

ELA Work-stream Report for June 15, 2015, ASRC Meeting:

The ELA work-stream has continued to work on the *Matrix for Reviewing State Level Standards*. In addition to pre-Common Core Massachusetts and California standards, which were discussed briefly at the last meeting, all members have had time to review the *2008 ELA and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills*. These standards have some notable strengths, including a clear, concise vertical progression of skills, and a helpful ancillary document that details how students have met, failed to meet, or exceeded the standard at each grade level. They also contain many overlaps with Common Core Standards. The Texas standards lack the levels of clarification and support offered by some of the other curriculum frameworks, in particular that of California. The work-stream will shortly be completing a review of Virginia's SOL's and the present North Carolina standards.

The ELA survey has been submitted to superintendents across the state to distribute to their teachers. So far we have 990 respondents who have taken time to offer feedback. While it is far too early to predict what the final survey results will be, there are a few notable trends in the data.

One source of frustration for teachers seems to be the number of students who entered their classrooms this year needing remediation. 68% of teachers agree or strongly agree their students needed remediation. This is linked to the survey question which asked teachers to identify the impediments they have faced in implementing the present standards with fidelity. 46% responded that students are arriving to their classrooms with learning gaps since the standards were not phased in, but applied to all students in a single year.

The leading concerns with the present standards are their developmental appropriateness for the grade level, covering all the standards required by the end of the year, and the multiple tasks that may be embedded in a single standard. On the other hand, teachers particularly value the emphasis on text-based evidence and the focus on academic vocabulary that are part of the NC ELA standards.

Teachers cited the need for more textbooks and instructional materials aligned with the standards and more professional development. And, an overwhelming 78.8% of respondents said they would like to see teacher-recommended changes made to the present North Carolina ELA standards.

There are too many articulate and nuanced open-ended responses from teachers to share here. We appreciate the effort it took at a very busy time of year to respond to our survey. It has been disheartening to hear that some districts have thus far been unable to share the survey links with their teachers. We hope that does not continue to be the case, because we are garnering truly helpful data that will allow us to make the most informed recommendations possible for the teachers and students of our state.

