

Common Core State Standards

Using Common Sense When Discussing Common Core

- There is a misconception that states were required to adopt the standards. They were not. Florida's state and education leaders voluntarily adopted them to ensure all students have access to an excellent education.
- Governors, education chiefs, educators and parents came together to ensure higher expectations and greater alignment across states so that families moving from state to state can expect consistent, high standards across our schools. Students moving into or out of Florida will have a smoother educational transition because learning goals will now be the same across states.
- They're modeled on success. The Common Core standards are aligned to international standards from the highest achieving countries. This means our students will be well prepared to compete both nationally and internationally.
- College and career ready is the name of the game. All students graduating college and career-ready is the goal of the CCSS. These standards are designed to prepare students for success in whatever they choose to do after graduation.
- Real life is really important. What students learn in school should be directly related to what they'll be required to do once they leave. The Common Core places a strong emphasis on reading informational and technical texts to prepare students for the demands of college and the workplace.
- College should not begin with remediation. Too many students entering universities and community colleges require remedial classes in English and Math. The CCSS are designed to make that a problem of the past by fully preparing students for college-level coursework. If the bar isn't raised now, we are perpetuating a workforce pipeline that is undereducated, under skilled and underprepared to compete nationally and internationally.
- Increased access to learning resources. Common standards mean that learning resources and teaching and learning materials can be shared across states.
- 21st century skills for 21st century jobs. These standards will prepare our students for career success in the rapidly changing world of work. Higher standards and rigorous assessments raise the bar and set Florida on a continued path to prosperity.
- Those opposing the state-led Common Core Standards view them as the federal government interfering with local control. They are not. In fact the standards provide teachers and schools with incredible flexibility in their choice of curriculum and learning materials as well in how they engage students to meet the standards and master critical skills and knowledge.

Sources:

Vince Roig, Founding Chairman and Paul Luna, president and CEO of Helios Education Foundation
Lexington School District - <http://ccss.lexington4.net>

The Common Core State Standards

About the Common Core State Standards

- The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), adopted by 46 states and the District of Columbia, are a set of K-12 academic standards in mathematics and English language arts that will ensure that all students have the academic knowledge and skills they need in these core subjects to succeed after high school.
- **The Standards, grounded in what it takes for all students to graduate college- and career-ready, were developed in a state-led process** under the leadership of governors (NGA) and state superintendents (CCSSO) from 48 states who were increasingly concerned about the ability of U.S. students to compete in a global economy. The process included the participation of state departments of education, districts, teachers, community leaders, experts in a wide array of fields, and professional organizations.
- **The Standards are also grounded in evidence**, including the best standards from states and high-performing nations, frameworks developed for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), academic research, assessment data on college- and career-ready performance, and input from educators, business, higher education and the general public.
- **Although states collectively created the CCSS, each state made its own individual decision on adoption.** To date, 46 states and the District of Columbia have voluntarily adopted the CCSS. As a testament to their voluntary nature, some states that participated in their creation have determined, at this time, not to adopt them including Nebraska and Virginia. The adoption of the CCSS was **not** required in order to receive a federal waiver from NCLB; in fact Virginia has not adopted the CCSS and received a waiver.

Local Control and Innovation

- **The Standards specify *what* students should know and be able to do in each grade and by the end of high school to be college- and career-ready. It is still up to states, districts, schools and teachers to determine *how* to get students to that point.** Decisions about curriculum, tools, materials and textbooks are, as they should be, left to local decision-makers who know their students best. Standards are not a curriculum. **School districts will—as they always have-- adopt their own curriculum** just like they did under the old set of state standards.
- **There is no national curriculum and there never will be**, not only because state and local policymakers would not allow it as a matter of policy, but because the CCSS call for the development of a more robust market for instructional tools. Participants in this emerging marketplace include the private sector, states, districts, non-profits etc. that are producing more choices for teachers and schools than ever before.
- **The CCSS are creating a marketplace that will work to the advantage of local decisionmakers.** The CCSS allow participating states and districts to flex their collective muscle and demand curricula and tools that match the high standards. In the past, smaller states and their districts were at a

disadvantage in pushing the market for quality materials. **The clarity, consistency – and commonality – of the CCSS are giving states, districts and schools the market power to demand more and better choices.** The CCSS is a market-based game changer.

Other Benefits of the CCSS:

- **The ability to use common materials currently in development and greater choice in curriculum** including text books, lessons, instructional units, and professional development models and materials. The marketplace is already opening up for states, districts and schools who can now look across state lines to purchase aligned materials.
- **The ability to compare student results across states.** The CCSS will allow states to compare their students with the performance of students in other states. Students need to be prepared to compete with their peers from across the country and the world.
- **The support of business.** The business community is supportive of the internationally benchmarked standards and believes they will ensure that all students develop the skills and knowledge they need for success in college and careers, thus providing the educated workforce American business needs to remain competitive in a competitive global economy.
- **Cost reduction in higher education.** Adopting the CCSS can ultimately have cost savings by reducing the need for higher education remediation (more prepared students, less time repeating courses).
- **Reduced spending on professional development for teachers new to the state.** Education schools across the nation can now prepare teachers based on the CCSS, which should reduce costs for in-service professional development in the future.
- **Reduced costs on standards creation and review.** The CCSS allows states to supplement the standards. Maybe it is cursive writing, or certain math concepts or adding particular reading materials. Customizing the standards by adding to them to meet state needs while keeping in place the CCSS would allow states to be nationally and internationally competitive—and save us time and money on recreating the basics.
- **Ease of student mobility.** Families move from state-to-state and need to know students won't be behind when they relocate because of job and/or family needs - and this includes **military families** who often move not by choice but because they are serving our country. The Department of Defense Education Activity schools have adopted the common core for this very reason.