



COMMON CORE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN PA



What are Common Core standards?

Currently, each state has its own academic standards – meaning that students across the country are learning at different levels. While Pennsylvania’s academic standards are among the nation’s strongest, Common Core standards in English-language arts (ELA) and math will raise academic expectations nationwide, improve equity, and ensure that all students are prepared for college and career in core subjects.

This initiative is being led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA) with the participation of the overwhelming majority of states. The main goals for this consortium are to create standards that are “research and evidence-based, aligned with college and work expectations, include rigorous content and skills and are internationally benchmarked”.¹

The Common Core will result in grade-level standards in ELA and mathematics, tied to college and career ready targets. It is expected that draft standards will be released in March 2010, with a public comment and review preceding the final release.

What process will Pennsylvania use for adoption of the Common Core standards?

Along with the other 48 states, 2 territories and D.C., Pennsylvania has agreed that the Common Core will represent at least 85 percent of academic standards in reading and math.

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education plans to adopt Common Core academic standards in ELA and math conditioned on two assumptions: (1) the State Board will be provided ample opportunity to conduct a thorough and public vetting of the Common Core that will support successful implementation; and (2) the Common Core will be no less rigorous than the revised state-level standards the State Board was in the process of adopting. The adoption process will begin this spring with a thorough, independent study that compares Common Core with the state’s existing standards framework in reading and math. The results of this study will be presented at a public meeting of the Board and posted on its website.

Following completion of the alignment study, the Board’s Academic Standards Committee will hold a series of public roundtables across the Commonwealth to gather feedback on the Common Core and suggestions for successful implementation should the Board adopt the Common Core. In addition, the Board will invite written comment from education stakeholders,

¹ See www.corestandards.org



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policymakers and the public. Any action on adoption would likely occur during the summer or fall of 2010, and be preceded by two weeks of written public notice.

Where can I go for additional information?

The Pennsylvania Department of Education will continue to provide updates on its website. In addition, the Common Core website – www.corestandards.org – maintained by CCSSO and NGA provides information regarding the standards review and validation process, work and feedback group members, as well as drafts of the standards, summaries and presentations.

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