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March 26, 2014

The Honorable Will W. Weatherford
 402 South Monroe Street
 420 The Capitol
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Andy Ford
 President

Joanne McCall
 Vice-President

Clara Cook
 Secretary/Treasurer

Dear Representative Weatherford,

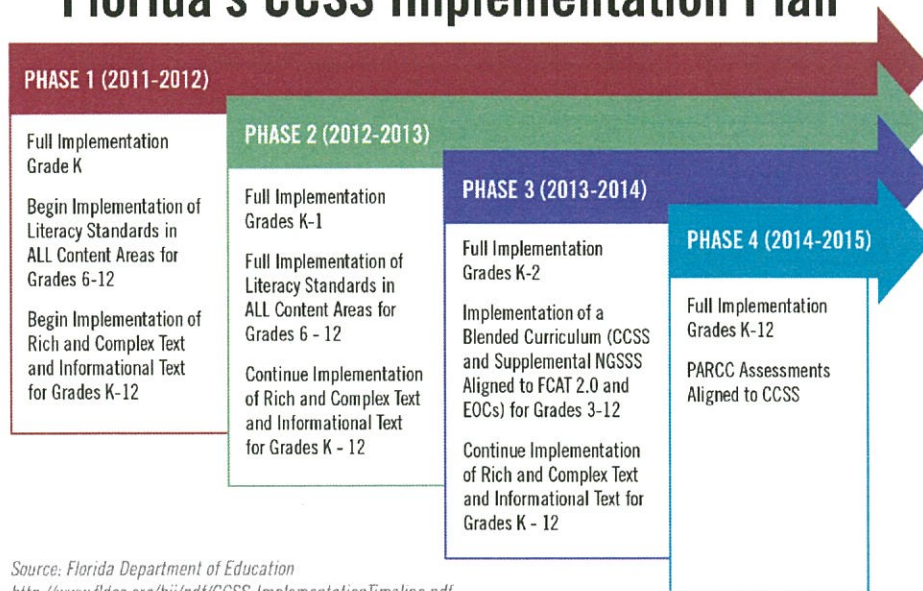
Based on comments made during Monday’s Education Appropriations Subcommittee, many representatives believe and promote inaccurate, unsubstantiated information about Florida standards implementation. Just because an elected official believes and says the Florida standards have been fully implemented since 2010, does not make it so.

The Common Core State Standards – the basis of the new Florida Standards – were adopted by Commissioner of Education Eric Smith on June 10, 2010. However, an implementation plan was not published until the spring of 2011.

A copy of this plan entitled “Florida begins the work of implementing Common Core State Standards and Assessments” can be found on the FLDOE’s website.

What is the truth about Florida standards implementation? FLDOE summarizes Florida’s CCSS implementation in the graphic below.

Florida’s CCSS Implementation Plan



Source: Florida Department of Education
<http://www.fldoe.org/bii/pdf/CCSS-ImplementationTimeline.pdf>

The facts are:

- It is a four year rollout process
- In 2011-12, full implementation in ELA and math required only for Kindergarten – NO statewide test
- In 2012-13, full implementation in ELA and math required only for Kindergarten and 1st grade – NO statewide test
- In 2013-14 – this school year, full implementation in ELA and math required only for Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades – NO statewide test
- **Full implementation in ELA and math in grades K-12 has not occurred yet; it is scheduled for 2014-15 – AIR test aligned with Florida standards will be given in 2015**
- **Teachers had to teach to and prepare their students for statewide tests on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) from 2011-2014.**

Regarding the professional development that helps teachers make the transition from the NGSSS to the entirely new, differently focused, Florida standards, there has been little assistance provided by the FLDOE and school districts.

- The FLDOE developed and offers web-based model lessons and Lesson Study Toolkits. During the summer of 2013, the Department provided a two-day awareness training on the CCSS to approximately 6,000 teachers.
- School districts were financially strapped until July 1, 2013. From 2010 through June 30, 2013, school districts used their limited resources to align their PD with the tested NGSSS standards.

We were asked if we had heard from teachers about the implementation of the standards. Yes, we have. Not only do we speak face-to-face with teachers weekly, FEA conducted a statewide survey on February 14-18. 510 members were asked many questions about the CCSS and their implementation. We wanted to understand their perceptions of the Florida standards, formerly identified as the CCSS, learn about the resources made available to them, and determine the level of implementation they are experiencing. I thought you would like to know what teachers across all grade levels told us.

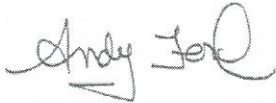
Question: What are the most important things your school should do to help you and your colleagues adjust to CC?

- Offer on-site training to teachers (K-5)
- Improve technology and upgrade the computers (K-5)
- More resources and better training (K-5)
- Just continued professional development and time to implement it (K-5)
- More freedom to implement it correctly (K-5)
- More teacher-ready material that is ready for teachers to use. Teachers should not have to write the curriculum (K-5)
- Provide training on how to utilize the CC when you have students who are below the levels they should be at (K-5)
- Allow for more collaboration with teachers (6-8)
- We need more teacher training. To keep us in the loop and be very knowledgeable (6-8)

- More in-services for teachers. More materials that are actually CC standards (6-8)
- We need better textbooks that align with the standards specifically (6-8)
- Supplying us with more technology, giving us smaller class sizes, and providing more supplies, like lab materials (6-8)
- Common planning for teachers (9-12)
- I would say that training and giving teachers more time will help them adjust (9-12)
- Consistent training (9-12)
- Better and more testing materials (9-12)
- Hold workshops and bring in guest speakers. Help the teachers plan their lessons (9-12)
- Better training. The training is vague. (9-12)

As you can clearly see, full implementation of the Florida standards from K-12 has not yet occurred. Professional development and aligned resources are not yet fully available to Florida teachers. Our teachers need more time, more resources and more training to prepare themselves and their students for the deep learning required by these new standards.

I hope you find this data useful and agree that a three year delay is what is needed to properly implement these new standards. It's what is best for students.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "D".

Andy Ford, President
Florida Education Association