

she said. And they made it easier to determine the complexity of texts, said Ms. Pimentel, a Washington-based consulting group.

Changes were also made in the discussion of early childhood in the introduction, which now emphasizes the importance of educating the whole child, she said.

Away From Washington

The press event for the release of the final standards took place at a high school outside Atlanta. Attendees carried political messages that the organizers of the common-standards initiative adopted.

Peachtree Ridge High School in Suwanee, Ga., is 600 miles from Washington, a fact aimed at the movement as a federal intrusion into state education decisions. That perception was fueled by the federal government. President Barack Obama backs the idea, and the U.S. Department of Education is financed with economic-stimulus money, favors states that adopt the standards. No representatives from the event, though they have been present at some previous common-standards gatherings.

In addition, key groups that spearheaded the initiative all are based in Washington. Those groups note that the common-standards work is "state-led." They note that it began after numerous state documents have been shaped by the states' review and feedback.

The list of attendees at Wednesday's release event—with its inclusion of state school chiefs, parent and civil rights groups, a corporate executive, an urban superintendent, and top officials—conveyed a message of widespread buy-in, from the grassroots to the upper echelons, even as states debate whether to adopt the standards.

The standards are an example of "people pulling together" regardless of political party and interest," Gov. Jack Markell of Delaware, a Democrat, said via videoconference.

"We governors believe education is the rightful responsibility of our states," Georgia Gov. Son

Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, and Lily Eskelsen, the vice president of the National Education Association, were also on hand to endorse the standards, with Ms. Weingarten calling the AFT an "unabashed supporter."

She pointed out the role that the AFT and teachers had in shaping the standards—and will continue to have. The standards "are extraordinarily important," yet only one piece of the puzzle, Ms. Weingarten said, adding that the real work begins with implementation.

Leah Luke, Wisconsin's 2010 teacher of the year and an 18-year veteran middle- and high school teacher, praised the standards as a potent teaching tool. They are strong because "they model the best classroom practice of the end in mind," she said as the standards-writers smiled and nodded. "There is a logical progression of skills from the endpoint backw

Ms. Luke, who has taught both English and Spanish, said she was also excited that the language standards are not for English teachers alone, but are to be shared with teachers of science, social studies, and ot

Urban superintendents also voiced their support.

Andrés Alonso, the chief executive officer of the Baltimore school system, spoke on behalf of the city and signed a statement of support through the Council of the Great City Schools. The city super

simply about access [to quality], it's not simply about equity, ... it's fundamentally about ex to too many of our students."

Representatives of subject-matter groups also voiced their support.

The four major math societies, including the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, is In an interview, W. Gary Martin, a professor of mathematics education at Auburn University NCTM, called it "notable" that the standards had evolved over the duration of the project to them. In particular, they had been concerned about reasoning and mathematical thinking, k in that area.

Not Good Enough?

Still, acceptance of the standards is not universal.

"They aren't terrific," said R. James Milgram, one of a handful of the nearly 30 members of refused to sign off on the document. "What they are is far better than the vast majority of s professor emeritus of mathematics at Stanford University, said in an interview yesterday. "I international expectations, and they are not quite as good as the best of the state standard Indiana."

Regardless of the content, Jay P. Greene, a professor of education reform at the University any move to adopt a single set of standards for all.

"The initial attraction to the standards movement is that ... people tend to be convinced the and the best way to go, so they start imagining everyone else will agree," Mr. Greene said. the world coordinating their actions to get things adopted. There's nothing evil about it. It's

Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia signed pledges of support to help develop th them to embrace the resulting document. Kentucky, Hawaii, Maryland, and West Virginia hz on earlier drafts. But now that the document is final—and with the Race to the Top requiring face adoption decisions in the next couple of months.

Eric J. Smith, Florida's education commissioner, acknowledges that the legislature and othe confident his state will adopt them. "We're ready to move forward," he said.

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