

Teacher Perceptions of CCGPS

**Spring 2013 –
Spring 2014**

**Findings from three administrations of
the *Teacher Survey on CCGPS*
*Implementation***

**Main
Findings**



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The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), formerly the Office of Education Accountability, strives to increase student achievement and school completion across Georgia through meaningful, transparent, and objective analysis and communication of statewide data. In addition, GOSA provides policy support to the Governor and, ultimately, to the citizens of Georgia through:

- An [education report card](#) that indicates the effectiveness of Georgia's education institutions, from Pre-K through college;
- [Research initiatives](#) on education programs in Georgia and corresponding findings to inform policy, budget, and legislative efforts;
- Thorough analysis and straightforward communication of education data to stakeholders;
- [Audits of academic programs](#) to ensure that education institutions are fiscally responsible with state funds and faithful to performance accountability requirements; and
- Collaborative work with the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH) to improve education statewide.
- GOSA also houses three innovative educational programs:
- The [Governor's Reading Mentor Program](#) places 15 reading instruction mentors in elementary schools across the state to coach teachers on effective reading instruction.
- The [Governor's Honors Program](#) is a four-week, summer residential program designed to provide intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students challenging and enriching educational opportunities.
- The [Innovation Fund](#), created under Georgia's Race to the Top plan, provides competitive grants for applied learning, teacher and leader recruitment, and charter planning with a particular focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

While GOSA's direct affiliation remains with the Governor's Office, it also works closely with all of Georgia's education agencies, including the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), the University System of Georgia (USG), the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC).

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Executive Summary

In July 2012, Georgia adopted the *Common Core State Standards*, a set of common performance standards in mathematics and English Language Arts in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The *Common Core State Standards* aim to support college and career readiness by ensuring that all students in the country are well-prepared for the future.

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) began preparing educators for the transition to Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS), Georgia's version of *Common Core State Standards*, in Spring 2011. During School Year (SY) 2011-2012, GaDOE curriculum staff engaged in a variety of efforts aimed at preparing educators for the transition to CCGPS. These efforts included presenting at over 85 conferences and meetings, providing training through webinars and Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) live-streamed videos, partnering with Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) to offer face-to-face training, and developing sample unit frameworks and other instructional support materials. GaDOE continues to support educators through newly revised unit frameworks, grade level/course overviews, and updated webinars. Links to all of the aforementioned resources can be found at <http://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core>.

Teachers fully transitioned to the new standards during SY 2012-2013. GOSA partnered with Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) to administer the *Teacher Survey on CCGPS Implementation (Teacher Survey)* to random samples of teachers in April 2013, December 2013, and May 2014. The purpose of this survey was to learn about teachers' early experiences implementing the standards.

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to discuss the main findings from the *Teacher Survey* and identify opportunities for further research. Findings from these surveys are intended to inform state and local decision-making regarding ongoing implementation of CCGPS. In particular, these findings should help education leaders better understand teachers' perception of the accessibility and utility of CCGPS-related support. Also, these findings should suggest if teachers are making use of the support in their classroom.

Methodology

GOSA and GaPSC administered the *Teacher Survey* to approximately 2,900 different teachers in each administration. GaPSC employed a stratified random sampling design to select the sample of teachers. GaPSC split the accessible population into subgroups, or strata, based on subjects taught and GaPSC-assigned personnel categories (e.g., certificate level). Then, GaPSC proportionally selected teachers randomly from each subgroup. GaPSC focused the sample design on identifying mathematics teachers of kindergarten through ninth grade in the first administration and tenth grade in the second and third administrations. The sample also included English Language Arts teachers of kindergarten through

twelfth grade. GaPSC selected these teachers because their subjects and grades were part of the CCGPS rollout during the SYs 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the years in which the surveys were administered.

The following table shows the breakdown of teachers involved in the survey, including the response rates for each administration.

Administration	Number in sample	Number of surveys successfully delivered	Number of respondents	Final number of respondents after data cleaning	Response rate
Spring '13	3,000	2,919	1,095	987	33.8%
Fall '13	3,000	2,962	1,242	1,024	34.9%
Spring '14	3,000	2,966	980	927	31.2%

Between 6 and 18% of the responses in each administration were discarded due to incomplete responses, respondents not teaching CCGPS subjects, and other reasons. The response rates are considered average for online survey administration, and the respondents are reflective of the accessible and sample populations. The difference in the proportion of teachers represented in the survey is within five percentage points of the proportions in the accessible population and sample, with the exception of elementary teachers in the Fall 2013 administration.¹

Major Findings

Respondents had professional development and resources aligned to CCGPS.

The *Teacher Survey* asked respondents to rate the amount of professional development they had in preparation for CCGPS, as well as, the degree to which support resources were aligned to CCGPS. More than half of the respondents, across administrations, shared that “substantial” amount or “all” of their professional development focused on CCGPS. In the second and third administrations, 93% of respondents indicated the resources they used were aligned to CCGPS over the first two years of CCGPS implementation. This was an increase of 10 percentage points from the first administration.

Usage of CCGPS resources was linked to whether respondents found accessing the resources convenient. Respondents who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they used resources aligned to CCGPS had much higher rates of agreement on the accessibility of materials. The reverse holds true for respondents who “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” that they used resources.

Respondents found utility in the CCGPS-aligned professional development and resources they used.

Over 80% of all respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the topics of the professional development they received in preparation for CCGPS implementation were relevant. Over two-thirds of

¹ Elementary teachers were over-represented in the fall 2013 survey.

respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the professional development received contributed to their ability to implement CCGPS with fidelity.

Respondents also found utility in the CCGPS-aligned instructional support resources. The majority of respondents found it convenient to access various instructional support materials via the most popular sources, which were district or GaDOE websites, or search engines, like Google. Respondents in the second and third administrations found accessing resources more convenient than those in the first administration. In the second and third administrations of the *Teacher Survey*, 86% of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that CCGPS resources used contributed to their ability to implement CCGPS with fidelity. This was an increase of five percentage points from the first administration of the *Teacher Survey*.

Considering that, in general, respondents indicated they found value in the CCGPS training and resources for which they had access; GOSA examined potential patterns between perception of professional development and understanding of CCGPS. One way to gauge teachers’ understanding of CCGPS was to determine if they understand the key shifts in mathematics and English Language Arts required by CCGPS. In general, a higher percentage of respondents selected the correct shifts in mathematics than in English Language Arts. The percentage of respondents who selected incorrect shifts was at least 12 percentage points higher for English Language Arts than mathematics across administrations.

GOSA then grouped respondents based on the degree to which they understood CCGPS and found no pattern between having a more positive experience with professional development and “understanding” CCGPS among English Language Arts teachers, with the exception of the first administration. In the first administration English Language Arts teachers who “understood” CCGPS applied what they learned statistically significantly more than those who did not understand. However, across administrations, for mathematics teachers, respondents who properly identified all the central shifts had a statistically significantly higher perception of professional development than teachers who only identified one correct shift.

Although survey results showed that, in general, respondents found CCGPS professional development topics relevant and access to CCGPS resources convenient, open-ended comments suggest that most of the respondents’ CCGPS implementation challenges focused on the support received transitioning to CCGPS. Across administrations, respondents were most positive about their practices and their students’ transition to CCGPS. However, respondents consistently expressed frustration with the training and support materials they had to prepare for CCGPS. Respondents found it difficult to locate resources and some felt the resources provided by the state were inadequate.

Respondents demonstrated engagement in CCGPS-aligned professional development and resources.

Over 80% of respondents, across all administrations, “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they applied their CCGPS-professional development. When respondents found the CCGPS-aligned professional

development topics relevant, they were more likely to apply the skills and knowledge they gained from the training in their classrooms.

Across the types of CCGPS resources, more respondents indicated using resources “always” or “very often” rather than “never” or “rarely.” The resources used most frequently were teaching guides, curriculum maps, or unit frameworks, with 73-79% of respondents saying they used these resources “always” or “very often.” The resources used least frequently were curriculum exemplars, with 38-44% of respondents saying they used these “always” or “very often.” Across resources and survey administrations, respondents who believed CCGPS-resources contributed to their ability to implement CCGPS with fidelity used resources significantly more frequently than others.

Teachers and students engaged in practices and tasks associated with CCGPS.

The final step in the theory of change focuses on student achievement. This step is not covered by this study because it is too early to assess the impact CCGPS is having on student achievement. However, the *Teacher Survey* gave respondents an opportunity to provide feedback on how their own practices, as well as their students, are changing as a result of transitioning to CCGPS. Across administrations, respondents as a whole were implementing practices aligned with CCGPS and students were engaged in tasks aligned with CCGPS more frequently than prior to implementation.

Across administrations, the percentage of respondents who said their students “never” or “a few times a year” engaged in various mathematics and ELA learning tasks related to CCGPS decreased. The percentage of respondents who said their students engaged in these tasks “daily” increased. Using a paired t-test, the pre/post changes for all three administrations were statistically significant. In addition, the number of comments that focused on positive student adaptation outweighed the negative comments. Over one-third of the major successes that respondents shared related to students adapting well to CCGPS.

As it relates to teachers, across administrations, respondents indicated they were implementing strong practices; however, these were not always the practices most closely associated with CCGPS. Across administrations, 80-90% of respondents indicated they were asking students more questions and encouraging them to develop answers independently, which is a teacher practice closely associated with CCGPS. The second and third highest rated teacher practices were generally not practices closely associated with CCGPS.

In addition, GOSA found patterns between implementation of CCGPS practices and perception of professional development. Respondents who thought their professional development contributed to the fidelity of implementation were more likely to implement CCGPS-associated practices than those who did not think the training contributed to their implementation. Respondents who applied what they learned from their CCGPS-focused professional development implemented CCGPS-associated teacher practices more than respondents who did not apply what they learned from their CCGPS-focused professional development.