

The Common Core State Standards and Parents and Guardians

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college.

Despite the state’s budget problems, California must move forward now so that all children – no matter where they come from or where they live – receive a world-class education that’s consistent from school to school, and graduate ready to contribute to the future of our state and our country.

California is putting these standards to work, using them as the foundation for remodeling our education system. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace outdated ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.

Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy, and the costs must be managed over time. These standards provide every part of our education system the same sheet music – with the clear goals of career and college readiness for all. And we all have a part to play.

Preparing Students for Career and College

Goal – all students graduating from our public school system as life- long learners will have the skills and knowledge necessary to assume their positions in the 21st century global economy.

- The new standards are designed to be relevant in the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills students need for success in both higher education and career.
- Our communities will be stronger if students graduate with the skills and knowledge needed in today’s job market.

Will There Be New Tests for the New Standards?

Yes, California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The consortium is developing new tests that will measure student progress toward career and college readiness. You may learn more about the new tests and California’s participation in the SBAC at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>.

California’s CCSS Implementation Plan

The *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California* is a living document approved by the State Board of Education in March 2012. The plan, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>, identifies the major phases and activities involved in implementing the CCSS and serves as the blueprint for remodeling the education system to support student success in career and college.

Transitioning to the CCSS: What Parents and Guardians Can Do Now

Parents and guardians are crucial partners in laying the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards. Parents and guardians can:

- Learn about the CCSS and the district's transition plan.
- Talk to the principal about the school's plans for the transition to learn what will be different about these new standards and what will remain the same for children.
- Attend a board and/or community meeting to discuss district goals and timelines.
- Meet with your child's teacher to discuss what your child will be learning over the coming year and how classroom instruction will shift to align to the CCSS.
- Play an active role in your child's education at home. If you notice your child is struggling in a certain area, consult with his or her teacher to identify strategies and resources that might be helpful.
- Educate other parents about the transition to the CCSS.
- Explore opportunities to become actively involved in the Common Core transition through your state and local Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

Resources for Parents and Guardians

The following Web resources provide the most current information from the California Department of Education (CDE) Web Site and are continuously updated. The first reference is the main CDE CCSS Web Page which includes the *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California*, the Significant Milestones Timeline, and a "Learn More" section that provides additional links to audience specific information.

California Department of Education CCSS Web Page: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/> (select "Students/Parents" tab)

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Information:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

K-8 California's Common Core Standards Parent Handbook:

http://www.ccsesa.org/sysadmin/documents/CCSParentHandbook_020411.doc

This handbook, created by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) in consultation with the California State PTA, gives parents an introduction to California's CCSS and a summary of what students are expected to learn as they advance from kindergarten through grade eight.