

Changing the Classroom Context

What Do Common Core State Standards Mean For Your Education Grantmaking?
A Funder's Guide to Understanding the Common Core State Standards

written by EDUCATION FIRST and GRANTMAKERS FOR EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Announced in 2009 and subsequently adopted by 46 states and the District of Columbia, the Common Core State Standards represent a new blueprint for what students in virtually every corner of the country will learn in English language arts (ELA) and literacy as well as mathematics.

According to their authors and advocates, these new standards present an unprecedented opportunity to elevate the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in America's schools. They also create a common platform for developing and deploying higher quality teaching tools and materials. States and local school systems are working feverishly to implement the new standards.

The Common Core is taking root in nearly every state, presenting significant opportunities and challenges. As districts and states move into the critical stages of implementing the new standards, funders need to understand the scope and scale of this effort and consider the implications for their work.

This guide—the second in a series by Grantmakers for Education—explores challenges and opportunities for funders to navigate the Common Core as schools implement these ambitious new standards.

HOW THE COMMON CORE IS CHANGING THE CONTEXT

“Knowledge” is one of Grantmakers for Education's eight Principles for Effective Education Grantmaking



About This Series

Regardless of how funders are working to support changes in public education—from grants to schools and districts to support of nonprofit technical assistance efforts to advocacy campaigns—the scope and sweep of the Common Core State Standards will impact grantmaking strategies. Grantmakers for Education is producing a three-part series of guides to help funders navigate the implementation of the new standards.

The series includes:

- *Common Core State Standards: A Funder's Guide to Understanding Their Development and Impact in K-12 Schools*
- *Changing the Classroom Context: What Do the Common Core State Standards Mean for Your Education Grantmaking?*
- *High Need, High Impact: What School Systems Need to Succeed With the Common Core State Standards and How Philanthropy Can Help*

because effective philanthropy demands sound “information, advice and ideas... to help a funder make wise choices.” Funders need knowledge and context about the states and communities in which they are working, the problems they are trying to solve, and honest assessments about what has worked—or hasn’t—from previous education grants and strategies.

The arrival of the Common Core State Standards—with their sweeping adoption by states and school systems across the country and reordering of instructional priorities in key subject areas—presents a fundamental shift in American public education. With this changing context in mind, education funders should take stock and consider the ramifications for their own strategies for improving education systems.

Even if funders choose not to invest directly in activities that advance the Common Core, they need to understand that the new standards will be absorbing the focus and capacity of educators and leaders moving through the challenging implementation process. Also, prospective grantees increasingly will be referencing them in funding requests. Moreover, funders should explore whether the Common Core affects their existing grantmaking strategies—and how they might use the standards as a rallying point to help accelerate pre-existing work and goals.

“The Common Core is a catalyst that can help bring people to the same table and align agendas in schools and districts,” said Peggy Mueller, senior program officer for The Chicago Community Trust. The 98-year-old community foundation in recent years has focused its education program grants on building the capacity of educators at all levels of schools and

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systems in order to improve instruction in core curriculum areas. In contrast to the competing expectations from school systems and states that teachers too often had to navigate, Mueller observes the Common Core “provides a renewed focus and a justification for educators to implement best practices.”

Still, while the Common Core presents opportunities, it also could crowd out other priorities for school improvement. Driven by aggressive timelines for implementing the new standards, school leaders are focused on boosting teacher skills and knowledge and communicating about the new expectations.

The reality is, for the foreseeable future, implementation of the new standards is expected to consume a large part of the limited bandwidth and capacity in local school systems and state departments of education. Funders will want to carefully consider whether to introduce major new initiatives that are unrelated to the new standards at a time when school systems are focused on implementing complex change. Some may want to instead focus on providing Common Core assistance in the short term, or ensuring that existing grantmaking strategies link to or reinforce the standards in some way.

For example, when it comes to the Common Core, the California-based Stuart Foundation has chosen to respond to specific requests from the school districts it currently supports. Local school districts “tell us what’s

really important,” said Christy Pichel, president of the Stuart Foundation. “If they tell us getting teachers ready for the Common Core is critical, we’ll try to provide financial support.”

DETERMINING NEXT STEPS

The issues surrounding implementation of Common Core State Standards are complicated. If you’re struggling to understand the path forward for your organization, you’re not alone—and it’s not too late. Across America, many funders are just now solidifying their strategies. To develop the right approach for your grantmaking, consider these three steps as you conduct due diligence about the challenges and opportunities ahead.

1. Survey The Landscape

As a starting point, funders need to take stock of how the Common Core is changing the classroom context in local school systems and states. Steps could include:

- **Identify the major challenges local school systems and states face in the work ahead.** Be especially diligent about understanding the competing pressures that schools, school systems, and state departments of education are experiencing. In many places, for example, states are asking schools to implement new teacher evaluation systems—including robust classroom observations and multiple measures of student learning—at the same time they’re asking educators to teach to the higher

expectations embedded in the Common Core. Simultaneously managing two complex reform initiatives with significant human resource implications would test any organization. Making sure efforts are aligned and coherent demands attention from both policymakers and educators. “A lot of the air space already is being consumed by issues like teacher evaluation,” said Paul Herdman, president and CEO of the Rodell Foundation of Delaware, which helped push for a broad set of reforms through the national Race to the Top competition. “Everyone’s got to move carefully. There’s only so much tension a state can manage at one time.”

- **Determine how the Common Core is, or isn’t, overlapping with other reform initiatives you care about.**

Talk with officials in your state department of education or local school systems to understand the challenges and opportunities the Common Core creates for education initiatives you’ve already been supporting. In California, for example, a major priority of the S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation is improving education in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and math). Implementation of the Common Core math standards, with their deep emphasis on more conceptual understanding and practical applications of mathematical ideas, seemed like an area ripe for Bechtel’s support. In April 2013, the foundation awarded grants to seven local school systems seeking to help teachers and principals as they shift instructional practices in elementary and middle schools. The foundation views the grantees as potential high quality models for how to implement the

Silicon Valley Drives Collaboration Through the Common Core

In America’s technology and innovation capital, one might think schools are well positioned to manage change and improvement. But the Silicon Valley Community Foundation is taking nothing for granted—especially when it comes to meeting the world-class expectations embedded in the Common Core State Standards.

With 54 different school districts in its Northern California region, the foundation saw big challenges and opportunities in the arrival of new standards—including implementation gaps between local school systems and opportunities to collaborate. With this in mind, foundation officials in 2013 launched the Silicon Valley Common Core Initiative, a three-year effort to leverage the standards to drive change across the region. The objective: Bring together school systems and administrators to identify common problems in Common Core implementation, and devise solutions.

“If we proceed the way we have in the past, there will be 54 different implementation strategies developed by each of the 54 school districts,” Emmett D. Carson, the foundation’s CEO, argued in the San Jose Mercury News. “For the sake of our kids and the stewardship of limited funds, we cannot let that happen. The opportunity to improve achievement

is too great and the risk of poor implementation by some districts is too high.”

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation’s premise: By working together, school systems can achieve economies of scale, improve access to more effective instructional materials and resources, and share lessons learned around Common Core implementation. The foundation is enlisting national experts to help the region’s school systems and administrators think collectively about how to best operationalize the new standards.

Additionally, the foundation is providing information about the Common Core to parents, business leaders, and philanthropic partners to stimulate a community conversation on the importance of raising the bar in the classroom. The foundation is insisting on collaboration around the new standards in its grant-making. “There’s a sense of urgency, and everyone needs to be working together,” said Gina Dalma, a program officer.

The Silicon Valley Common Core Initiative still is taking shape, but the foundation believes the potential for improvement could be profound if the region’s school systems can effectively lock arms. “Together we will find the best ideas,” Carson said. “Success, however, demands everyone’s attention and collaboration.”

Common Core math standards well. “These school districts are tackling the challenges that other California districts face,” explained Arron Jiron, a foundation program officer. “After comprehensive field-focused research, and a competitive selection process, we discovered that no one expert had the answer on how to tackle the standards. School districts have to lead the way.”

- **Examine state and local plans for supporting schools, principals, and teachers—with an eye toward gaps that may exist.** A necessary component of quality Common Core implementation plans is detailed timelines, with clearly identified milestones. Funders can play a role helping local school systems, state departments of education, and other

governmental agencies spot problems and solve them. “Sometimes agencies don’t communicate well with each other because they’re so heads down on their own business,” said Christine McCabe, executive director of College Spark Washington, a Seattle-based grantmaker that funds programs to help low-income students become college ready and earn degrees. “Because we fund across areas, we have a chance to look for and spot opportunities where agencies can talk to each other.” In some cases, funders can help school systems identify potential pain points in their implementation plans, whether it is the intersection of two major milestones, or an aspect of implementation that is especially challenging. For instance, funders can help school leaders spot instructional shifts in the Common Core that are particularly demanding for teachers—and assist in identifying new tools and professional development to respond. Alternatively, funders can help school systems focus on the change management process that must occur if major reform is going to successfully take root—including revisiting data systems, test protocols, use of instructional time, and overall resource allocations. Or funders can help K-12 leaders build stronger connections with other education systems, including helping higher education institutions and faculty understand the new college- and career-ready standards. Regardless of the approach, find ways to constructively challenge thinking, provide space for leaders to troubleshoot and plan, catalyze partnerships, and quietly help improve the work.



Survey the Landscape

KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the current status of Common Core implementation and what are the major milestones ahead?
- What peak periods or pain points have school leaders identified in their implementation process, and how do they plan to respond?
- Are local school systems and schools adequately prepared for the Common Core, and do they have the resources and supports needed to implement the standards with fidelity?
- How should school leaders shift their existing resources to address the demands of the Common Core?
- What are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing local school systems, and what are the barriers to implementation?
- To what extent are local leaders aware of and utilizing implementation resources developed by other districts or states, including the increasing number of free materials developed by national organizations?

2. Assess Your Strategy

Reflecting on grantmaking goals and objectives, funders should think about how to acknowledge the Common Core in their education investments. Steps could include:

- **Examine your existing priorities to determine which ones are aligned, or could be.** Think about whether and how your existing grants and initiatives intersect with the new teaching and learning expectations for schools. For example, before the Common Core, The Chicago Community Trust’s grantmaking was focused on strengthening instruction in key subject areas such as literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and language development in high-needs schools and school systems. With the Common Core, the Trust is continuing its work—but now focusing efforts through the lens of the new standards rather than through previous district-developed frameworks. The Common Core serves as a common platform for developing professional learning communities within schools that are supported by experts in the key subject areas.
- **Talk with colleagues, grantees, educators, and your board about potential challenges and opportunities around the Common Core.** “The scope of what needs to be accomplished is pretty big,” Pichel said. As they explore best ways of responding to these tall challenges, funders should assess their own internal knowledge and capacity. According to Pichel, they also should seek advice from effective teachers and school system leaders who will know the most about their schools’ capacity to meet the demands of the new standards and what support is most needed.

- **Stay focused on quality.**

One significant contribution funders can make is ensuring that teachers and schools are using instructional resources and materials that truly are aligned to the new standards. Across the field, stories already abound of vendors selling materials such as lesson plans and textbooks labeled “Common Core-aligned”—but they might not be. “A lot of textbook publishers are putting ‘Common Core’ on everything,” Pichel said. “Schools are buying curriculum. How can they get tools to know what’s best? How can funders help make sure there really are good materials out there?” Quality assurance is an area that’s ripe for funders to help separate good resources from those that fall short. By helping local school systems and states make better purchasing decisions, funders can leverage their investments many times over. For example, funders can press local school systems and educators to be sure that old materials are retired from the classroom and that they are closely examining the quality of new materials in order to ensure that they are, in fact, aligned to the new standards. They also can encourage (and provide funding for) districts to convene teams of teachers and school leaders to develop rubrics or processes to use in evaluating materials. Some efforts already are underway to develop these kinds of tools; these provide a strong foundation for local funders to build on. For example, Student Achievement Partners—led by some of the writers of the Common Core—has produced “publishers’ criteria” to guide development of high-quality and aligned materials. Achieve manages

the Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) collaboration to help teachers across a network of states review the quality of new materials being produced. The National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics developed its own Common Core “materials analysis tools” to help guide educators in selecting new materials.

- **Ask tough questions of prospective grantees.** With much of public education’s energy and attention focused on the Common Core, funders will want to know how other initiatives do—or don’t—connect to the new standards. In areas like teacher professional development, for example, investments could be for naught if efforts aren’t aligned with the standards. “The Common Core informs

New Mexico Eschews ‘Shiny Stuff,’ Focuses on the Common Core

When the late entrepreneur J. F. (Jack) Maddox established his family philanthropy in 1963 to serve southeastern New Mexico, he insisted that public education be a key priority. Fifty years later, Maddox’s legacy is driving Common Core implementation in the rural Southwest.

Working with Hobbs Municipal Schools, a 9,000-student school system with 60 percent of kids qualifying for free- and reduced-price lunch, the J. F. Maddox Foundation is taking a lead role in helping the system prepare teachers for the higher expectations of Common Core State Standards. Over five years, the foundation is committing \$2.5 million in direct support to the school system and another \$2.5 million to engage the University of Texas’ Charles A. Dana Center to provide professional development for teachers and leaders.

With the Maddox Foundation’s support, “our current curriculum will be aligned with [the Common Core] and staff will be trained in how to adjust lesson plans and instruction,” said TJ Parks, superintendent of Hobbs Municipal Schools. He added that the new standards framework “emphasizes fewer concepts than our current content, but requires deeper student understanding.”

For its part, the Maddox Foundation views the Common Core as the single most promising development in public education in years—and the most challenging reform to properly implement due to the lack of preparation among teachers in the classroom.

As Bob Reid, the foundation’s executive director, said: “The Common Core represents the hardest shift public education has had to make in a long time—and if schools focus on anything else instead of the Common Core, they won’t get it done. We have taken all the work we’ve been doing at the foundation to support Hobbs schools and reshaped it in ways that can best support successful implementation.” Among other investments, the foundation has engaged consultants to help design and track change efforts and to support teachers and principals in strengthening their practices.

Reid views the new standards framework as a catalyst for helping philanthropy rethink its approach to education reform. “This is a time for funders to sharpen their focus,” he said. “Let’s get away from the shiny stuff and get into the blocking and tackling. We can have a huge impact if we know what we’re doing.”

the questions I ask,” said Carmen James Lane, senior program officer for the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation in Washington, DC. “It’s changing the conversation.” Questions to pose when reviewing applications could include:

- How does the proposal integrate with or reinforce existing efforts in schools to implement the Common Core? Does it take into account existing timelines and milestones in schools’ implementation plans?
- Is there compelling evidence that the project strategically addresses a real, high priority gap in Common Core implementation?
- How is the grantee ensuring that activities are tightly aligned with Common Core expectations and meet a high bar for quality?
- Does the proposal include strong leadership and buy in from state or district leaders, school principals, or teachers?
- Are other funders supporting this project?



Assess Your Strategy

KEY QUESTIONS

- How is Common Core implementation consuming capacity—leadership, resources and attention—inside local school systems and state agencies with which we work?
- What needs—technical assistance, research, leadership, or communications—fit well with what we provide as funders?
- How can philanthropy leverage the “common” framework the standards provide by urging local school systems and states to develop and use higher-quality teaching materials and tools without reinventing the wheel?
- Can the Common Core offer a new and stronger platform to address longstanding challenges in schools that have long interested us?
- How will the work be sustained after our grant ends?

As they explore best ways of responding to these tall challenges, funders should assess their own internal knowledge and capacity.

3. Choose a Leverage Point

After surveying the landscape and assessing different strategies, funders can choose an approach that matches their priorities, leverages their strengths and interests, and addresses real gaps. Steps could include:

- **Fund local or state initiatives.**

For some funders, working directly with local school systems or states may be the easiest and most obvious way to engage in Common Core implementation—and may be the quickest pathway to wider scale reach. In Arkansas, for example, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation made a \$250,000 grant to the Arkansas Department of Education to support strategic communications about the Common Core, starting with the development of new tools for communicating with parents and the public. “We’re looking for the most effective ways to insert ourselves into the conversation,” said Sherece West-Scantlebury, the foundation’s president and CEO. “The grant was one way to get a seat at the table.” Meanwhile, in New Mexico, the J. F. Maddox Foundation is underwriting a partnership between Hobbs Municipal Schools and the University of Texas’ Charles A. Dana Center to provide top-notch professional development for teachers and leaders. Bob Reid, the foundation’s executive director, notes the investment reflects a strategy to support “the blocking and tackling” needed to help school leaders stay focused on what’s needed to make the Common Core successful. “It’s an opportunity to provide focused resources that have potential for big impact,” Reid said.

- **Fund nonprofits that work with schools and bring unique content knowledge or expertise.** At the school level, funders have nearly limitless opportunities. Some may choose to support the development of Common Core-aligned lessons in key areas or the dissemination of high quality instructional materials. Others may want to fund school-level professional development for teachers. Others may choose to engage with students and families in support of higher academic expectations. Responding to a request by 10 California school districts, the Stuart Foundation funded the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning at WestEd to help develop much needed lesson plans aligned to the Common Core. The center convened about 200 teachers from several districts to collaborate on writing these plans, helped other groups of teachers pilot these materials and identify improvements, and then made the final lessons available to educators across the 10 districts. Other funders, such as the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation in Flint, Michigan, have funded training seminars for afterschool program leaders statewide to ensure that out-of-school time programs are providing better support in helping students reach the new standards.

- **Fund programs within schools.** Finding unique opportunities to drive Common Core-related change in individual schools can be a useful exercise—especially if it has the potential to inform an entire local school system. For example, the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation last year granted \$160,000 to the E.L. Haynes Public Charter School in Washington, DC, to work with the District of Columbia

Public Schools to develop “competency-based pathways to high school graduation” over two years. Lane said the work is still in its early stages, but holds promise. “It’s not just creating a new pathway, but it’s being done in such a way that’s aligned with the Common Core,” she said, pointing to the new standards’ focus on critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. “It means students can earn a more meaningful high school diploma.”

- **Don’t hesitate to advocate.** Funders are influential voices in states and communities, and can use their bully pulpit and convening authority to advance ideas. For example, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation’s president and CEO, Emmett Carson, penned a column in the local newspaper explaining the foundation’s support for the Common Core and calling for greater coordination among area school systems. Funders also can support advocacy and communications efforts. The Arizona Community Foundation joined with the Helios Education Foundation and more than a dozen other funders to create Expect More Arizona, a freestanding nonprofit organization that advocates for the Common Core in schools and communities. Similarly, The Rodel Foundation of Delaware is contemplating new advocacy initiatives designed to raise public and parent awareness of the Common Core—with an eye toward establishing “proof points” around successful implementation in a few districts. “With the right engagement and information,” said Rodel’s Herdman, “you can bring all this back to parents and teachers and say, ‘Here’s what this should look like and here are the opportunities to help.’”



Choose a Leverage Point

KEY QUESTIONS

- What are the best leverage points to influence the rollout and supports for the Common Core? By working with local school systems or a state agency, or by working with organizations outside of schools?
- Through the Common Core’s implementation, what big opportunities are emerging in areas of focus such as teacher preparation and development, school leadership, use of time in schools, and curriculum? How does that align with our expertise, priorities, and networks?
- Regardless of approach, how can we build lasting capacity in schools or other organizations to help students meet the higher expectations under the Common Core?
- What unique assets does our foundation bring—such as convening expertise, community voice and reputation, access to thought leaders, or grant dollars—and how do they align with local needs and opportunities around Common Core implementation?
- In addition to grantmaking, are there other leadership roles we can play to focus attention on the Common Core? For example, can we provide leadership by bringing together leaders of local school systems, or building broader community awareness?
- How can foundations work together to support instructional improvement in schools in their region?

The Common Core Anchors Chicago Math Work

Two years before states began collaboratively writing the Common Core standards, The Chicago Community Trust embarked down a similar path with support from the John G. and Francis C. Searle Funds.

In 2006, the Trust funded a partnership between Chicago Public Schools and the University of Illinois at Chicago to improve math instruction in the middle grades. From the beginning, the work centered on emphasizing more conceptual understanding and practical application of mathematical ideas—now key tenets in the Common Core.

As the Common Core standards took shape, the Trust then kicked off an ambitious project—now known as the Suburban Cook County Mathematics Initiative (SCCMI)—to strengthen math instruction in grades 6 through 9 in nearly three dozen high-needs suburban school districts. The first order of business: Develop a common language among the participating districts' administrators and teachers.

At the time, the school systems were utilizing different textbooks and employing different approaches to teaching mathematics. Achieving coherence across the project looked to be a challenge. But the project's staff had a two-pronged solution. First, work with each school's principal and a lead teacher

to establish mathematics leadership teams—inside the schools and across the districts. Second, model the work on a successful effort—the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative, a comprehensive project supported by the Palo Alto, California-based Noyce Foundation that focuses on professional development, content coaching, and assessment.

The result: SCCMI schools and districts are learning from each other, and math instruction is improving. The Common Core is a catalyst to accelerate the work. "School districts are now very cognizant of the mathematical practices embedded in the Common Core, and we are getting more traction," said Gudelia Lopez, a senior program officer for the Trust. Moreover, interest is growing. Area school districts that previously declined to participate in the project now are asking to sign on.

From the Trust's perspective, the Common Core is effectively spurring higher quality math teaching. "The more there is alignment and understanding of the new goals and instructional strategies, the more there is support for teacher leadership and teamwork in each subject area," Lopez said. And ultimately, she added, "the more likely these changes can be sustained after the funded work is completed."

LOOKING AHEAD

Funders interested in the Common Core need to be cognizant of challenges that may be unique to their states or communities, including:

- **Implementation timelines.**

The timing and quality of state implementation plans may vary. To assess progress toward implementation, Education First and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center surveyed state education agencies across the country to gain better insights into implementation efforts. The results, published in a February 2013 report, found that all 46 Common Core states and the District of Columbia reported having formal implementation plans for transitioning to the new standards. However, fewer than half the states had completed detailed plans in key areas of focus, such as teacher professional development, curriculum guides, and teacher evaluation. In most states, Common Core implementation is in full swing. During the 2012-13 school year, some adopting states had put in place the new standards across all grades in K-12. The remaining states expected to fully implement the Common Core by 2014-15 at the latest.

- **Low-resource or low-capacity school systems and states.**

Capacity crunches happen in school systems of all sizes, and funders need to be prepared to recognize the capacity risks and respond accordingly. "There are always districts that are more capable than others, that have the leadership and capacity to prepare and anticipate change," said Christy Pichel with the Stuart Foundation. "We are always looking for ways to

help them share that expertise.” While some funders may choose to build on the strengths of higher performing schools systems—and highlight “proof points” for effective implementation—other funders may choose to help systems with more limited resources, including those in high poverty neighborhoods and rural areas, develop the capacity needed for success. In rural school systems, for example, “the academic director may also be the transportation director,” said David Sevier, deputy executive director of the Tennessee State Board of Education. “In the smallest counties, you may just have three people in the central office.” In low-capacity environments, funders may play an especially important role helping school systems better understand their needs and connect to resources and support.

- **Common assessments.** Adding urgency and stress to Common Core implementation are new online assessments expected to arrive in fall 2014 to measure the new standards. Most states plan to use new exams jointly developed with other states through two testing consortia, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). At the same time, some states are exploring developing their own tests and using private testing services, such as ACT, to measure student and school performance against the standards—although the quality of these privately developed options is less clear. In order to match the deeper skills and knowledge required of the Common Core, these new tests will need to be

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more rigorous than the states’ current standardized tests, requiring students to do more writing and problem solving in context. Rollout of the new assessments will introduce a whole new set of practical implementation challenges for schools and districts, as well as concern among parents and educators. At least in the short term, students’ proficiency rates are projected to dip sharply, increasing anxiety about the new tests.

CONCLUSION

Philanthropy—through its resources and independence—is uniquely situated to help shape Common Core implementation across America. High-leverage opportunities could include disseminating high quality instructional resources and materials, building capacity and deeper subject area expertise among educators, helping state leaders identify policies that will help more students attain higher standards, and boosting public understanding and stakeholder engagement. Every funder must chart a different course, but education experts agree that philanthropy will play an important part in what happens next.

“Participate,” is the advice from Sherece West-Scantlebury with the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. “Philanthropy has a leadership role and you can influence how the Common Core takes shape.”

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