**Executive Summary of Initial Results of the 2013-2015 CCSS Longitudinal Survey Study**

This study reports on teachers’ perceptions of the Common Core State Standards in Arkansas in 2015 (n=775) and how those perceptions have changed since 2013 (n=1304). We sent an electronic survey instrument to a stratified random sample of teachers at all grade levels, in all subjects, from schools of all sizes, in every region of the state to determine their perceptions of the standards and their implementation. The survey asked teachers to provide their views of the standards themselves and building leadership during implementation, as well as their perceptions of how teacher involvement and teaching conditions have changed when compared to pre-CCSS conditions. The survey was administered once in 2013 and again in 2015. Unfortunately, the results of our most recent survey indicate that teachers’ perceptions of the CCSS, teacher involvement and teaching conditions have decreased considerably over the past two years (Figure 1). Here we will highlight some of the most important changes that we will investigate further through statistical analysis.

**Teachers’ Views of CCSS, Collegiality, and Teaching Conditions**

In terms of teachers’ views of the Common Core State Standards, there were marked declines from 2013 to 2015 in the percentage of teachers who viewed the standards positively. Most striking is that only a slight majority of teachers believe that the CCSS are an improvement on the state frameworks used previously in Arkansas (50.76% down 16.71% from 2013). Also following that negative trend are the diminishing number of teachers who anticipate improved student achievement as a result of CCSS (-15.33%), teachers who believe instructional pacing is appropriate under CCSS (-11.35%), and teachers who believe their schools will be better off in 10 years due to CCSS (-17.05%).

Similar negative trends are apparent in teachers’ perceptions of collegiality and involvement today compared to pre-CCSS. For example, fewer teachers in 2015 reported that cooperation between colleagues has improved (-15.02%), while more teachers say that it has actually grown worse (+8.97%). The same can be said for teacher collegiality (-14.23% and +9.42% respectively) and teacher involvement in school governance (-12.63% and +9.98% respectively). More teachers’ also believe that student stress has increased (+28.97%) and that students’ enjoyment of learning has declined (-27.52) over the past two years.

In a similar fashion, teachers report worse teaching conditions in 2015 than in 2013. There is an increase in the percentage of teachers who report a loss of overall instructional autonomy and flexibility (+12.35%), loss of autonomy and flexibility with instructional materials (+9.88%) and loss of autonomy with instructional methods (+11.13%). Conversely, we also find a decrease in the number of teachers who report more overall autonomy (-16.67%), more autonomy with materials (-12.90%), and more autonomy with methods (-13.60%). Not surprisingly, these changes are accompanied by an increasing percentage of teachers who report less overall job satisfaction (+18.50%), less feeling of professionalism (+12.61%), and less enjoyment of teaching (+16.86%). Unfortunately, the number of teachers who say that they are thinking of leaving the profession all the time has also increased from 22% to 31% since 2013.

**Classroom and Teacher Time Allocated for PARCC Preparation and Administration**

The 2015 survey was deployed in April so that it would follow testing under the Partnership for Assessing Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) exam, which was administered for the first time the previous month. This version of the survey included a series of questions about the PARCC exam designed to determine how much instructional time was reallocated to preparation and administration of the PARCC, how instructional time was spent preparing for the PARCC, and how much teacher professional time was spent preparing for the PARCC (Figure 2).

Overall, the average Arkansas teacher used 18.54 instructional class periods for PARCC preparation and administration. Teachers at the middle school level had the most instructional time reallocated for the PARCC at 19.62 class periods. Since there are five days in a school week and typically four weeks in a month, this figure represents approximately one class period per day for an instructional month. We also asked teachers about the number of minutes spent on PARCC preparation and administration. Overall, the average number of instructional minutes used for the PARCC was 1,108.76, and middle level teachers again reported using the most instructional time for the PARCC at 1,245.86 minutes.

In terms of how instructional time was allocated to prepare for the PARCC exam, Arkansas teachers reported that the most time was spent on PARCC specific preparation skills (22.63%), practice taking PARCC questions on the computer (21.07%), and general test preparation skills (19.20%). Since the PARCC was administered on the computer, the average teacher spent 10.25% of their PARCC preparation, or 54 instructional minutes, just to test the schools’ network capacity to see if it was sufficient for test administration.

A substantial amount of teachers’ professional time was also spent preparing to administer the PARCC exam during the 2014-15 school year. Overall, teachers reported that they spent over a quarter of their planning time (25.99%) of their planning time and almost a third of their professional development time (31.82%) preparing for the PARCC exam. This is time that teachers normally would have dedicated to improving classroom instruction or honing their instructional skill.

**Conclusion**

Overall, the teachers of Arkansas do not view the Common Core State Standards as highly as they did just two years ago. Only a slim majority still views the CCSS as an improvement over the former frameworks and their views of the other 30 aspects of CCSS instruction and implementation we asked about have all universally declined as well. When combined with the significant instructional time used to prepare for the federally mandated but state selected PARCC exam, questions should be raised about whether or not the CCSS are in our state’s best interest.

Respectfully submitted by Dr. Chris Goering to the Common Core Panel on 5-6-2015. These initial results represent the work of a team of researchers at the University of Arkansas led by Dr. Jason Endacott ([jendacot@uark.edu](mailto:jendacot@uark.edu)).