



Preface

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to develop a common core of state standards for proficiency in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten through grade 12. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) expressed its support in June 2010 for the goal and intent of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics effort, which aimed to produce a common set of standards for learning across the nation, strengthening the continuity of instruction and the coherence of auxiliary systems (e.g., assessment systems, textbooks) as well as facilitating the growing number of transfers of students across school boundaries.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSSI 2010) are intended to address the highly challenging task of defining the knowledge and skills that students should gain as they progress from kindergarten through grade 12 to ensure that they will graduate from high school able to succeed in introductory-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in jobs in the workforce. States are asked to adopt the Common Core State Standards in their entirety and include the core in at least 85 percent of the state's standards in English language arts and mathematics.

The [*Common Core State Standards for Mathematics \(CCSSM\)*](#) build on many years of work by NCTM to define the mathematics that students need to know and be able to do. NCTM became the first national organization to develop content standards in mathematics with its publication of [*Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics \(1989\)*](#) and the subsequent revision and update, [*Principles and Standards for School Mathematics \(2000\)*](#). More recently, the Council published [*Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten through Grade 8 Mathematics: A Quest for Coherence \(2006\)*](#) to address issues of curricular consistency, coherence, and depth in the school years before high school. In 2009, NCTM published [*Focus in High School Mathematics: Reasoning and Sense Making*](#) to articulate a vision for high school mathematics based on reasoning and sense making and encouraging students to develop reasoning habits throughout their mathematics learning.

While CCSSM was in development, NCTM organized review panels to provide extensive comments and detailed suggestions to the developers and writers on every successive draft after the first. Individual NCTM members served on the writing and validation committees. The Council diligently monitored the development of CCSSM and advised NGA and CCSSO throughout the process. NCTM pointed out common ground between the common core standards and the Council's own K–12 Standards publications while also articulating areas where the two sets of standards diverged.

NCTM's underlying philosophy and its foundational publications offer teachers support in their implementation of CCSSM. Teachers can use the Council's continually growing collection of resources to flesh out CCSSM and fully engage students in doing mathematics. The extensive collection of materials that NCTM



has developed to support and demonstrate the Council's Standards can similarly inform implementation of CCSSM. NCTM can also help fill in some gaps in CCSSM. NCTM's prekindergarten materials provide guidance for parents and early childhood educators in preparing young children to get the most out of their kindergarten mathematics experiences. NCTM has also developed materials that can be used in conjunction with CCSSM to illustrate effective uses of technology or extend students' experiences into areas such as statistics.

Indeed, NCTM's resources can help ensure that the full vision of CCSSM is achieved. Significant next steps in reaching the ideal of a common core standards environment will be the development of assessments that are consistent with CCSSM and reflect what NCTM's work has helped to make known about the importance of reasoning and sense making in mathematics.