

National Teacher Attitudes on Adoption of Common Core State Standards

While teachers' outlook on Common Core continues to be positive, there are some challenges emerging on the horizon that need to be addressed. By a 2:1 margin (62% approve-31% disapprove) teachers approve of adoption of Common Core State Standards. However, this support is soft as 17% said they strongly approve and 44% said somewhat approve. This overall level of support is basically unchanged from last March, when in a Hart/Winston Group survey, 62% of teachers approved and 32% disapproved.

Additionally, attitudes about approval of state implementation of Common Core has slipped slightly as it went from 66% in March to 60% in July. While the trend is of concern, nonetheless the approval margin is still 2:1 (60-30). Also like overall approval, that approval is soft with 18% strongly approving and 42% somewhat approving.

Finally, and perhaps the most immediate challenge, is that what teachers have heard about Common Core Standards over the last year has not been favorable. Given what teachers said they had heard over the last year, 17% said it made them more favorable, while 32% said it made them less favorable. However, almost half (49%) said that what they had heard had not changed their attitude. Again, this was similar to last March when it stood at 18% more favorable, 32% less favorable, and 49% the same.

This survey occurs as we are in the middle of implementation across the country. Implementation was always seen as a challenging moment, yet 6 out of 10 teachers at this point still approve of how that is occurring. Obviously it would be better if that approval were not as soft as it is. Additionally that softness is complicated by the teacher reaction to what they have heard. Nonetheless, the attitudes are still very positive, but a stronger Common Core narrative is needed to coincide with further implementation to move things forward.

This survey was fielded August 2-3, 2014 for The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. 800 teachers nationally were interviewed.