

TRANSCRIPT

Answers to Important Questions about the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards

SPEAKER Rochelle Herring

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[Slide: Webinar Title]

MEG LIVINGSTON ASENSIO

I'm now going to introduce Ben Sanders and Eric Crane **[Slide: Ben Sanders and Eric Crane]**, who will be helping to facilitate the webinar, and I'll turn it over right now to Ben Sanders from CORE to introduce our speaker for this afternoon.

BEN SANDERS

Great, thank you, Meg. And let me just say I'm pleased to welcome everybody to the CORE Standards, Assessment, and Instruction initiative officially, for the first time in most cases, and to thank you for taking the time this afternoon to join us for the first of what actually is scheduled for three webinars in preparation for our summer design institute. The focus of this webinar, as you know, is on the English language arts standards, but I did want to just clarify that we have two additional webinars coming up. One is on formative assessment and the second will be on, or the third I should say, will be on the Common Core math standards.

And I did just want to clarify one question about that, which is, who should attend which? We are hoping that everybody will attend the formative assessment webinar. And for those of you, obviously, who are on this webinar today, we'll welcome you to the ELA piece. And the third one, again, is the math one. Everybody will join two of the three webinars, but also I wanted to note that everybody will hopefully find all three of the webinars useful. So we know how busy everybody is, and we just wanted to have folks focus on the content area that we know you'll be focused on at the institute. But if, in fact, you have any interest at all in joining the math webinar, which will be led by Phil Daro, I think, frankly, you will probably find that quite useful. So we will encourage everybody to join all three if you are able.

In any case, today's focus obviously is on the Common Core ELA Standards, and at the institute we're going to be delving much more deeply into the specifics of the standards, and building the capacity to do some formative assessment task development and resource building, collectively. And so, we know we'll have a chance at the institute to get into much more depth; obviously today is just sort of a broad overview, if you will. It's good to know that folks are very familiar with—at least they're initially familiar with the standards, and so I think that's helpful for our presenter, Rochelle, to know that most of you have had at least some exposure to the standards, which we assumed, but it's helpful to know that's the case.

But, nevertheless, we're still going to keep this webinar at a fairly high level, just to kind of get some of the real basics out on the table and sort of go into the institute with a bit of a shared understanding, hopefully, of some of those big issues. So with no further ado, **[Slide: Today's Presenter]** I'd like to introduce our presenter, who is Rochelle Herring. Rochelle is the

founder of an organization called Transformation by Design, which has been providing support for school districts all around the country, here in California and elsewhere, around really gearing up for the Common Core, English language arts in particular.

And so as a result of that, I think we're really fortunate that Rochelle brings not only a deep knowledge of the standards themselves, but, frankly, she has been doing so much work with folks just like yourselves, educators around the country, that I think she really does bring a firsthand understanding of some of the issues and challenges that folks encounter when they start thinking about the standards and how they should approach them in terms of ultimately implementing them. So we're thrilled to have Rochelle walk us through this initial piece, and so welcome, Rochelle, and take it away.

ROCHELLE HERRING

[Slide: The Common Core State Standards . . .] Thank you very much, Ben, and good afternoon, everyone. I'm delighted to be here with you to have a discussion around the Common Core Standards. **[Slide: Where did the Common Core State Standards come from?]** So one of the first questions, actually, that people put on the table about the Common Core Standards is, where do they come from? And so the Common Core Standards, yes, are actually standards documents. But there's a larger vision behind the Common Core Standards, and a larger vision that, I think, sometimes gets missed when we just talk solely about standards.

So there are two lead organizations, the Council of Chief [State] School Officers and the National Governor's Association. They came together to address a couple of issues that are common, that we'd been picking up across the country. We. . .our previous standards focused on high school graduation. **[Slide: photo]** And what we found is that over the years when the kids graduated from high school, they didn't necessarily have the thinking skills that . . . **[Slide: photo]**. Some of our kids went on to college, and many of them were successful, but then there were still others that had to start with the remedial courses, and not start college-bearing courses until much later.

And then there were other students who started careers **[Slide: photo]**, and at the time, back long ago, many of the careers that were available for students that were not college bound would set them up for a middle class life. And all of a sudden we have the computer, and the internet connects the world via the computer screen. And what we started to notice is that education is not just about competing with your peers in your class; it's about competing with your peers all over the world. And now that education is abundant, the United States finds itself in the situation where there are so many different learning devices and people have access to a lot of the same information that we have [garbled]. I feel that schools have been the vehicle through which people have been able to be equipped with the skills to achieve the American dream, and what we found was that we stagnated here in America for many years, and it's time for us to now go forward so that our kids are prepared to take advantage of whatever opportunities come their way.

[Slide: Why are the Common Core Standards necessary?] And so the Common Core Standards are necessary because what we have is the innate sense that many of our students are not sufficiently prepared for college and careers, and that when it comes to global competitiveness, that we have. . .that our peers in other nations are performing a lot better than some of our students. **[Slide: Why are the Common Core Standards necessary? continued]** And so these issues, for some, don't necessarily seem real. They think about them in terms of statistics, but we have a moral obligation to our kids to make sure they're prepared for a future unknown. It becomes a matter of national security when many of our students are not able to pass the entrance exam for the military or pass some simple language exam in careers within national defense.

And so we were really trying to take a look at some of the disparities when we had different states taking the NAEP and setting their own standards. What we noticed on the NAEP, that there were states like Massachusetts where the scores, in terms of number of students who were proficient on the exam, were compatible with state scoring; their state scores were compatible. But then there were other states where that was not necessarily happening.

[Slide: Why are Common Core Standards necessary? continued] And so, as we find the world of work changing, what we're noticing is that technology is reducing the need for routine workers. And so lots of careers that people were into, we're starting to see apps being available to take their place. So many of us are using an online app for H&R Block to do our taxes, or we're using legalzoom.com for routine legal work. And so the idea that routine skills can be replicated in an algorithm means that if you do routine work, ideally, once there is an application for that, it reduces the number of people who are necessary to do that as a career. And so by 2018, about 62% of the U.S. jobs are going to require some education beyond high school, and where we are right now as a nation is that we rank 15th among the major 20 industrialized countries that are producing adults with bachelor's degrees.

[Slide: What do career and college require?] So we start to see that the skills in this current day that are necessary to be successful in career and college require the same thing. They require expert thinking and they require complex communication. Now when we think about expert thinking, we are thinking about people who have the ability to solve new or ambiguous problems; these are people who do research, or are creative, that can create something that people didn't even know they needed and then they can't live without, like Steve Jobs. So we are thinking about people who are creating a new dish, or are able to synthesize a lot of analytics and come up with actions that move forward. But not only is the ability to create new things and solve problems necessary, but it's also important for workers in the new century to have an ability to teach a particular interpretation. We have an abundance of information; however, we still need people to do the interpretation, explain that information, and talk about its practical applications to real life.

And so what you see on the PowerPoint slide **[Slide: chart]** is a chart that's taken from the work of Rick Murnane, who is an economist. And what he shows on this chart is our demand for students, for careers, to have expert thinking and complex communication as a foundation are rising, and how you see routine work starting to decline. And so it's really imperative that we ramp up our standards so that all of our kids are career and college ready, no matter what it is that they choose to do in life.

[Slide: How are the Common Core State Standards different...] So one thing that's very, very different between the Common Core State Standards and the standards that we have had in the past is that these current standards emphasize career and college readiness for *all* students, and they're designed for kids to be prepared to succeed in a global economy. In the past, we were focused on high school graduation, but these standards are meant for kids to succeed way beyond high school.

[Slide: What is the vision for a career- and college-ready student?] So we talk about a vision for a career- and college-ready student; this was something that was sometimes missing in the past. A lot of times we worked with the standards, and there was a list—we didn't know how to prioritize them, and we had to go about in our districts making pacing charts or identify power standards, but we didn't necessarily have a clear idea of the type of students that we were trying to create.

And so one thing that I really like about the Common Core Standards is, up front in the introduction, they say these are the characteristics of a career- and college-ready student. So when we talk about demonstrating independence, we are talking about having a curriculum and school experience that enables kids to work on their own. Many of our students now rely a lot on teacher support or teacher scaffolding. While some of our highest-achieving students get

the opportunity to work on their own and demonstrate independence, many other students do not. Our students learn to build strong content knowledge, meaning when they leave the walls of our schools, they need to know about high school-related content.

As we started to embark upon our Common Core work with different clients, one thing that we noticed right away is that many of the tasks that kids were being asked to do in the classroom relied heavily on a student's background knowledge. And we've been working really hard to make sure that where we ask kids to do something in school, it's related to the academic content of the course. So if they're in a history course, we're not just asking their opinion on something and letting them bring in information from the outside; we're asking them to research it and really demonstrate that they have an understanding of the content.

We also want students to be able to be successful under different circumstances of performance. Often the classroom routine limits people in terms of the kinds of assignments that kids do, so when we look at the performance on a test, many teachers sometimes say that they're not satisfied, because what the kids did as classwork and what they did on their own, there was a mismatch on what the kids said and what they wrote, were different. And so, in this instance, we're being really deliberate about making sure that our students are able to perform no matter what the circumstances are. If the work is timed, if it's over time, if it's on demand, if they are writing to the mayor's office, or they're talking to their classmates, they're able to show that they have a mastery of the content knowledge, and they're able to demonstrate that knowledge under various circumstances.

When we started with the last set of standards, oftentimes we had assignments where students were asked to critique or respond, but many times those responses or those critiques didn't always show us that the kids made meaning of what they read in school. So it's important, as we frame the tasks the students are doing in the classroom, we see that they are making meaning of what they're learning in school; they're critiquing the various sources, and they're also developing a perspective that's grounded in evidence.

And we want to start to use our technology and digital media strategically, meaning if there's an electronic source that is rich, that we bring that into the classroom, and not solely rely on pencil and paper. And then, finally, that we help our students to understand that there are other perspectives and that other cultures may not perceive things in the same way. So it's very important that we start to help them develop a global perspective. And this is designed... these indicators actually come directly from the Common Core introduction.

[Slide: How are the standards organized?] So the English language arts standards are organized around three main sections: the kindergarten through 5th grade standards are cross-disciplinary; there is a set of standards for 6th to 12th grade English language arts; and then there is also another section that's 6th to 12th grade literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. So the standards are written in a way, in this way, to let everyone know that literacy is everyone's responsibility, and so we start to see an emphasis, not just on the teaching of reading and writing in the language arts class; we start to see an emphasis on reading and writing in the content areas as well.

[Slide: How are the standards organized? continued] Anchor Standards are in the introductory page in the grade-level standards documents when you look on the Common Core Standards website. The Anchor Standards indicate the knowledge and skills that the students must acquire by the end of high school. These Anchor Standards were written and vetted by the College Board, the ACT, and Achieve. And once they drafted the standards, they vetted them by taking them to professors of introductory-level courses in college, and making sure that these standards, if kids mastered them, would actually enable them to be successful in their classrooms. And then the second wave of writing the standards dealt with creating grade-by-grade standards to show people how to scaffold, or how to vertically align the curriculum so that by the time kids get to the end of high school, they would actually be able to demonstrate

that they have mastered these set of standards. And then, finally, the standards are organized in a way that everyone can use them to develop tasks in their classroom that has some reading, content area reading or content area writing attached to them.

[Slide: Anchor Standards] So the Anchor Standards provide us with a broad set of competencies in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. And they express very clearly (this is my way of review) that what a high school student should be able to know and be able to do. The K-8 standards are written grade by grade, and the 9th and 10th grade, 11th and 12th grade standards are written in grade bands. So this is what the Anchor Standards document looks like. So for each section of the standards, whether it be reading, the writing, and the speaking, before you go into the grade-level standards, what you will see is, are the standards that each of the grade-level standards correspond to.

[Slide: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading] And this slide is an example of what the reading standards for literature K-5 looks like.

So the reading standards really emphasize some specific skills, like being able to read complex text. The framers, or the developers of the standards, really did a deep analysis of the college-level textbooks **[Slide: Reading Standards for Literature K-5]**, and what they noticed is that they were rich in complex text, meaning that the level of difficulty increased throughout the textbook; the type of reading through the charts, figures, primary sources, secondary sources were all embedded. And that sometimes the high school textbooks were not as complex, or teachers were finding get-arounds, such as presenting PowerPoint presentations or summaries to students at the high school level in order for them to master the reading.

[Slide: The Reading Standards] And so a chief [garbled] behind the reading standards is to make sure that students are exposed to increasingly sophisticated and appropriate level text, and that they are equipped with the skills to do a close reading of it independently. So text complexity is described at length in Appendix A of the English language arts document. Appendix B of the English language arts standards provides exemplar text to illustrate what complex text looks like at each grade level and gives you sample excerpts, and it also recommends performance tasks.

[Slide: The Writing Standards] The writing standards are organized in a way where content area teachers, such as history teachers, science teachers, are able to use them, and Appendix C contains writing exemplars so that there is no question about what the work should look like at your grade level. In our past set of standards, many times teachers had to determine what is an A paper, or what paper meets standards, or try to determine the difference between a paper that scored a 3 and a 4. So Appendix C is really strong to give us an idea of what the papers actually look like, and we're finding that the imaging really helps for teachers to calibrate their expectations.

[Slide: The Writing Standards, continued] These writing standards encourage three types of writing: argumentation, informative text, and narrative text. Argumentation is the language of academics. So lots of times when academics write, they write from their own perspective, and then they justify what is their claim by saying what people who would agree with them have said, and also what people who disagree with them have said. And they position themselves in a way where they are weighing evidence, and showing through their paper that they have looked at all of the credible sources and that their idea or their claim is credible.

Informative text takes a slightly different stance. They're not necessarily trying to prove a claim, although they will have a point that they are trying to make, or a thesis statement. And the stance for the informative text is: I know something; let me teach you about it. Whereas with narrative, it's not as emphasized in the upper grades; the upper grades are encouraged to have kids write as reflective essays or reflective narratives, not as creative ones. And so the idea here is to give kids a balanced experience in reading and writing, in fiction and nonfiction.

And so the standards also really focus on making sure that students get the opportunity to practice their writing over time, so that their reading assignments are not just things that are one-shot deals; that they really get the opportunity to research and revise for clarity of thought and for well-evidenced content.

[Slide: The Writing Standards, continued] The use of research is something that from time to time we don't always get the opportunity to plan for. And so these standards really lend themselves for teachers to create a path where students get the opportunity to engage in research and write about sources under different time frames and for different purposes.

[Slide: What are the implications for instruction?] So what are the implications of all of what I just said? Well, in short, as we move forward and try to make some new advances in teaching, what we have to do is make sure that we plan and craft an experience for our students where our kids get to develop a strong knowledge base, where we are deliberate about increasing the complexity of text that they interact with, that we really force the kids, or encourage them, to use the text when they answer questions and when they write. And as we work with our students on a regular basis, to incorporate talk through use of text-based discussions, and encourage the use of academic vocabulary.

[Slide: What are the implications for instruction? What the standards do NOT describe] Now what the standards do not do, is they do not tell teachers how to teach, and everything that will need to be taught. There is still some. . .there is lots of room for teachers to make some data-driven decisions about what kinds of interventions to present to their students, and then also what strategies they will use to support their English language learners, their GATE students, their students with special needs. But no matter what, everything needs to be, also be for the purpose of making our kids career and college ready.

[Slide: How does this connect to what we will do with CORE?] So how does this connect with CORE? When we talk together at the design institute, we are going to be introduced to a framework for thinking about a module, or an experience that gets our students to be able to perform to the level of expectation on a performance task. So this framework has been developed through careful examination of the standards, and also through careful examination of the information that's available to us about the Smarter Balanced assessment. And so all of our performance tasks will start with some sort of stimulus, and in our case, we're going to start off with a stimulus that would be text. And we will be deliberate about choosing text that varies in complexity. We'll probably start off with an item that's able to snowball into a larger piece, like a series of open-ended questions. And the idea is for us to plan out a series of performance tasks that lead kids from being a novice in a particular content area to showing that they are an expert. And that as we change through item A, item B, and item C, the tasks that we give kids get more cognitively demanding, in that they have to use more of their resources to answer the question, and that they have to spend more time and, obviously, get more feedback as they move through it.

[Slide: What websites can I visit to learn more?] So there is an abundance of information about the Common Core Standards online, and I encourage each and every one of you to view them. I found all of these websites to be particularly helpful. It's a short presentation so, of course, I'm not able to share all of the information there, but they have videos of David Coleman—who is one of the lead architects on the standards—speaking, and he speaks quite eloquently about the standards, the rationale behind them, and also does some examples of what it looks like in the classroom. And then also there are some other resources, some articles that I found really fascinating and interesting in terms of grounding this work. And you will be able to read about the history of the initiative and hear some expert perspectives on the Common Core Language Arts Standards. So at this time I will accept any questions.

BEN SANDERS

Well, Rochelle, I think I can help on that. [Title slide] But there's actually quite a few that have been noted, and I do want to just address a couple. I know one thing that's come up a couple times—which is a totally reasonable question—is, will folks have access to this PowerPoint? And, of course, the answer is absolutely yes. We'll make sure that this is available to everybody, if not actually sent directly through an email, we'll certainly make it extremely easy for everybody to download this PowerPoint. So that's one thing. As well as, I should note that anybody who wanted to re-view the webinar, it will be recorded and posted, and anybody of our colleagues who were not able to join us will, of course, be able to observe the video, or the webinar I should say, in recorded fashion. So, Rochelle, do you want to take a couple of these questions?

ROCHELLE HERRING

Sure.

BEN SANDERS

And what I'll state as well is that I think we're going to be pretty strict about hitting our timeline, just knowing how busy everybody is. So we'll stop promptly at 4:15. And so if we don't have time to address all these questions, what I would like to say is that we'll definitely carefully review these questions, and make sure that if we don't address them today, we will absolutely directly address them during the institute itself. So thank you everybody; thank you all for these thoughtful questions.

So here's one that I thought would be relevant. What should we talk about? I mean, you just referred to some of the performance tasks, but one question is about development with regard to the assessment tasks. And I think that's probably—I'm not sure if that question is specifically regarding some of the Smarter Balanced, which by the way we're going to have quite a bit of explanation about Smarter Balanced assessments, summative assessment, that some of you may be aware of. Rochelle, do you want to just give a quick overview of the Smarter Balanced pieces, just so people have an idea of what that is, and again, we'll have lots more information about that to come, but it might be helpful for folks to just get a quick understanding of that.

ROCHELLE HERRING

All right. So there are two assessment consortia that are leading the assessment effort. One is called PARCC, and the other is called Smarter Balanced. California is going to be a part of the Smarter Balanced Consortium, and when you see it in print, a lot of times they use the acronym SBAC, and when you see that related to an assessment, they are referring to the Smarter Balanced assessment. At this point, there are about 30 states that have been working collaboratively since December of 2009 to develop an assessment that's aligned to the Common Core Standards. And so their task is to make sure that the assessment tasks on a test are internationally benchmarked, and that they give districts feedback on how well kids are performing on their path to career and college readiness. The tests are going to measure the full range of Common Core Standards in grades 3 through 8, as well as 11, and that they will have a strong emphasis on assessing problem solving and complex thinking skills.

So the plans for the system are that educators, all within the 30 states, will be able to access the reporting system that identifies each student's strengths and weaknesses, and that the scores will be able to be used to help districts identify professional development needs for teachers, as well as what needs to be done for students. They're also planning to have an online open source system, where teachers may be able to download items that would be related to summative exams, from optional formative assessments, and a variety of tools at your disposal that will help you for your classroom assessment.

BEN SANDERS

So here is an interesting question that comes from somebody who is familiar with the math standards, and I can talk to this briefly. But, Rochelle, would you say that there is roughly an analogy between the Anchor Standards and the math practices that are prominent in the math standards?

ROCHELLE HERRING

So what the Anchor Standards and the mathematical practices have in common is that they're all related to promoting the complex thinking and the problem-solving skills on the part of teachers. So the Anchors, the difference is, the Anchor Standards describe the characteristics of a student, but the mathematical practices describe the characteristics of the type of teaching that students who are able to engage in complex thinking and problem solving need to have access to on a regular basis. So they have the same goal, which is career and college readiness. The focus of both is around complex problem solving and communications, but the difference is that the Anchor Standards describe what a student must do, while the mathematical practices talk about what the teacher must do.

BEN SANDERS

A quick question just to clarify around the origin of the standards themselves. A question about where they actually really did come from: Were they written by people from academia and the business field to really assist with the career and college readiness approach?

ROCHELLE HERRING

So the Anchor Standards were designed by organizations that specialize in career and college readiness; specifically, representatives from Achieve, from the College Board. And then once those Anchor Standards were done, there were teams of people from different states; in some cases, they were community members, teams of educators, to mix in grade-by-grade standards. So each wave had a different set of people to construct them, and they were vetted by college professors who said, "Yes, these are the skills that, if students have them, they'll be career and college ready."

Now this path is different from the way that we made the previous set of standards. The previous set of standards were made by different groups, and they went around, and they got a lot of input from various interest groups that, as a result, some states ended up with long list of standards, some of them that didn't have anything to do with career and college readiness. So this process was purposefully designed to make sure that at the end of it, we had Anchor Standards that clearly articulated what career and college readiness looked like for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and mathematics, and that we had grade-level standards that were constructed by groups of educators that would lay out a path for all of our kids to get there grade by grade.

BEN SANDERS

So here are a couple of other questions that are really related to key issues that we'll be, again, digging into over the summer. But why don't you take a quick, sort of quick crack at sort of . . . one of them is a highly appropriate question about how we . . . especially with English language learners, accessing the depth of the Common Core. So why don't you touch on that one, and I've a couple more that are like that.

ROCHELLE HERRING

Okay. So when we think about our work with English language learners, what we really need to . . . we start to make a mind shift or a bit of a mind shift. A lot of times we've been really thinking about exposing kids to academic language, to functional language, in the classroom.

And in this case, we want to shift our thinking to first making sure that our English language learners are given tasks that focus on career and college readiness. Secondly, we equip them with the language that's necessary for them to be successful on the task, and then we equip the students with the language, whether it's their [garbled] or their everyday language and their academic language, where they can express their thinking.

Now, the teaching scaffold is what the teachers are going to have to be very deliberate about in terms of the students' level of English language proficiency. But at a very basic and general level, the teaching sequence would have to be one where students were exposed to the academic content, and they were given an opportunity to think about, talk about, interact with realia, and use appropriate strategies, such as the total physical response if they're beginners, and some others where you do some simulations in the classroom, and you let the kids listen to a fluent speaker speak about the content so they can imitate it. So, in this case, when you're thinking about the Common Core Standards, one of the key differences in mainstreaming English language learners' education is this focus on the career and college readiness task, and being very deliberate about embedding the academic language necessary for students to be successful on it.

BEN SANDERS

And on a related note, another appropriate question about providing access for special education populations.

ROCHELLE HERRING

So again, when we think about working with special populations, whether it's English language learners, our GATE students, or our students with special needs, the way that we have explicit instruction at this particular point in time is to think about the task first, and then to start to think about the types of strategies where you can help the kids compensate for something that doesn't come naturally to them. So when we're doing this career and college readiness task, all of the students are going to have to be exposed to content, all of the students are going to have to go through some sort of revision and research process. But when you think about the needs of a specific population, you also have to think about, in the case of a student that has special needs: How can I make this visual for them, so that they start to see the whole as opposed to just individual parts? How do I make this more concrete before I go to the abstract? And depending on what the student's classification is, the teacher will be deliberate about picking the differentiation strategies that will help them be successful on that task, as opposed to using a wide range of strategies where the kids might master a particular skill in isolation. In this case, we want to use strategies that are going to help the students be able to perform to standards on a particular task, regardless of whether they're English language learners, special needs, or your GATE students.

BEN SANDERS

So another question that I think is sort of anticipating a responsibility, or a role that some of the folks that are going to be involved in this work will ultimately be asked to take on, is really, how do we go about beginning to present these ideas and issues to other teachers, to other classroom teachers, and to support implementation? So what are some of the strategies to start thinking about how we can help other teachers begin to really understand and begin to gear up for the shifts that might be required to implement the Common Core?

ROCHELLE HERRING

So in terms of just starting out, I would recommend three things. The first is to do a series of text-based discussions. There are several articles and key readings, three of which I referred to in the PowerPoint slides, that would be excellent readings to introduce teachers to, so that they get the ideologies behind the Common Core Standards and get some background

information around the visions that underlie this. The second thing I would suggest that the teachers do together is to take a look at Appendix C, because Appendix C provides you with the imagery, grade by grade, of what the expectation is. And the tasks are written in a way where if you were to look at the reading tasks that are there and pick one that you wanted to start with, you'd have an exemplar there, and teachers could use that as the basis for moving forward.

A third way that you might start getting into the Common Core Standards conversation is to really have a conversation about what are the implications around reading and really start to dig into Appendix A, which is all about text complexity. Because what we're finding is that many of the teachers have very different definitions of what it means to read and comprehend, and since close reading of complex text is critical to the success of us having a strong implementation of the Common Core Standards, I suggest that people have a conversation about reading, so that you have a shared definition of what it looks like and what the outcomes are, and what actual reading work is, so that as you move forward and you start to connect reading and writing, you're moving from a strong foundation.

BEN SANDERS

We just got a whole bunch of really strong questions that came in, so thank you for everybody. I think we'll try maybe one last one, and then again, let people get on with the rest of their afternoon. And this one is perhaps a more complex discussion, but, Rochelle, why don't you take, kind of initial take of what your assessment is of what the similarities or differences are with the California standards and the Common Core.

ROCHELLE HERRING

So I think California is in a great place, because their standards, in many instances, are very good. And what the Common Core does is to advance and then build on the California standards by doing a couple of things. The first is making explicit what a career- and college-ready student looks like. The second is adding the Anchor Standards to show exactly what we're looking for. The Common Core Standards give us what it looks like grade by grade related to specific tasks. And we also have the imagery, meaning we have examples of what the student work looks like in Appendix C. We also have suggested performance tasks from Appendix B. And then we also have some foundation documents that explain exactly what is meant, so that each district, and each school, or each teacher doesn't have to come up with their own explanation. So I think that what you will see is that many of the strongest characteristics of the California State Standards are built or taken or advanced by some of these other attributes in the way these documents are organized and then the accompanying imagery.

BEN SANDERS

Well on that note, I think we'll conclude our session for today. I do want to say that there are some important questions about logistics for the institute, and I just want everybody to know that we will be in steady touch with information that you'll need in order to be well prepared for the institute, both in terms of logistics and some of the resources, and more detail on the institute itself. We don't want to overload people with information, but we'll sort of send it out in a somewhat steady stream. But the key information, we'll make sure is evident, and folks will be, I think, well prepared to be successful. And I will just conclude by saying, we're really excited about having everybody join us over the summer in Berkeley. We have been working hard on preparing what we hope is going to be a really engaging and productive two-and-a-half days, and I just want to thank everybody who has contributed to the planning, which is really quite a few people have been directly and actively involved in this effort. So we're really looking forward to it. And, Rochelle, I don't know if you have a final parting word for the folks, otherwise, I think we'll sign off. And, Meg, is there anything else that you want to do housekeeping wise?

MEG LIVINGSTON ASENSIO

No. I just want to thank everyone, and I am going to put the link into the tab right now to register for the formative assessment webinar coming up on June 11th.

MICHELLE

And Meg, this is Michelle. One thing I want to add is that if participants during today's webinar are interested in watching or engaging in the math webinar, they certainly can, so, Meg, if you can add that link as well, that would be helpful.

MEG LIVINGSTON ASENSIO

And this one is the math. There you go. So the first one there is to register for formative assessment, the second one is for the math, and we'll look forward to seeing everyone on one of the subsequent, or both of the subsequent webinars. We will be emailing you the PowerPoint presentation and the two handouts. We did have some trouble with the recorder. We hope we got it fixed and that we'll be able to post the webinar archive both on the CORE website and the REL West website shortly. So thanks, everyone, and have a good day.