

Common Core Academic Standards and Implementation

On July 1, 2010, the Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, making Pennsylvania the 18th state to do so. The Board's unanimous vote follows six months of careful study that produced evidence of strong alignment between Common Core and Pennsylvania standards.

Under the Board's regulation, the transition to Common Core will begin during the 2010-11 school year, with full implementation by July 1, 2013. This timeline is consistent with planning by other states that have adopted Common Core and will help ensure clear, consistent expectations for students and educators throughout the implementation. To inform this process, the Board will hold a series of statewide roundtables this summer to gather feedback from education stakeholders, and the Department will convene content experts to develop guidance and professional development around the newly-adopted standards.

Frequently asked questions concerning implementation are below:

Q: What are PDE's plans for updating the Standards Aligned System, Assessment Anchors and Keystone Exams to reflect the Common Core standards in ELA and math?

A: Given the strong degree of alignment between PA and Common Core (CC) standards, adjustments should be minimal; the following first steps will ensure successful integration of Common Core:

- Cross walk the PA Standards to the K-12 CC standards to verify the degree of alignment
- Evaluate the SAS Curriculum Framework to gauge its correlation to Common Core
- Align Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content to CC
- Review Keystone Exam blueprints to determine linkages to CC

PA educators and content experts will be involved in every phase of this work.

Q: What are PDE's plans regarding the timeline for integrating CC Standards with the PA framework?

A: PDE is already planning for the integration, with clear annual goals:

YEAR	PDE RESPONSIBILITY	DISTRICT
2010-2011	<p>CC transition teams complete alignment study and develop PA CC framework</p> <p>Continued development of Keystone Exams based on eligible content aligned to the CC</p> <p>Professional development offered for districts to begin transition plans</p>	<p>Curriculum and instruction based on the current PA Academic Standards</p> <p>PSSA based on current eligible content aligned to PA Standards (through 2013 administration)</p> <p>Attendance at PDE/IU staff development sessions to begin transition planning</p>
2011-2012	<p>Ongoing professional development to assist districts in creating transition plans and aligning curriculum and instruction to PA CC standards; Standards Aligned System (SAS) is fully aligned to PA CC Standards</p>	<p>Curriculum and instruction based on the current PA Academic Standards</p> <p>Create instructional redesign cycle and begin modification of district-approved curricula in ELA and Mathematics using CC Standards alignment documentation provided by PDE</p>
2012 - 2013	<p>Ongoing professional development to support full implementation in PA schools</p>	<p>Continue with curriculum rewrites, with July 1, 2013 target date for full implementation of PA CC</p>

Q: How will PDE deliver professional development to guide educators in understanding and using the CC standards?

A: A December 2010 institute will help introduce the CC standards and their relationship to the PA Assessment Anchors, PSSA, Keystone Exams, etc. Subsequent to the institute, professional development sessions will be scheduled across the Commonwealth. IU personnel will be trained to assist school districts and teacher prep programs in understanding and using the new standard model.

The SAS portal will continue to function as a resource for understanding and using the CC standards. The following will occur to support the transition:

- Update the standards database to reflect CC for all subjects, courses, and grade levels in English language arts and math;
- Align all existing content to the CC standards;
- Update search criteria within the current SAS search engines to filter by CC subjects, courses, and grade levels; and
- Create CC display strategies for all current SAS pages and components