



January 2013

# Governance Brief

## Governing to the Core: Acquiring Instructional Materials

Issue 3

This brief is the third in a series that focuses on the implementation of Common Core State Standards for California. The implementation of the Common Core will require changes at the district level over several years that involve standards and curriculum, teacher and administrator professional development, new instructional materials, and district assessment systems. These changes are directly connected to local boards' responsibilities in setting direction, establishing structure—including policy and budget—demonstrating support, ensuring accountability, and providing community leadership.

This third edition of *Governing to the Core* addresses the challenges associated with acquiring instructional materials aligned to the Common Core.

### **The board and instructional materials: Your role and responsibilities**

State law grants governing boards the authority to approve and adopt instructional materials. The board holds the district accountable for following a selection process for instructional materials that fulfill state criteria to ensure that appropriate materials are chosen. While there are specific requirements and criteria for the selection of instructional materials that must be met, some of these requirements have changed. In the past, boards for K-8 districts were required to select from a list of materials approved by the State Board of Education. Due to the passage of Assembly Bill 1246, boards are now allowed to adopt K-8 materials NOT approved by the State Board, provided those materials are aligned with state academic content standards or Common Core standards.

Prior to adopting instructional materials that are recommended by the superintendent or staff, the board must ensure that an instructional materials adoption process

is established and the selected materials meet identified criteria. CSBA sample policy and administrative regulation BP/AR 6161.1 - *Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials*, revised in November 2012, include the references the district will need to ensure compliance. Keeping all of this straight can be confusing, and the board will want to ask itself “is our district policy in this matter up-to-date? Does it meet the current requirements of law?”

### **Frameworks and instructional materials—a tough timeline**

Normally, frameworks are developed prior to the selection of instructional materials. Subject matter frameworks—which are created by the California Department of Education (CDE) and adopted by the State Board—are comprehensive documents that serve as the basis for aligning local curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices, and staff development with content standards.

The timing for the development of new mathematics and English-language arts (ELA) frameworks poses a challenge. In 2009, the state Legislature suspended the authority of the CDE to develop frameworks and the authority of the State Board to adopt frameworks until after July 2015. After the adoption of the Common Core in August 2010, the Legislature passed Assembly Bill 250 in 2011 to give CDE the authority to revise curriculum frameworks for ELA and math. According to the state implementation plan for Common Core (revised October 2012), the target date is November 2013 for the availability of a new math framework and May 2014 for a new ELA/English-language development (ELD) framework. Note the difference between a normal sequence for implementing content standards and the timeline for Common Core:

### The normal sequence for implementing standards

Adopt Content Standards  
Adopt Frameworks  
Adopt Instructional Materials  
Teacher Professional Development  
Standards Aligned Assessments

### Timeline for Implementing CCSS (ELA)

CCSS adopted Aug. 2010  
Teacher PD Modules Sept. 2012  
Supplemental Instructional Materials Feb. 2013  
ELA/ELD Framework May 2014  
New Assessments May 2015  
Adopt Instructional Materials *after June 2016*

#### Key points:

- The ELA/ELD framework will not be available until May 2014, *just four months* before K-12 teachers will be expected to implement the Common Core.
- The first assessment is currently scheduled for spring 2015, but new State Board-adopted instructional materials aligned to Common Core for math and ELA/ELD will not be available until after June 2015.

Board members can see that timelines are tight, and that the conditions under which the district might acquire any instructional materials related to Common Core are not optimum. While this creates uncertainty and ambiguity, it also provides an opportunity to innovate.

### Supplemental materials: The short-term solution

Senate Bill 140 (Ch. 623, Statutes of 2011) requires the state superintendent of public instruction to initiate a process to invite publishers to submit supplemental instructional materials, and created a review process by teachers and content matter experts. The purpose of the review is to provide support to local educational agencies (LEAs) in determining the extent to which supplemental instructional materials in ELA and math align to Common Core.

By January 2013, the CDE intends to provide a list of supplemental instructional materials that will bridge the gap between existing programs and the Common Core. Additionally, Assembly Bill 1719 (Chapter 636 Statutes of 2012) requires the state to provide, by January 1, 2014, a list of supplemental materials that are aligned to the newly adopted English-language development standards for English learners.

A complete Q&A on the supplemental review process is available at [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/sspimaterialreviewfaqs.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/sspimaterialreviewfaqs.asp). Also see CSBA sample BP 6161.11 - Supplementary Instructional Materials as revised in November 2012.

#### Key points:

- LEAs will *not* be required to purchase the supplemental materials identified by the CDE.
- Boards may select materials not on the approved lists, provided the materials are reviewed by content experts and meet certain criteria.

### Instructional materials funding

Board members understand that flexibility in funding has been granted because of drastic funding cuts. So the question of what materials students and teachers need versus what districts can afford is a constant challenge.

#### Instructional Materials Funding Realignment Program ends

Since 2003, the state of California has provided the Instructional Materials Funding Realignment Program (IMFRP)—funds allocated to districts on a per-pupil basis to assist districts in funding the purchase of core instructional materials. In response to the fiscal crisis in 2009, IMFRP funds were included in the flexibility granted to districts in Education Code 42605 through the 2014-15 school year. Assembly Bill 1246 (Statutes of 2012) repealed the provisions of IMFRP. LEAs for grades K, 1-8 and 9-12 are no longer limited to State Board-approved materials as long as textbooks are aligned to academic and Common Core standards.

#### Unrestricted general funds and lottery funds

According to the CDE's website, LEAs may utilize general funds or Proposition 20 lottery funds to purchase *any* instructional materials. This provides LEAs with some flexibility. However, the flexibility provided by Education Code 42605 is set to expire in June 2015. Unless the legislature takes further action, boards and superintendents will need to plan for restricted use of instructional materials funding. Beginning a multi-year acquisition of non-state

adopted materials with unrestricted general funds could be problematic if flexibility is not guaranteed.

Boards and superintendents will want to discuss the cost of instructional materials in light of the district's instructional needs as well as the district's available funds.

## The national perspective

California school board members are not alone in this. The benefit of adopting standards that have been adopted by 45 other states is that all of the states are facing the same challenges. In the near future, there will be greater opportunity to share resources, but this work is still in its beginning stages. Many states are actively engaged in processes similar to California's, developing tools to help districts map current standards to the Common Core and working with publishers to identify short-term supplemental materials and criteria for later full adoptions. At a September 2012 State Board meeting, it was suggested that the State Board adopt materials from other states that have already been through the process. While the idea was not discussed in depth, it raises the possibility there might be other solutions forthcoming.

## Governing conversations for Winter 2013

### Setting direction

The board and the superintendent must clarify the short-term target dates and goals that the district will pursue for Common Core implementation. Boards will want to set challenging but attainable goals. Clear goals and timelines are a critical issue for the board and superintendent; clear expectations lead to better performance and build trust at all levels. Because of local circumstance, boards may want to discuss whether the district will implement Common Core on the exact timeline set by the CDE.

### Establishing structure

Boards will need to plan for the process and funding to acquire any needed instructional materials. With resources strained and timelines short, more than ever, boards will need data. By documenting the precise needs for CCSS-aligned materials, districts can approach instructional materials strategically, purchasing only what is necessary.

The supplemental materials review by the CDE will be available in January 2013. This provides an 18-month window before K-12 implementation of Common Core is expected. Budget projections will have to account for instructional materials purchased between now and summer 2014, as well as for the multi-year projections for purchasing any new instructional materials after June 2015.

## Demonstrating support

There will be many bumps in the road to CCSS implementation. Boards will need to stay focused on the long view and understand that implementing Common Core is *not* simple. It is a big change—a second order change—and it will require significant work at every level of the district. Boards may want to keep Common Core implementation on the board's standing agenda.

To lead and support the Common Core changes, and subsequent changes to assessments, boards will need to focus heavily on sustaining a culture of excitement for the destination and patience for the journey. Boards will need to balance a sense of urgency with an understanding of the stress on staff to implement the changes. All of this will be done in an era of historically low and rapidly fading funding that strains capacity and endangers morale. Appropriate pressure and high support are critical to successful change.

## Accountability

With Common Core established as a regular agenda item, boards and superintendents must agree upon the short term measures and indicators that will serve as the basis for evaluating the acquisition of necessary instructional materials and other Common Core related goals.

## Community leadership

Boards must remember that they are still required by the Williamson Act (Education Code 60119) to hold an annual public hearing, and make a determination by resolution as to whether the district has sufficient instructional materials. Boards can also work with the superintendent to use the public hearing as an opportunity to inform the community about the implementation of Common Core in the district.

## County connection

The state implementation plan includes recommended activities for county offices of education (COEs) to support Common Core implementation. The plan includes a suggestion that COEs include in their technical support "providing instructional material fairs for the newly adopted supplemental instructional materials."

If they have not already done so, districts may wish to begin a dialogue with their COEs about how the county office can provide beneficial and appropriate assistance regarding instructional materials after the CDE posts its report in January 2013.

## Coming Up

<b>Dec 2012</b>	The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium released its minimum hardware and software requirements for existing computers. The report is at: <a href="http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology/">www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology/</a> .
<b>January 2013</b>	Watch for State Board action on Supplemental Instructional Materials. If the State Board acts, the CDE is scheduled to post the report on its website in January 2013.
<b>February 2013</b>	The smarter balanced pilot test is scheduled to take place between Feb. 20 and May 10, 2013 in grades 3 - 11. SBAC will include schools from across the state. There is also a volunteer component.

## Resources

### CSBA Sample Policies

BP 6161.11 - Supplementary Instructional Materials

BP/AR 6161.1 - Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials

### For Your Communities

Common Core flyers from CDE have been translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Chinese (simplified and traditional) and [bit.ly/WoQ4dR](http://bit.ly/WoQ4dR)