

A Letter from SpringBoard

We at SpringBoard have learned a lot as we have taken the ideas, suggestions, and best practices from teachers like you and placed them in a program that puts students at the center of instruction. The Common Core State Standards tell us “what” students should know, and we believe teachers can use SpringBoard as a tool to address “how” to meet the key instructional shifts resulting from these new standards.

SpringBoard is truly a unique program and the materials reflect the experiences and expertise of teachers in every state. At first glance, many users see the teacher suggestions as a “script” that can take away some of their autonomy and creativity. This is not the intent. We know that the dedicated teachers who use this instructional framework already have a variety of experiences that they can, and should, bring to the table. We at SpringBoard celebrate and embrace the amazing work that is already being done in the field and hope that all teachers who use our program can truly make it their own. Our amazing group of writers, teachers, trainers, and coaches has learned a great deal in working with instructors and leaders across the country, and we feel it is important to share a few thoughts with you.

We believe in starting each unit by showing students the Embedded Assessment. By identifying the skills and knowledge students will need to know and be able to do - and including them in the process - we are inviting our students to take ownership of their education. No longer will we hear comments like “this is busy work” or “why are we doing this today”? Instead, at the end of every class period we can ask our students what they learned and how it connected to the assessment. Their answers will validate instruction and help them understand why every day is important.

Process is as important as content, so the focus should be on both. Learning content is important, but learning how to learn is equally important for students to gain the skills to read and make meaning of any text or to write in multiple modes. Choose the reading and writing strategies that work well with your students (sometimes this changes from class to class) and differentiate your instruction based on your students’ needs. Having common assessments and lesson pathways allows you to focus on instruction and adjust that instruction according to what you see in your students’ work. This model also fosters rich discussions about your choices in your professional learning communities and district meetings.

Finally, we hope you will take time to become a part of the larger SpringBoard **community** of teachers who are focused on preparing ALL students for college and career success. Let yourself be inspired and challenged during professional development, find support through our online community, and share your opinions with us. The SpringBoard family welcomes you. We hope the high quality tasks, models of instruction, and professional support that SpringBoard offers will help you in your transition to CCSS and in your own instructional growth and success.

Sincerely,

The SpringBoard Team