

Updating Illinois Spanish Language Arts Standards: Insights from the field.

2019

The Latino Policy Forum is a staunch advocate of aligning instruction of English Learners to assessment. Native language instruction is mandated in Illinois as part of bilingual education. As such, it follows that assessments be conducted in the native language. Research has long contended that assessments administered in English, a language English Learners are still acquiring, do not yield valid and reliable results.

The Latino Policy Forum in partnership with Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education conducted a brief survey to understand practitioner use of Common Core en Español and interest in aligning Spanish Language Arts standards to Common Core. While Illinois has long had Spanish language arts standards, they are not aligned to Common Core nor the Illinois Learning Standards.¹ It is the hope that these survey findings illuminate the usefulness of Common Core en Español for Illinois practitioners. These findings are intended to inform future policy and advocacy efforts towards updating the state's Spanish Language Arts Standards and the development of an aligned assessment.

The History of Common Core en Español and its Relevance in Illinois

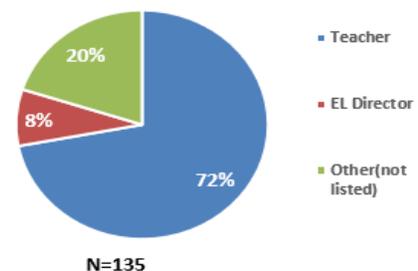
The Common Core State Standards, which covers English language arts and mathematics, provide a clear, consistent understanding of what students are expected to learn. Common Core en Español was a joint effort between the San Diego County Office of Education, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the California Department of Education. These standards are a translation of the English language Arts standards into Spanish. The translation was conducted by a group of district level educators and language scholars. Many educators in Illinois use Common Core en Español for their language programming, as it aligns with the Illinois Learning Standards. For additional information, please see:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr13/yr13rel40.asp>

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The survey received 135 respondents, largely practitioners, working with linguistically and culturally diverse learners. **The grand majority of respondents, 72%, were teachers.** The others included an array of positions: instructional coach, school social worker, school psychologist, school counselor, and EL coordinator.

What is your current position?

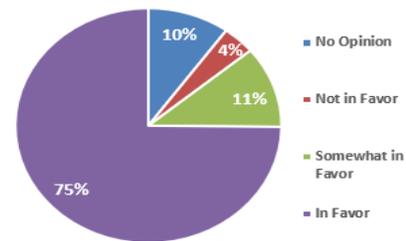


Almost half of respondents reported they were familiar with Common Core en Español: 45% familiar; 24% somewhat familiar; and 27% not familiar. (NOTE: 3 % of respondents indicated this question was not applicable to them.)

Respondents were asked about their curriculum’s alignment to Common Core en Español: 28% were greatly aligned; 24% somewhat aligned; and 25% not aligned (Note: 13% of respondents said this question was not applicable to them).

Overwhelmingly, 75% of practitioners expressed an interest in the state aligning its Spanish Language Arts assessment to Common Core en Español.

Would you be in favor of Illinois adopting Spanish language arts standards to align to Common Core en Español?



N=132

The Forum concludes that there is practitioner support for implementing native language assessment

ⁱ The survey was distributed electronically at the 2018 Annual Conference for Educators of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students. The survey was optional and results kept confidential. For more information on the methodology, see: <https://www.latinopolicyforum.org/publications>