – State Board withdraws from SBAC

August 2010 – Utah does not receive a RTTT Grant (round 2)

May 2010 – State Board submits RTTT Application (round 2)

August 2012 – State Board withdraws from SBAC

November 2012 – AIR successful bidder (received 10 out of 11 votes of the Selection Committee)

March 2012 – Utah does not receive a RTTT Grant (round 2)

May 2013 – State Board updates NCLB Waiver

June 2012 – USDOE grants NCLB Waiver

August 2012 – USDOE grants NCLB Waiver

May 2012 – AIR successful bidder

August 2012 – State Board submits RTTT Application (round 2)

June 2012 – USDOE grants NCLB Waiver

March 2012 – Letter from USDOE stating that Utah has “sole right to set learning standards”

September 2012 – State Board issues its own RFP for CAT

USBE, A Complete Resource Guide on the Utah Core Standards (December 2012); USBE, Utah Computer Adaptive Assessment System FAQ (February 2013)
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- Utah’s new Core Standards are an example of federal overreach.
In July 2009, the USDOE announced a competitive grant program entitled “Race to the Top.” One element of the grant was the adoption of College and Career Ready Standards, which could be satisfied by adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Utah’s grant application was denied. Since Utah was not awarded the grant and did not enter into a grant or cooperative agreement, Utah is under no federal grant requirement concerning the Common Core State Standards. (UCA §53A-1-402.6(6); Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, §§31 USC 6304-6305 (grant agreement or cooperative agreement required to bind federal government and state agency))

September 2010, USDOE awards the SBAC a $176 million grant to write computer adaptive assessments for the Common Core State Standards. Utah withdrew from SBAC in August 2012 to pursue its own computer adaptive assessment model. (USBE Meeting Minutes of 3 August 2012, motion passed 12-3; www.smarterbalanced.org/about/member-states)

USDOE has claimed credit for the Common Core State Standards as recently as March 2012. NGA reaffirmed shortly thereafter that the federal government played no role in developing the standards. The NGA and CCSSO hold the copyright, not the federal government. (USBE, A Complete Resource Guide on the Utah Core Standards (December 2012))

USDOE has allowed NCLB flexibility waivers tied to the Common Core State Standards. Utah has such a waiver. (www.schools.utah.gov/main/INFORMATION/Online-Newsroom/DOCS/UtahESEAWaiver.aspx)

**NCLB is a Federal Law that is 7 years overdue for reauthorization. Utah’s adoption of the Common Core Standards as part of the Utah Core Standards – standards over which Utah has complete control – has allowed Utah to receive a waiver from requirements within the Federal No Child Left Behind law.**
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• The NCLB waiver locks us into standards we cannot change.
The NCLB Waiver requires (1) that Utah adopt either Common Core Standards or its own College and Career Ready Standards approved by the Board of Regents, and (2) that Utah join one of the Common Core Assessment Consortiums or produce its own College and Career Ready Assessments.

The State Board has adopted the Common Core Standards (Box A), and not Board of Regents’ approved College & Career Ready Standards (Box B), because to do so would be unconstitutional as the State Board would be delegating a core function to the unelected Board of Regents. State v. Green, 793 P.2d 912 (Utah App. 1990); State v. Gallion, 572 P.2d 683 (Utah 1977) (non-delegation doctrine).

The State Board originally was part of the SBAC, but withdrew in August 2012, electing instead to issue its own RFP to produce Utah-specific College & Career Ready Assessments in the form of Computer Adaptive Tests. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) was the successful bidder to a five-year, $39 MM contract. 10 out of the 11 members on the Selection Committee found the AIR proposal to be the superior bid.

The State Board is free to amend its Utah Core Standards. If the USDOE believes that such amendments are substantial enough to withdraw the NCLB Waiver, then that is the risk the State Board consciously takes.

“No Child Left Behind is a flawed federal law.” Patti Harrington, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Utah (PBS Newshour, April 2005)
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- The Common Core is a new federal, high stakes assessment system.
The Common Core Standards are not assessments. The assessment of student learning is an important component of effective instruction. As always, the State Board of Education will continue to control state assessments.

### Computer Adaptive Testing

- Utah withdrew from SBAC and is not a member of any multi-state consortium.
- Utah is developing its own Formative, Interim, and Summative Adaptive Assessments.
- SAGE (Student Assessment for Growth and Excellence) replaces CRTs and UTIPS in 2014.
- Committee of 15 parents will review test questions (UCA §53A–1–603(8)).
- **AIR is required to comply with these privacy laws.** (AIR Contract, #136199, Attachment A, Condition #3, Dec 21, 2012; AIR letter to Superintendent Menlove, dated April 29, 2013)

### Who is AIR?

- Non-partisan, non-profit research, assessment, and technical assistance organization; founded in 1946; employs 1,600 staff; headquartered in Washington, DC.
- Nation’s premier provider of online adaptive accountability tests.
- Clients include the College Board, CISCO Systems, IBM, Verizon, Staples, Department of Defense and NASA.

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Jon Cohen, AIR, *Utah Statewide Computer Adaptive Assessment System* (February 2013)

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- Adopting the Common Core standards obligated Utah to develop a massive data system which collects personal information on students.
### Utah’s Longitudinal Data System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What it is:</th>
<th>What it is not:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Statewide student database. Created in 1998. Received federal grant to improve database from Bush Admin in 2007 and from Obama Admin in 2009.</td>
<td>- Federal grants did not require use of the “National Education Data Model”, and Utah does not and will not use said model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creates a unique student identifier</td>
<td>- Federal grant program established in 2002 by Bush Admin. It is neither part of Race to the Top, nor the Common Core Initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information collected includes: birth date, race, gender, special ed status, CRT results, ELS, Free &amp; Reduced Lunch status, grades, credits, enrollment dates, school &amp; district</td>
<td>- Student Behavior Indicators mean graduation data, grades, school discipline &amp; attendance history only! It does not include political beliefs/affiliation, sexual behaviors, DNA collection, family income/history, psychological/physical health, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information is released only in aggregate (<a href="#">no student level data is ever released</a>)</td>
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</tbody>
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15

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On May 2, 2013, the Utah State Board of Education enacted Resolution 2013-03, which provides the Board’s position against the release of identifiable student data. **The Common Core Initiative does not require the release of any student data information.** Utah is not associated with any of the testing consortiums which may require student data information. Current federal law, FERPA, prohibits the release of identifiable student data. However, it does allow for the release of aggregated, non-identifiable data. There is some confusion over Utah statutes which appear to be contradictory as to the release of identifiable student data. The State Board has encouraged the Utah Legislature to make appropriate changes to ensure the privacy of public school students.
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What should we be worried about?
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NAEP and the National Education Data Model

According to a recent “white paper” released by the National Center on Education Statistics, the Obama Administration wants to use the 13 question survey that eighth-grade students customarily fill out during NAEP tests to ask more probing questions in order to determine a student’s socioeconomic status.17

NAEP is part of the Institute of Education Sciences, USDOE. Its board is appointed by the US Secretary of Education. States are required to participate in NAEP federal assessments as part of NCLB and as a condition to receiving Title I monies. In the past, many states realigned their state education standards to the federal NAEP standards, such as in the case of Massachusetts in 2001.
CONCLUSIONS:

GOAL: 66% of Utah job force with postsecondary certificates or degrees

High Standards: Implementation of Common Core Math and English Language Arts standards (Utah controls its own standards)

High Quality Education: Utah has seat at the textbook publishing table

Effective Assessments: Implementation of Computer Adaptive Testing & ACT’s EPAS

Student Privacy: Utah’s Longitudinal Data System

Flexibility Waiver: Escape from NCLB

Common Core is not a curriculum
Utah is not part of Race to the Top
Common Core is not a federal program, nor a federal database
Utah is not a member of SBAC
Utah continues to have control over its education standards
References

2. (Achieve, Utah’s College and Career Ready Commitment, September 2012)
3. (NCHEMS Information Center)
4. ACT State Profiles (2012); College Board SAT State Reports (2012); ACT 2012 Concordance
5. The State of State Standards and the Common Core in 2010 (June 20, 2010); http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2010COMMONCOREK12TEAM.PDF
6. Reaching Higher, The Common Core State Standards Validation Committee (June 2010)
7. Reaching Higher, The Common Core State Standards Validation Committee (June 2010)
8. www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do
13. Hung-Hsi Wu, Phoenix Rising, American Educator (Fall 2011); isingaporemath.com/what-is-singapore-math ; USBE, A Complete Resource Guide on Utah’s Core Standards (December 2012)
14. Reading Between the Lines, ACT , Inc. (2006); The Case for Informational Text, Educational Leadership, Vol. 61, No. 6 (March 2004); USBE, A Complete Resource Guide on Utah’s Core Standards (December 2012); Shanahan, “The Common Core Ate My Baby and Other Urban Legends,” Educational Leadership, Vol 70, No 4 (Dec 2012/Jan 2013) (70% - 30% informational to literature ratio for secondary education refers to the entire curriculum, not simply texts read in English class)
17. Greg Toppo, Plan Aims to determine student’s socioeconomic status, USA Today (May 9, 2013)