

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### WHY DO WE NEED TO CHANGE?

We need standards to ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. Common standards will help ensure that students are receiving a high quality education consistently, from school to school and state to state. Common standards will provide a greater opportunity to share experiences and best practices within and across states that will improve our ability to best serve the needs of students.

Standards do not tell teachers how to teach, but they do help teachers figure out the knowledge and skills their students should have so that teachers can build the best lessons and environments for their classrooms. Standards also help students and parents by setting clear and realistic goals for success. Standards are a first step – a key building block – in providing our young people with a high-quality education that will prepare them for success in college and work. Of course, standards are not the only thing that is needed for our children's success, but they provide an accessible roadmap for our teachers, parents, and students.

<http://www.corestandards.org>

### WHAT ARE COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND HOW WILL THEY IMPACT MY CHILD?

The Common Core standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each grade in order to graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and careers. These standards are used every day by our teachers to insure that we bring quality instruction with a specific purpose for learning.

The Common Core standards were developed by educators and other experts based on research and lessons learned from top-performing countries. ***The standards describe the skills and knowledge our students need to succeed in a rapidly changing world, including the ability to think creatively, solve real-world problems, make effective arguments, and engage in debates.*** In short, The Common Core standards provide us with a powerful opportunity to develop students' critical thinking skills and push them to become lifelong learners.

The Common Core includes standards for students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve in English language arts and math. The English standards include a focus on literacy in history, science, and technical subjects—emphasizing that teachers in **ALL** subjects are responsible for teaching literacy. As our teachers implement these new standards, students will be asked to do significantly more writing and to read increasingly complex texts, with an emphasis on nonfiction. In math, students will take more time to understand concepts deeply, make connections between topics, and master complex ideas through hands-on learning.

### WHAT DO COMMON CORE STANDARDS LOOK LIKE FOR ENGLISH, LANGUAGE ARTS, HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS FOR GRADES 6-12?

The Common Core standards are divided into five (5) categories: Reading Literature, Reading Informational Texts, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language Skills. Within each of these categories are "Anchor Standards" that include key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and range of reading and level of text complexity.

What this means is that as our teachers prepare their lessons, they have subject matter and activities for your student to learn that directly relate to a specific standard(s).

The goal of each day is to help students figure things out for themselves, problem solve with others, and think critically.

## **WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS SO IMPORTANT?**

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. They help set clear and consistent expectations for students, parents, and teachers; build your child's knowledge and skills; and help set high goals for all students.

Of course, high standards are not the only thing needed for our children's success. But standards provide an important first step - a clear road map of learning for teachers, parents, and students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. Standards help parents and teachers know when students need extra assistance or when they need to be challenged even more. They also will help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.