Common Core State Standards 101

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Common Core State Standards Initiative

- State-led and developed standards for grades K-12 in English language arts and mathematics
- Led by Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center)
Why Standards?

- Disparate standards across states
- Global competition
- Today’s jobs require different skills

For many young people, a high school degree is not preparing them for college or career.
Why is This Important for Students, Teachers, and Parents?

- Prepares students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and work

- Ensures consistent expectations regardless of a student’s zip code

- Provides educators, parents, and students with clear, focused guideposts

- Offers economies of scale
Features of the Standards

- Aligned with college and work expectations
- Focused and coherent
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards
- Based on evidence and research
- Internationally benchmarked
- Should be read to allow the widest possible range of students to participate fully
College- and Career-Ready

Aligned with college and work expectations

❖ Prepare students for success in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses (2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions)

❖ Prepare students for success in careers that offer competitive, livable salaries above the poverty line, opportunities for career advancement, and are in growing or sustainable industries
Intentional design limitations

The standards do NOT define:

- How teachers should teach.
- All that can or should be taught.
- The nature of advanced work beyond the core.
- The interventions needed for students well below grade level.
- The full range of support for English learners and students with special needs.
- Everything needed for students to be college and career ready.
STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) & LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS
"Habits of mind" fostered by the Common Core State Standards

In developing knowledge and skills in English/language arts, learners:

- Demonstrate independence.
- Build strong content knowledge.
- Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- Comprehend as well as critique.
- Value evidence.
- Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- Come to understand other perspectives and cultures.
ELA Key Advances

Reading
- Balance of literature and informational texts
- Text complexity

Writing
- Emphasis on argument and informative/explanatory writing
- Writing about sources

Standards for reading and writing in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects
- Complement rather than replace content standards in those subjects
- Responsibility of teachers in those subjects
3 Major shifts

- Informational Texts
- Text Dependent Questions – Reading and Writing
- Text Complexity and Academic Vocabulary
Standards for Mathematics
"Habits of mind" fostered by the Common Core State Standards

In developing knowledge and skills in mathematics, learners:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.
Focus in early grades on number (arithmetic and operations) to build a solid foundation in math

Evened out pace across the grades

High school math focus on using math and solving complex problems, similar to what would see in the real world

Problem-solving and communication emphasized
3 Major Shifts

- Focus

- Coherence across and within grades

- Fluency, application, and deep understanding
Adoption and Implementation
The process for adoption varied:

- State boards were responsible for standards adoption decisions in the majority of states.
- In few states, the legislature or other stakeholders were involved.
- Process typically included opportunities for public input and a review of the Common Core in relation to current state standards and assessments.
- Opportunity to add 15 percent
Common Core State Standards Initiative

Forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core State Standards.
Implementation focus in 4 general areas:

- Assessments/Accountability
- Human Capital/Educator Capacity
- Curricular and Instructional Materials
- Communications/Outreach
Assessment/Accountability

- Transition Planning (including technology readiness)
- Student Supports
- Review of All Assessments Offered

Key challenge: implementation of the Common Core will undoubtedly result in an initial drop in student proficiency rates as students are assessed to higher standards with more rigorous assessments. However, states will still have to adhere to federal and state accountability requirements.

New assessments are scheduled to come online in the 2014-2015 school year
Assessment Consortia - Smarter Balanced

[Map of the United States showing states participating in the Smarter Balanced assessment consortium, marked in green]
Assessment Consortia - PARCC
Human Capital/Educator Capacity

- Preparation/Pre-service
- Professional Development
- Licensure/Certification

**Key challenge**: develop educator understanding of level of student performance expected in the new standards and pedagogy to teach the standards in an integrated manner.

- Teachers in most states will start teaching to the Common Core State Standards in 2012-2013 or 2013-2014 school year as the rollout is in phases.
Curricular and Instructional Materials

- State v. District Roles
- Support Adoption of High-Quality Materials Collaboration

**Key challenge:** all materials claim to be aligned to the Common Core, but few are. Material review can be expensive and requires significant staff time.

- The standards writers have developed publishers criteria that can be used to identify high quality materials
Communications/Outreach

- Information for Different Audiences
- Support from Outside Groups
- Preparation for “Assessment Cliff”

**Key challenge:** A few teachers remain unaware of CCSS and their main concern is actually having time to teach. The public is very supportive of the CCSS when they know about it, but large numbers are unaware.

**Focus group feedback:**
- The most compelling messages for parents and teachers have to do with more focused classroom learning.
- The initial drop in scores is a big concern that’s only neutralized by the ‘collective momentum’ message.
PTA Parents Guides:

1. Key items that children should be learning in ELA and mathematics in each grade.

2. Activities that parents can do at home to support their child’s learning.

3. Methods (questions and sample topics) for helping parents build stronger relationships with their child’s teacher.

4. Tips for planning for college and career (high school only).
Top Tips for Common Core Implementation

- Necessary to have a **school culture** with expectation that all students should be prepared to go to a two- or four-year college or enter into a good career
- Common Core is viewed as an **essential, but not sole**, component of preparing students for college and career
- **Quality instruction** (the “how”) is married with Common Core implementation (the “what”)
- Choosing a **small number of curriculum units** to implement at a time rather than doing it all at once
- **Collaborative professional learning time** for teachers to do the work
What Differentiates Typical Implementation from Great Implementation

- **Instruction**: Depth of understanding required of students, not just moving topics from one grade to another

- **Supporting struggling learners**: Providing access to grade-level content while closing skill gap (ex. Ohio resources for diverse learners)

- **Instructional materials and curricula**: True alignment to the standards (ex. Tri-State Rubric) and what you take away from what you’re teaching along with what you need to add (ex. Basal Alignment Project)

- **Professional development**: Training on the new standards and time for teachers to collaborate with their peers

*Action Guides for School Leaders (Achieve)*


*Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core (Learning Forward)*

www.corestandards.org

Common Standards

Building on the excellent foundation of standards states have laid, the Common Core State Standards are the first step in providing our young people with a high-quality education. It should be clear to every student, parent, and teacher what the standards of success are in every school.

Mission Statement

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

Read the Common Core State Standards
CCSS Implementation Tools & Resources

- The Official Common Core Website – FAQ, Myths v. Facts, Publishers’ Criteria, the Standards [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)
- National PTA – CCSS Parent Guide [www.pta.org/parentguides](http://www.pta.org/parentguides)
- CCSSO - compilation of promising Common Core resources: [www.ccsso.org/commoncore](http://www.ccsso.org/commoncore)
- Hunt and CCSSO Video Vignettes [http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Digital_Resources/Common_Core_Implementation_Video_Series.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Digital_Resources/Common_Core_Implementation_Video_Series.html)
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