SURVEY FINAL COMMENTS

Is there anything else you want us to know before we begin this initiative?

Note, we corrected spelling, but left text in tact.
827 comments were received—this is a sample

It would help teachers if the public understood why this (common core) is so important as well as why it will be more painful to implement in a state like Arizona where the current standards are far from where they will be with the Common Core standards.

Technology is the heart of the future in education - Payson needs to catch up. Money has always been a factor!

The area of Health, Nutrition, Physical Education, Social and Emotional development needs to be at the forefront of education and recognized as a critical component to learning. This evidence has been received at the national level but needs funding and exposure at each district level. This IS science!

I do believe we are in much need of high-quality professional development, however this needs to come from outside our county. The training received from the school personnel is nonexistent and relatively poor quality at the county level (depending on who is doing the training).

I am fortunate to have been employed in the electric and nuclear utility industry for 34 years before returning to the classroom so I have first hand experience on the "real world of work" but many educators only have their classroom experiences as their frame of reference so many do not see the big need for common core and STEM.

For math and science the only hands on thing that my classroom came with was 4 science tool kits.

The school where I work has no science lab equipment with which to provide concrete activities for the concepts taught out of the textbooks.

Its difficult for me to leave this one-room school and go to another location for professional development. Takes 2 hours to nearest large town, and hard to find a sub.

It is difficult to teach science in the classroom w/o sinks, and with just 4 electrical outlets

Collaboration among all subject matters... the whole future is based on a well-rounded student, not just science and math.
Thank you for reaching out to more rural areas. It would be great to see opportunities for professional development in math and science.

I am eager to learn, open to new ideas, and always looking to expand my repertoire of instructional strategies.

We at STAR School are fighting a battle against low-test scores, low parental education and financial strains. However, I believe that we are making a difference and in the one year that I have been at STAR School, there have been huge positive changes to the school community, student learning and achievement, and determination of faculty and students to flourish.

I'd like to have more training in depth of knowledge and ways to help develop critical thinkers in the classroom.

Over 90% of my students qualify for the free lunch program at my school, and a school garden would also be an excellent source of nutrition and energy for the students as well as an invaluable, ongoing educational center.

The teachers within our district test the kids to death and the students are good at bubbling in answers from a multiple choice. However, I would love to see more hands on and actual "real" teaching encouraged.

I would like science activities that are great vocabulary builders for Language learners. In addition I am seeking more materials (aside from worksheets) to enhance science lessons.

Teachers and administrators need to be held accountable for high standards in teaching.

Due to state standards we have to teach for testing. I feel that science is being drastically left behind by most teachers, and only taught "when there is time" which for some teachers is not everyday. Students who are pulled out for reading intervention are also missing out on science education (at least at the elementary level). I think our district could really use some professional development/help in the area of science at the elementary level.

The more students can see how their mathematics and science knowledge can be used in the real world, they better the students are able to make achievable goals.

Please do not use the money for hours of teachers sitting in meetings being talked too, and given too much paper work with too many ideas that we never have time to try. That is not helpful. We need to have time to actually learn about with models, and time to create quality-learning activities for students to get engaged in.

I believe that elementary teachers should be more educated in Science. As a middle school teacher I get students who know very little about Science because their elementary teacher just skipped it!
It has been very hard to integrate science into curriculum, there is not enough time to teach so much in one day, and therefore any recommendations/trainings would be very appreciated.

Students in low-income schools need more hands-on activities, which are hard to do when there is a need for manipulatives and materials.

I would like the experts that are training us to come in and actually teach a lesson to my class so that I can see their methods in actions and how they address the problems I face in my classroom. I have tried for 2 years to have my students work together in groups and I have had little success with it, for many reasons. Some classes do better than others.

We need to bring not only science back to the Elementary schools; we need the arts---Music, PE and Art. Our students are drowning in Math and Reading instruction. They need creative release time so both sides of their brains can grow.

I consider Technology should be implemented in school with prepared teachers because it's not the future for our kids, it is here right now.

Watching other teachers in action and connecting us to teachers that are highly qualified and motivating so we can have a network to learn from and get information from.

We are a rural district with limited resources. The district is actively trying to implement technology but funding always seems to slow down progress.

Any help would be great!

In order for students to be successful, the community and parents NEED to have a voice. Especially in rural communities, community involvement is limited because of a lack of understanding of the school system and a feeling of helplessness within the system. Also, students have less access to experiences that enrich their education.

It would really be nice if you would consider our school or the funds as we have a high population of students that are in the poverty level and don't have much exposure to opportunities to learn science and math outside of the educational setting.

We also need to ensure that lower grades are teaching students. At my school, students are coming to 4th grade not knowing basics, like: causes of night & day, states of matter . . . .

Lab Equipment for experiments, computer programs for calculators (many of these)

iPads or other tablets for classroom use (many of these)

A Smartboard. (Many of these)
$ for an actual math program would help. Right teachers are grabbing for any materials they can find and that isn't always effective. We don't even have a math program we all follow.

Resources for Science (lab kits, etc.) because I sometimes cannot buy the materials I need for experiments.

I have an iPad loaded with many math and science apps. I would love an apple TV for use with my projector in class.

I would like to be apart of a cohort of teachers taking classes toward a masters in elementary math & science education.

Text Books (many)

Resources for teachers (many of these)

Professional development and funding for tools and materials that can be used to teach different objectives.

Complete kits and manipulatives for up to 35 students in a class.

Students having access to graphing calculators.

Science Kits and Math Manipulatives

Materials for Manipulatives in math from base ten blocks to hands on equations for jr. high.

It would help if the state and local schools stressed that it is important to do well in science and not just language arts and math!!!

Money for the materials necessary insuring each student has his or her own books, assignments, and tools and thus has no need to share limited materials

Experiences outside of the classroom where they can apply their learning.

Technology in classrooms that worked. Money for items to run labs.

Grants for higher Education

We do not have wireless Internet or computers in our classrooms. We do have a computer lab, but with one lab and over 700 students, their time is limited. We need class sets of computers, or tablets and wireless Internet.

More planning time/materials to teach with

Funded afterschool activities with a field trip component at the end as a cumulative reward.

Having more than 2 math teachers in our district. We are running on a skeleton crew of teachers and it is very hard on the core teacher. We also need more CTE classes offered in our district.

More of a discovery approach in math rather than a drill or rote memorization focus. I would also like more training in how to teach science.

Update materials

Equipment and materials for hands-on learning and teaching.
Students need a connection between the math and science they learn and the career opportunities. For example, my 15-year-old daughter likes and is successful at math and science. She is considering an engineering career. She has no idea what her options are because that information is not readily available. Luckily, our family can afford to send her to Engineering Camp at U of A so that she can begin to explore different aspects of engineering. Not many of our students have that opportunity.

Purchase Vernier Data collection hardware and probes for labs and demonstrations.

A well developed, consistent curriculum

All students rotate through and have access to the science lab, with approved materials and activities. All students have access to IXL math and other programs online. All students have opportunities for Project Based Learning activities.

It has been very hard to integrate science into curriculum, there is not enough time to teach so much in one day, therefore any recommendations/trainings would be very appreciated.

I think our students can become better learners through understanding the basic of math and science and how we use it everyday of our lives.

Yes, we need information/materials for our students that are written at an easier reading level in science. Usually the concept along with the specific vocabulary we are trying to teach is difficult enough without the whammy of readings that are difficult. I want my students to walk away understanding the concepts without being frustrated with how cumbersome the delivery material is to comprehend. Help them to want to read the information!

Students need to be able to see connections so whatever you implement needs to take that into account. The best training for teachers won't make a difference if students don't get excited, understand how it applies to them and it's a real life skills for them. The tight budgets make teaching Science more difficult than if there more hands-on resources available. I have spent over a thousand dollars of my own money this year to buy lab materials.

I would love it if we could have professionals from these fields visit our kids and do hands on activities with them. They know why learning to read and why learning English is important, but they need more emphasis on math and science.

There are very limited resources (if any) for science and mathematics. I also think better training to help new teachers teach students writing is needed.

Our school only has 1 computer lab for about 600 students. Classes are scheduled to use the computer lab once a week for 30 minutes. We have no student computers in our classrooms.

Teacher needs post graduate scholarships on paid study leave. It is not easy especially in Math to do teaching and going to grad school at the same time.
Many times small schools have a hard time keeping up with course offerings in math and science due to a small student body. We only have so many teachers and so many students and a 1 teacher to 5 students ratio is not going to happen. Thanks you for the help.

Our school district has very little funding available for new curriculum and supplies to help us teach the common core. We do have about 90% of our students that qualify for free and reduced lunch. Our kids want to learn but don't have many opportunities.

I believe technology use in the classroom is going to allow students better learning opportunities.

I think there would be more people who would take the tests to become highly qualified if it did not cost them so much.

Our school is struggling with Science because of the lack of equipment for experiments

I really need all the help I can get any science support from grants, to supplies to professional development is needed greatly.

Many people do not understand that our district is composed 90% or more of Hispanic students in which many cases parents do no speak English at all, or are not even in the U.S with their children. We are overwhelmed with the SEI schedule and do not have the time to incorporate many things into our teaching like Science and Social Studies. As an English language learner myself, I feel that people who are in charge of these programs don not understand what is really needed to become proficient in English. Every year they change things and just keep making it harder for the teacher/students. People who create this should be exposed to the demographics, background, and customs of certain areas, for example border towns that get most of their population from Mexico. Knowing what activities or strategies are correlated to the standard.

Common Core Professional Development (but only if it is worth my time, and the learning experience highly beneficial). Nothing makes me more frustrated than to spend time in Professional Development when the instructor isn't GREAT! :)

Motivational speakers --- people you have come from humble beginnings to become leaders in the field of math & science.

Money for the materials necessary insuring each student has his or her own books, assignments, and tools and thus has no need to share limited materials

My students love science but become bored with it because we do not have the supplies to do actual hands on experiments. The teachers do their best to provide what we can but sometimes it is just not enough.

Summer camps offered would help.
I think as teachers we also need a lot of time to collaborate and plan in order to implement the common core standards.

As a small charter school we serve a population of high need. Our students are those who did not find a place in the traditional setting, for numerous reasons. Our A.I.M.S. scores and graduation rates rise every school year, which shows the dedication of our staff and the untapped abilities of our students. We are in need of resources to further serve our students.

When you live in low-income rural areas and perform without the best resources on hand, and now cuts are made to the budgets; everyone suffers, but the students mostly are the biggest losers of all.

We do not have as much time to teach science as we would like, as that time slot has to be shared with social studies.

Are there low cost graduate degrees in math and science or must I go into debt to improve my effectiveness?

Providing training that offers practical ideas and tools that can be used in the classroom benefit teachers the most. It is nice to walk away from something and have an idea of how to teach something not just what to teach.

Our computer access for students is limited. Portable systems for classrooms, such as class sets of I-pads would be great!

The Jr. High Science Teacher is having to relocate due to budget cuts. The room will have limited resources to perform activities.

I really need all the help I can get any science support from grants, to supplies to professional development is needed greatly. (Repeated often)

Science needs to be reemphasized in classrooms; it has been put in the background behind math and reading for too long. Very little time and funding have been used to keep science content up to date in the classrooms.

I would be interested in a gift card and I would start an engineering program with grants provided to the school or district.

Our district is doing away with our computer labs at all three of our middle schools next year in order to provide an online learning content recovery/intervention class. At this point, our students will have no computers available for independent use. Building a computer lab/or providing a mobile lab for each middle school would be the most helpful thing we could ask for.
There is a big need on teachers who are highly qualified and highly certified in the field of math and science. It is very difficult to implement new programs when there is a need for teachers.

You must keep in mind I live in an area where school is not a priority to many students. Behavior of some students really keeps others from learning. I have about a 10% return on homework and many students are very low in writing and math, not as many in reading.

Most of our students don't have access at home to Internet.

We need A LOT of help in the areas of math and science, please, please help our district.

We are a small school, working with out dated materials and texts, no funds, and a student population that is isolated from the rest of the world by lack of technology and opportunity. I want to expose my students to a greater, more diverse world full of the Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance as I can. These subjects feed right into Science and Math and can only offer the student an opportunity for greater understanding of both.

If all the students have computers to use in the classroom, it will definitely enhance learning.

Schools are in need of funding to reduce class sizes, purchase materials/supplies, and increase preparatory time at the elementary level.

Only a few people in our community show any interest in science. Science is not accepted by the churches therefore many of my students go through the motions of learning science but the believe strongly the "real truth" is what the churches teach. The science the students are expected to learn is provided by the churches. Anything else is false.

The schools on the Navajo Nation are in dire need of funding and programs like STEM to encourage children to further their education.

We need science in the schools. It was mostly cut from our elementary schools, so we could teach kids to read. Science and music both are important, because they allow children to move to higher levels of thinking.

Funds for the library have been so limited the past decade that our collection of nonfiction and STEM items is very dated. It will be difficult to provide exciting, up-to-date reading connections to the new standards without a great infusion of funds for books. We certainly haven't had money to invest in any e-books, or online resources.

Our district is going from "hands-on" science to ONLY textbook reading of science/math. Most good science/math students learn their science/math while doing "hands-on" science/math with science textbooks as guides. What is wrong with this picture?
Computer-based science equipment is vital for high school Physics and Chemistry. I think good quality microscopes have more of a payoff than Galileoscopes which I personally have not had good luck with.

Our school has no funding for special projects. Materials for science labs would be great for students to actual have hands on experiences.

We all need more math and science teachers in our schools. Look at the number of openings!

My fellow teachers are overwhelmed with the Common Core Initiative. Elementary teachers teach the core areas: Reading, Writing, Math, Science as well as adding, subtracting, dividing, multiplying, grammar, art, and social studies. Could we please start with not only the "end in mind" but with examples for teachers of what the "end" or student outcomes should look like... be like.. how to know if students have reached the benchmarks... how to remediate... how to promote, refine, and encourage students through this process. Lots of free workshops outside of the school day to demonstrate what we should be doing in the classroom and what kids should be able to do... would be most helpful. Adults don't learn that much differently than kids.... you can't just send out a list of standards and truly expect everyone to "get it". Teachers also need to be shown, to have the information presented in many learning styles so that teachers find the Common Core Standards worthwhile, "doable", and kid friendly.

Thank you for caring enough to ask what we need, not just assume.

Teachers are already over-worked and under-paid and under-respected. If you want teacher buy in, back up your initiative with additional TEACHER pay. Grants and funding for your classroom and for materials often get absorbed into the district budget (at least partially). Teacher's have been frozen on the pay scale in this district for 8 years, yet the work load and expectations get higher every year. Teacher's are burnt out. They need to be rewarded for taking on additional tasks and implementing new programs.

In Science I feel I do not have enough good problem solving materials and activities to challenge students in creative ways.

We need to have better response time for our computers. Often more than half of our computer lab time is spent signing students on because of poor response times.

I think most of us would appreciate more cross- curricular emphasis of how ideas can be used, and HOW to implement the ideas instead of simply saying here's what you have to do- go do it. Professional development on building this would be helpful.

As a teacher I would appreciate a curriculum pacing GUIDE (guide, as in suggestion, not a lock-step dictate) that would guide me in hitting all the common core standards for my various classes. Maybe the textbook publishers would help provide something, telling me that section 6.4 meets standard blahblah.
Our last bond failed school cuts abound

Thanks for thinking of rural areas..... technology will be an issue as old machines, network on and off..... not wireless......

Our students do not have the same opportunities as students from schools in areas like Phoenix or Tucson. We are a long distance from museums and zoos etc. so most of our students have never experienced anything like that. We have no budget for field trips in town either. We are right on the Colorado River and conducting a field study for an Environmental Science class would be great but we don't have the money to transport the kids. Our entire budget for our Science department was around 1,000 dollars. With that our teachers had to buy office supplies and toner for the printers, chemicals, specimens, lab supplies and equipment. I am sure other schools are feeling the crunch too. I would like my students to experience more hands on science and getting some additional supplies could make that happen.

Parent outreach programs to stress the importance of Common Core and Career Exploration, especially with a focus on STEM and its integration--this is where the foundation of student achievement must be built, not only in math and science but in all areas.

I believe we need more of a curriculum based on tools for measuring various aspects of our environment and for observing it. Exploration at a hands on level and work with data can join math and science. Some engineering projects can marry them. Students need to have a chance to explore, understand, and create.

In order to achieve our goals, I think everyone should know that the key is classroom size. No one does anything about it. We get all these professional development, trainings on how to become a better teacher, how to improve our teaching skills, but there is not much improvement when there are 35 to 40 students in the classroom. We can have the best teachers in the world but it is very difficult to gain student achievement with so many students in the classroom. Maybe the state can use all this money in finding teachers and paying them, instead of making us go to all these wonderful trainings when we can't even put them in practice.