Common Core State Standards

What Every Parent Needs to Know

Serving as one of the most important U.S. education initiatives in the last 40 years, the Common Core State Standards have the singular power to upgrade the competitiveness of all U.S. students. The goal? To achieve educational excellence through tougher expectations that move student learning to higher levels.

What is an Educational Standard?

Educational standards provide clear, measurable goals to help teachers, administrators and parents ensure our students absorb the critical and relevant knowledge to succeed in today's challenging university and career environments.

What are Common Core State Standards?

The Common Core State Standards initiative establishes a consistent and concise set of English language arts and mathematics standards for students in kindergarten through twelfth grades. To assess proficiency, students at each grade level will take standardized assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards toward the end of each academic year.

Why Adopt a Common Set of Standards in Every State?

Following a more rigorous set of Common Core State Standards throughout America provides two direct benefits: 1) Providing clear and concise expectations for parents, teachers and students 2) Raising student performance in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and mathematics.

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What You Need to Know

Today, leaders in more than 45 states have taken the bold step to adopt Common Core knowing that it is challenging, but also necessary. The new common Standards affect everyone: administrators, students, teachers, parents, university officials and hiring businesses. We all need to know what is happening and why, and how to navigate the changes.

What it Means for Students

There will be a period of transition as the new Standards are implemented, understood and assessed. Depending on your child's school and the curriculum being taught, some students will not have any trouble with the new Standards nor will teachers be forced to "dumb-down" their curriculum if already at a high level. For other students at other schools, the new Standards might prove more challenging. Estimates are that test scores might drop in some states by an average of 33 percent.

What it Means for Parents

The new Standards were designed to ensure that students, teachers and parents understand expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and mathematics. Depending on your local schools and the curriculum, students at various skill levels will experience the Common Core State Standards differently. The work may be harder and the tests more rigorous, but ultimately, higher standards will better prepare young people for college and careers in our globally competitive world.

Why Does Intel Care?

International tests and benchmarks consistently demonstrate that U.S. students score lower and are lagging behind global counterparts. One of the primary gaps has been our less rigorous and inconsistent K-12 standards. For the past 20 years, Intel leaders have been a leading corporate advocate to boost educational outcomes. Tougher standards raise expectations, and today's students need a higher base of academic knowledge and skills to be successful in college and careers. As the change rate and demands of technology's rapid acceleration continue to increase, future engineers and executives will need to be well-versed in critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation.

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A Quick Look

How the Common Core State Standards Came to Be

In 2009, the National Governors Association and the Council of School State Chief Officers brought leading education experts, administrators and parents together to design K-12 standards for mathematics and English language arts (science and social studies standards are still being developed). A number of prominent educational organizations fully endorse the new standards, including the National Parent Teacher Association.

Students at Kentucky K-12 schools became the first in the nation to face these new, tougher Common Core State Standards during the 2011-2012 academic year. Officials in 44 other states have since followed suit—including Arizona, California, New Mexico, Massachusetts, Oregon and Washington— by adopting the same Common Core State Standards.