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Contact: Patrick Riccards
Tuesday, April 8, 2014
703-298-8283
riccards@collaborativecommunications.com

LFA: Give Educators More Time to Successfully Implement Common Core State Standards

Voices Representing More than 10 Million Teachers, Administrators, Parents and Community Leaders Call On States To Hold Off on High-Stakes Consequences

WASHINGTON, DC (April 8, 2014)—The Learning First Alliance today called on policy makers to allow more time for the formal implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), particularly the high-stakes consequences tied to CCSS testing, to ensure the required instructional alignment and supports necessary for meaningful college- and career-ready standards.

“Rushing to make high-stakes decisions such as student advancement or graduation, teacher evaluation, school performance designation or state funding awards based on assessments of the standards before they have been fully and properly implemented is unwise,” the LFA statement said.

“We continue to see growing opposition to the standards as officials move too quickly to use aligned assessments in high-stakes accountability decisions. Such actions have the potential to undermine the standards themselves – and thus our opportunity to improve education for all students. We must take the necessary time to ensure we succeed in this endeavor,” it continued.

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of leading education organizations representing more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Its member organizations include: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), AASA: The School Superintendents Association, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), Learning Forward, National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Education Association (NEA), National PTA, National School Boards Association (NSBA), National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), Parents for Public Schools and Phi Delta Kappa International.

“The more than 10 million teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, parents and community leaders are clear. We must take action now to allow more time for the implementation of college- and career-ready standards. It is the only way we can ensure we get this right,” LFA Executive Director Cheryl Scott Williams said. “Despite good intentions, educators and other voices represented by LFA have been largely left out of decisions around the implementation process, and decision makers have largely avoided issues of curriculum and instruction to date.”
“We call on policy makers in those states where implementation is clearly struggling to heed the voices of the more than 10 million closest to these standards and allow the time necessary to do this right,” Williams said. “We must take the time to look to those states where implementation is going well, learn from their experiences and ensure all children have access to the college- and career-ready learning they need and deserve.”

To help facilitate the identification and sharing of best and promising practice on CCSS implementation, LFA announced that it has constructed a new website to serve as a home for implementation success stories, providing it as a guide to help policy makers and educators construct a timeline and execution plan based on what is necessary to implement the standards in classrooms and communities across the nation.

“Right now, too many states, districts and schools simply are not prepared to make high-stakes decisions such as student advancement or graduation, teacher evaluation, school performance designation or state funding awards based on assessments of the standards before they have been fully and properly implemented,” Williams said. “We should look to the states, districts and classrooms that are making progress, despite challenging circumstances.”

She noted states like California, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky and Massachusetts offer particular promise as models of successful CCSS implementation.

As states and districts focus on these important issues, LFA made clear holding off on formal implementation should not turn back the focus on accountability at all levels of the learning process.

“We urge a continued commitment to accountability. We recommend that states and districts continue to hold educators and schools to a high standard as determined by the components of their accountability systems that are not solely based on standardized tests, including other evidence of student learning, peer evaluations, school climate data and more,” the LFA statement said.

**About the Learning First Alliance**
The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of leading education organizations representing more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. We share examples of success, encourage collaboration at every level, and work toward the continual and long-term improvement of public education based on solid research. For more information on the Learning First Alliance, please visit [www.learningfirst.org](http://www.learningfirst.org).

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