

States' Taxpayers Left to Pay for Common Core

<http://www.educationviews.org/states-taxpayers-left-pay-common-core>

by Henry W. Burke

1.26.14

It will cost California \$2.1 billion (net amount) to implement the Common Core Standards (CCS). Where will California find \$2.1 billion to implement the mediocre Common Core Standards?

The net cost for Illinois is \$691 million; and the net cost for Pennsylvania is \$606 million. The taxpayers in each state are left to pick up the expensive tab for the untested Common Core Standards.

INTRODUCTION

The **total nationwide cost** for 7 years of the Common Core Standards Initiative is **\$15.8 billion!** This includes the cost to states of CCS Testing, Professional Development, Textbooks, and Technology. (Other costs not shown in this report would be the cost to set up and administer a nationalized teacher evaluation system and a national student/educator database.)

The taxpayers in each of the 45 states (and D. C.) that have committed to the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI) will be left "holding the bag" because our federal government with a national debt of \$17 trillion cannot come in and alleviate the cost to the states.

Because it will cost California \$2.2 billion to implement the Common Core Standards but California only received \$104 million (\$0.1 billion) from the federal government for competitive Stimulus awards, **the taxpayers of California will have to come up with \$2.1 billion difference out of their state coffers.**

With California on the brink of bankruptcy, where would their taxpayers find **\$2.1 billion?** (Please see Table 1 at the end of this report for a complete listing of CCS losses per state.)

Where would other states such as the ones listed below find the extra funding to implement the Common Core Standards?

Illinois -- \$691 million

Pennsylvania -- \$606 million

Michigan -- \$569 million

The cost for CCS does not suddenly end at Year 7. **The ongoing cost for Year 8 and after will be \$801 million per year.**

The up-front, one-time cost for CCS implementation is two-thirds (67%) of the Total Cost for 7 years.

This report will focus primarily on the cost of implementing the Common Core Standards in each of the 46 states (45 states plus D.C.).

*A very helpful compilation of Anti-CCSI Resources has recently been posted at:

<http://www.educationviews.org/updated-anti-common-core-resources-list-12-11-09-12-31-13>

Background on Common Core Standards and RTTT

Picture this scenario: You are the CEO of a large company. An outside company offered your company an incentive to persuade you to convert to their system. Would you change the main system in your company if you knew it would cost more money to convert than the amount of the incentive?

That is what 45 states (and the District of Columbia) did in adopting the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI). Under the U.S. Department of

Education's Race to the Top program (RTTT), states competed for \$4.35 Billion in federal grants.

In exchange for the potential funds, states had to drop their own state education standards and adopt the Common Core Standards

Initiative (a.k.a., CCS) -- nationalized curriculum standards, nationalized curriculum, nationalized assessments, a nationalized teacher evaluation system, and a nationalized database.

Under the \$787 billion Stimulus measure, money was set aside for RTTT funding. About \$3.9 billion was awarded in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of RTTT in 2010; since then, an additional \$1.5 billion has been granted. This brings the total competitive awards to \$5.4 billion.

Cost to Implement CCS

How about the costs? One reliable estimate places the nationwide cost of implementing CCS at \$15.8 billion.

As a block, the states will spend \$16 billion and get \$5 billion in federal grants. Why would the states change to a system that costs several times what they will receive in return? That does not sound like a very good deal to me.

When the states were competing for those coveted federal dollars, they were not calculating realistic costs for the conversion. Theodor Rebarber, CEO and founder of AccountabilityWorks, explained: "States did almost no costs analysis" when they signed on to adopt the Common Core standards. They sorely needed the money and viewed CCS through the proverbial "rose-colored glasses."

If the RTTT grant money were the chief reason that states adopted the Common Core Standards Initiative (the nationalization of the public schools), would they drop out of CCS if the conversion costs were significantly higher than the RTTT funds received from the federal government? That is a good question.

This report will cover the federal RTTT awards; however, the major emphasis will be on the cost side of the equation. I think many states will "get off the national standards train" once the real costs are known.

When I was searching for reliable cost estimates on implementing the Common Core Standards, I found an **excellent White Paper report** published by the Pioneer Institute entitled National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards by AccountabilityWorks, No. 82 - February 2012.

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/national-cost-of-aligning-states-and-localities-to-the-common-core-standards/>

My report is based almost entirely on this outstanding Pioneer Institute White Paper.

Quality of the Standards

I think it is obvious that the potential RTTT award money was the chief reason that the states gave up their own state standards and adopted the Common Core Standards (CCS).

People might try to argue that the national standards are an improvement over the states' standards. Numerous education experts certainly do not think the Common Core Standards are an improvement over the state standards.

The Pioneer Institute recently published a report by R. James Milgram and Sandra Stotsky, "Lowering the Bar: How Common Core Math Fails to Prepare High School Students for STEM."

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/lowering-the-bar-how-common-core-math-fails-to-prepare-high-school-students-for-stem/>

Both Dr. Milgram and Dr. Stotsky were on the Common Core Validation Committee. Because the standards were so deficient, both education experts refused to validate the Common Core Standards.

The Pioneer report concludes by offering these chilling indictments:

At this time we can conclude only that a gigantic fraud has been perpetrated on this country, in particular on parents in this country, by those developing, promoting, or endorsing Common Core's standards. We

have no illusion that the college-readiness level in ELA will be any more demanding than Common Core's college-readiness level in mathematics.

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/lowering-the-bar-how-common-core-math-fails-to-prepare-high-school-students-for-stem/>

Texas wisely shunned the national standards movement and devoted considerable energy into writing its own standards. The Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted excellent standards documents several years ago for English / Language Arts / Reading (ELAR), Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. Many experts deem these four standards documents to be the best in the country!

Assessments

Education expert Donna Garner has been using this graphic for about five years to illustrate the inter-relationship of the various parts. This is the way that the Common Core Standards and Race to the Top work. [The arrows mean “lead to.”]

National standards → national assessments → national curriculum → teachers' salaries tied to students' test scores → teachers teaching to the test each and every day → national indoctrination of our public school children → national database of students and teachers

How can the Obama administration take over the control of our nation's public schools and impact the entire future of our nation? It is easy. All his administration has to do is to pressure teachers to teach each and every day whatever is on the national assessments that are tied to the national curriculum that is tied to the national standards.

On 9.2.10, the U. S. Department of Education (USDOE) awarded \$160 million to the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to develop

assessments tied to the Common Core Standards for 31 states. On 9.2.10, the USDOE awarded \$170 million to Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC, or Partnership) to develop assessments linked to the Common Core Standards for 26 states.

In a 1.24.14 article in *USA Today*, "Some states get cold feet as Common Core testing draws near," Adrienne Lu wrote:

But as controversy over the Common Core has challenged some states' commitment to the standards, a number of states have decided to withdraw from PARCC or Smarter Balanced or to use alternative tests, raising questions about the cost of the tests and the long-term viability of the multistate testing groups, which received \$360 million in federal grants to develop the tests. The federal grants will end this fall, and it is unclear whether the testing groups will continue past that point.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/01/24/stateline-common-core-testing/4817739/>

Numerous states have withdrawn from the assessment consortia. Similarly, legislators in many states have passed legislation that will fight or stop the Common Core in their states.

States that Have Pulled Out of their Assessment Consortia

| State | PARCC | SBAC |
|--------------|-------|------|
| Alabama | Yes | Yes |
| Alaska | | Yes |
| Florida | Yes | |
| Georgia | Yes | |
| Indiana | Yes | |
| Kansas | | Yes |
| Oklahoma | Yes | |
| Pennsylvania | Yes | Yes |
| Utah | | Yes |

**PARCC -- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
SBAC -- SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**

Pioneer Institute White Paper Report

National Cost of Aligning States and Localities to the Common Core Standards, A Pioneer Institute and American Principles Project White Paper, No. 82 - February 2012.

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/national-cost-of-aligning-states-and-localities-to-the-common-core-standards/>

The Pioneer white paper provides a thorough analysis of the cost of implementing the Common Core Standards. The report states:

The goal of this analysis was to develop a 'middle of the road' estimate of the 'incremental' (i.e., additional) cost of implementing the Common Core standards based, as much as possible, on actual state or local experience implementing similar initiatives.

Please note that the Pioneer Institute report gives the incremental or additional expenses borne by the states for implementing CCS during the 7-year period.

I strongly urge the readers to study the Pioneer Institute report. Also, a wealth of information is included in the Appendices to the Pioneer white paper. The Appendices provide enrollment numbers and detailed cost breakdowns for every state.

http://www.accountabilityworks.org/photos/Appendices.Common_Core_Cost.AW.pdf

Analysis of the Pioneer CCS Information

My goal has been to utilize the research done by the Pioneer Institute but to go one step further by calculating (1) the cost for each CCS category in each state, and (2) the total CCS cost for each state.

The Pioneer Institute white paper includes costs for four categories: Testing, Professional Development, Textbooks, and Technology. The Appendices to the Pioneer Institute report provide dollar figures for Textbooks and Technology for each state. I derived the Testing costs and Professional Development costs for each state from the Pioneer white paper Figure 2B and the Pioneer report's assumptions.

http://www.accountabilityworks.org/photos/Appendices.Common_Core_Cost.AW.pdf

Highlights from Common Core Tables

CCS Loss Per State (Please refer to Table 1)

1. **California will lose \$2,084 million** (\$2.084 billion) on CCS implementation. (Translation: California taxpayers will have to take \$2.1 billion from their state coffers to pay for CCS.)
2. **Illinois will lose \$691 million** on CCS implementation. (Translation: Illinois taxpayers will have to take \$691 million out of their state coffers to pay for CCS.)
3. **Pennsylvania will lose \$606 million** on CCS implementation.
4. **Michigan will lose \$569 million** on CCS implementation.
5. **New Jersey will lose \$526 million** on CCS implementation.
6. **Indiana will lose \$387 million** on CCS implementation.
7. **Arizona will lose \$324 million** on CCS implementation.
8. **Missouri will lose \$336 million** on CCS implementation.

9. Washington will lose \$331 million on CCS implementation.
10. Wisconsin will lose \$313 million on CCS implementation.

Total CCS Cost (Please refer to Table 2)

1. The Total Cost for the 46 CCS states is \$15,834.717 million (\$15.834 billion).
2. The Total Testing Cost for the 46 CCS States is \$1,240.641 million.
3. The Total Professional Development Cost is \$5,257.089 million.
4. The Total Textbook Cost is \$2,469.098 million.
5. The Total Technology Cost is \$6,867.889 million.
6. Category Costs are listed for each state. For example, the costs for Alabama are as follows: Testing Cost = \$22.225 million; Professional Development Cost = \$91.707 million; Textbook Cost = \$44.643 million; Technology Cost = \$123.118 million; and Total Cost = \$281.693 million.

CONCLUSION

The main reason that the states gave up their standards and adopted the Common Core Standards was the potential money offered under the Race to the Top program. Unfortunately, that federal ploy of the "carrot and stick" has worked wonderfully; 45 states (plus D. C.) have signed on to the national standards.

The quality of the national standards is questionable and unproven. The Common Core Standards have not been piloted under controlled research conditions and have not been internationally benchmarked. No one knows whether or not students will actually increase their academic achievement by being taught the CCS.

The 45 states (and D. C.) committed to adopt the CCS before the standards documents (English and Math) were even completed and made public. Several states blindly dropped their stellar standards in favor of the mediocre national standards.

The Pioneer Institute published a commendable breakdown of the cost to implement CCS.

I expanded upon Pioneer's work to produce detailed CCS costs for every state.

Most states will lose money when they fully implement the national standards in their state.

California stands to lose a whopping \$2.1 billion on CCS! Illinois will lose \$691 million; and Pennsylvania will lose \$606 million. Those states' taxpayers will have to make up for the differences from their state coffers.

The decision by these 45 states (and D. C.) to adopt CCS will be terribly expensive indeed!

The Conclusion to the Pioneer Institute white paper provides these insights:

While a handful of states have begun to analyze these costs, most states have signed on to the initiative without a thorough, public vetting of the costs and benefits.

In particular, there has been very little attention to the potential technology infrastructure costs that currently cash-strapped districts may face in order to implement the Common Core assessments within a reasonable testing window.

I believe that when the states become aware of the high cost of implementing the Common Core Standards, they will seriously want to consider their options. If a state is truly concerned about protecting the taxpayers, the state will opt out of the costly national standards.

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Table 1-- CCS Loss Per State**(\$ Millions)**

The following table (**in millions of dollars**) shows the difference between the amount of RTTT grant funds a state received and the total cost of implementation of CCS. The states with the plus signs have a "gain" on cost minus awards. All of the other states have a loss and will have to make up the difference out of their state coffers.

| State Abr. | State | Total Cost (\$Millions) | Federal Competitive Awards (\$Millions) | State Loss (Cost - Awards) (+ = Gain) (\$Millions) |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| AL | Alabama | 281.693 | 0 | 281.693 |
| AZ | Arizona | 374.704 | 50.344 | 324.360 |
| AR | Arkansas | 193.529 | 9.833 | 183.696 |
| CA | California | 2,188.494 | 104.208 | 2,084.286 |
| CO | Colorado | 304.494 | 91.725 | 212.769 |
| CT | Connecticut | 226.215 | 4.473 | 221.742 |
| DE | Delaware | 48.892 | 119.122 | + 70.230 |
| DC | Distr. of Columbia | 29.331 | 105.253 | + 75.922 |
| FL | Florida | 1,024.163 | 719.975 | 304.188 |
| GA | Georgia | 646.622 | 404.691 | 241.931 |
| HI | Hawaii | 67.556 | 74.935 | + 7.379 |
| ID | Idaho | 99.246 | 3.700 | 95.546 |
| IL | Illinois | 799.021 | 108.429 | 690.592 |
| IN | Indiana | 386.623 | 0 | 386.623 |
| IA | Iowa | 192.565 | 9.035 | 183.530 |
| KS | Kansas | 185.515 | 11.180 | 174.335 |
| KY | Kentucky | 256.754 | 22.036 | 234.718 |
| LA | Louisiana | 270.086 | 47.515 | 222.571 |
| ME | Maine | 79.189 | 7.315 | 71.874 |
| MD | Maryland | 327.234 | 334.284 | + 7.050 |
| MA | Massachusetts | 377.294 | 310.588 | 66.706 |
| MI | Michigan | 591.593 | 22.730 | 568.863 |
| MS | Mississippi | 187.300 | 7.570 | 179.730 |
| MO | Missouri | 362.058 | 26.531 | 335.527 |
| MT | Montana | 56.208 | 0.520 | 55.688 |
| NV | Nevada | 151.051 | 0 | 151.051 |

| | | | | |
|----|----------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| NH | New Hampshire | 79.715 | 0 | 79.715 |
| NJ | New Jersey | 563.657 | 37.848 | 525.809 |
| NM | New Mexico | 128.751 | 10.727 | 118.024 |
| NY | New York | 1,088.436 | 845.659 | 242.777 |
| NC | North Carolina | 576.903 | 427.081 | 149.822 |
| ND | North Dakota | 40.281 | 0 | 40.281 |
| OH | Ohio | 662.048 | 468.320 | 193.728 |
| OK | Oklahoma | 246.387 | 15.466 | 230.921 |
| OR | Oregon | 201.964 | 19.937 | 182.027 |
| PA | Pennsylvania | 705.985 | 100.164 | 605.821 |
| RI | Rhode Island | 58.883 | 75.000 | + 16.117 |
| SC | South Carolina | 273.045 | 22.122 | 250.923 |
| SD | South Dakota | 49.301 | 19.684 | 29.617 |
| TN | Tennessee | 373.326 | 518.492 | + 145.166 |
| UT | Utah | 196.306 | 24.900 | 171.406 |
| VT | Vermont | 39.995 | 0 | 39.995 |
| WA | Washington | 365.092 | 34.330 | 330.762 |
| WV | West Virginia | 109.957 | 0 | 109.957 |
| WI | Wisconsin | 331.092 | 17.952 | 313.140 |
| WY | Wyoming | 36.163 | 0 | 36.163 |
| | Totals | 15,834.717 | 5,233.674 | 10,601.043 |

Table 2 -- Total CCS Cost
(\$ Millions)

The column that is particularly significant is the far-right column -- **Total Cost**. This is the Total Cost (**in millions of dollars**) that each state will have to bear to implement the CCS.

| State Abr. | Testing Cost (\$Millions) | Prof. Dev. Cost (\$Millions) | Textbook Cost (\$Millions) | Technology Cost (\$Millions) | Total Cost (\$Millions) |
|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AL | 22.225 | 91.707 | 44.643 | 123.118 | 281.693 |
| AZ | 31.982 | 100.310 | 64.482 | 177.930 | 374.704 |
| AR | 14.247 | 71.910 | 28.151 | 79.221 | 193.529 |
| CA | 185.690 | 605.938 | 374.295 | 1,022.571 | 2,188.494 |
| CO | 24.702 | 94.735 | 48.476 | 136.581 | 304.494 |
| CT | 16.737 | 84.178 | 33.132 | 92.168 | 226.215 |

| | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| DE | 3.763 | 16.684 | 7.608 | 20.837 | 48.892 |
| DC | 2.047 | 12.300 | 3.647 | 11.337 | 29.331 |
| FL | 78.184 | 354.970 | 155.810 | 435.199 | 1,024.163 |
| GA | 49.492 | 223.838 | 97.932 | 275.360 | 646.622 |
| HI | 5.342 | 22.021 | 10.784 | 29.409 | 67.556 |
| ID | 8.200 | 29.353 | 16.515 | 45.178 | 99.246 |
| IL | 62.445 | 267.411 | 121.910 | 347.255 | 799.021 |
| IN | 31.062 | 120.220 | 62.427 | 172.914 | 386.623 |
| IA | 14.596 | 69.211 | 28.483 | 80.275 | 192.565 |
| KS | 13.950 | 67.006 | 27.758 | 76.801 | 185.515 |
| KY | 20.172 | 85.680 | 39.328 | 111.574 | 256.754 |
| LA | 20.504 | 95.866 | 39.771 | 113.945 | 270.086 |
| ME | 5.616 | 31.427 | 11.221 | 30.925 | 79.189 |
| MD | 25.178 | 112.452 | 49.594 | 140.010 | 327.234 |
| MA | 28.378 | 134.994 | 56.056 | 157.866 | 377.294 |
| MI | 48.496 | 178.986 | 97.181 | 266.930 | 591.593 |
| MS | 14.377 | 63.922 | 28.961 | 80.040 | 187.300 |
| MO | 27.243 | 130.914 | 53.930 | 149.971 | 362.058 |
| MT | 4.208 | 20.316 | 8.502 | 23.182 | 56.208 |
| NV | 12.716 | 42.683 | 25.557 | 70.095 | 151.051 |
| NH | 5.850 | 29.913 | 11.717 | 32.235 | 79.715 |
| NJ | 39.909 | 222.544 | 79.168 | 222.036 | 563.657 |
| NM | 9.924 | 43.880 | 19.729 | 55.218 | 128.751 |
| NY | 78.650 | 414.787 | 157.198 | 437.801 | 1,088.436 |
| NC | 44.007 | 202.844 | 87.607 | 242.445 | 576.903 |
| ND | 2.821 | 16.155 | 5.689 | 15.616 | 40.281 |
| OH | 52.359 | 215.071 | 104.702 | 289.916 | 662.048 |
| OK | 19.382 | 82.411 | 37.024 | 107.570 | 246.387 |
| OR | 17.297 | 55.518 | 33.932 | 95.217 | 201.964 |
| PA | 52.929 | 252.930 | 106.979 | 293.147 | 705.985 |
| RI | 4.307 | 21.946 | 8.655 | 23.975 | 58.883 |
| SC | 21.461 | 90.718 | 42.110 | 118.756 | 273.045 |
| SD | 3.671 | 18.009 | 7.409 | 20.212 | 49.301 |
| TN | 28.862 | 126.212 | 57.696 | 160.556 | 373.326 |
| UT | 17.295 | 49.190 | 34.563 | 95.258 | 196.306 |
| VT | 2.743 | 16.865 | 5.302 | 15.085 | 39.995 |
| WA | 30.726 | 103.208 | 61.909 | 169.249 | 365.092 |
| WV | 8.389 | 39.197 | 16.233 | 46.138 | 109.957 |
| WI | 25.891 | 112.821 | 50.023 | 142.357 | 331.092 |
| WY | 2.616 | 13.838 | 5.299 | 14.410 | 36.163 |
| Totals | 1,240.641 | 5,257.089 | 2,469.098 | 6,867.889 | 15,834.717 |

Notes on Table 2:

1. **Testing** -- The Testing cost for each state was determined by multiplying the number of students in the state by \$29.6768 per student. My total Testing cost of \$1,240.641 million is identical to Pioneer's Figure 2B.

2. **Professional Development** -- The Professional Development cost for each state was determined by multiplying the number of teachers in the state by \$1,931 per teacher. My total cost for Professional Development is consistent with the total number of teachers in the 46 CCS states (2,722,470 teachers). My total Professional Development cost of \$5,257.089 million is slightly under the amount in Pioneer Figure 2B.

3. **Textbooks** -- The Textbook costs for each state were taken directly from the Pioneer report Appendix. My total Textbook cost of \$2,469.098 million is identical to Pioneer Figure 2B.

4. **Technology** -- The Technology costs for each state were obtained directly from the Pioneer Appendix. My total Technology cost of \$6,867.889 million is identical to Pioneer Figure 2B.

[NOTE: This is a shorter version of a comprehensive report. To obtain the full report, "States' Taxpayers and the Common Core Standards," please contact the author at hwburke@cox.net .]

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Bio for Henry W. Burke

Henry Burke is a Civil Engineer with a B.S.C.E. and M.S.C.E. He has been a Registered Professional Engineer (P.E.) for 37 years and has worked as a Civil Engineer in construction for over 40 years.

Mr. Burke had a successful 27-year career with a large construction company.

Henry Burke serves as a full-time volunteer to oversee various construction projects. He has written numerous articles on education, engineering, construction, politics, taxes, and the economy.

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