APSRC
Arkansas Public School Resource Center

A Guide to the Common Core Standards

Adoption and Implementation

- *Arkansas's State Board of Education adopted the Common Core Standards (CCSS) on July 12, 2010.*
- States must adopt 100% of the CCSS, but may adopt additional standards ("up to" 15%)
    - States are responsible *for setting the criteria and assessing* the additions.
- Implementation will be phased in over several school years; assessment will follow in 2014-15 school year.

What does "adding to the standards" mean?

It is up to states to define:

- Is there key content that is present in existing state standards that does not exist in the Common Core?
    - Is the missing content required by state laws/regulations to include in the standards? Are there other compelling reasons to add content?
- What are the implications of adding content?
    - How will this affect assessment?
    - How much will this affect commonality with other states?
    - Does it dilute the standards?
    - Impact on the classroom?

What are other states doing to adopt and implement the CCSS?

- Adopting "as-is"
- Considering required content for their states
- Considering adding narrative to frame documents for the state, not adding content

What can Arkansas educators do to transition to the CCSS?

- Understand the background and purpose of the CCSS and explore the design and organization of the CCSS documents for English language arts and mathematics.
- Study the key advances of the CCSS and ramp up students' study of informational texts across disciplines, development of academic language in the content areas, and understanding of mathematical practices or habits of mind.
- Just as soon as the Arkansas Department of Education rolls out a transition plan, begin the work of alignment to the CCSS according to the implementation timeline. Many districts are starting the alignment process *now*.
- Include content from the CCSS in all future professional development.

Background of the Common Core Standards

Beginning in the spring of 2009, Governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia committed to developing a **common core of state K-12 English-language arts** (ELA) and **mathematics** standards.

- States agreed to participate in the development process, provide input on drafts, and consider eventual adoption.

The **Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI)** is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) with assistance from Achieve, ACT, and the College Board (SAT).

Current and Future Focus for Common State Standards

Current (led by CCSSO and NGA):

- K-12 English Language Arts Common Core State Standards
- K-12 Mathematics Common Core State Standards

Future (currently led by various national associations):

- Next Generation Science Standards (draft by Fall 2011)
  (Framework currently under development)
- English Language Development Standards for ELLs (within 1 year)
- Social Studies (within 2 years)
- Arts (development may begin in January 2011)

Why Common Core State Standards?

- **Preparation:** The standards articulate college- and career-readiness. They will help ensure students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in post-secondary education and training.
- **Competition:** The standards are internationally benchmarked. Common standards will help ensure our students are globally competitive.
- **Clarity:** The standards are focused, coherent, and clear. Clearer standards help students (and parents and teachers) understand what is expected of them.
- **Equity:** Expectations are consistent for all – and not dependent on a student's state of residence. States have time to consider what state-specific additions to the standards might look like
- **Collaboration:** The standards create a foundation to work collaboratively across states and districts, pooling resources and expertise, to create curricular tools including textbooks, professional development, common assessments and other materials.
- **Opportunities for ALIGNED and CONNECTED SYSTEMS:** "Common standards" is a **common thread** among current and evolving national initiatives and opportunities

Design of the Common Core State Standards

Building on the strength of current standards across many states, the CCSS are designed to be:

- Focused, coherent, clear, and rigorous
- Internationally benchmarked
- Anchored in college and career readiness
- Evidence and research based

Intentional Design Limitations of the Common Core Standards

- 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 language learners and students with special needs
- Everything needed to be college and career ready

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts

- **College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards**
  - Overarching standards for each strand that are further defined by grade-specific standards
- **Grade-Level Standards in English Language Arts**
  - K-8, grade-by-grade
  - 9-10 and 11-12 grade bands for high school
  - Four strands: *Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening,* and *Language*
- **Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects**
  - Standards are embedded at grades K-5
  - Content-specific literacy standards are provided for grades 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12
- **Media and Technology are integrated throughout the standards.**

Design and Organization of the Common Standards for English Language Arts

Three main sections

- K–5 (cross-disciplinary)
- 6–12 English Language Arts
- 6–12 Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (Shared responsibility for students' literacy development)

Three appendices

- **Appendix A:** Research and evidence; glossary of key terms, overview of each strand
- **Appendix B:** Reading text exemplars; sample performance tasks
- **Appendix C:** Annotated student writing samples

Key Advances in English Language Arts

Reading

- Balance of literature and informational texts
- Text complexity

Writing

- Emphasis on writing argumentative, informative/explanatory, and narrative texts
- Emphasis on research

Speaking and Listening

- Inclusion of formal and informal talk

Language

- Value of general academic and domain-specific vocabulary
- Emphasis on the conventions of English and the effective use of language

Common Core Standards for Mathematics

Grade-Level Standards

- K-8 grade-by-grade standards organized by domain
- 9-12 high school standards organized by conceptual categories (Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Modeling, Geometry, Statistics and Probability)
- Course progressions included in Appendices

Some standards go beyond "career and college readiness level" (e.g., STEM concepts, denoted by "+"). These standards are integrated throughout and go beyond what all students will need to know and at high school may lead to a 4th year of math

Standards for Mathematical Practice describe mathematical "habits of mind"

- Standards for mathematical proficiency: reasoning, problem solving, modeling, decision making, and engagement
- Carry across grade levels and connect with content standards in each grade

Design and Organization of Common Core Standards for Mathematics

Grade Level Example—Kindergarten Overview

Counting and Cardinality

- Know number names and the count sequence.
- Count to tell the number of objects.
- Compare numbers.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

- Work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value.

Mathematics Practices
(Habits of Mind)

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structures.
8. Look for and express regularity in

Key Advances in the Common Core for Mathematics

Focus and coherence

- Focus on key topics at each grade level.
- Coherent progressions across grade levels.

Balance of concepts and skills

- Content standards require both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency.

Mathematical practices

- Foster reasoning and sense-making in mathematics.

College and career readiness

- Level is ambitious but achievable.

Resources

- **CCSSO/NGA Common Core Standards Initiative Web Site:**
  www.corestandards.org/
  www.corestandards.org/Standards/index.htm
- **Achieve resources:**
  http://www.achieve.org/achievingcommoncore_implementation

For more information

Contact the Dr. Ellen Treadway, coordinator of the Teaching and Learning Team at the Arkansas Public School Resource Center for CCSS training opportunities and curriculum development workshops: (501) 492-4300.