



## State of New Jersey

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January 15, 2008

**TO:** Chief School Administrators  
Principals  
Charter School Lead Persons

**FROM:** Jay Doolan, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Standards and Programs

**SUBJECT: New Jersey Standards Clarification Project**

As you may be aware, the Office of Academic Standards has been working with teams of field-based educators under the guidance of Grant Wiggins, national consultant, on a standards clarification project. The purpose of this two-phase project is to provide materials in each of the nine content areas that convey an understanding of the priorities in the current *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards* and how to capture those priorities in designing local curriculum and assessments, as well as in managing local instruction across content areas. At this time, I am pleased to announce the release of Phase One of the project.

**Phase One** of standards clarification consists of the following materials to assist in prioritizing the standards:

**Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics and Science** - Content areas in the state assessment program for Grades 5-8 contain guidance framed as **Areas of Focus** for the state assessment. Areas of Focus include exemplars of how cumulative progress indicators may be assessed on state assessments and locally and also provide related comments for certain indicators. Since the areas of focus materials are intended to be living documents, additional examples and comments will be added periodically to provide further guidance for teachers. These materials may be accessed at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/>.

**All Content Areas Grades K-12** - Priorities have been identified in the standards within and across cumulative progress indicators to answer the question "What is most important?" and framed as big ideas, enduring understandings and essential questions. As such, critical content, or the "heart" of the subject, becomes

transparent for teachers and students providing an organizing structure for meaningful and connected learning, as well as opportunities for transfer of learning to other subject areas and real-life situations. These materials may also be accessed at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/>.

**Phase Two** of the standards clarification project consists of sample units for each content area, lesson plans containing performance tasks and accompanying rubrics, ideas for additional performance assessments that reflect various facets of understanding, samples of student work and content resources. This phase of the project will be in alignment with the new 2009 standards and disseminated with and in support of this document.

Please inform your staff about the availability of these standards clarification materials. They have been developed by field-based educators with the goal of making clear the intent of the standards in the learning and teaching process. We hope you find these materials helpful and welcome your feedback in order to inform the work-in-progress for Phase Two of the project. Should you have any questions, please contact Janis Jensen, director, Office of Academic Standards at: [janis.jensen@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:janis.jensen@doe.state.nj.us) or (609) 984-5322. Thank you.

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c: Members, State Board of Education  
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