

## **Standards Overview**

### **Improvements:**

- Revisions to basic language and order of standards reflect educator input (eg multiple clarifications and adjustments to specific standards' language in ELA and Math, movement and removal of standards to avoid duplication and offer more coherence)
- Use of grade bands (PK-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, 11-12) in ELA offers flexibility in timeline for meeting some standards (should be considered for Math as well)
- Flexibility in draft guidance for ELA regarding ratios of informational text vs fiction, use of full books, text complexity over the course of the school year reflect educator input
- Creation of glossary of terms, specific examples, and use of concept of "exploring" vs "mastering" within Math standards are useful revisions (but all are still needed for ELA)

### **Concerns (see below for details):**

- Continued lack of revisions and guidance which address SPED and ELL needs
- More work needed on PK-2 developmental appropriateness (especially regarding play)
- Lack of guidance document on literacy across the content areas
- Lack of timeline for how and when future reviews of the standards will happen

### **Continued Lack of Guidance on SPED and ELL**

**The preface and Fact Sheet states that the ELA standards have been revised to "Create a NY-Specific Introduction on How to Use the Standards to help inform local curriculum and instruction. While all curriculum decisions are locally made, a set of learning standards cannot be properly used without the necessary guidance. The introduction provides information on how to use the new Lifelong Practices for Readers and Writers, strategies for using the new standards in the classroom, and strategies and supports for applying the standards to students with disabilities and English language learners."**

*"The introduction provides information on • How to use the new Lifelong Practices for Readers and Writers. • How the standards are organized and how to use them in the classroom. • How the standards apply to students with disabilities and English Language Learners. • How to use the standards to inform local school district curriculum and instruction decisions."*

This is a good first step in addressing our concerns about the standards use with ELL and SPED students, but does not yet appear to have happened in any significant way – at a minimum, it isn't currently available on the website for public review and it's unclear who would be/is creating this document. It is also not included in the Math Standards summary, although these concerns also need to be addressed in that subject area.

The guidance on this included in the standards themselves is much too vague – for example, in K, it states:

*"Grades Kindergarten and 1: Reading and Level of Text Complexity Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. By the end of the school year, read literary and*

*informational texts that are at or above grade level. Please note that during instruction, kindergarten and first grade students should read texts that specifically correlate to their reading level and word knowledge. During instruction, educators should provide scaffolding and support as needed."*

This is not adequate in terms of useful guidance for teachers of ELL and SPED students. Since within the standards themselves, no other explicit mention is made regarding the needs of SPED or ELL students, it is urgent that work on this issue be prioritized, funded, and completed before districts are asked to develop or select curriculum based on the new standards. At a minimum, this should include the creation and support of state committees parallel to the PK-2 committee for SPED and ELL. In addition, our Task Force created the attached one page template as an example of a guidance document which they felt would be useful for school-based educators; we recommend that it or something similar be used as a model for guidance documents provided with the Introduction.

#### **More work needed on PK-2 developmental appropriateness (especially regarding play)**

The creation of the PK-2 Task Force and the use of a PK-2 grade band in meeting standards are improvements here; however, the concerns about the limited acknowledgement of the importance of play for students in this grade band doesn't seem to have been fully addressed. Despite the claims in the preface that this was a priority, I found only one standard (in the K ELA standards) which mentioned the word "play." More work is likely needed for standards in these grades to address this issue. At a minimum, the work of the PK-2 Task Force should continue until appropriate revisions have been made.

#### **Lack of guidance document on literacy across the content areas**

The preface states that the ELA standards have been revised to "*Ensure Literacy is Included in the Content Areas. For example, the committee recommended creating a new document for the Grades 6-12 Literacy in Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects Standards. The committees separated the literacy standards for these distinct content areas to better connect the standards directly with these content areas. In addition, guidance will be developed to show connections to literacy in other content areas.*"

Again, while this is a good idea, it doesn't seem to have been done yet.

#### **Lack of timeline for how and when future reviews of the standards will happen**

Assuming that these standards are approved in this form in June, it is important to emphasize that this is a living document and that the standards should and will be revised as needed to meet the needs of students. At a minimum, the state should commit to a regular review and revision process every three years, and to a willingness to revisit standards as needed during the next two years as guidance documents, curriculum, and assessments are developed through a process which may reveal additional necessary changes to this version of the standards.