



Advocating for teachers
and public education

**Connecticut Education
Association**

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National Education Association

Testimony
Connecticut Education Association
Before the
Education Committee

Regarding:

**H.B. 5078 'An Act Imposing a Moratorium on the Implementation of the
Common Core State Standards'**

**H.B. 5331 – 'An Act Concerning the Implementation of the Revisions to the
PEAC Guidelines'**

March 12, 2014

Good Afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and other members of the Education Committee. My name is Mark Waxenberg; Executive Director of Connecticut Education Association, also with me is Sheila Cohen, President of Connecticut Education Association, (CEA). Thank you for the opportunity to address you today on the two proposed bills listed above.

Rather than commenting at length about the specificity of the language in each bill, we have provided you with exhibits supporting CEA's position on each bill.

Let us articulate in simple terms what our position is: On the bill dealing with Common Core, our exhibits prove that the Common Core issue is like a traffic light.

"There is a light which means stop – CEA does not support this".

"There is a light, which means go; CEA does not support this".

"Finally, there is a light which means look both ways and proceed with caution, that is CEA's position".

Specifically, our exhibits support our position and we are extremely pleased that the Governor, through his Executive Order, has created a working group that supports our position as well.

CC I – shows the timeline of the CCSS occurring in Connecticut, which may conflict with previous statements made by others about teacher involvement.

CC II – Document from SDE sent in October of 2011 which cites activities. My notes indicate on page 3 the reality as of today.

CC III – statement from CEA President, Sheila Cohen on standards.

CC IV – CEA News Release stating CEA’s position and concerns about Common Core based on teacher polling data. “Proceed with Caution”.

CC V – Specific responses from members polled that support our position.

CC VI - Analysis of 2 slides presented in 2010 that raised the caution flag.

CC VII – Responses from ALL CEA Locals on what training, professional development, or curriculum coordination has occurred since 2010 for the implementation of CCSS and the assessment of SBAC.

CC VIII – Unsolicited and original responses from 4th graders as prepared by one of the students (Scribe) in a discussion group the student initiated. This was not teacher lead or encouraged. It came from a discussion at dinner with a parent and the parent suggesting to get the opinions of her classmates on the SBAC Test. As you can see, “Proceed with Caution”.

Secondly, regarding the bill dealing with PEAC Guidelines.

CEA’s position is clear here as well.

This legislation body needs to determine if they choose to confer policy making authority in the areas cited in the Education Reform Bill of 2012 over to an administrative agency.

This legislation reflects agreements made in PEAC that do not require legislation, but I do not believe that is the point. This legislation raises a broader concern, that we previously stated. If the legislature chooses to say that they will keep “hands off” unless and until trouble arises, that’s a position to take. On the other hand, if the legislature chooses it wants to codify portions of the guidelines so they cannot be manipulated without legislative input, that’s a position to take.

As you decide what road you choose to take, we will continue to make good faith efforts using our “Road to PEAC” process - to modify existing guidelines for the best interest of students, parents, teachers and public education.

We have attached exhibits that give some background and history that you may need in your discussions. We continue to work with all constituent groups to share ideas in accordance with the Governor’s letter dated January 28, 2014.

PEAC #1 – Governors letter dated January 28, 2014 with highlights on page 2.

PEAC #2 – Which clearly states CEA’s support for the new flexibility as a first step.

PEAC #3 – CEA Press Release highlighting a Hamden study and promoting growth over time versus having 22.5% of teachers’ evaluations be totally dependent on a single student test score, which is the present case.

PEAC #4 – CEA document sent to all our Locals explaining flexibility and its impact.

In closing, I hope this testimony and exhibits are clear and unambiguous and effectively communicate Connecticut Education Associations’ position on these issues.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Adoption Steps

- ▶ **May 2009:** Memorandum of Agreement with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association signed by Governor Rell and Commissioner McQuillan
- ▶ **November 2009:** SDE consultants provide feedback to first draft of Common Core State Standards
- ▶ **February 2010:** SDE consultants provide feedback to second draft of Common Core State Standards
- ▶ **March 2010:** State Board presentation outlining pre-adoption strategic plan
- ▶ **May-June 2010:** Final Common Core State Standards published; Comparison Study conducted identifying degree of similarity between Common Core State Standards and Connecticut standards
- ▶ **June 2010:** Race to the Top Phase 2 Application describes Connecticut's intention to adopt and implement Common Core State Standards
- ▶ **June 2010:** Stakeholder Engagement Conference to raise awareness of Common Core State Standards, elicit judgments and recommendations, and promote buy-in; Independent evaluator's report synthesized feedback
- ▶ **July 2010:** State Board adoption

From stakeholder meeting
in July 2010

October 25, 2011

Common Core State Standards

History and Background of the Standards

In the spring of 2009, governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, two territories and the District of Columbia committed to developing a Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for K-12 English language arts and mathematics. The CCSS were designed to consist of fewer, clearer and higher-level standards; to be aligned with college and work expectations; to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills; to build upon the strengths and lessons of current state standards; to be internationally benchmarked so that all students will be prepared to succeed in our global economy; and to be based on evidence and research. On July 7, 2010, with a unanimous vote, the State Board of Education adopted CCSS in English language arts and mathematics that will establish what Connecticut's public school students should know and be able to do as they progress from kindergarten through Grades 12.

State adoption of the CCSS will result in changes to what is taught, when it is taught and how it is taught. **Because the CCSS do not address pedagogy, full implementation relies on content experts at the classroom level to determine how students will advance through the grades and meet each year's grade-specific standards.** The English language arts standards require that students systematically develop literacy skills and understandings through reading, writing, speaking and listening. For Grades 6–12, there is also a set of standards for English language arts in the content areas. The mathematics standards are designed to focus on developing students' understanding of mathematical concepts and acquisition of fundamental reasoning habits, in addition to fluency skills. These standards are now the new Connecticut Standards.

Implementing Common Core Standards

Implementing began as soon as the standards were released in the spring of 2010 and consisted of a multi-step process to inform and engage education stakeholders. Through an inclusive process, CSDE obtained stakeholder feedback regarding the alignment, rigor and quality of the CCSS, thus broadening acceptance and understanding of the standards in advance of implementation.

Common Core Comparison Study

In May 2010, CSDE content standards experts together with over 50 English language arts and mathematics content specialists from Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) and from school districts conducted a comparison study between Common Core and Connecticut standards. The resulting reports summarized the percentage of matches between Common Core and state standards, as well as the strength of those matches and where there were grade level differences. Following the comparison study, English language arts and mathematics crosswalk documents were developed to show the correlation between the CCSS and Connecticut standards.

CCSS Stakeholder Engagement

The CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference was held to share the results of the standard-to-standard comparison and to provide an opportunity for educational and other experts to provide feedback about the quality of the new standards. One hundred and eighty one individuals were invited to attend the June 2010 CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference. These individuals represented a broad sample of education stakeholders and included administrators, teachers, specialists from RESCs, and representatives from parent, community, and social advocacy organizations. During the conference, participants reviewed the gap analysis results and completed two feedback surveys.

Ongoing Implementation

Since June 2010, ongoing planning for implementing CCSS has occurred resulting in a number of targeted and sustained actions to support districts in transitioning to the standards. Over the course of the next three years, CSDE will continue to provide direction for full implementation. To date, many CCSS presentations have been provided for stakeholder groups including:

- P-20 Council Meetings – Fall 2010 and Fall 2011
- Northeastern Educational Research Association - Fall 2010
- Connecticut Reading Association – November 2010 and November 2011
- April 2011 *Higher Education Symposium*
- August 2011 *Connecticut Assessment Forum*
- Superintendent's *Back to School* Meeting – August 2010 and August 2011
- Regional Curriculum Development Sessions - Summer 2011 and Fall 2011, Ongoing
- Special Education Director's *Back to School* Meeting - September 2011
- New England Board of Higher Education Board Meeting – Fall 2011
- *Connecticut's Vision for Implementing the Common Core State Standards* Statewide Conference – September 2011
- Associated Teachers Of Mathematics In Connecticut - 2011
- CABE/CAPSS Meetings and Newsletters - Ongoing
- RESC Language Arts Councils, Mathematics Councils and Curriculum Councils - Ongoing
- Connecticut Education Association - Ongoing
- School District Presentations - Ongoing

During the winter and spring of 2011, the CSDE created foundational documents for designing rigorous curriculums in K-12 mathematics and English language arts, based on the CCSS. State-level Rigorous Curriculum Design (RCD) teams, comprised of content specialists from the local districts, RESCs, the State Education Resource Center and higher education, convened to develop this set of guiding documents, which consists of frameworks for units of study (Attachments A and B) comprised of priority and related supporting standards and pacing calendars. **The documents, for use by districts, are part of a statewide system of technical assistance to facilitate ongoing effective implementation of**

the standards. This set of guiding documents, together with the crosswalk documents, will provide districts with tools for revising curriculum documents and for implementing the standards at the classroom level.

During the summer and fall 2011, regional curriculum development sessions were held to assist districts in using the guiding documents. Teams of district curriculum directors and curriculum writers attended the sessions for a hand-on opportunity to review, revise and develop district curriculum documents. These sessions will continue throughout 2011-2012.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and other National Collaborations

In June 2010, Connecticut educational leadership (Governor, Commissioner of Education, State Board of Education Chair, Commissioner of Higher Education, Chancellor of the State University System and Chancellor of the Community College System) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to become a governing member of the SBAC and join with 30 other states to seek federal funds under the RTTTAP grant to develop new systems of assessment. Key factors of the SBAC's proposal that led us to join SBAC included:

- Developing an online adaptive summative assessment, complemented with interim assessments aligned to the summative and extended-time performance tasks of high cognitive demand (Adaptive assessments are efficient to administer, requiring students to take fewer items than standard assessments to determine their performance level, and do a better job of assessing the lower- and higher-performing students within a grade level.);
- Creating a comprehensive system that integrates the standards, instruction, professional development and assessment;
- Creating an on-line digital repository with instructional resources and modules and educator training materials, including an extensive item bank from which potential end-of-course assessments could be drawn; and
- Planning for extensive teacher involvement (K-12 and higher education) in all aspects of the assessment development and scoring.

NOT DONE

NOT DONE

TOP

NOT AWARE

To date SBAC has established its governance structure and Technical Advisory Committee of national experts in the fields of education and measurement, a master Plan of the details of the work through October of 2014, 10 workgroups with state representation to craft Requests for Proposals (RFP) to subcontract most aspects of the work and has already issued RFPs for several aspects of the project.

To meet the goal of having an operational assessment administered in the spring of 2015 and a comprehensive system in place, SBAC has established the following primary milestones over the next four years:

- **2011:** Develop formative processes and tools to support states in the implementation of CCSS and specifications for the summative and interim assessments.

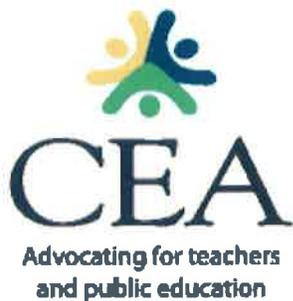
- 2012:** Develop the items for the summative and interim assessments and make the pool of interim items available to states, and begin pilot testing.
- 2013:** Complete pilot testing of summative items and development of the technology infrastructure.
- 2014:** Establish preliminary common achievement standards.

The rationale for this series of steps is that these are the sequence of steps that the member states agreed upon to not only ensure that tests would be operational by spring 2015, but that they would be fair, reliable and valid for the purposes for which they are being developed. SBAC has developed a detailed work-plan to meet these milestones.

Connecticut also is a member of three collaboratives of states:

- The Council of Chief State School Officer's (CCSSO) *Implementing Common Core State Standards* State Collaborative on Assessments and Student Standards (SCASS), which is working with six-member teams across states to share resources and strategies to systematically implement the standards within our states;
- The CCSSO *Next Generation of Accountability* SCASS, which is a multi-state collaborative to establish policy that will reshape accountability at the state and national levels; and
- The New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), which consists of five New England states that have established common goals, metrics and associated policies to improve secondary school education throughout the region.

Commissioner Pryor could be most helpful in advancing this work by playing a key leadership player in the Chiefs' meetings that each consortium holds on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. There is considerable enthusiasm among the Chiefs to reach out to constituents and support their states in successfully completing this important, complex work.



CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT

For Immediate Release
January 29, 2014

STATEMENT FROM CEA PRESIDENT SHEILA COHEN ON CCSS

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are intended to provide clear goals outlining the skills and knowledge students should master in each grade level, and promote critical thinking and knowledge of specific content. Unfortunately, all indications from the frontlines of public education indicate these standards cannot be met in short order under the existing conditions in Connecticut's classrooms. It's time for a thorough review and careful consideration by professional educators in close collaboration with parents and the community.

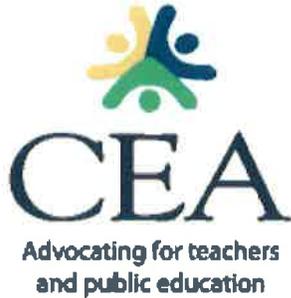
There is no reason to rush forward with CCSS implementation when there are so many questions about how the standards were developed, exactly by whom, and whether they are developmentally appropriate in each and every grade. We have heard too many stories of too many students in tears when youngsters are confronted with their performance on standards that are foreign to them.

Timelines and expectations need to be reasonable, student-focused, and do no harm. The bottom line is that policymakers should never move forward unless they can guarantee that no students will be shortchanged or traumatized in the implementation process.

The Connecticut Education Association represents 43,000 teachers in Connecticut.

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CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
February 26, 2014

No time to waste: CEA urges action to address botched CCSS rollout Advances teacher solutions/bolsters urgency with new survey

Saying time is of the essence, CEA today urged the new Connecticut Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Working Group* to convene immediately with teachers playing a central role in addressing the botched implementation of the CCSS in Connecticut classrooms.

“Our students can’t afford to wait. There’s no redo for them when precious teaching and learning time is lost to problems connected with CCSS implementation,” said CEA Executive Director Mark Waxenberg.

At a news conference today in Hartford, Waxenberg shared with reporters CEA’s specific recommendations about the group’s charge.

Those recommendations to the working group include:

- assure the examination of standards is done collaboratively;
- place teachers at the center of efforts to develop aligned curriculum, assessments, and professional development that are relevant to their students and local communities;
- engage educators actively in examining new tests and the process for improving them; and
- acknowledge that testing should be only one way to inform effective teaching and learning.

Waxenberg said the composition of the working group should include representatives from each of the following: teachers, parents, administrators, superintendents, and local school board members.

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The current situation in public school classrooms demands urgency, and CEA has evidence to prove it, according to Waxenberg. “We have surveyed and talked directly to Connecticut teachers across the state and they have given us clear feedback on what’s needed.”

According to the new survey released today, more than half (55 percent) of all CEA members give their schools and districts failing grades on implementation (a score of 5 or lower on a 10-point scale).

Waxenberg continued, “With nearly 1,500 teachers participating in our survey, it provides policymakers with what they never had before—specificity from the frontlines of public education and teachers’ clear ideas about what is necessary for student success.”

According to Waxenberg, Connecticut teachers have very serious concerns about the ability of particularly young students to meet the standards. They also believe that CCSS siphon time and money for assessments that schools could use for other things, while limiting their ability to innovate in how they teach. Teachers added they felt that states rushed into CCSS implementation without field testing or time to review.

In the survey:

- **Teachers want to be consulted and involved in their school’s implementation plans.** However, two-thirds (65 percent) have not been given the opportunity to weigh in on their district’s plan to implement Common Core in their classrooms.
- **Strong majorities say they need more time to get it right for their students.** Almost all (96 percent) believe implementation has been rushed; just a third have been given time to properly prepare the new curriculum; 80 percent say they and their students need more time for training and learning.
- **Schools are ill-equipped and under-resourced to implement.** Just 16 percent of teachers say they have the materials and textbooks students need to learn the Common Core, and less than a quarter have the technology required to administer the computer-based assessments to their students.
- **Teachers are concerned about assessments, exacerbated by CCSS.** More than two thirds (68 percent) say there is too much testing, and 62 percent worry that CCSS will exacerbate this. Almost all say schools should prioritize learning over testing, and 97 percent want a moratorium on accountability provisions tied to the Smarter Balanced test.

CEA President Sheila Cohen said, “This survey should be a wake-up call for anyone who tries to sugarcoat the reality in our classrooms. For students to reap the benefits of Common Core and for it to be successful in Connecticut, policymakers must listen to feedback from teachers about what is going well and not well; give teachers the time to plan, train, and collaborate; appropriately equip classrooms; and give students more time to succeed at the new, more rigorous standards before they are tested.”

more

In the survey, teachers were clear about what it will take to get education reform right for kids:

1. The opportunity for teachers to be involved in their schools' planning for Common Core, as well as the chance to give feedback in order to improve implementation.
2. More time for teachers to plan and practice good lessons, receive high-quality training, and observe and collaborate with colleagues.
3. More time for students to learn and succeed at more rigorous standards.
4. More financial resources to make sure classrooms are equipped with the required technology and that students have access to updated Common Core-aligned textbooks.
5. A moratorium on accountability provisions tied to the Smarter Balanced test so that students and teachers can have time to prepare.

While a majority of members support the central goal of CCSS, very few do so without having serious concerns and reservations. Mishandled CCSS implementation has eroded confidence in the ability of the education system to get this right, resulting in 56 percent of CEA members supporting the Common Core but with reservations.

Waxenberg explained, "Teachers always have and will continue to support high standards, but the enormity of the botched CCSS rollout has caused wide-spread frustration. Teachers are demanding that Connecticut get this right. That's why—this time around—teachers need to be at the center, not the distant periphery, of standard setting and implementation."

The survey was conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research during February 4-20, 2014. The margin of error on the survey data is +/-2.57 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. The CEA research was done in conjunction with nationwide research by the National Education Association.

* On January 28, 2014, top policymakers announced, in the next two weeks, they would establish a Common Core State Standards working group that will include teachers and other educators from across the state to make recommendations on Common Core implementation. The policymakers included Governor Dannel P. Malloy, Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, Senate President Donald Williams, and House Speaker Brendan Sharkey.

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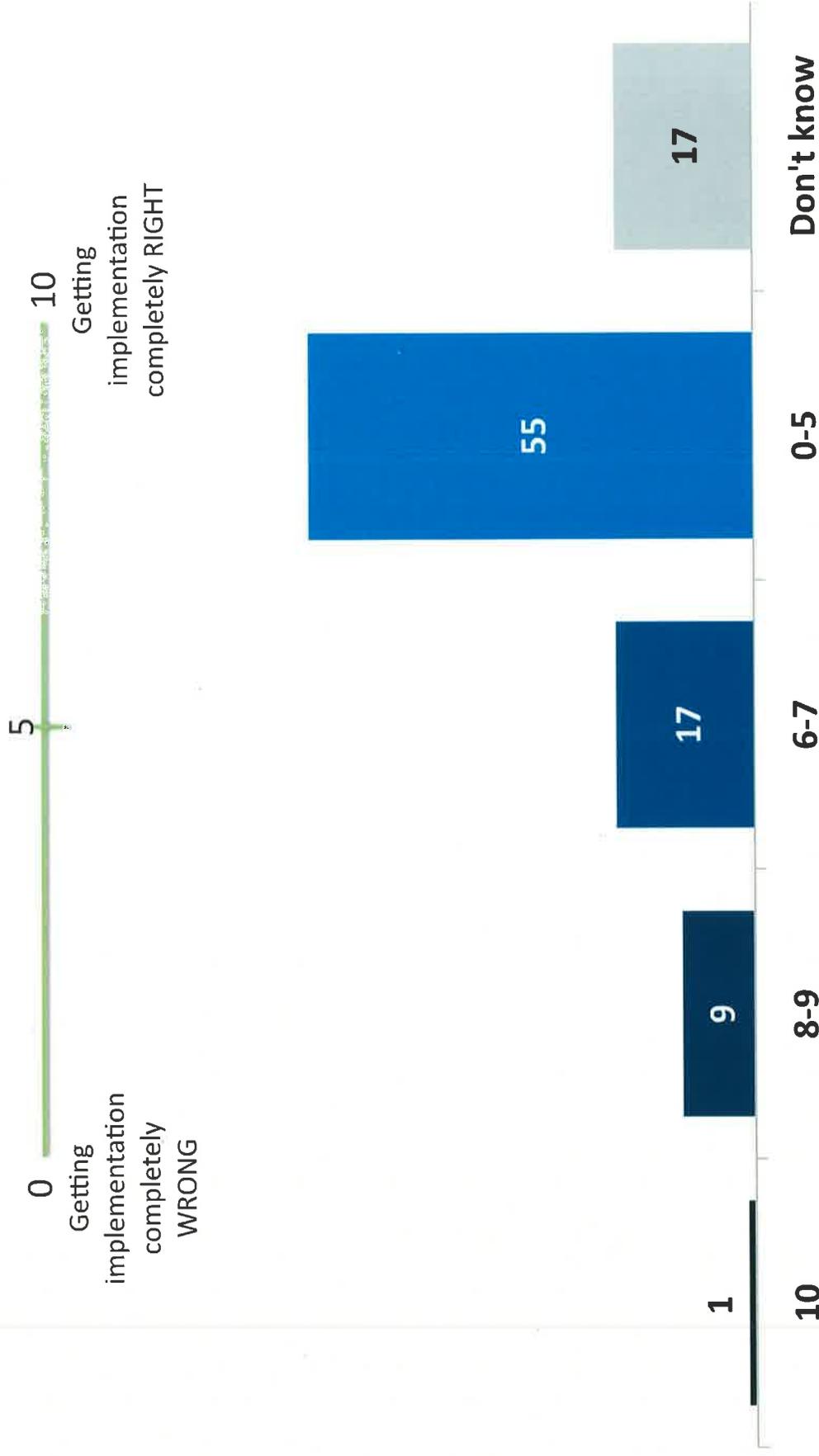
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CEA

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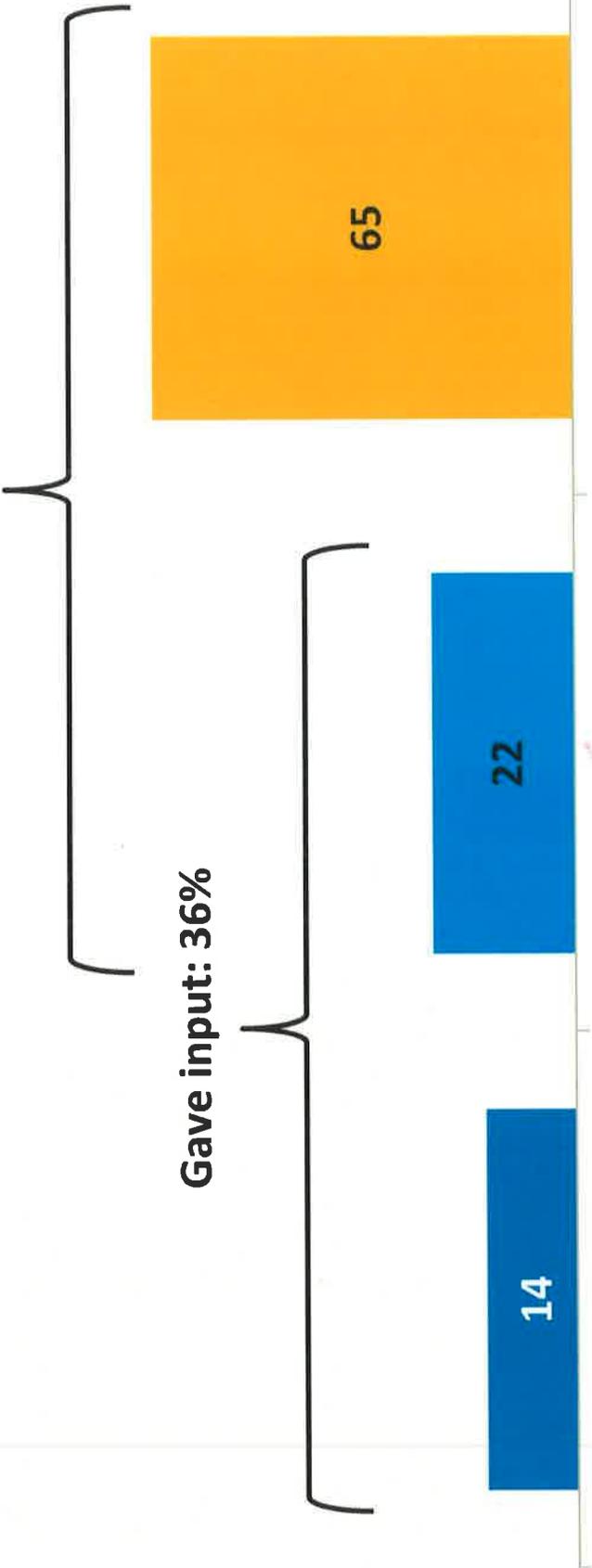
Implementation is not going well. More than half give schools and districts failing grades for implementation



Teachers not able to give input on Common Core implementation, and very few say they are being heard

Not listened to: 87%

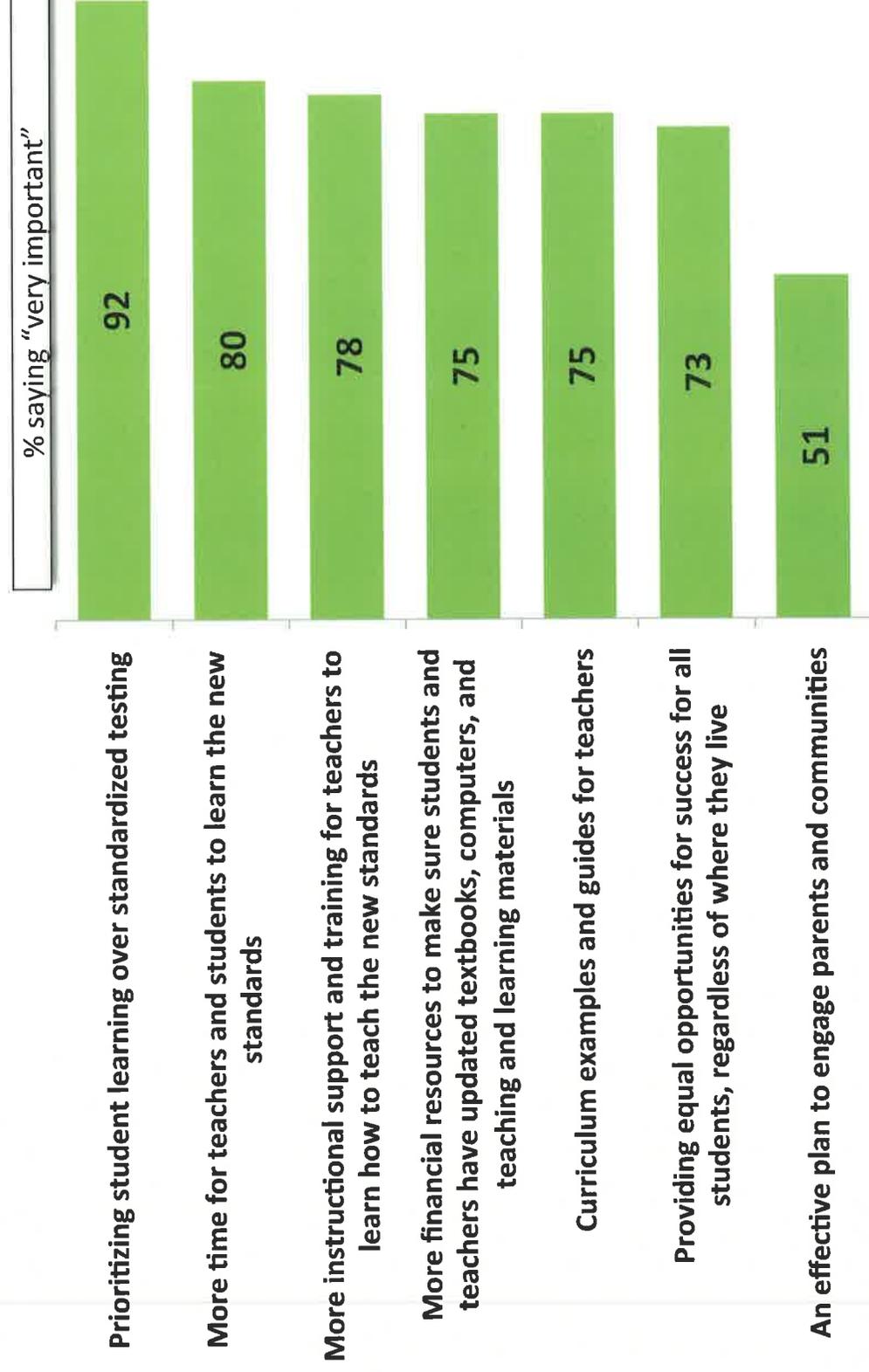
Gave input: 36%



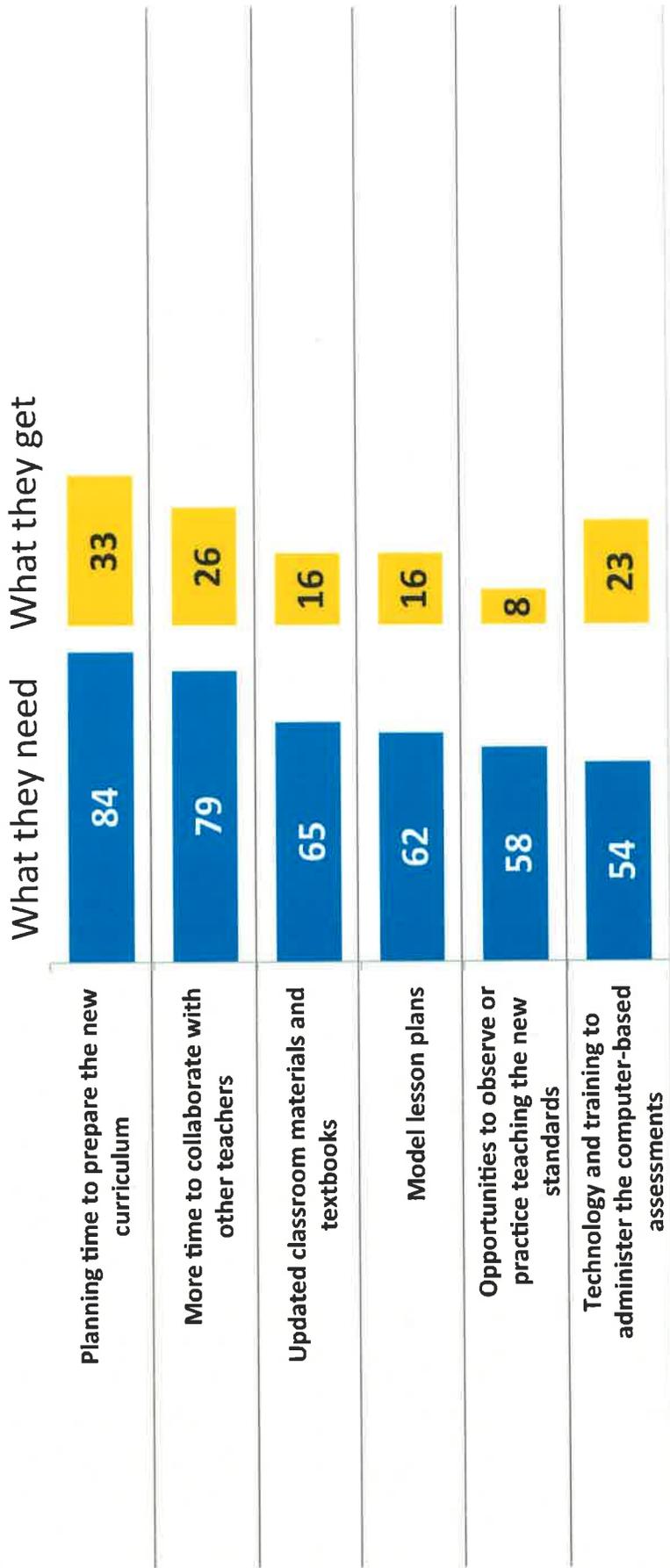
Yes, and they seem to have listened to my input

No

What would it take to be successful? More emphasis on learning than testing. Also, give teachers and students more resources to get it right and more time to do it well



But schools not providing teachers most basic resources for Core, and what is available does not align with what they need most.



Key Findings

- **Despite teachers' support for the Core, schools are falling short on implementation.** More than half (55 percent) give their schools failing grades on Common Core implementation.
- **Schools are ill-equipped and under-resourced to implement the Core.** Just 16 percent say they have the classroom materials and textbooks students need to learn the Core, and less than a quarter have the technology required to administer the computer-based assessments to their students.
- **Strong majorities say they need more time to get it right for their students.** 96 percent believe implementation has been rushed: just a third have had time to properly prepare the new curriculum and 80 percent say more time for training and learning is very important for them and their students.
- **Teachers want to be consulted and involved in their school's implementation plans.** However, two-thirds (65 percent) have not had the opportunity to weigh in on their district's plan to implement Common Core in their classrooms.
- **They have concerns about high stakes assessments, exacerbated by CCSS.** 68 percent say there is currently too much testing and 62 percent worry that CCSS will exacerbate this. Almost all members say schools should prioritize student learning over testing and 97 percent want a moratorium on the Smarter Balanced test.

Information from SDE September 2010 presentation

Slide 4 : "CCSS assume 100% mastery of the preceding year's standards."

Points to raise :

1. Students, especially in the primary grades, develop at different rates. 100% mastery of the standards for any student doesn't take into account developmental levels, so is unrealistic.
2. Pushing children to achieve 100% mastery can do more harm than good, as they may not be cognitively ready for the concepts being taught. If they haven't mastered the previous year's standards, they won't be able to grasp the new concepts being introduced. They fall further and further behind.
3. Primary level teachers have voiced many concerns about the developmental inappropriateness of some of the standards. Pushing 100% mastery of something that is developmentally inappropriate to begin with is poor practice and harms children's love of learning.

Slide 21 : Grade Level Comparisons Between CCSS and CT Standards

Points to raise : Tying into slide 4's assumption of mastery and concerns about developmental inappropriateness of some of the standards

1. CCSS introduce a significant percent of concepts in math earlier than did the CT Standards :

in K -	26%
in grade 1 -	16%
in grade 2 -	20%
in grade 3 -	26%
in grade 4 -	27%
in grade 5 -	42%
in grade 6 -	27%
in grade 7 -	22%
in grade 8 -	16%

2.
 - + Earlier introduction of concepts
 - + possible developmental inappropriateness of concepts
 - + expectation for 100 % mastery

setting students up for failure and squelching love of learning

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
ACES	No
AMITY	yes, with ACES and in teams of teachers
ANDOVER	Yes
ASHFORD	Yes
AVON	Yes, there has been a lot of PD training time on Common core
BARKHAMSTED	SBAC Training. State "Cross walk" was distributed and used as a guide; limited training done; currently doing an upcoming training.
BERLIN	No PD for this...there was PD time to "pretty much decipher things for ourselves, but no actual training."
BETHANY	Has done regular PD for common core over the last two years
BETHEL	All teachers received a two hour overview of the CCSS. Bethel has new curriculum for math and LA that connects to the Common Core. There has been little / no training on common core in connection with curriculum that exists for science, social studies
BLOOMFIELD	Aware of the mismatch "but are not worried about it since the data on CMT scores and SBAC is only a field test; no data from these tests will impact anyone. There is no curriculum that aligns with the CCS as of last year."
BOLTON	No
BRANFORD	Yes. But not so much about how to deal with conflicts between curriculum and common core standards.
BRIDGEPORT	In 2010 when we had dept chairs we started to look at it. Once The chairs were gone it stopped so essentially the answer is no. Nothing in 11, 12, or 13
BROOKFIELD	No
BROOKLYN	No
BURLINGTON	N/A
CANAAN	No
CANTERBURY	Yes, but not enough. Were asked to compare and contract curriculum with the CCSS and come up Yes - My department -Sp. Ed. had some training last year to help align with our goals/objectives for an iep. Sonya Kunkel came to our school. I know our English Department for Middle school/High School have text books that are in alignment with Common Core. We still could use more training.
CANTON	Yes to 6 to 6 magnet and the middle school (regular ed). In the SPEC programs - no
CES	No
CHAPLIN	No. One school received a new CCSS based curriculum and had PD in Aug. Not all units were
CHESHIRE	At Eliot we have had several presentations. We are being given time to align our curriculum units
CLINTON	Much CC training done internally by Reading/LA Coordinator; series of SDE workshops around SBAC. Being concluded currently.
COLEBROOK	

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
COLUMBIA	Yes
CORNWALL	No
COVENTRY	No, it has been fragmented by grade and department
CREC	The short answer is yes, not effective or smooth. Partially because curriculum in general is a mess at CREC. Standards have been discussed, professional development occurred. Different schools/grades handling differently. MLC has a lot of collaborative time and working with teams to align curriculum to standards. There is basically no math elementary curriculum and so all the teachers are given is the standards. But that is no different than what has been occurring for years. A lot of their curriculum has aligned with common core for years, as much as there is a curriculum because CREC likes to be on the cutting edge with flipped classrooms and teaching bell to bell and such.
CROMWELL	Yes
DANBURY	No
DARIEN	No
DERBY	No
EAST GRANBY	No
EAST HADDAM	No
EAST HAMPTON	Sort of-bad
EAST HARTFORD	Yes, but not at the secondary level yet. The SDE came out to do crosswalk training in 2011.
EAST HAVEN	Yes. But not so much about how to deal with conflicts between curriculum and common core standards.
EAST LYME	Yes (Math, not lang. arts)
EAST WINDSOR	No
EASTFORD	Yes
EASTON	No
ELLINGTON	No
ENFIELD	No - There has been training related to the common core for some teachers but not all and we are unaware of any of that training that was specifically related to the mismatches and curriculum strategies to deal with it.
FAIRFIELD	No
FARMINGTON	No
FRANKLIN	Yes
GILBERT SCHOOL	No training re: common core; 2 representatives will be sent to an upcoming training.
GLASTONBURY	Yes
GRANBY	No

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
GREENWICH	Yes
GRISWOLD	No
GROTON	No
GUILFORD	<p>Not in an effective manner. Technically PD sessions were held, however, they lacked any link to existing curriculum. The entire process seems to have been the "fly the plane as it's being built approach. Much discussion took place about what the CCSS standards were and what new performance tasks needed to like like. However, little discussion took place about how to enhance/tweak our current lessons in order to address the new standards.</p> <p>There was some PD on the standards but we still have no ELA curriculum- being designed now CCSS have been put in units of study but no real formal PD occurred. teachers were not told how to deal with mismatched curriculum and common core standards.</p>
HAMPTON	No
HARTLAND	No training on standards "mis-match"
HARWINTON	N/A
HEBRON	Sort of - poorly done
INTEGRATED DAY	Yes
ISAAC	No
KENT	No
KILLINGLY	yes
LEARN	Yes
LEBANON	No
LEDYARD	Yes
LISBON	No
LITCHFIELD	No
MADISON	<p>We were not given specific pd regarding common core and the teacher evaluation plan. We were told on many occasions that this is a pilot year and that we will get through it together. We are also still in the midst of writing our curriculum and much of it has not been updated to common core yet. I hope I have answered your question.</p>
MANCHESTER	No
MANSFIELD	yes
MARLBOROUGH	No
MILFORD	No

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
MONROE	<p>That specific question has not come up. But we are investing a lot of time, much of it release time, to revising our curriculum at every level, to see if we have the necessary resources to teach to the standard. I will say that the math changes are causing problems at the elementary level. Although we have adopted a new curriculum (the New York model) there are not a lot of supplemental materials and teachers have been scrambling to find materials to use for homework and classwork. This has led to a lot of confusion about what can and cannot be used, and the parents have begun to take a close look at what effect the common core has had on elementary math in Monroe. There is a facebook page set up on which parents apparently have been venting about how confused the curriculum seems.</p>
MONTVILLE	Yes (minimal)
NAUGATUCK	Yes, with ACES writing curriculum for Math and English
NEW BEGINNINGS	No
NEW CANAAN	Yes
NEW FAIRFIELD	No
NEW HARTFORD	Training done on how to read/understand standards; no training on standards "mis-match"
NEW LONDON	No
NEW MILFORD	Only selected teachers werwe trained, mostly coaches who do not work with students
NEWINGTON	No - Newington was given an inservice about the common core. We were NOT given training about how to incorporate it. We were just given some new curriculum in LA and "good Luck" nothing in the other subjects
NORFOLK	There has been no training re: CC, curriculum and CMTs
NORTH CANAAN	No
NORTH HAVEN	No. Some were encouraged to go to RESC training, Coordinators got some training, for the majority little to none
NORTH STONINGTON	X (inadequate 2 years ago)
NORWICH	No
NORWICH FREE ACD	No
OLD SAYBROOK	Had training last year, varied from building into building, called "unwrapping the common core," still writing curriculum at the same time as teaching it this year, overwhelmed
ORANGE	YES - Math curriculum already aligned with Common Core; Writing minimal PD offered
OXFORD	Limited /minimal PD this year
PLAINFIELD	No
PLAINVILLE	Yes
PLYMOUTH	No
POMFRET	Some, but not nearly enough

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
PORTLAND	Sort of Some/not equal or districtwide
PRESTON	They have had a small amount of training on Language Arts this past Fall and they currently have half day PD mini-workshops on the Common Core.
PUTNAM	No, on the schedule for next year
REDDING	No
REGION 01 (Housatonic Valley)	No
REGION 04	Region 4 had training but is only writing curriculum tied to the standards this year.
REGION 06	No
REGION 07	Training that has been done re: cc has been done by local staff; don't remember any training from SDE
REGION 08 (RHAM)	Yes
REGION 09 (Joel Barlow)	No
REGION 10	No common core training; teacher teams worked to determine curriculum components.
REGION 11	Yes, but not told how to deal with mismatched curriculum and common core standards.
REGION 12 (Shepaug Valley)	No
REGION 13	Sort of-Minimal/Bad
REGION 14 (Nonnewaug)	No
REGION 15 (Pomperaug)	CCSS training was provided. However, no materials were provided. Local has asked for CCSS aligned text books.
REGION 16	No
REGION 17 (Haddam-Killingworth)	Yes
REGION 18 (Lyme-Old Lyme)	We were told need to look at what we have and see where there are gaps. Told this during faculty or grade level meeting not in any formal training.
REGION 19 (E.O. Smith)	Yes
RIDGEFIELD	No
ROCKY HILL	No
ROXBURY	No
SALISBURY	No
SCOTLAND	We have not received any training or materials to support the Common Core. We are still struggling with technology to even support the program.
SEYMOUR	No
SHARED SERVICES	No response from local.
SHARON	NO
SHELTON	No
SHERMAN	There was no formal professional development on Common Core. The math specialist and language arts specialist sat with individual teachers and went over some things.

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
SIMSBURY	yes, but not enough
SOMERS	No
SOUTH WINDSOR	No
SOUTHINGTON	No
SPRAGUE	No
STAFFORD	Were provided with reading material on this , and asked us to prepare lessons that were aligned to CCSS. Also sent people to CCSS training, but the packaging has not always matched the contents - so most of our actual PD has been within the district.
STAMFORD	The district has been aligning curriculum with the CCSS and has been providing PD on the new curriculum. No one could really address the issue of the mismatch.
STERLING	No
STONINGTON	there has been some small discussion of common core standards, but no specific PD about curriculum or how to implement it.
STRATFORD	None for elementary; some not nearly enough in MS and HS
SUFFIELD	No
THOMASTON	No
THOMPSON	yes
TOLLAND	yes
TORRINGTON	No training from SDE re: CC and curriculum match
TRUMBULL	Some, but not nearly enough
UNION	yes
VERNON	No
VOLUNTOWN	No
WALLINGFORD	No – teams of teachers developed curriculum during 2012-13 year; Individual teachers given curriculum that was aligned to Common Core
WATERBURY	Yes
WATERTOWN	3 years ago we did 1 activity and a little last year we did some connections on our own, but no formal training. Last week we identified curriculum that includes either common core, CT standards, or both, or none, but no training to deal with it.

Local	Common Core - PD Training Response
	<p>The short answer is yes, not effective or smooth. Different Levels/subject area would answer the question differently. Elementary they are having curriculum writing teams rewrite curriculum to align to the standards. But I think this is more to "pass the test" than to align to curriculum. So, outside training – not to my knowledge. Time spent during professional development – yes. High School – depending on department different emphasis/training on aligning to curriculum. Math – no training but expectation for teachers to throw out old curriculum and start new. Different courses at different places, and this will be subject to grievance/TPP in near future. Social Studies/Science and English – going much slower. Middle School – don't really know outside of professional development what is occurring, besides middle school math is a mess.</p>
WEST HARTFORD	No. No specific training on how to correlate present curriculum with CC. Only general discussion at a Prof. learning Community meeting
WESTBROOK	Weston president said there was some training for some groups of teachers, but it was not universal. He suggested I speak to a couple of other teachers in the district for more information. I am following up with them
WESTON	My Westport local presidents referred me to another teacher who sent the below response about Westport: YES for math because the Singapore math program is very aligned to the CCSS and the standards were addressed during the Singapore PD -- YES for reading
WESTPORT	Willington has actually received some decent Professional Development with respect to getting curriculum to match Common Core.
WILLINGTON	"Yes" but the training was more thorough at some grade levels and in some subject areas than others. In some departments/grade levels it was pretty thorough, but at some other grade levels, it was pretty half-assed. In short, the way we were told to "deal with mismatched curriculum and common core standards" was to change everything we teach so that it is aligned to the CCSS.
WILTON	Has had a great deal of training re: CC; remembers training around 'mis-match' back about 2010.
WINCHESTER	Yes, but limited
WINDSOR	No
WINDSOR LOCKS	No
WINTERGREEN MAGNET	YES – Minimal, 5 hours of training with ACES
WOLCOTT	No
WOODBIDGE	No
WOODSTOCK	No
WOODSTOCK ACD	No

4th Grade
Class
West Hartford
Ct.

Sbac

- I don't like computers or sbac
- sbac takes forever to do and it's all mixed together
- I do like ^{sbac} because not timed
- I'm not good at typing so will take along time
- likes the sense of urgency
- ~~not~~ like sbac so you can take your time
- everyone knows how to write and not type
- more to do in sbac
- likes to watch videos in sbac
- listening is harder w/ sbac
- sbac ^{is} more challenging
- easier to write w/ cmt's
- sbac catches your spelling mistakes
- sbac is intimidating
- I like how you can pause sbac
- hope we get cmt's back



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

January 28, 2014

Dear Members of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council:

In light of your meeting tomorrow, we write to you today to urge you to amend the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation to provide our educators greater flexibility in the implementation of the new evaluation and support system, and to relieve the significant demands and pressures on teachers and administrators who simultaneously must also implement the Common Core State Standards.

Since the beginning of the school year, we have heard from teachers and administrators voicing their concerns that too much change is hitting their classrooms at once. This confluence of changes jeopardizes the success of our teachers, and thus our students. We've heard their concerns loud and clear, and understand. Too much change all at once impedes teachers' ability to be effective in their classrooms. Teachers and administrators understandably are feeling burdened and together we must take action to relieve this pressure.

Just as the evaluation and support system is about improvement and professional growth, so must we adapt and improve the system to make it more usable and helpful to teachers and administrators. It is more important that we get it right than to do it fast and all at once.

Today, we ask you to make the following changes to the PEAC guidelines:

1. Enable the exclusion of state standardized test indicators (CMT, CAPT, or SBAC) in next school year's evaluation (pending federal approval). Last summer, PEAC waived the state standardized test indicators for the current school year.
2. Enable school districts to have flexibility in the implementation of evaluation in the current school year and future school years – and alleviate unnecessary burdens on educators– by providing districts with the option of reducing the number of time-consuming formal observations and by clarifying that the minimum number of goals/objectives required for each educator can be 1.

3. Streamline the data management requirements at the classroom level while ensuring the protection of data from unauthorized users and access to technical assistance to all school districts.

It is imperative that we smooth the process of evaluation implementation, and not get bogged down in rigid compliance and time-consuming paperwork. By easing the rules around evaluation our hardworking educators can focus on and put more energy toward implementing the Common Core with fidelity. We all want our students to be successful, but they won't succeed unless teachers have the support to succeed.

In addition, we ask PEAC to convene an ongoing subcommittee of classroom teachers and administrators to share obstacles faced in the implementation of evaluation and make recommendations to improve the evaluation system in future school years. We ask that the subcommittee make its recommendations not only to PEAC, but also to the four of us, the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education by January 1, 2015. We must have a continuous dialogue on improving our evaluation and support system with the teachers and administrators doing this work if we are to make it effective.

Furthermore, we encourage PEAC to meet as a full body over the coming year so that additional clarifications and revisions can be made to make the evaluation and support system more effective and usable.

We know this work is difficult, particularly adapting to the Common Core State Standards. It is a very heavy lift to implement the Common Core and we have the greatest respect for the hard work our teachers are doing to prepare our youngsters to be college and career ready. We hear these concerns and share the desire to get Common Core implementation right.

To that end, we believe we must engage in a more robust dialogue to improve the implementation of Common Core and address gaps in Common Core preparation. In the next two weeks, I will establish a Common Core State Standards working group that will include teachers and other educators from across the state to make recommendations on Common Core implementation. We need to hear about the gaps and needs in the classrooms of our state if we are to implement the Common Core well and enable our teachers to prepare students and enhance their learning experience. It is important that we listen to educators' concerns and get this right.

Thank you, in advance, for taking action tomorrow to make improvements during this school year; we look forward to continuing this dialogue.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor



Nancy Wyman
Lieutenant Governor

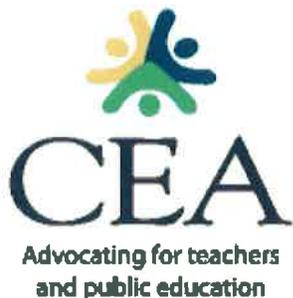


Donald E. Williams Jr.
Senate President Pro Tempore



J. Brendan Sharkey
Speaker of the House

Delivered electronically



CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT

For Immediate Release
January 29, 2014

STATEMENT FROM CEA PRESIDENT SHEILA COHEN ON NEW FLEXIBILITY OPTIONS IN TEACHER EVALUATION

While this is a significant improvement for Connecticut students in public schools, it is only a first step in modifying existing guidelines and removing obstacles that hinder a student-focused system of public education. With today's PEAC improvements, parents and communities can be confident that teachers will be able to enhance their impact on students—a focus put at risk this school year as teachers, administrators, and school districts were forced to put enormous time and resources into compliance and paperwork required by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Today's PEAC changes will foster a new climate that moves away from strict guidelines and moves toward the healthy flexibility that our school communities sorely need—and need as soon as possible.

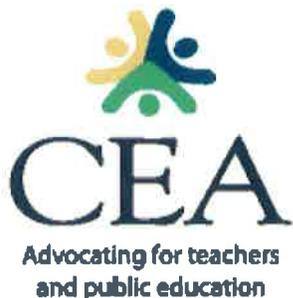
Significant problems emerged this past school year due to the conformity and compliance that characterized the new teacher evaluation system—including the overreliance on testing, the number of required formal observations, development of Student Learning Objectives, and onerous data collection—all which negatively impacted students.

CEA brought these issues to the governor and lieutenant governor, and insisted on frank and honest discussions about what helps high-quality education and what hurts. These discussions resulted in teacher evaluation guideline changes that eliminate obstacles to student learning in many classrooms—a very positive move forward in the best interest of public education.

PEAC's action today has Connecticut making the right turn at a critical crossroads. But the right decision did not occur through serendipity, accident, or coincidence. It happened because Connecticut teachers care deeply about their students, and they spoke out intelligently and persuasively about the obstacles that state requirements had placed between teachers and students. As strong advocates for our students, CEA and its members will continue to be vigilant and press for continued positive changes so that reform is implemented right in Connecticut.

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The Connecticut Education Association represents 43,000 teachers in Connecticut. For further information contact Kathy Frega at 860-725-6315, kathyf@cea.org; or Nancy Andrews at 860-725-6317, nancya@cea.org.



CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
March 6, 2014

Targeting What Students Need for Academic Growth Through Quality Teacher Evaluation

A teacher evaluation initiative, studied in new research being released today, offers a teacher evaluation alternative to using unreliable standardized test scores to evaluate students and teachers—an alternative that holds educators more accountable and is supported by the new flexibility options for teacher evaluation, but contrasts sharply with the state model (SEED).

Seeking a better way than the state way, CEA advocates a holistic, qualitative approach that trusts educators by enabling them to set student goals for growth and assess their students' growth by using a common Quality Student Work Rubric (QSWR) as it applies to student work done over time in the subject they teach.

CEA President Sheila Cohen said, "We want to redirect teacher evaluation in Connecticut so that it is student based. We want to refocus it on what teachers do on a regular basis and how teachers assess student growth on a continuing basis. And we want to allow teachers to focus their energy on what they know matters most—planning and providing engaging instruction for their students."

At a news conference today at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, CEA released the results of a field study that bolsters that approach—one that provides countless opportunities for teachers to focus on their students rather than spend endless hours on paperwork and compliance as required by the state model. With the enormous and unreasonable demands of the state system, teachers' attention is being diverted from their students' learning needs.

No Teacher Left Behind: A Look at CEA's Alternative Approach to Educator Evaluation is a field study conducted by Daniel A. Long, Ph.D., assistant professor of sociology at Wesleyan University, and Rebecca Coven, Long's former research associate. The study, conducted last year, included Hamden educators at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Student growth over time vs. a single standardized test score

Using student work over time as a measure of growth, and linking that to teacher evaluation, is a concept that hadn't been studied in Connecticut prior to last year. As a first step in this direction, the new study was limited in scope, but the authors had comprehensive access to current research about what works and what doesn't in teacher evaluation.

(more)

Cohen said, “Although the Hamden field study was limited in scope, the findings show promise as an important component of a robust teacher evaluation system. This is one that encourages greater teacher accountability and responsibility in the process, provides stronger accountability for student learning, promotes more collaborative discussion about teaching and learning, and provides greater trust in the accuracy of the evaluation.”

Unreliable test scores

There is no evidence in research that the state model, which uses unreliable test scores to assess student growth and evaluate teachers, improves the quality of teaching in public schools. Under the approach discussed at today’s news conference, the link between a teacher’s student goals and use of the QSWR encourages the teacher to design instruction that more precisely targets what students need to grow academically, holds teachers more accountable, and shows growth more realistically than a single unreliable test score.

Teachers from across the state have shared concerns with CEA about the state model and how it is hindering high-quality teaching and learning. CEA is confident that its qualitative approach promotes student growth and positive changes in teacher pedagogy and practice. It also facilitates teacher autonomy, collaboration, self-reflection, interpersonal trust, and morale.

Using the growth model not only allows educators to look at student achievement in terms of their performance over the course of the entire school year, but it also allows evaluators to get a better representation of how a teacher’s instruction more specifically fosters quality student work. Collecting student work and rating it using a rubric that describes the elements of high-quality work is something that many more educators can apply to their classrooms, regardless of whether they teach a class that has standardized tests.

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New Flexibility Options In Teacher Evaluation

**Understand the Change.
Guide the Discussion.**



On January 29, 2014, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council approved new flexibility options for teacher evaluation. This presentation will explain what the flexibility options are, and some of the questions a district Professional Development and Evaluation Committee should discuss so as to use the flexibility options appropriately for their needs. The timelines for submitting changes in the district plan to the State Department of Education will also be reviewed.

Overreliance on Testing

Current Requirement : Use of CMT / CAPT for 22.5% of evaluation

Flexibility Option : No use of CMT / CAPT / SBAC in 2013-14 year

No use of CMT / CAPT / SBAC in 2014-15 year,
pending federal approval



The first area of flexibility is in the use of the state tests in evaluation. The teacher evaluation guidelines currently state that the state test - CMT and CAPT - must be used in determining 22.5% of the 45% of evaluation comprised of student growth. Since Connecticut will participate in the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium field test this spring, the state applied for, and was granted, a waiver from using state tests in evaluation for this year.

Connecticut will apply for an extension of that waiver, which would give districts the flexibility to **not** use the state test in evaluation for the 2014-2015 school year. PEAC has agreed to this flexibility being recognized as part of the teacher evaluation guidelines. This flexibility allows teachers and evaluators to mutually agree on greater use of appropriate, student-centered, non-standardized indicators of student growth.

Testing Flexibility Option : What Should Guide Our Discussion?

(sample questions)

1. Are there other standardized indicators we'll use in place of the CMT/CAPT/SBAC?
2. In what years will our plan use those other standardized indicators?
3. Do we know that other standardized indicators align closely enough with our curriculum that they're reliable and valid for measuring student growth over time?
4. Will using other standardized indicators bring an additional expense to the district?
5. What else do we need to have in place if we adopt another standardized indicator for use, and will we be able to do this in time to use those indicators effectively?
6. What non-standardized indicators do teachers currently use to show student growth over time?
7. What additional non-standardized indicators, if any, can teachers use?
8. Will our committee require a specific minimum number of non-standardized indicators for each SLO? If so, what will that number be?
9. Will the committee require more than one *type* of non-standardized indicator, such as district benchmark assessments, teacher created tests, student work, etc?
10. If we use different forms of student work as non-standardized indicators, do we have a common understanding in our district of what constitutes 'high quality' student work? If not, how can we / should we develop a rubric that describes this on a continuum of performance?

These are a sample of questions your district committee should discuss when talking about a flexibility option. One of the biggest decisions is whether or not a different standardized indicator will replace the use of CMT/CAPT/SBAC. Districts aren't required to purchase another standardized indicator for use, and before doing so, should really be assured that any such indicator aligns tightly with the curriculum being taught.

Having this flexibility to use only non-standardized indicators to show student growth over time brings several advantages:

1. Teachers can collect samples of student work that align with the SLO more frequently, showing incremental growth.
2. Using student work as non-standardized indicators allows the teacher to include different types of work, such as written and oral work, constructed projects, performances, etc. This,

in turn, allows students to use different modalities to show what they've learned.

3. Teachers are more accustomed to assessing student growth using non-standardized indicators, which allows them to create a closer alignment to the curriculum.

Many districts have already developed common rubrics for different types of student work that they can adapt for this purpose, and there are many resources available to help teachers develop rubrics if that's needed. The ultimate goal in deciding how to use non-standardized or standardized indicators should be to give the teacher options for showing student growth over time by examining student performance at several points in the year.

Number of Required Formal Observations Teachers Rated Proficient or Exemplary

- Current Requirement :
- At least 1 formal, in-class observation **each year**
 - 1-2 reviews of practice / year

- Flexibility Option :
- At least 1 formal, in-class observation **every 3 years**
 - 3 informal in-class observations all other years
 - 1 review of practice / year
 - Observations for non-classroom teachers take place in appropriate settings
 - Districts may use the equivalent ratings of 'proficient' and 'exemplary' from prior evaluation system to determine which teachers are eligible for this option

The current teacher evaluation guidelines require that every teacher – no matter what his or her rating – has a combination of 3 observations and reviews of practice each year. At least one of those **must** be a formal, in-class observation.

The flexibility option would give district committees the opportunity to establish an evaluation process based on a 3-year cycle for those teachers who are rated proficient or exemplary. Since this is the first year many districts are using those specific terms, the district can use the terms they included in their *previous* evaluation system to determine which teachers would be eligible for this flexibility option. Within the 3 year cycle, at least one formal, in-class observation must take place; the committee can mutually agree to include more formal observations on a regular basis if they choose.

During the years when a formal observation isn't scheduled to take place, proficient and exemplary teachers would have 3 informal observations conducted by their evaluators. This is a practice many districts currently use. This will free up a significant amount of time for evaluators to concentrate on providing support for new teachers and those who are struggling.

The flexibility option also allows an evaluator to schedule additional formal observations at any time during the 3-year cycle if informal observations lead him or her to feel that one or more formal observations are needed. Clarifying language in the flexibility option reinforces that, for non-classroom teachers, observations would take place in a setting that is appropriate to their roles.

The 3-year cycle also includes a review of practice between the teacher and evaluator every year.

Observation Flexibility Option : What Should Guide Our Discussion?

(sample questions)

1. Will our district use this option for teachers, and if so, when will we begin?
2. If we begin this year, how will we decide which teachers will be in year 1, 2, or 3 of the cycle?
3. Will we randomly select? Ask for volunteers? Begin with those teachers who have already been observed?
4. If teachers are placed in an 'informal observation' year, and have already had formal observations, will those be used in their summative evaluation this year?
5. Will the process for conducting informal observations in the 3-year cycle change at all, and if so, how?
6. Will the focus of one formal, in-class observation encompass all or only some indicators of the observation rubric the district uses?
7. Will the committee draw up a list of recommended 'appropriate settings' for those support specialists who are non-classroom teachers, so there is greater consistency across the district?



5

Changing the way formal observations are conducted can have several advantages for both teachers and evaluators. With fewer teachers to formally observe each year, the evaluator can spend more time supporting new or struggling teachers. If an evaluator conducts 3 informal observations each year, those can help shape the focus of the review of practice and other conversations with the teacher.

Perhaps the hardest decision to make is whether or not to begin a 3-year evaluation cycle in the middle of this year. This is one area in which mutual agreement of the committee members is critical. One key to making the right decision is assuring that all aspects of the change are fully discussed and committee members have a common, agreed-upon understanding of how those changes will look in practice.

Development of SLOs (Student Learning Objectives)

- Current Requirement :
- 1 – 4 per year
 - Every educator's SLOs aligned with student academic growth indicators
- Flexibility Option :
- 1 Student Growth Objective per year
 - Support specialist develops growth objective & indicators based on his/her role



Under the current guidelines, teachers develop between 1 and 4 student growth goals or objectives each year, as described in their teacher evaluation plan. The State Department's interpretation of the guidelines language has been that the student goals are required to use multiple indicators to measure student **academic** growth and development, no matter what the teacher's role is within the school. The SEED model requires teachers to write 2 student *learning* objectives, and most districts have followed that requirement.

Requiring teachers to write 2 SLOs can lead to those SLOs and targets being easier to reach and not focusing on students' most pressing needs. The flexibility option emphasizes that districts **can focus on having teachers write 1 student goal or objective that addresses the most critical student needs, and that student goal can**

be based on other areas of growth in which a support specialist does his or her work.

This is especially important for support specialists who work in non-classroom settings (such as guidance counselors and school psychologists), specialists who don't have primary responsibility for direct instruction of students or who teach students on an as-needed basis (such as some library media specialists), and specialists who don't instruct students at all (such as coaches or curriculum specialists).

Student Growth Goal Flexibility Option : What Should Guide Our Discussion?

(sample questions)

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of writing 1 student goal?
2. If we're not ready to make a full change to requiring only 1 student goal for next year, should we pilot this with a smaller group of teachers?
3. With the development of 1 student goal, how many indicators would we recommend teachers include?
4. What guidelines do we think are important for teachers and evaluators to follow when developing and agreeing on 1 student goal?
5. Where can we find good samples, or how can we develop good samples, of student goals that focus on the most important role of : (1) a support specialist who provides services directly to students, (2) a support specialist who works primarily with teachers, and (3) a support specialist who doesn't work with either students or teachers?
6. If we want to focus on the use of only 1 student goal starting this year, what guidance can we give to teachers and evaluators about reaching mutual agreement on which student goal to use?



The student growth goal flexibility option is another that has the potential to significantly decrease the work load for both teachers and evaluators, and enable teachers to focus on one very meaningful growth goal for students. One of the most important parts of the flexibility option is shifting the focus of student goals for support specialists.

Specialists who provide services to students can think in terms of how their services promote student development that contributes to student growth *overall*, not just academically.

Specialists who work primarily with teachers and aren't responsible for primary instruction of students shouldn't be held directly accountable for student performance. They also have no control over whether or not teachers use what they learn from the

specialist, so can't be held accountable for teacher performance. But they can be held accountable for providing supports to teachers in response to teacher needs that are connected to student learning needs, and this can help guide the development of their growth goals.

Specialists who don't work with either teachers or students also can't be held accountable for student growth. The objectives they write may be better linked to how they contribute to a particular school program, depending on their role in the school.

Onerous Data Collection

Current Issue :

- Excessive data management system requirements
- Technical & Infrastructure problems cause system failures
- No privacy protections

New Requirement for All Districts (not optional) :

- Limit data, information, & artifacts to those specifically used for evaluating teacher
- By 9-15-14, and then annually, Teacher Evaluation & Development Committee examines efficiency of data management system & makes report to local Board of Education
- Access to teacher data limited to primary evaluator, superintendent/designee, & others directly involved in evaluation/PD processes
- SDE access to identifiable student data limited to that needed to comply with statutory audits

At this point in time, data management in teacher evaluation has a stronger emphasis on 'data' than it does on 'management,' and teachers and administrators have reported excessive data uploads required by different systems. This is due in part to the belief that an evaluator has to have evidence for every indicator in every domain, for every observation done of a teacher, no matter what rubric is being used in the evaluation system. Because evaluators may not observe behaviors that align with every indicator while they're in the classroom, teachers are often required to upload additional information. Teachers have reported spending a minimum of 2 hours, and often many more, on these tasks, which takes time from their lesson planning for instruction.

The flexibility option limits the data required to only that which is used specifically in any given observation; in essence, if the

evaluator doesn't see behaviors during an observation that align with an indicator, the teacher **wouldn't** be required to upload additional data and artifacts, and the observation would be based only on what is observed.

District committees would also be required to examine how efficient the data management system selected for use is, and make a report to the local board of education as to what they see the needs for a data management system are, and what would work efficiently. Protections for students and teachers that limit who has access to data stored electronically are also specified, so as to prevent the misuse of such data.

Data Management Flexibility Option : What Should Guide Our Discussion?

(sample questions)

1. What information is really needed in each phase of evaluation?
2. Is there redundancy in the information teachers are asked to provide? If so, where is it, and how can we eliminate it?
3. How can we assure there is consistency across schools in how much information teachers are asked to upload?
4. What does an 'efficient' data management system look like?
5. What privacy protections does any data management system we examine have?
6. What type of training in use of any data management system is needed?
7. What would the cost to our district be?
8. What technical support does any data management system company provide to teachers and administrators?



Choosing a data management system isn't easy for a local board of education. Because there are so many aspects to use of the system that need to be explored and discussed, your committee may want to establish a sub-committee that includes other educators – especially at least one district IT staff member – to take on this work. Monitoring and evaluating the use of the data management system will be a process that occurs over time, and with the other work that the Professional Development & Evaluation committee has to do, it may be better to separate this task. A sub-committee would report back to the full committee with its findings, and the full committee will make a final report to the local board of education about the needs and efficiencies of a system that the committee identifies.

Timelines

January 29, 2014 - Flexibility options approved by PEAC

February 5, 2014 - Flexibility options tentatively set to be reviewed by State Board of Education

March 30, 2014 – District deadline for submitting flexibility plan for remainder of 2013-14 school year to SDE

SDE to determine district deadline for submitting teacher evaluation plan, including any flexibility option, for 2014-15 school year

Note : The district plan, including any flexibility changes made to the plan used for the remainder of this school year, must be approved by the local board of education prior to submission to the State Department of Education.



10

Time is always of the essence, but it's critical that district Professional Development & Evaluation committees convene as quickly as possible to review the flexibility options now available and determine their next course of action. As the timeline indicates, a district committee **can** make changes to their plan and put those into effect immediately, and must submit those changes to the State Department of Education no later than March 30 of this year. If a district chooses not to make any changes to the plan they'll use for the remainder of this year, no submission to the SDE is needed.

The SDE will determine the deadline for each district to submit the teacher evaluation plan they'll use **next** year, including any flexibility options that are chosen for that plan. As required by statute, all plans must be approved by the local board of education prior to submission to the SDE.

Timelines :
What Should Guide Our Discussion?

(sample questions)

1. Should we begin by creating and agreeing on a priority list of the changes we feel will have the most positive impact on teaching and learning?
2. What changes can we most easily come to mutual agreement on for use *this* year?
3. Will the changes apply to all staff, or will we pilot those with smaller groups?
4. If we pilot for the remainder of this year, how will we decide whether or not to include the changes in our plan for next year?
5. Should we include a board of education member in our discussions so we have an idea of whether or not the board will approve changes we request?
6. How would we 'message' changes for this year to teachers and administrators so everyone has the same understanding?
7. What flexibility options are we interested in including in our plan for *next* year?
8. Will the changes apply to all staff, or will we pilot those with smaller groups?
9. In what other areas do we want to make changes to our plan for next year?



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The timeline for making changes to your teacher evaluation plan may seem short, but chances are teachers and administrators already have ideas of what changes need to be made. Your committee would be well served to work first on those changes that will have the most positive impact on teaching and learning. Resources are available on the CEA web site's teacher evaluation page to help guide your committee's discussions, and CEA staff are available to work with your committee. It's important to remember that the evaluation plan is a working document and can be changed each year as teachers and administrators in your district find what works best.

Next Steps for Your Committee?

- Convene meeting of the district Professional Development & Evaluation Committee
- Review flexibility options and mutually agree on whether changes will be made for this year, next year, or both
- Establish appropriate working schedule
- Review Flexibility Option Questions as a guide to committee discussions
- Mutually agree on language and practice changes for plan
- Decide on how the changes will be communicated in a clear message to all staff
- Submit changes to plan to local board of education for approval
- Upon approval, submit plan for changes to the SDE; plan for next year will go through established review process for consistency with guidelines

CEA teacher evaluation resources : www.cea.org
Click on 'Teacher Evaluation' on left hand menu

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Time is often in short supply, but it's very important that the district Professional Development & Evaluation committee meets to discuss the flexibility options and makes a well-informed decision. The options have the potential to help make the evaluation process more meaningful and appropriate, while relieving teachers and administrators of some of the burden the current system places on them. With honest discussion about evaluation, we have the opportunity right now to return to a focus on planning and providing engaging instruction for our students.
