

PUBLIC SURVEY ON THE COMMON CORE AND THE CURRENT MASSACHUSETTS STANDARDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (2001) AND MATHEMATICS (2000)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS JULY 2010

BACKGROUND

The Common Core State Standards Online Survey was launched by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on June 6, 2010 to gather public comment on the similarities and differences between the Common Core State Standards (released June 2, 2010) and the current Massachusetts standards (Mathematics standards adopted in 2000 and English Language Arts or ELA in 2001). The link to the online survey was posted on the ESE website and widely distributed to professional associations for mathematics and ELA, curriculum coordinators, school superintendents, principals, higher education faculty, advisory councils, content liaison groups and others. Respondents were asked some common questions and then chose one or more subject area grade bands to rate the content of both sets of standards in the categories of concepts and skills, rigor, clarity, vertical alignment, measurability, relevance for college & career readiness (for K-12 and high school) and overall. The majority of ratings for both the Common Core and the Massachusetts standards were *good* or *excellent* in mathematics and ELA for every category in each grade band.

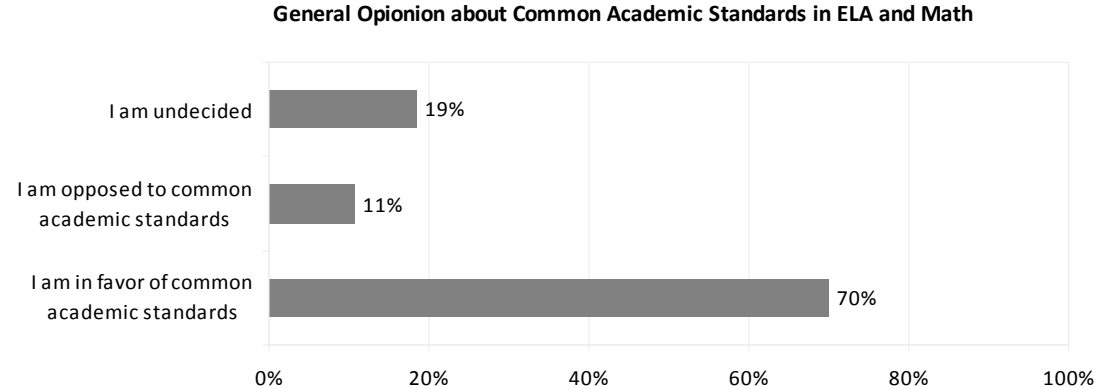
This report provides highlights of the responses and is based on a total of 178 respondents who completed the survey by commenting on at least one grade band (K-12, K-5, 6-8, or high school) in ELA or mathematics. Of the 178 respondents, 73% were teachers, 13% were curriculum coordinators, 8% were from higher education institutions, and 6% were parents, students, and others.

RESULTS

The results described below should be interpreted with the understanding that they are based on a limited number of respondents with varying degrees of familiarity with each set of standards.

1. Respondents' Opinion on Common Academic Standards

The great majority of respondents (70%) expressed a favorable opinion about states having common academic standards.



2. Mathematics: Summary of Survey Data by Grade Band

Within a particular grade band, respondents were asked to rate the content of both the Common Core State Standards and the current Massachusetts standards as *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, or *poor* in the categories of content: concepts and skills, rigor, clarity, vertical alignment, measurability, career & college readiness (for grade bands K-12 and high school) and overall. Responses were compared based on percentage of the total for *excellent* and *good* ratings.

- Those who reviewed the mathematics standards for the **K-5** grade band (N = 36: MA, N = 37: CC) rated the Common Core State Standards higher than the Massachusetts standards in all categories.
- Those who reviewed the mathematics standards for the **6-8** grade band (N = 22: MA, N = 23: CC) rated the Massachusetts standards higher than the Common Core State Standards for all categories except content clarity (which was rated better for the CC standards).
- Those who reviewed the mathematics standards for the **high school** grade band (N = 23: MA & CC) rated the Massachusetts standards higher than the Common Core State Standards for all categories.
- Those who reviewed the mathematics standards for the **K-12** grade band (N = 29: MA & CC) rated the CC standards higher than the Massachusetts standards for all categories.
- In their optional comments on “strong components in the Massachusetts standards that are not included in the Common Core State Standards,” one respondent commented: “The MA standards are more balanced and address all strands appropriately. CCSS standards overemphasize number and operations.”
- In their optional comments on “strong components in the Common Core math standards that are not included in the current Massachusetts standards,” one respondent commented: “CCSS are more specific about how children should ‘do, solve, represent’ in order to show understanding. They also give much more detail of what the standards include by clustering those that are related. Explicitly embedding the algebraic thinking in the number strand makes a lot of sense.”

3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA BY GRADE BAND

Within a particular grade band, respondents were asked to rate both the CC standards and the current Massachusetts standards as *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, or *poor* in the categories of concepts and skills, rigor, clarity, vertical alignment, measurability, and overall. Responses were compared based on percentage of total *excellent* and *good* ratings.

- Those who reviewed the ELA standards for the **K-5** band (N = 29:MA, N = 30:CC) rated the Common Core ELA standards higher on clarity, vertical alignment and measurability and rated the Common Core ELA standards as being higher overall.
- Those who reviewed the ELA standards for the **6-8** band (N = 17:MA, N = 17:CC) rated both the Common Core and Massachusetts ELA standards even on 3 of the 6 questions (College and Career was not asked for 6-8) and rated the Common Core and Massachusetts ELA standards as being even.

- Those who reviewed the ELA standards for the **9-12** band (N = 23) rated the Massachusetts ELA standards higher on concepts and skills, rigor, vertical alignment, measurability and college and career and rated the Massachusetts ELA standards as being higher overall.
- Those who reviewed the ELA standards for the **K-12** band (N = 26) rated the Common Core ELA standards higher on rigor, clarity, vertical alignment, measurability and college & career readiness, but rated the Massachusetts ELA standards as being higher overall (note: the higher overall rating of Massachusetts ELA standards over the Common Core ELA standards was minimal).
- In their optional comments on “strong components in the Massachusetts standards that are not included in the Common Core State Standards,” six respondents mentioned the reading standards for different genres of literature and one respondent commented that the Massachusetts standards offered a strong presentation of 21st century skills.
- In their optional comments on “strong components in the Common Core ELA standards that are not included in the current Massachusetts standards,” seven respondents mentioned the standards for reading informational text and standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects, three mentioned the standards for writing, and three the emphasis on college and career readiness.