



# Curriculum News

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## Where did the time go?

I hope all of you enjoyed your Christmas break. I must admit sleeping in, watching movies, and playing games with the kids was wonderful. It is always a magical time that creates so many memories.

It is hard to believe we have started 2011. I am amazed each year how fast the time flies. Before we know it, the love of February will be right around the corner. March will be chomping at the back of our heels like a lion. Shortly after, April will bounce by like a bunny as we jump into the

flowers of May. Then, we will graduate to the end of yet another school year. The time will go so fast. We will once again be sitting in the warmth of summer at our Fourth of July celebrations and asking ourselves, "Where did the time go?"

As we step into the next few weeks, I hope that you feel energized more than ever for the sprint that is before us. These days of relaxation we have had have helped to prepare us for the coming of this

race to the end of the school year. We have so much to do and the time we have with our students has become even more precious.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to our students. What you do matters. You are making a tremendous difference!

Please let me know if I can ever be of any assistance to you. Have a wonderful start to 2011!

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### Almost There

by Ralph Marston

Even when it seems that you're not making progress, you most likely are. The biggest breakthroughs often come after a long period of being stuck.

If you're making a focused, determined effort, then you are making positive progress, even if you can't see it yet. Keep going, for the breakthrough will come.

It is impossible to create value without receiving value in return. Keep working to create value, and the value you seek will come to you in time.

Your next bit of effort may be what finally makes everything start falling into place. You may already be so close to the goal that you can almost touch it.

Keep going, for your efforts will pay off. Keep on acting with purpose, with focus and commitment. The path to the top of the mountain of accomplishment will grow steeper as you near the summit. When the going gets difficult, keep going, for it means you're almost there.

## Common Core Standards

### Information from ISBE

The Illinois State Board of Education has adopted new Math and English Language Arts standards for K-12 education known as the New Illinois State Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core. The goal is to better prepare Illinois students for success in college and the workforce in a competitive global economy.

The process to fully implement new standards touches numerous systems including assessment, curriculum, professional development, instruction and various support components such as RTI. As the details for implementation are determined, the many reform efforts and initiatives underway will be considered to ensure the work is aligned and coordinated. It is anticipated the development and implementation will span over the next eighteen to twenty

four months with varying phases of work.

The 2010 state standards are designed to be relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in both college and work. The current assessment system will undergo significant adaptations that are in the very early stages of design and development.

### What we know

- **No changes will be in place for the 2011 Spring ISAT/PSAE assessment.**
- The target date for implementation of the new assessment is the 2014-15 school year.
- The development of a plan for transitioning from 1997 standards and assessments to 2010 standards and assessments

is an ISBE priority for 2010-2011.

- Illinois is a governing state in a 26 state consortium on assessment called the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC assessments will incorporate more frequent assessments and include performance tasks to measure the new Illinois standards more effectively.

More information can be found at the following :

**Video: (Gives a good overview)**  
[http://www.isbe.net/asx/Common\\_Core\\_Video\\_121010.asx](http://www.isbe.net/asx/Common_Core_Video_121010.asx)

**Websites: (More complete info.)**  
[http://www.isbe.net/common\\_core/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm)

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

## Curriculum Council

*The Curriculum Council* is responsible for making recommendations related to: curriculum problems/changes, textbook adoption studies, professional development, school improvement, and the promotion of articulation between grade levels. Next Meeting: **Tuesday, February 8, 2011**, CIS Library at 3:30 p.m.

Members that attended out last meeting on November 30:

Erin Basso- CHS  
Keith Liddell- CHS  
Leslie Dawson- CHS

Kim Ballestro- CIS  
Joanne Davis- CIS  
Lindsey Dersch- CIS  
Kathy Stine- CIS  
Lisa Skeate- CIS  
Jackie Lasseter- CIS  
Sarah Barnstable- Tri-C  
Karri Forby- Tri-C  
Beckie Savka- Tri-C  
Lucy Griffin- Tri-C  
Chip Lennox- Tri-C  
Amy Owens- Tri-C  
Sandy Fraser- Tri-C  
Kelly Webb- Tri-C  
Lu Horning- Tri-C

### Item Discussed on Nov. 30

- Mr. Liddell presented a proposal for a Music Appreciation course at CHS for dual credit with John A. Logan Community College.
- Mr. Heidbreder presented a PowerPoint to the group on the New Illinois State Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core.
- Illinois suspended testing of writing through ISAT for the FY2011 school year. The group discussed the creation of a local writing assessment

## 2010-2011 Testing Dates

For the 2010-2011 school year, the ISAT tests for grades 3 through 8 will be administered February 28 – March 11, 2011.

The dates for the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) and for grade 11 IMAGE will be April 27–28, 2011, with

makeup testing May 11–12, 2011.

More information on state assessments can be located at <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/default.htm>

**“A diet is defined as a short period of starvation followed by a gain of five pounds.” - Butch Cotter**

**“And in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.”- Abraham Lincoln**

## Obstacles: Our Best Motivators by Byron Pulsifer

*"The block of granite which was an obstacle in the pathway of the weak becomes a stepping-stone in the pathway of the strong." -Thomas Carlyle*

Obstacles are not insurmountable barriers unless you believe that this is the case. If obstacles prevent you from moving forward then you are falling into a trap - a trap that will keep you down.

Obstacles, when viewed in a positive light, are simply stepping-stones on the journey to success. When you think of famous people who could have been stopped in their tracks, e.g., Thomas Edison the inventor of the light bulb, obstacles became the vehicle

to keep trying.

*"I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is another step forward." - Thomas Edison*

Obstacles can be your launching point to propel you to attain new personal growth, or to gain valuable experiences. To quote Norman Vincent Peale: "In every difficult situation is potential value. Believe this, then begin looking for it."

To view obstacles as necessary stepping-stones to gain success, you will start to welcome them, not to spend energy trying to either avoid them, or to mentally suppress them.

The only person responsible to see obstacles as a necessity, not a burden, is you. It's your choice. Remember, we all have a choice in every situation we face whether that is in personal relationships or in the work environment. Judith M. Knowlton said, "I discovered I always have choices and sometimes it's only a choice of attitude." We couldn't agree with her more!

Turn obstacles to your advantage, and move forward where others are afraid to go.

*"Every problem has a gift for you in its hands." - Richard Bach*