

**Chris L. Nicastro, Ph.D.**  
Commissioner of Education



**Michael J. Muenks**  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of College and Career Readiness

## Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

— *Missouri public schools: the best choice...the best results!* —

**TO:** School Administrators and School Personnel  
**FROM:** Michael Muenks, Assistant Commissioner  
**DATE:** June 23, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Common Core State Standards  
**CC:** RPDC Directors and Staff, Area Supervisors, Federal School Improvement Supervisors, Department Offices

Thank you to the many teachers and administrators who provided feedback and input to the development of the Common Core State Standards. We have worked closely in recent months with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State Officers to develop the standards, which were released to the public on June 2.

On the recommendation of Commissioner of Education Chris L. Nicastro, the State Board of Education voted last week to adopt the Common Core State Standards. Missouri became the 10th state to adopt them, and we appreciate the wide spread enthusiasm and support for the new standards.

The formal adoption of the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics is only the beginning of a lengthy process, which is now moving to the assessment development stage. Department staff members are focused and committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for school districts in Missouri.

One of the components of the Common Core Initiative is that states join one of the various consortia to work cooperatively in designing formative and summative assessments to accompany the new standards. Missouri is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced assessment consortium.

The goal of that consortium is to have assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics available by the 2012-2013 school year – at the earliest. Until such time, Missouri students will continue to take Grade-level and End-of-Course assessments aligned to Missouri's 2.0 Grade-level and Course-level expectations.

District accountability will continue to be based upon student performance on those assessments. So, although districts should continue to update curriculum, as has been done in the past, the focus for now should remain on the standards that align with the assessments that will be used for district accountability – the 2.0 Missouri Grade-level and Course-level expectations.

Moving forward, Department staff members have been making plans to ensure that teachers will have the information and tools necessary to successfully implement the standards in a uniform manner throughout the state. We will be helping Missouri educators become familiar with the documents and will provide information on specific differences between the Common Core

standards and Missouri's 2.0 GLEs/CLEs. Professional learning opportunities for Missouri educators also will be provided to districts as implementation nears.

In the meantime, districts should continue to ensure that teachers are providing the best instruction possible for students – focused on the current GLEs/CLEs.

Please do not hesitate to contact the [curriculum section](#) at 573-751-2625 with any questions as we move through the implementation process.

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