

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS



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Arkansas is one of 44 states that adopted the Common Core State Standards. We don't want to be left out when almost all states move forward with these higher standards for educating our children. We want every Arkansas child to be educated well so he or she can compete for the best jobs with a child from Colorado, or Georgia, or Florida, or Massachusetts or any state.

This is not a federal mandate or curriculum. In fact, these are state standards which means each state could choose whether or not to adopt them. Arkansas's own experts helped write them.

Why change?

The world is changing and our education system hasn't kept pace. Too many Arkansas high school graduates – nearly half (43.2 percent) according to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education – must take remedial classes to enroll in college courses. Common Core creates a level playing field for all students regardless of income level, ethnicity or zip code.



Common Core isn't going to take away local control. A lot of people are worried that because the standards are common that everything else (teaching, curriculums, materials etc.) will be common, too. Actually, the standards aren't a curriculum which means that states and local districts still get to decide how they'll meet the standards.

How are these standards different from current state standards?

- The primary goal of Common Core is to teach critical thinking and problem solving. Students will become active learners – rather than passive – in a dynamic classroom environment.
- Students will become independent thinkers who can create informed opinions, critique the opinions of their peers and their world, defend their arguments with evidence, and communicate their points of view effectively.
- On tests, students will be required to reason out the best answer, rather than memorizing the “correct” answer.





evaluate and use this information. They must become thinkers as much as learners. Common Core will equip our children with the skills they need to handle these future challenges.



You will see some change and that's a good thing! It's true that Common Core should cause some changes in what school looks and feels like. Children will be doing more than finding answers and completing tasks. Instead, you'll hear them reasoning, you'll see them working through more complex problems, and you'll enjoy watching them read both fiction and non-fiction.

These activities will help them be successful in the real world regardless of the level of education they complete. Knowing how to figure things out is a great skill even for kids not planning to go to college.

Why now?

With today's technology, the entire world's information is at our children's fingertips. But to be successful in school and careers, our children must learn how to

Acknowledgement: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/common-core-state-standards-introduction-families-other-stakeholders>

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