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March 11, 2013

To: Representative Kasha Kelley
From: Sharon Wenger, Principal Analyst
Re: Common Core Standards

As you requested, below in a question and answer format is information about Common Core Standards as the standards were developed in Kansas. Attached material includes the Memorandum of Agreement between Kansas and the national Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, the letter from the U.S. Department of Education approving Kansas' request for a waiver from ESEA – No Child Left Behind requirements, Legislative Division of Post Audit performance audit regarding the waiver of No Child Left Behind and Common Core Standards, an example of Common Core standards for 8th grade English Language Arts, and excerpted pages from the Fordham Institute report on Common Core standards.

How and when did Kansas get involved in the development and adoption of Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts?

Kansas law (KSA 2012 Supp. 72-6439) requires the State Board of Education (State Board) to establish curriculum standards for the core area academic areas of mathematics, science, reading, writing, and social studies and review those standards at least every seven years.

The time the State decided to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with The Council of Chief State School Officers and The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (see attached MOU from 2009), coincides with the time when Kansas was due for a seven-year review of math and English language arts standards.

Because states had been working together to develop more rigorous standards and assessments (an example of this was the American Diploma Project begun in 2001 that 35 states joined to align state standards with college and work expectations), Kansas officials wished to be part of this effort to develop common standards for math and English. Educators from Kansas provided regular feedback to the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers as the Common Core Standards were in development. Kansas also took advantage of the ability to develop 15 percent of the standards from within the state. An example of the 15 percent is attached for your review.

Senate Ways and Means Committee
Date: 05-31-13
Attachment #: 7

State Board members discussed the Common Core Standards for math and English for several months leading up to the State Board's adoption of the Standards in October 2010.

Describe the costs associated with implementation of the Common Core Standards in Kansas and compare to the Pioneer Institute's report entitled "National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards" as well as describing the Pioneer Institute's methodology for cost estimates.

Because Kansas' Legislative Division of Post Audit completed a performance audit on this topic (*K-12 Education: Estimating Potential Costs Related to Implementing the No Child Left Behind Waiver in Kansas*) and reviewed the Pioneer Institute's work, I reviewed the audit work with auditors in detail. Legislative Post Audit completes audit work in compliance with General Accounting Office standards. (A hard copy of the Post Audit is provided to you.)

Technology Cost Estimates

Because the Pioneer Institute used California and Florida in its estimating of technology costs and because both states do not use computer-assisted assessments for all students, the estimates for states like Kansas conducting all assessments *via* computer seem overstated. (California is only this year piloting the use of computer-assisted assessments.) The Pioneer Institute estimated the technological costs to Kansas would be nearly \$77.0 million in the first seven years. The Post Audit review of the Pioneer study indicated the study overestimated costs.

Legislative Post Audit (page 19) wrote that "Technology costs, which may be significant in many states, should not be much of an issue in Kansas because most student assessments already are taken online."

Professional Development Costs

The Pioneer Institute study used the states of California, Texas, and Washington to estimate costs for teacher professional development. Kansas adopted the Common Core standards in October 2010 and began training thereafter. Texas has never adopted Common Core Standards; Washington adopted them in July 2011; and California adopted in August 2010. The Pioneer Institute study estimated a cost of \$1,931 per each teacher in a state or about \$66.0 million in Kansas. However, this estimate includes all K-12 teachers. Post Audit indicated that "it should not be necessary for all teachers to attend Common Core training."

Post Audit (page 17) estimated Kansas teachers would need two additional training days on Common Core standards. Because several teacher training days are already scheduled for a school year, training on the Common Core standards might be part of the already-scheduled training days. Post Audit indicated that "school districts may incur

between \$2.0 million and \$5.0 million in one-time real costs if they add new training days to the schedule.” The Post Audit goes on to say “School districts would incur few out-of-pocket costs if they incorporate the Common Core training into existing training.”

Further, much training has already taken place in Kansas since the adoption of the standards.

Textbooks and Materials

The Pioneer Institute estimated Kansas would spend about \$27.8 million on new textbooks and materials related to implementation of Common Core standards.

Post Audit (page 16) stated: “We estimate Common Core textbooks and materials would cost school districts an additional \$30 million to \$50 million over the next two years, but this amount does not have to be entirely out of pocket.” By looking at financial data, the audit showed Kansas school districts spend about \$30 million per year on new and replacement instructional materials. So, the audit concluded, districts could forgo the replacement of non-Common Core materials and spend no more than past years or spend an additional \$30 million.

Testing Costs

The Kansas Department of Education budgets approximately \$6.0 million per year to cover costs of assessments. (This is primarily due to a contract with the University of Kansas - Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation for test administration and analysis.) Department and national experts estimate development of assessments based on new standards would cost Kansas between \$9.0 - \$30.0 million, depending upon what type of assessments were required for example, a multiple choice assessment might cost less to develop than another type. Recently, the University of Kansas Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation received a \$22.0 million grant to develop a new assessment system for special education.

The cost of developing the Smarter Balanced assessment system will be funded by the U.S. Department of Education. After development is complete, most states can expect to spend less on Smarter Balanced assessments than they do on current assessments. However, it is unknown at this time what those costs will be because the assessments will not be used until the 2014-2015 school year.

It is likely that Kansas' costs could be less than other states, in the same way that estimated costs in the technology area above is less, because Kansas has been using computer-assisted testing for some time.

Discuss ACT and SAT tests and possible coordination with the Common Core State Standards.

According to Scott Montgomery, Assistant Vice President, of ACT, because the ACT (the test taken near the end of high school) is aligned to ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks, and it will not be changing. No information is available at this time on the SAT test.

Describe the differences between a standard and curriculum.

A standard could be: *At the end of grade level, read and comprehend at the high end of grade 2 – 3.*

Curriculum to accomplish that: *A teacher might use a reading textbook OR Use no textbook and read newspapers or other materials.*

It will be local school districts' responsibility to choose curriculum.

Will other standards, such as science standards or history/government standards become part of Common Core State Standards?

Kansas is updating science and history/government standards because of the seven-year review requirement in Kansas statute; but they are not part of Common Core Standards.

Are Common Core Standards for math and English required for Kansas to be in compliance with the state's waiver from No Child Left Behind?

Kansas' waiver from No Child Left Behind was not granted until July 2012 (see the approval letter from the U.S. Department of Education attached.) The waiver requires Kansas adopt "college and career ready standards" but does not require those be the Common Core State Standards.

A more detailed description of the waiver is included in the performance audit conducted by the Legislative Division of Post Audit described earlier.

What other studies have looked at Common Core State Standards?

The Fordham Institute – often referred to as a conservative think-tank and the sponsor of charter schools in Ohio – published a report entitled *The State of State Standards and the Common Core in 2010*.

The Fordham Institute acknowledges they have been "longtime supporters of national standards and tests" because many states have poor standards. Attached is a summary of the analysis of Fordham on each state's standards as well as the Institute's analysis of Kansas

standards compared to the Common Core Standards in math and English Language Arts.

Enclosures:

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