



Frequently Asked Questions Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI)

Q: Is this a federal takeover of education?

A: No this is a state-led process by governors and chief state school officers.

Q: Our state has no money for new initiatives, how can we afford to adopt common core standards?

A: Common core standards will save your state money, because you will be able to share the cost of things that your state in the past had to do on its own, such as design professional development for your teachers and curriculum aligned to your state's standards.

Q: Our state has high standards. Will adopting the common core standards mean we will have to lower our standards to meet in the middle with lower standards of other states?

A: No, the common core standards have been created in collaboration with the states with highest standards to assure that no state would have to lower its current standards to adopt the common core.

Q: If standards are raised, is it more likely that students will drop out of school?

A: This is a common concern heard from parents and educators alike, however data does not support the notion that raising standards leads to an increase in the dropout rate. In fact, data shows the opposite: when more is expected of students they often rise to the challenge,

Q: Is the adoption of common core standards in English language arts and mathematics going to limit student access to other subject areas, such as the arts or Career and Technical Education?

A: No. States are aware of the importance of other subjects to students' college and career success and do not intend for the common core standards to narrow the curriculum. Rather, because there will be clearer standards under the common core, teachers will likely be able to create deep, multi-disciplinary projects and lessons that help their students reach the standards.

Q: Does the CCSSI penalize students in low-performing schools by creating unrealistically high expectations?

A: No. The goal of CCSSI is to ensure high expectations and an excellent education for all students, regardless of where they live. Too often, students in low performing schools are held to lower expectations than their peers in higher performing districts that do not prepare them for college and work. The CCSSI will improve conditions for students in low-performing schools by preparing students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and career and compete with not only their American peers in the next state, but with students from around the world.



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Q: Does National PTA have a position statement or resolution that supports the CCSSI?

A: Yes. National PTA has adopted position statements as early as 1981 in support of voluntary, clearer, higher academic standards for all students.

Q: How will CCSSI be integrated with the American Diploma Project (ADP), especially for ADP states?

A: Achieve launched the ADP in 2001 in partnership with the Education Trust and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, with the goal of ensuring that all students graduate from high school prepared for college and career. Currently, there are 35 states in the ADP network that are working to align state standards, assessments, curriculum and accountability systems with college and work expectations. Achieve has been an integral partner in the development of the CCSSI. In Achieve's analysis of the draft common core college and career standards, Achieve found a strong degree of alignment between the CCSSI and the ADP Benchmarks. For the states who have already raised their English language arts and/or mathematics standards to a college and career-ready level will likely find that the common standards builds on that effort and major changes may not be needed to adopt the **CCSSI**.

The Common Core Standards in mathematics are well aligned with the ADP Benchmarks in mathematics across all the traditional mathematical strands: Number, geometry, Algebra, data analysis and probability. While there are small differences in terms of the content, they are not significant — and both documents share the same focus on rigorous mathematical content throughout.

The Common Core Standards for Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening are also well aligned with the ADP Benchmarks in English Language Arts. While there are some topics included in the ADP benchmarks that are not addressed in the Common Core Standards, for the most part they are at a different level of detail. Both sets of standards put an emphasis on students' comprehension of complex texts, research and communications.