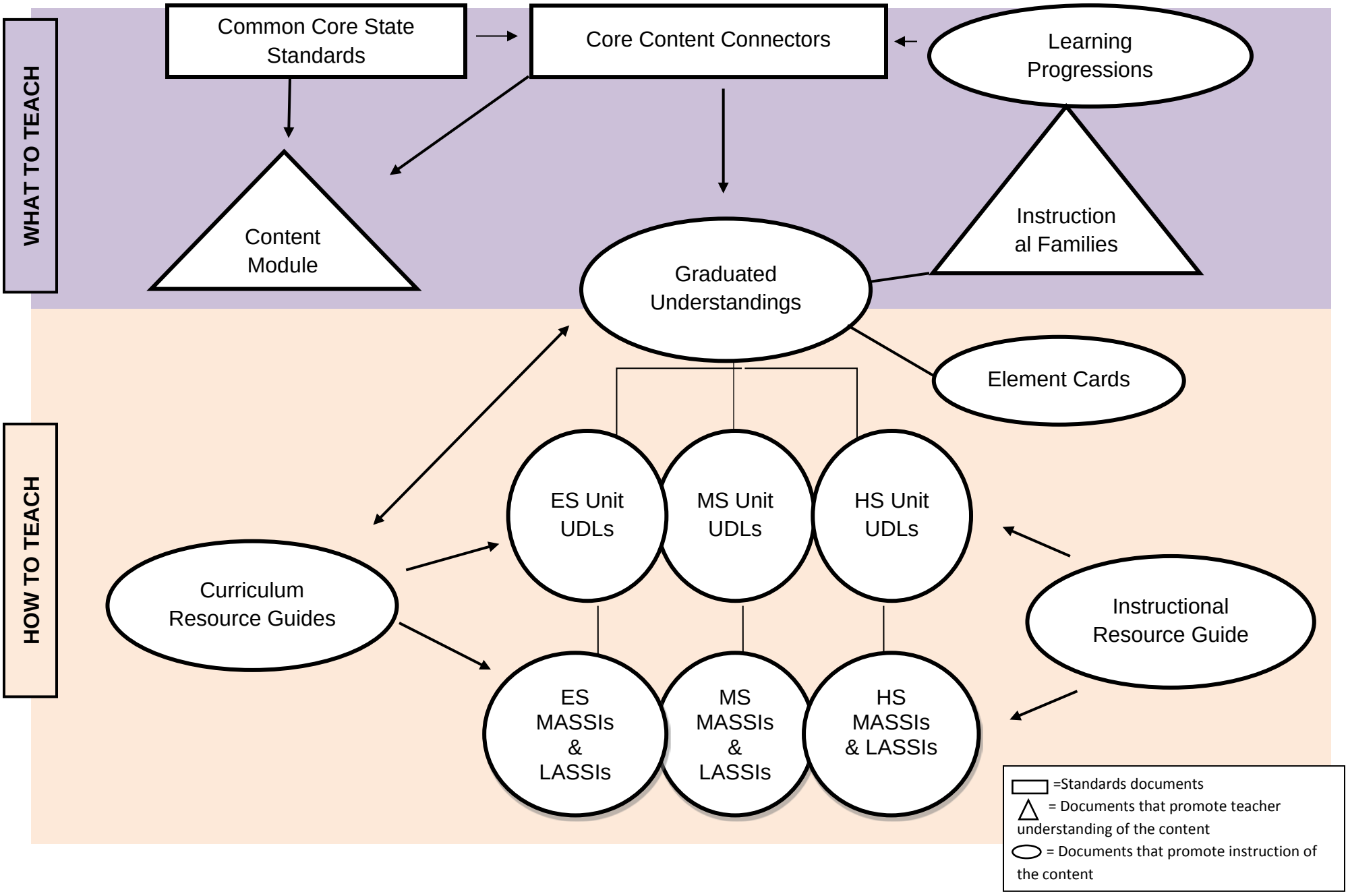
Figure 1. Common Core State Standards Resources Diagram
NCSC Instructional Resources



Explanation of NCSC Instructional Resources Diagram

The NCSC instructional resources provide support for teachers to address the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** when teaching students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These students will participate in alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards. The purpose of these resources is to help teachers plan instruction using the **Core Content Connectors (CCCs)**. The CCCs link to both the CCSS and the NCSC **Learning Progressions Frameworks.**[1] They pinpoint the main grade level content focus of the CCSS. CCCs are the starting points for planning instruction and assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

NCSC is preparing a collection of resources to assist teachers in both understanding the content and planning instruction.

Understanding the Content. The **Content Modules** are an online multimedia resource. The modules provide teachers with a deeper understanding of difficult or complex concepts. This is important for effective planning, teaching, and learning. Sample general education lesson plans and participant assessments are included. Additionally, the modules provide adaptations and modifications to consider when designing materials and instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities. **Graduated Understandings- Instructional Families** group related CCCs into families (e.g., Counting and Representing Numbers). The Instructional Families allow teachers to view the academic expectations (concepts and skills) within and across grades. They also show how these expectations develop over time to promote instruction based on the CCSS.

Teaching the Content. The **Graduated Understandings- Element Cards** provide another key resource to support instruction on the CCSS. Instructional Element cards are written for select CCCs at each grade level. Each Element Card provides a wide range of suggested instructional strategies and supports (e.g., use of a calculator or a raised grid). The Element Cards promote instruction on the CCCs and the broader CCSS for students with a variety of learning needs. The Element Cards also include Essential Understandings. The Essential Understandings define the basic knowledge and skills required to successfully work on the grade-specific academics addressed by the CCCs.

[1] A framework that maps the potential paths of the standards across grade levels. The Learning Progressions identify the next learning step needed to make progress across grades.

NCSC Parent Materials, September 2013. This work was supported by a grant from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (H373X100002, Project Officer: Susan.Weigert@ed.gov). The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and no assumption of endorsement by the Federal government should be made.

The **Curriculum Resource Guides** are a set of resources for understanding the CCCs for grades 3 through high school and how to teach them. These guides offer examples of how the content is taught in general education classrooms. They also provide ideas for teaching across content areas, assessment examples, ideas for real life use and ways to promote college and career readiness. In addition, the guides offer examples of modifications and adaptations for students with specific learning needs (sensory differences, motor differences, limited evidence of experience/skill or motivation/attention and lack of or extremely limited use of speech).

Teachers are expected to design instructional plans at various levels. The first level of planning should be to promote universal design for learning (UDL)[2] for all students. The **UDL Units and Lesson Plans** provide models of universally designed planning for an entire class of students. In addition, the UDL Units and Lesson Plans show how to target the CCCs within general education lessons. They also include class-based performance assessments. Examples are provided for planning multiple ways of engaging students, presenting information, and allowing students to show what they know. In addition, many examples are offered for meeting the unique needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities. Specific suggestions are included for students who are emerging readers and emerging communicators.

Even the best plans for a class may not be sufficient for some students to master certain English Language Arts and mathematical concepts and skills. The **LASSIs** (Language Activities with Scripted Systematic Instruction) and **MASSIs** (Math Activities with Scripted Systematic Instruction) offer intensive instruction. They use evidence-based practices shown to be effective in teaching students with significant cognitive disabilities. LASSIs and MASSIs target CCCs that are a priority for the assessment. They offer a guide for instruction with increasing levels of difficulty, beginning with students who have little to no understanding of the content. The instruction is based on a script, making them easy for teachers to use. Included are data sheets that can be used for monitoring progress towards mastery. Skill tests to give students practice responding in a testing situation are also provided. Teachers have access to an **Instructional Resource Guide** to help them use the LASSIs and MASSIs. The guide provides and explains examples on how to use the evidence-based prompting and instructional strategies. This guide can also be valuable for working with students on lessons other than the LASSIs and MASSIs.

[2] Universal Design for Learning is an educational framework with principles and guidelines that make instruction accessible to the widest range of learners. The principles require that students be provided with multiple ways to get information, multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, and multiple ways to be engaged in learning. For more information see www.udlcenter.org