Common Core State Standards Initiative Standards-Setting Considerations

The following considerations guided the standards development workgroups in setting the draft college and career readiness standards.

Fewer, clearer, higher: One of the goals of this process was to produce a set of fewer, clearer and higher standards. It is critical that any standards document be translatable to and teachable in the classroom. As such, the standards must cover only those areas that are critical for student success. This meant making tough decisions about what to include in the standards; however, these choices were important to ensure the standards are useable by teachers.

Evidence: This work has made unprecedented use of evidence in deciding what to include – or not include – in the standards. Each document includes a brief narrative on the choices that were made based on evidence. Rather than focusing on the *opinions* of experts exclusively, evidence to guide the decisions about what to include in the standards was used. This is a key difference between this process and the processes that have come before.

Internationally benchmarked: These standards are informed by the content, rigor and organization of standards of high-performing countries and states so that all students are prepared to succeed in a global economy and society.

Special populations: In the development of these standards, the inclusion of all types of learners was a priority. Writers selected language intended to make the standards documents accessible to different learners.

Assessment: While an assessment of the common core state standards in not currently being developed, these standards will ultimately be the basis for an assessment system that would include multiple measures of student performance. Once states agree on the final standards, attention will be turned to creating a high quality system of measurement that would include proper incentives for teachers to teach these standards and a variety of assessments that will reinforce teaching and learning tied to the agreed upon expectations.

Standards and curriculum: Standards are not curriculum. This initiative is about developing a set of standards that are common across states. The curriculum that follows will continue to be a local responsibility (or state-led, where appropriate). The curriculum could become more consistent from state to state based on the commonality of the standards; however, there are multiple ways to teach these standards, and therefore, there will be multiple approaches that could help students accomplish the goals set out in the standards.

21st **century skills:** These documents are not an attempt to demonstrate everything that a student should learn; rather, we have focused on two areas – English-language Arts and Mathematics. The standards have incorporated 21st century skills where possible. They are not inclusive of all the skills students need for success in the 21st Century, but many of these skills will be required across disciplines.