

Summary Points

Achieve’s Side-by-Side Comparison of the American Diploma Project (ADP) English Benchmarks with the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* (revised 2007)

Introduction

For purposes of this analysis, Achieve staff constructed a side-by-side chart comparing Achieve’s American ADP English Benchmarks with the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts*. The Achieve study focused on Florida’s Standards for Reading/Language Arts at Grades 9-10 and 11-12. However, since the ADP Benchmarks refer to skills and knowledge obtained *by the end of* Grade 12, in some instances objectives from grades lower than Grade 9 were used to complete the chart. Commentary regarding rigor can be found in both this summary report and in side-by-side chart that accompanies this review.

According to the Florida Department of Education Web site (<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4687/TAP-2007-141.pdf>), the Sunshine State Standards were first approved by the State Board of Education in 1996 as a means of identifying academic expectations for student achievement in Florida. These original standards were written in seven subject areas and were divided into four separate grade clusters (PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). As Florida moved toward greater accountability for student achievement at each grade level, the Sunshine State Standards were further defined with specific K-8 “Grade Level Expectations” added in 1999.

On January 17, 2006, the State Board of Education adopted a six-year cycle that set forth a schedule for the regular review and revision of all K-12 content standards. This revision included the alignment of the new standards with assessments, instructional materials, professional development, and teacher licensure exams.

The Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts were revised from the original version in 1996 to a revised version in 2007. The revised version included the following changes from the original:

- separate standards were introduced in benchmarks for Grades K-8, as opposed to the broad grade bands;
- new strands were developed to reflect the process for reading and writing; and,
- high levels of cognitive challenge were incorporated into each of the benchmarks through the use of verbs such as *create*, *develop*, and *analyze* to ensure higher level instruction.

The present draft of the Florida standards for Grades 9-12 is organized by the following strands:

Reading Process

Standard 5: Fluency

Standard 6: Vocabulary Development

- Standard 7: Reading Comprehension
- Literary Analysis
 - Standard 1: Fiction
 - Standard 2: Nonfiction
- Writing Process
 - Standard 1: Prewriting
 - Standard 2: Drafting
 - Standard 3: Revising
 - Standard 4: Editing for Language Conventions
 - Standard 5: Publishing
- Writing Applications
 - Standard 1: Creative
 - Standard 2: Informative
 - Standard 3: Persuasive
- Communication
 - Standard 1: Penmanship
 - Standard 2: Listening and Speaking
- Information and Media Literacy
 - Standard 1: Informational Text
 - Standard 2: Research Process
 - Standard 3: Media Literacy
 - Standard 4: Technology

The ADP Benchmarks in English are organized into eight strands: A. Language, B. Communication, C. Writing, D. Research, E. Logic, F. Informational Text, G. Media, and H. Literature.

Alignment Analysis

- **Overall, the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* are generally aligned with the ADP English Benchmarks.**

Certain strands are well aligned; these include the ADP strands on:

- Language,
- Writing (Florida includes specific statements on work-related texts, which is somewhat uncommon among state standards and should be recognized as a strength in preparing students for work readiness),
- Research, and
- Literature.

Florida’s expectations align less closely in the area of Communication—a gap is found in the area of working in teams—and show weak alignment in Logic—many of the specifics of analyzing and evaluating arguments are missing in Florida’s expectations.

The ADP strands on Informational Text and Media show some alignment with Florida, but Florida’s benchmarks could be strengthened to be made more explicit and comprehensive in these areas within the Grades 9-12 statements.

In the side-by-side chart included with this report, the degree of alignment between an ADP Benchmark and one or more Florida benchmarks judged to align with that Benchmark is evaluated. A numerical score ranging from 0 to 3 is assigned to each match to define the degree of alignment. These ratings can be interpreted as follows:

- 3 = excellent alignment between the two documents
- 2 = good alignment, with minor aspects of an ADP Benchmark not addressed, or are found in Grades K-8
- 1 = weak alignment, with major aspects of an ADP Benchmark not addressed
- 0 = no match for an ADP Benchmark was found

As needed, commentary is provided in the last column of the side-by-side chart to clarify the reasoning that went into assignment of the numerical rating.

Below is a brief summary description of some general commonalities and differences found in the alignment between the two sets of standards related to each ADP strand.

Finding 1: In a few instances, ADP Benchmarks do not have a counterpart in the State Standards.

For the most part, issues of non-alignment between Florida and ADP can be characterized as instances in which Florida is less specific than ADP about the criteria for effectiveness or instances in which Florida aligns, but at grade levels below 9-12. In just a few instances are there gaps for which Florida lacks any statements that align with an ADP Benchmark.

TABLE 1 below shows the ADP Benchmarks that have no counterparts in the Florida benchmarks. Ratings of “0” were assigned in the accompanying side-by-side chart since there is no match for these Benchmarks.

TABLE 1 – ADP Benchmarks that are not addressed in the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* at some grade level

E. Logic
E2. Identify false premises in an argument.
E5. Recognize common logical fallacies, such as the appeal to pity (<i>argumentum ad misericordiam</i>), the personal attack (<i>argumentum ad hominem</i>), the appeal to common opinion (<i>argumentum ad populum</i>) and the false dilemma (assuming only two options when there are more options available); understand why these fallacies do not prove the point being argued.
E7. Understand the distinction between a deductive argument (where, if the premises are all true and the argument’s form is valid, the conclusion is inescapably true) and inductive argument (in which the conclusion provides the best or most probable explanation of the truth of the premises, but is not necessarily true).

H. Literature

H8. Analyze the moral dilemmas in works of literature, as revealed by characters' motivation and behavior.

Finding 2: In some instances, the alignment between the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* and the ADP Benchmarks is not as complete or not as clear and explicit as it could be.

For many ADP statements, Florida's statements align closely. For some, however, Florida may want to consider the specifics or the general focus of its benchmarks.

For example, ADP B5 expects that students will "Analyze the ways in which the style and structure of a speech support or confound its meaning or purpose." Florida includes benchmarks LA.910.5.2.1 and LA.1112.5.2.1 that specify that students will demonstrate effective listening skills, strategies, and behaviors—and evaluating oral presentations is included as one of these skills, strategies, and behaviors. However, this alignment could be made more specific to better guide students and educators; what specifically is involved in *evaluating* oral presentations?

Similarly, Florida includes benchmarks LA.7.5.2.1, LA.910.5.2.1, and LA.1112.5.2.1 that specify that students will listen for a variety of purposes, including discussions, but the state does not explicitly extend this idea to include participating in self-directed work teams (ADP B7).

As another example, under Logic, ADP E4 states that students will "Evaluate the range and quality of evidence used to support or oppose an argument." Florida includes benchmarks LA.910.3.3.3 and LA.1112.3.3.3 that specify that students will revise their own writing to elaborate ideas with specific facts, by which one could infer that students should be able to evaluate the range and quality of evidence, but this expectation is not stated explicitly.

Weak ratings and/or comments in the chart indicate gaps in content or performance alignment, or what appear to be differences in the level of expectation, given the wording used in the Florida benchmarks.

Cases where the full expectation defined in an ADP Benchmark is not covered completely or well by the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* are indicated in **TABLE 2** with a rating of "1" or "2."

TABLE 2 – ADP Benchmarks that are not explicitly or completely addressed in the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts, Grades 9-12*

(Note that those that are not completely addressed in Grades 9-12, but are addressed ONLY in earlier grades, Grades K-8, are listed in TABLE 3)

ADP Benchmark	Florida Benchmarks	Rating	Comments
A7	LA.1112.4.2.1	2	The Florida benchmark focuses on the use of language rather than on comprehension of quantitative, technical, and mathematical language (but perhaps comprehension would be implied by use).

ADP Benchmark	Florida Benchmarks	Rating	Comments
			Florida may wish to consider including a statement at Grades 9-10 that addresses the comprehension of this kind of content-area/technical language and vocabulary.
B5	LA.7.5.2.2	2	Florida is less specific than Achieve on this topic. The ability to analyze style and structure is more than/different from a listening strategy or behavior.
	LA.910.5.2.1		
	LA.1112.5.2.1		
B7	LA.7.5.2.1	1	While some elements of ADP B7 are addressed, they are focused on listening to presentations or engaging in discussions—not explicitly on participating in self-directed work teams.
	LA.4.5.2.4		
	LA.910.5.2.1		
	LA.1112.5.2.1		
	LA.1112.5.2.5		
C2	LA.1.5.2.4	2	Closest alignment is from earlier grade levels. In Grades 9-12, Florida emphasizes the <i>how</i> of the performance (that students will draft by analyzing language techniques of professional writers) not just the <i>what</i> of the performance. This can pose challenges in measurement; what if students show a command of language but we cannot ascertain if they analyzed the techniques of professional writers to gain this command?
	LA.910.3.2.3		
D4	LA.910.3.1.2	1	Florida does not explicitly reference the time and length requirements for writing; this is a minor point within ADP but may be worth consideration in light of timed writing expectations for students.
	LA.1112.3.1.2		
E3	LA.910.1.7.5	1	Analyzing text structures (see Florida) is not as specific an expectation as describing the structure of an argument—including its claims, evidence, and connections among evidence, inferences and claims (see ADP).
	LA.1112.1.7.5		
E4	LA.3.1.7.3	1	Florida does not specify that students will be able to evaluate the range and quality of evidence that supports an argument although the state does expect students to support ideas in writing.
	LA.910.3.3.3		
	LA.1112.3.3.3		
E6	LA.910.6.3.1	1	ADP is more specific than Florida.
	LA.1112.6.3.1		
E8	LA.910.1.7.6	2	ADP more explicitly focused on arguments—how authors reach conclusions—than Florida, which is more generally on considering multiple works on one topic.
	LA.1112.1.7.6		
F4	LA.910.2.2.4	2	Note that Florida takes a different approach than ADP here by including a statement that is more parallel to the genre statement under Literature in ADP. This seems like a positive addition while not an exact match to ADP.
	LA.1112.2.2.4		

ADP Benchmark	Florida Benchmarks	Rating	Comments
F6	LA.910.1.7.4	2	Cause-and-effect relationships are just one example in ADP; in Florida, cause-effect is focus of whole statement.
	LA.1112.1.7.4		
F10	LA.8.4.3.2	2	Florida statements LA.910.2.1.7 and LA.1112.2.1.7 focus on fiction, not informational texts. LA.8.4.3.2 and LA.1112.4.3.2 address the use of irony in writing, not in analyzing informational texts
	LA.8.5.2.3		
	LA.910.2.1.7		
	LA.1112.2.1.7		
	LA.1112.4.3.2		
F11	LA.910.2.2.1	2	Florida has emphasis on specific text features while F11 focuses on evaluation of texts overall.
	LA.910.6.1.1		
	LA.1112.2.2.1		
	LA.1112.6.1.1		
G4	LA.910.3.5.1	2	The emphasis in Florida is on using technology to support an oral presentation; this seems a different emphasis than to expect students to create media productions.
	LA.910.5.2.5		
	LA.910.6.4.1		
	LA.1112.3.5.1		
	LA.1112.6.4.1		

Finding 3: Several areas of alignment between the ADP Benchmarks and the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* rely completely or heavily on standards from lower grade levels.

Some areas of alignment between the ADP English Benchmarks and state standards below grades below 9-12 are to be expected. Many language and reading skills are applied at *all* grade levels, but to more and more complex texts as the grades increase.

This issue of repetition is challenging to clarify in a set of English language arts standards. It is not helpful to repeat the same statement across all grade levels, and some statements may be appropriate only for inclusion in early grades. On the other hand, some expectations are so essential to success in the language arts that they need to be reinforced at every grade level, and, particularly at the secondary levels, applied to much more complex situations than they were in the lower grades. At the primary levels, for example, students need to be taught how to use the context clues provided within a sentence to figure out the definition of an unfamiliar word. As texts become more complex, however, definitions of essential yet unfamiliar words may be found at the paragraph or section levels of a text—a much more wide-ranging expectation of the use of context clues than that practiced at the early grade levels.

The lack of repetition of some key skills may be due to the expectation that the Florida standards are cumulative—that it is a “given” that the skills from previous grades are maintained at the next level. In the Florida document, however, the cumulative nature of the standards could be clearer. Not including language to this effect may suggest to educators that they are not responsible for previous years’ content. If this is the case, those “gaps” in alignment that were noted in the side-by-side chart to show when alignment was found in Grades K-8 are worth the state’s consideration.

The Massachusetts state standards could serve as one model for how a state has handled the issue of reminding readers that students are responsible for content, skills, and strategies expected from earlier grades. At each grade band, the standards begin with the phrase “Continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult texts.”

Florida benchmarks that appear in the second from left column of the side-by-side chart are those that were extracted from Grades K-8 for purposes of this analysis. Alignment that relies on benchmarks from lower grades is highlighted in turquoise font in the accompanying side-by-side chart.

TABLE 3 below indicates those alignments between ADP and the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* that rely entirely or heavily on standards from lower grades.

TABLE 3 – Alignments that rely on the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* from lower grade levels

ADP Benchmark	Florida Benchmarks
B1	LA.2.6.1.1
B2	LA.3.5.2.1
	LA.8.5.2.1
B3	LA.3.5.2.1
	LA.8.5.2.1
B4	LA.4.5.2.1
	LA.6.5.2.1
	LA.910.5.2.1
E1	LA.K.1.7.2
	LA.1.1.7.5
	LA.3.6.3.1
	LA.4.1.7.3
F1	LA.2.6.1.1
G1	LA.8.6.3.1
	LA.910.6.3.1
	LA.1112.6.3.1
G2	LA.8.6.3.1
G3	LA.8.6.3.1
H6	LA.3.2.1.1
	LA.7.2.1.6
	LA.7.4.1.2

Finding 4: Some of the expectations within the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* are not explicitly addressed in the ADP Benchmarks.

The ADP English Benchmarks include the content that postsecondary educators and employers identified as essential skills for postsecondary success in education and work. It is expected that some content and skills, such as creative writing or aesthetic analyses of literary works, will be

included in high school English and language arts classes that may fall outside of this focus of ADP but may still be entirely appropriate as a focus of instruction in high school.

In addition, because they were written as end-of-high-school, or exit, benchmarks, the ADP Benchmarks do not include the level of detail that would be expected in a set of grade-specific content standards; some states include additional statements that get at a level of detail that goes beyond ADP. A greater degree of specificity within the Florida statements is to be expected as they are intended to guide both instruction and assessment within the state.

In the case of Florida, many of the statements that extend beyond the scope of ADP are those that address strategies or processes for learning, such as LA.910.1.5.1—“The student will adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.” —or LA.910.1.7.8—““The student will use strategies to repair comprehension of grade-appropriate text when self-monitoring indicates confusion, including but not limited to rereading, checking context clues, predicting, note-making, summarizing, using graphic and semantic organizers, questioning, and clarifying by checking other sources.” A few describe specific instructional activities for learning, such as LA.910.4.2.5—“The student will write detailed travel directions and design an accompanying graphic using the cardinal and ordinal directions, landmarks, streets and highways, and distances.” Because the ADP Benchmarks were written as a set of exit benchmarks, they address specific performances expected of students. They do not include statements that get at internal process or strategies for learning. Florida may want to consider the inclusion of such statements because they may present challenges to measurement, both in class and on large-scale assessments.

TABLE 4 below identifies the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts* that define concepts or performances not explicitly addressed in the ADP Benchmarks. In the side-by-side chart, these standards are shaded and received a “2” or lower rating.

TABLE 4 –Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts in Grades 9-12 that address concepts/performances not explicitly required in the ADP Benchmarks

Florida Benchmarks at Grades 9-10
LA.910.1.5.1 The student will adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.
LA.910.1.6.1 The student will use new vocabulary that is introduced and taught directly;
LA.910.1.6.2 The student will listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text;
LA.910.1.6.4 The student will categorize key vocabulary and identify salient features;
LA.910.1.6.5 The student will relate new vocabulary to familiar words;
LA.910.1.6.8 The student will identify advanced word/phrase relationships and their meanings;
LA.910.1.6.9 The student will determine the correct meaning of words with multiple meanings in context;
LA.910.1.7.1 The student will use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, prereading strategies (e.g., previewing, discussing, generating questions), text features, and text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection;

LA.910.1.7.2 The student will analyze the authors purpose and/or perspective in a variety of text and understand how they affect meaning;
LA.910.1.7.8 The student will use strategies to repair comprehension of grade-appropriate text when self-monitoring indicates confusion, including but not limited to rereading, checking context clues, predicting, note-making, summarizing, using graphic and semantic organizers, questioning, and clarifying by checking other sources.
LA.910.2.1.5 The student will analyze and develop an interpretation of a literary work by describing an authors use of literary elements (e.g., theme, point of view, characterization, setting, plot), and <u>explain and analyze different elements of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, symbolism, allusion, imagery)</u> ;
LA.910.2.1.7 The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate an author's use of descriptive language (e.g., tone, irony, mood, imagery, pun, alliteration, onomatopoeia, allusion), <u>figurative language (e.g., symbolism, metaphor, personification, hyperbole)</u> , common idioms, and mythological and literary allusions, and explain how they impact meaning in a variety of texts;
LA.910.2.1.9 The student will identify, analyze, and compare the differences in English language patterns and vocabulary choices of contemporary and historical texts; and
LA.910.2.2.5 The student will select a variety of age and ability appropriate nonfiction materials (e.g., biographies and topical areas, such as science, music, art, history, sports, current events) to expand the core knowledge necessary to connect topics and function as a fully literate member of a shared culture.
LA.910.3.3.4 The student will revise by applying appropriate tools or strategies to evaluate and refine the draft (e.g., peer review, checklists, rubrics).
LA.910.3.5.3 The student will sharing with others, or submitting for publication.
LA.910.4.1.1 The student will write in a variety of expressive and reflective forms that use a range of appropriate strategies and specific narrative techniques, employ literary devices, and sensory description; and
LA.910.4.1.2 The student will incorporate figurative language, emotions, gestures, rhythm, dialogue, characterization, plot, and appropriate format.
LA.910.4.2.5 The student will write detailed travel directions and design an accompanying graphic using the cardinal and ordinal directions, landmarks, streets and highways, and distances; and
LA.910.5.1.1 The student will use fluent and legible handwriting skills.
LA.910.6.4.2 The student will routinely use digital tools for publication, communication and productivity.
Florida Benchmarks at Grades 11-12
LA.1112.1.5.1 The student will adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.
LA.1112.1.6.1 The student will use new vocabulary that is introduced and taught directly;
LA.1112.1.6.2 The student will listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text;
LA.1112.1.6.4 The student will categorize key vocabulary and identify salient features;
LA.1112.1.6.5 The student will relate new vocabulary to familiar words;
LA.1112.1.6.8 The student will identify advanced word/phrase relationships and their meanings;
LA.1112.1.6.9 The student will determine the correct meaning of words with multiple meanings in context;

LA.1112.1.7.1 The student will use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, prereading strategies (e.g., previewing, discussing, generating questions), text features, and text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection;
LA.1112.1.7.2 The student will analyze the authors purpose and/or perspective in a variety of text and understand how they affect meaning;
LA.1112.1.7.8 The student will use strategies to repair comprehension of grade-appropriate text when self-monitoring indicates confusion, including but not limited to rereading, checking context clues, predicting, note-making, summarizing, using graphic and semantic organizers, questioning, and clarifying by checking other sources.
LA.1112.2.1.7 The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate an author's use of descriptive language (e.g., tone, irony, mood, imagery, pun, alliteration, onomatopoeia, allusion), <u>figurative language</u> (e.g., symbolism, metaphor, personification, hyperbole), common idioms, and mythological and literary allusions, and explain how they impact meaning in a variety of texts with an emphasis on how they evoke reader's emotions;
LA.1112.2.1.9 The student will describe changes in the English language over time, and support these descriptions with examples from literary texts; and
LA.1112.2.2.5 The student will select a variety of age and ability appropriate nonfiction materials (e.g., biographies and topical areas, such as science, music, art, history, sports, current events) to expand the core knowledge necessary to connect topics and function as a fully literate member of a shared culture.
LA.1112.3.3.4 The student will revise by applying appropriate tools or strategies to evaluate and refine the draft (e.g., peer review, checklists, rubrics).
LA.1112.3.5.3 The student will sharing with others, or submitting for publication.
LA.1112.4.1.1 The student will write in a variety of expressive and reflective forms that uses a range of appropriate strategies and specific narrative techniques, employs literary devices, and sensory description; and
LA.1112.4.1.2 The student will incorporate figurative language, emotions, gestures, rhythm, dialogue, characterization, plot, and appropriate format.
LA.1112.4.2.5 The student will write detailed travel directions and design an accompanying graphic using the cardinal and ordinal directions, landmarks, streets and highways, and distances; and
LA.1112.5.1.1 The student will use fluent and legible handwriting skills.
LA.1112.6.4.2 The student will routinely use digital tools for publication, communication and productivity.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Achieve's initial analysis provides the Florida Alignment Team with a Side-by-Side Comparison of the ADP English Benchmarks with the *Florida Sunshine State Standards for Reading/Language Arts*, as well as this narrative summary of the comparison. Using this analysis as a starting point, the Florida Alignment Team should begin to identify college- and career-ready expectations while keeping in mind both where the present Florida benchmarks are already aligned with ADP, and where there may be gaps between the two sets of expectations.

State alignment Teams have used these documents in a variety of ways. States:

- use this analysis to determine where the state’s high school standards are already aligned, and to determine the areas in which alignment is not strong;
- use the side-by-side chart with its ratings as a tool with postsecondary content groups to aid in the identification of critical expectations for entry-level college course work;
- ask postsecondary faculty and employers to complete surveys to rate the relative importance of the expectations for entry-level success.

When the Florida Alignment Team has thoroughly processed this analysis, conducted some outreach with business and postsecondary to determine critical skills, and produced a draft of college and career expectations, the draft is submitted to Achieve for review. Achieve will then produce a Quality Review of these draft college- and career-ready expectations that will focus not only on the alignment issues of the initial analysis, but also on the following criteria of quality standards:

The Criteria Used for the Evaluation of College and Career Ready Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
Rigor —What is the intellectual demand of the standards?	Rigor is the quintessential hallmark of exemplary standards. It is the measure of how closely a set of standards represents the content and cognitive demand necessary for students to succeed in credit-bearing college courses without remediation and in entry-level, quality high-growth jobs. For Achieve’s purposes, the ADP Benchmarks represent the appropriate threshold of rigor.
Coherence —Do the standards convey a unified vision of the discipline, do they establish connections among the major areas of study, and do they show a meaningful progression of content across the grades?	The way in which a state’s College and Career Ready Standards are categorized and broken out into supporting strands should reflect a coherent structure of the discipline and/or reveal significant relationships among the strands and how the study of one complements the study of another. If College and Career Ready Standards suggest a progression, that progression should be meaningful and appropriate across the grades or grade spans.
Focus —Have choices been made about what is most important for students to learn, and is at the amount of content manageable?	High quality standards establish priorities about the concepts and skills that should be acquired by graduation from high school. Choices should be based on the knowledge and skills essential for students to succeed in postsecondary education and the world of career. For example, in mathematics choices should exhibit an appropriate balance of conceptual understanding, procedural knowledge and problem solving skills, with an emphasis on application, and in English standards should reflect an appropriate balance between literature and other important areas such as informational text, oral communication, logic, and research. A sharpened focus also helps ensure that the cumulative knowledge and skills students are expected to learn is manageable.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
<p>Specificity—Are the standards specific enough to convey the level of performance expected of students?</p>	<p>Quality standards are precise and provide sufficient detail to convey the level of performance expected without being overly prescriptive. Standards that maintain a relatively consistent level of precision (“grain size”) are easier to understand and use. Those that are overly broad or vague leave too much open to interpretation, increasing the likelihood that students will be held to different levels of performance, while atomistic standards encourage a checklist approach to teaching and learning that undermines students’ overall understanding of the discipline. Also, standards that contain multiple expectations may be hard to translate into specific performances.</p>
<p>Clarity/Accessibility—Are the standards clearly written and presented in an error free, legible, easy-to-use format that is accessible to the general public?</p>	<p>Clarity requires more than just plain and jargon-free prose, which is free of errors. The College and Career Ready Standards must also be communicated in language that can gain widespread acceptance not only by postsecondary faculty but also by employers, teachers, parents, school boards, legislators and others who have a stake in schooling. A straightforward, functional format facilitates user access.</p>
<p>Measurability—Is each standard measurable, observable, or verifiable in some way?</p>	<p>In general, standards should focus on the results, rather than the processes of teaching and learning. The College and Career Ready Standards should make use of performance verbs that call for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills and should avoid using those that refer to learning activities, such as examine, investigate, and explore, or to cognitive processes, such as appreciate.</p>