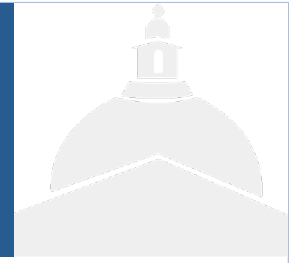




Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents



M.A.S.S. Supports the Common Core

Background

In 2010, the Massachusetts Board of Education adopted the most *comprehensive, focused, and rigorous* blueprint of learning standards in the history of the Commonwealth. In 2011, teachers and administrators took on the challenge of implementing curriculum maps, instructional strategies, and a variety of assessments designed to prepare all students for college, career, and *civic* readiness. To dismantle this work, to reverse the forward momentum we have, M.A.S.S. feels is wrong. Massachusetts played a significant role in the drafting of the Common Core with the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, a byproduct of that work.

Defense of the Common Core and the Massachusetts Frameworks

Our support of the standards outlined in the Common Core and the current Massachusetts Frameworks is summed up in three points: they are comprehensive, rigorous, and fiscally responsible.

Comprehensive. The new frameworks insist on a “shared responsibility” for a set of core competencies – reading, writing, problem solving, speaking, listening, and language – that transcend the boundaries of all curricula areas and ensures transferable skills from grade to grade and subject to subject. This new framework establishes the foundation for the balanced civic discourse we so need.

Rigorous. The current Massachusetts frameworks advance expectations to meet the new demands of the information age. The new standards place greater emphasis on informational texts, arguments, evidence and reasoning, research, collaboration, and multimodal communication. All of this must be done with tasks of increasing complexity and greater student independence.

Fiscally responsible. Millions of dollars have been invested in developing the current standards, revising curricula, and training teachers. The investment in professional development for teachers was very expensive but made reasonable with Race To The Top (RTTT) monies. Any change now would require millions of dollars to reinstate the prior standards, retrain teachers, and reconstruct curricula.

If we are to graduate citizens prepared to meet the demands of democracy in the age of multimedia, we will do so not by returning to the past, but by accepting the challenge of our current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and empowering our students, teachers, and administrators to continue to engage in effective change.