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Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk regarding research on the correlation between common core state standards and state assessment in Georgia. Ask A REL is a collaborative reference desk service provided by the ten regional educational laboratories (REL) that, by design, functions much in the same way as a technical reference library. It provides references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations on research based education questions.

The information below represents the most rigorous research available. Researchers consider the type of methodology and give priority to research reports that employ well described and thorough methods. The resources were also selected based on the date of the publication with a preference for research from the last ten years. Additional criteria for inclusion include the source and funder of the resource.

**Question:** *What is the research base documenting the correlation between Georgia's Criterion Referenced Competencies Test (CRCT), particularly the reading section and the English/Language Arts Common Core State Standards?*

### **Search Process**

**Key words and search strings used in the search:** *alignment AND standards AND assessment; CCSS AND criterion referenced assessment AND reading; Georgia CRCT AND common core standards AND correlation*

### **Search databases and websites:**

- Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com>)
- ERIC (<http://www.eric.ed.gov>)
- JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch>)
- Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Resources: <http://ies.ed.gov>
- What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

### **Results:**

Based on the database searches described above, there were no results specific to Georgia that reflected rigorous research as defined by the U.S. Department of Education-Institute of Education Sciences. Below are some resources to guide your search for information relevant to your question.



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We recommend that you contact the Georgia Department of Education for information specific to Georgia's CRCT and the common core state standards. Below is the link to the CRCT Content Descriptions based on the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

- Georgia Department of Education (CRCT Content Descriptors for ELA)  
[http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/ELA%20Content%20Descriptions%20grades%203-8\\_08\\_2012\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/ELA%20Content%20Descriptions%20grades%203-8_08_2012_FINAL.pdf)

**Sample Citations Retrieved: (NOTE: The following abstracts and executive summaries on alignment are copied directly from the reports when possible to ensure accuracy):**

Beach, Richard W.(2011). Issues in Analyzing Alignment of Language Arts Common Core Standards with State Standards. *Educational Researcher*, 40(4), 179-182.  
doi: 10.3102/0013189X11410055

**Abstract/Summary:** This commentary on Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang's "Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum," which finds a lack of alignment between the Common Core State Standards and state standards and assessments, suggests possible reasons for the lack of alignment. It also offers possible reasons for Porter et al.'s finding of a lack of focus in the standards. It raises questions about the use of a cognitive-processing framework for conducting content analysis of the standards. (Contains 1 note.)

Fulmer, Gavin W. (2011). Estimating Critical Values for Strength of Alignment among Curriculum, Assessments, and Instruction. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*, 36(3), 381-402. doi: 10.3102/1076998610381397

**Abstract/Summary:** School accountability decisions based on standardized tests hinge on the degree of alignment of the test with the state's standards documents. Yet, there exist no established criteria for judging strength of alignment. Previous measures of alignment among tests, standards, and teachers' instruction have yielded mixed results that are difficult to interpret and to compare across studies. This article reports findings from a simulation study to determine critical values for Porter's alignment index, suitable for hypothesis testing at alpha levels of 0.05 and 0.10, as is familiar to many scholars. It then reexamines the results of previous alignment studies and demonstrates how these findings may be compared through the use of these critical values. The tables of critical values will be useful to researchers or policymakers who seek to



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judge strength of alignment of standards, assessments, and instruction. The article also describes directions for future research in establishing objective criteria for the interpretation of alignment indices. (Contains 2 figures, 9 tables, and 1 note.)

Martone, Andrea & Sireci, Stephen G. (2009). Evaluating Alignment between Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(4), 1332-1361.  
doi: 10.3102/0034654309341375

**Abstract/Summary:** The authors (a) discuss the importance of alignment for facilitating proper assessment and instruction, (b) describe the three most common methods for evaluating the alignment between state content standards and assessments, (c) discuss the relative strengths and limitations of these methods, and (d) discuss examples of applications of each method. They conclude that choice of alignment method depends on the specific goals of a state or district and that alignment research is critical for ensuring the standards-assessment-instruction cycle facilitates student learning. Additional potential benefits of alignment research include valuable professional development for teachers and better understanding of the results from standardized assessments. (Contains 8 notes and 1 table.)

Polikoff, Morgan S. (2012). Instructional Alignment under No Child Left Behind. *American Journal of Education*, 118(3) 341-368. doi: 10.1086/664773

**Abstract/Summary:** The alignment of instruction with the content of standards and assessments is the key mediating variable separating the policy of standards-based reform (SBR) from the outcome of improved student achievement. Few studies have investigated SBR's effects on instructional alignment, and most have serious methodological limitations. This research uses content analyses of state standards and assessments and survey data on more than 27,000 teachers' instruction in mathematics, science, and English/language arts (ELA) to investigate changes in instructional alignment between 2003 and 2009. Fixed-effects models indicate that alignment in grades K-12 mathematics increased by approximately 0.19-0.65 standard deviations, depending on the grade and target. Alignment also increased to grades K-12 standards in ELA and grades 3-8 standards in science, though the magnitudes were smaller. Multiple alternative specifications support the findings of increased alignment. Implications for research and SBR policy are discussed. (Contains 6 tables and 1 figure.)

Polikoff, Morgan S. (2012). The Association of State Policy Attributes with Teachers' Instructional Alignment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 34(3), 278-294.



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doi: 10.3102/0162373711431302

**Abstract/Summary:** States vary greatly in their implementation of standards-based accountability under No Child Left Behind, yet little evidence is available to guide policymakers on what attributes of state policy advance more tightly aligned instruction. This study uses survey data and content analyses from the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum to describe elements of state policy that are associated with tighter alignment between teacher-reported instruction and state standards and assessments. The author reports substantial variation on policy attributes across states, with increasing use of power (rewards and sanctions) and low overall consistency between standards and assessments. Several of the policy attributes are related to instructional alignment, with the strongest fit in mathematics. (Contains 4 tables and 2 figures.)

Polikoff, Morgan S.; Fulmer, Gavin W. (2013). Refining Methods for Estimating Critical Values for an Alignment Index. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 6(4) 380-395.  
doi: 10.1080/19345747.2012.755593

**Abstract/Summary:** The alignment among standards, assessments, and teachers' instruction is an essential element of standards-based educational reforms. The Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) is the only common tool that can be used to measure the alignment among all three of these sources (Martone & Sireci, 2009). Prior SEC alignment work has been limited by not allowing for significance tests. A recent article (Fulmer, 2011) provided a first attempt to address this shortcoming of the SEC, but that work was limited in several ways. We extend Fulmer's simulation approach by accounting for important elements of the SEC procedures, including the proper framework size, number of standards and assessment points, number of raters, rater cell-splitting rates, and rater agreement results. The results indicate that inferences about relative alignment may be heavily influenced by features of the alignment procedures. Thus, our method should be broadly applied to future SEC alignment investigations.

Carmichael, Sheila Byrd, Wilson, W. Stephen, Porter-Magee, Kathleen, & Martino, Gabrielle. (2010). The State of State Standards and the Common Core – in 2010. Washington, D.C.: The Fordham Institute. Retrieved from: <http://edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-of-standards-and-the-common-core-in-2010.html>

**Abstract/Summary:** The K-12 academic standards in English language arts (ELA) and math produced in June 2010 by the Common Core State Standards Initiative were clearer and more rigorous than ELA standards in 37 states and math standards in 39 states, according to this



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Fordham Institute study. In 33 of those states, the Common Core bested both ELA and math standards. Yet California, Indiana and the District of Columbia had ELA standards clearly superior to those of the Common Core. And nearly a dozen states had ELA or math standards in the same league as Common Core.

### **Referrals**

#### **Organizations:**

- Thomas B. Fordham Institute, <http://edexcellence.net>
- Achieve, <http://www.achieve.org>

#### **Federally Funded Resources:**

- US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Resources, <http://ies.ed.gov>
- What Works Clearinghouse, <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

### ***Disclaimer:***

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