The Common Core Essential Elements are specific statements of content and skills that:

• link to the Common Core State Standards grade level specific expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

• provide a bridge to the Common Core State Standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities to help them achieve grade differentiated expectations.
Development Process

Members of the Dynamic Learning Maps consortium, educators with content expertise and experience teaching students with significant cognitive disabilities, and a team of expert reviewers, developed the Essential Elements under the guidance of Edvantia, Inc. and Sheinker Educational Services, Inc. The process involved:

- Preparatory webinars and distribution of resource materials
- On-site working meetings with state representatives
- Expert review of on-site work
- Review of draft documents
- Stakeholder review and feedback on draft documents
- Revision of drafts based on stakeholder feedback and additional expert review of drafts

Design Priorities

The Common Core State Standards Essential Elements were developed with specific priorities in the forefront. These included:

- Focusing on student learning
- Creating comparable expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Using performance terms to define what students should know and be able to do
- Ensuring that the final statements are measurable and observable
- Defining essential differences from grade to grade with respect to:
  - cognitive demand
  - content knowledge
  - skills-based expectations
- Identifying the key elements essential for each grade level
- Aligning Essential Elements across and between grades

Description

Essential Elements are embedded in the content area learning maps being developed for the new Dynamic Learning Maps alternate assessment system.

Like the Common Core State Standards, the Essential Elements do NOT define what is taught or how it should be taught and are NOT:

- Replacements for the Common Core State Standards
- Downward extensions
- Statements of functional skills
- Curriculum or learning progressions
- IEP goals or benchmarks

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