



DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**



# Oregon Common Core State Standards Fact Sheet

Oregon Department of Education



## What is a standard?

Standards-based education is the process of teaching, learning, and assessment that focuses on national, state, and local educational standards. Academic content standards are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do at specified grade levels.

Content standards serve several important functions and roles:

- Content standards focus on essential concepts, knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary for students to succeed in the 21st century. As such, they are designed to increase achievement.
- Because content standards clearly address what all students should learn and each school's responsibility in that effort, standards can be used as a means of preventing school failure and reducing the number of students dropping out of school.
- Content standards serve as beginning points for teachers when they make decisions about what to teach.

## Does Oregon have standards?

Content standards were first introduced in Oregon at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 in 1991 through the Educational Act for the 21st Century.

With the passage of No Child Left Behind in 2001, Oregon moved to grade level content standards in English language arts and mathematics.

In 2007 Oregon began to transition to a core standards structure designed to create fewer standards that are more focused and coherent.

This continual commitment to standards revision effectively positioned Oregon for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in October 2010.

## What are the Common Core State Standards?

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts and mathematics are content standards shared among participating states. They are designed to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy and mathematics no later than the end of high school. Developed as part of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a voluntary state-led effort, this common set of standards describes what students in our nation should know and be able to do.

Parents, teachers, school administrators, and experts from across the country, together with state leaders through their membership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), led the effort to develop the standards.

The Common Core State Standards were released by CCSSO and the NGA Center on June 2, 2010. These content standards are

- Aligned with expectations for college and career success;
- Built upon strengths and lessons of current state content standards and standards of top performing nations;
- Informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Evidence- and research-based.

For more information on the Common Core State Standards, please visit <http://www.corestandards.org>.

## What was Oregon's role in the initiative?

Oregon has been engaged in CCSS work since the initiative's inception in spring 2009. A total of 48 states including Oregon signed a memorandum of understanding to participate in the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

Oregon Department of Education staff reviewed each draft of the standards and provided feedback throughout the development process. Oregon educators and interested stakeholders reviewed the draft standards regionally and in an online survey. On October 28, 2010, the State Board of Education adopted the two sets of standards:

- The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
- The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

In a recent communication with Oregon educators, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo wrote, "By joining other states in the Common Core movement, we better position our students to compete nationally and internationally with their peers for jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace."

## What this means for Oregon

These two new sets of content standards **replace** Oregon’s current standards in English language arts and mathematics. While the new standards are similar to Oregon’s current standards, some content has been shifted to ensure college and career readiness at the end of high school. Oregon’s CCSS Stewardship Team will provide guidance to districts about instruction and assessment considerations during the transition period. Resources for transitioning to and implementing the CCSS will be posted on ODE’s CCSS website at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/go/commoncore> . Districts will continue to prepare for OAKS assessment through school year 2013-2014. The CCSS will be fully implemented and assessed through a common assessment in school year 2014-2015.

## Key Design Features of the Common Core State Standards

### English Language Arts

The CCSS for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects represent a broader view of literacy than the English language arts standards adopted in 2003. In the CCSS, literacy is a shared responsibility within the school, across all subjects.

- The K–5 standards include expectations that students need to apply reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills in a range of subjects, including but not limited to English language arts.
- The 6–12 standards include two sections, one for English language arts and the other for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. English teachers develop students’ literacy skills; all other teachers contribute.

The CCSS were designed with the end goal in mind—all students college and career ready. The College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards were written first and describe expectations for end of high school. The CCSS were back-mapped from the CCR level down to kindergarten to ensure that students would be on track early to meet rigorous end of high school literacy goals. Conversely, Oregon’s English language arts standards were designed starting at the kindergarten level.

The CCSS includes standards written at grade levels 9/10 and 11/12. Oregon’s current standards are designated as “high school” and are not broken out by grade level. The 11/12 standards will facilitate course alignment, awarding of proficiency-based credit, and preparing all students to be college and career ready by the end of grade 12.

### Mathematics

For over a decade, international achievement comparisons, such as TIMSS and PISA, have shown the United States to have mediocre achievement in mathematics. Research also indicates that high performing countries organize the mathematics content around fewer concepts. As with Oregon’s mathematics standards adopted in 2009, the CCSS were modeled after international standards, which allows for a shift away from the “mile-wide, inch-deep” curriculum and prepares students with the skills they need to be competitive in the global marketplace.

- The K–5 content standards are organized by grade level and have number and operations as their primary emphasis; preparing young students to successfully apply more demanding math concepts and procedures, and move into applications.
- The 6- 8 content standards are organized by grade level, but are designed more like high school standards with a primary emphasis on Algebra, Geometry and Statistics.
- The high school content standards are organized by Conceptual Categories rather than grade level, with the goal of preparing all students for advanced mathematics.

To assist educators with the transition, a Mathematics Crosswalk document has been created. This document identifies matches between individual Common Core standards and Oregon standards and includes rater comments that highlight the similarities and differences between the content standards. This information is indexed by Oregon and Common Core standards so that educators can begin cross-referencing materials and activities to the CCSSM.

## Frequently asked questions about the Common Core

### **Q: What are some ways Oregon will benefit from common educational content standards?**

A: The CCSS will

- Help prepare students in Oregon and in the nation with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and careers
- Allow states to align curricula to internationally benchmarked standards
- Allow for more focused pre-service education and professional development
- Create potential economies of scale for curriculum, instructional resources, and assessment
- Help students who move between states
- Help evaluate policies that affect student achievement across states
- Help prepare students in Oregon and in the nation to compete for good jobs in a knowledge-based economy.

### **Q: Will the new Common Core State Standards replace Oregon's existing academic content standards for mathematics and English language arts?**

A: Yes. These two new sets of standards will **replace** Oregon's current standards in English language arts and mathematics. While the new standards are similar to Oregon's current standards, some content has been shifted to ensure college and career readiness at the end of high school.

### **Q: What is ODE doing to help schools transition to the Common Core Standards?**

A: ODE has

- Convened a CCSS Stewardship Team composed of educators, administrators, and education stakeholders to develop a comprehensive implementation timeline, plan, and identify resources for instruction and assessment.
- Helped to establish the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium that will build a CCSS common assessment for the partner states to be implemented in school year 2014-2015.
- Provided mathematics teachers with an annotated crosswalk table (<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3211>) that compares the CCSS to the current Oregon mathematics standards, illustrating what content has moved to different grade levels.
- Provided English language arts *and* subject-area teachers with the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework (<http://www.ode.state.or.us/go/literacyframework>) that supports implementation of the CCSS in English language arts and all other subjects. A number of states are using Oregon's Framework for this purpose.
- Completed two new sections of the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework: a Writing section comparable to Reading and an extensive Reading professional development portal for coaches and teachers.
- Provided Strand 4 Oregon DATA Project training featuring implementation of the Reading and Writing CCSS and Essential Skills using the Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework.
- Collaborated with other states to provide educators with a variety of tools and resources, including shared curriculum. Collaboration is ongoing.

### **Q: How will the economies of scale benefit Oregon in implementing the CCSS?**

A: The economies of scale that the CCSS will bring will save our state money in these ways:

- Oregon will no longer need to revise and update English language arts and mathematics standards on its own.
- Instructional resources designed to support the CCSS can be *shared* among the states.
- Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium partner states will *share* the costs of developing and implementing a common assessment.
- Assessment resources including formative assessments will be *shared* among the Smarter Balanced consortium.
- It is anticipated that textbooks and curriculum materials may be *shared* through open source environments.
- A **Joint Taskforce on Mathematics** that includes members from all major mathematics education organizations plans to provide a CCSS implementation website to *share* tools and resources for teachers.

- A **Common Core Curriculum Mapping Project** funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has designed and *shared* CCSS English language arts curriculum maps for districts.

**Q: What is the CCSS common assessment?**

A: States adopting the CCSS will implement a student assessment system aligned with the CCSS for mathematics and English language arts beginning in the 2014-15 school year.

- Along with 30 other states, Oregon is a member of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>) which has formed to create an historic assessment system.
- The common assessment is a natural continuation of the work already underway in Oregon and builds on our current assessment system and the work of the Oregon DATA Project.
- By partnering with other states, Oregon will be able to leverage resources, share expertise, and produce a system that will meet the needs and expectations of Oregon students and teachers.
- Until the common assessment is designed, piloted, and implemented, however, ODE will continue using the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) to assess students in math, reading, and writing. Oregon will continue to assess science and social science using OAKS until CCSS are developed for those content areas.

**Q: What will be included in the new assessment?**

A: The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is developing an assessment with three major components: (1) a summative assessment; (2) an interim assessment; and (3) formative assessments and tools.

Summative Assessments:

- Include computer adaptive selected response (multiple choice), constructed response, and performance tasks;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks;
- Will be administered in the last 12 weeks of the year in grades 3–8 and high school for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Students will have two opportunities during this testing window.

Interim Assessments:

- Optional computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed to provide actionable information about student progress;
- Based on publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in learning progressions across grades and how college and career-readiness emerge over time.

Formative Tools and Processes:

- Provides resources to inform teachers about student progress toward achieving the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to monitor a student’s learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

**Oregon Department of  
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[www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us)

**Oregon Common Core**  
[www.ode.state.or.us/go/common  
core](http://www.ode.state.or.us/go/common_core)

**Smarter Balanced  
Assessment Consortium**  
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