

Mark Anderson, Teacher

We need to acknowledge the challenges that have arisen in the implementation and adoption of these standards, much of which have come as a result of hasty efforts to tie teacher evaluation and student testing to the standards before educators and parents were provided an adequate opportunity to fully understand and work with them.

But let's not lose sight of the opportunity that they have provided us.

The new, higher standards provide an opportunity for all students to engage in a productive struggle with rigorous and meaningful concepts, skills, and texts.

This focus on a higher bar for all students has shifted our focus of instruction to "how can we provide access to all learners to this challenging, essential content?"—and this is pivotal for students historically denied access to college and career ready skills and knowledge.

Having a more coherent set of standards has furthermore provided an opportunity for all teachers to engage in developing aligned curriculum, materials, and resources not only across classrooms and grades within a school, but furthermore across districts and states. I have been fortunate to work with teachers across our nation in developing aligned materials and curriculum, as well as across my city. And I have seen how the standards have provided opportunities at my school to vertically align content and skills across the grades and across subjects within a grade.

As we move forward, let's not lose sight of these opportunities as we review the standards within New York State.