



A Union of Professionals

AFT News Release

For Immediate Release
March 10, 2010

Contact:
John See
202/879-4458

**Statement by Randi Weingarten,
President, American Federation of Teachers,
On Common Core Standards**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) today released common core standards for students in grades kindergarten through 12. The standards, which will be finalized after a public comment period, define the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn.

WASHINGTON—These standards represent the best effort so far to transform today’s patchwork quilt of 50 sets of state standards into one set of strong, consistent expectations for what all students should know and learn.

Earlier this year, AFT members reviewed draft standards and suggested extensive changes to make them clearer and more useful for teachers. We are pleased that CCSSI took many of our suggestions to heart, and as a result, these standards are much improved over earlier drafts. Going forward, the standards must continue to be refined and additional parts must be developed. We will take full advantage of the public comment period to make sure teachers continue to have a voice in the process.

Many of the people who years ago launched the first “standards movement” overstated the importance of standards, acting as if standards alone could transform our schools. But better standards, by themselves, aren’t enough. Every state must align curriculum, assessments and professional development for teachers to the standards. Also, in order to make the standards work for kids, we need to give teachers the other tools they need, as well as more support from administrators and more time to work with each other. That’s why the AFT is exploring, with the Council of the Great City Schools, the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, a pilot project to implement the standards as part of a comprehensive standards-based system.

As a longtime advocate for common standards, the AFT commends CCSSI for taking this important step. We look forward to working with CCSSI and others to do all we can to help provide America’s students a world-class, 21st-century education.

###

The AFT represents more than 1.4 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators.

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT • 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W. • Washington, DC 20001 • T: 202/879-4458 • F: 202/879-4456 • www.aft.org

AFT Teachers • AFT PSRP • AFT Higher Education • AFT Public Employees • AFT Healthcare

