

Legislators Visit Elementary Classrooms to Learn More About the Common Core State Standards

Senator Kirk Pearson and Representative Elizabeth Scott (of the 39th District Position) visited classrooms at Monte Cristo Elementary School on April 21st to learn first-hand how the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are being implemented into the classrooms. Washington State CCSS Teacher Leader, Debra Howell, along with Principal Karin Manns and Superintendent Linda Hall, guided both Pearson and Scott through several classrooms. After a brief presentation by Howell and Manns, Pearson and Scott were able to sit-in during both language arts and math lessons. Pearson and Scott visited three classrooms (a 1st grade class, a 2nd



Representative Scott partakes in the classroom activity of second grade classroom

grade class, and a multiage 4, 5, 6 class) and sat down alongside the children in order to fully interact and engage with kids during the lesson. After the walk-throughs and hands-on experience, the legislators were provided the opportunity to debrief and ask questions. Hall, Howell and Manns were able to share the efforts that teachers and staff have been making over the last two years to deepen their understanding of these standards and effect change in the classrooms. Overall,

both representatives indicated their appreciation and found the visit informative and valuable. Legislative Representative, Dan Kristiansen, will visit the classrooms on May 8th.



Senator Pearson talks with student, Orion Green, while handing out business cards at the end of the lesson



(Left-Right) Karin Manns, Linda Hall, Senator Kirk Pearson, Representative Elizabeth Scott, Debra Howell

In the U.S., standards for students vary from state to state. Some states have tougher standards than others. For example, an “A” student in Washington may fall behind a “C” student in Colorado (or vice versa). Common Core changes that by providing consistent learning expectations for all students no matter where they live, and creating clear goals for what students should know and be able to do at every grade level. Schools and teachers in Washington are starting to use the Common Core now because our state needs to do a better job at preparing students to be college and career ready. The new Smarter Balanced tests (formerly known as WASL, HSPE) will institute these standards aligned with the CCSS in English language arts and math. The new tests will be implemented state-wide in the spring of 2015.

[Read a letter to the community here](#)
[Implementing the CCSS in WA](#)

Visit the [District website](#) or [OSPI website](#) for more information