

Common Core Standards Process FAQ

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1. What makes this process different from other efforts to create common standards?

This process is different because it is state-led, and has the support of educators across the country as well as prominent education, business, and state leaders' organizations, including CCSSO, the NGA Center, Achieve, Inc, ACT, the College Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Hunt Institute, the National Parent Teacher Association, the State Higher Education Executive Officers, the American Association of School Administrators, and the Business Roundtable.

2. Are these national standards?

The federal government was NOT involved in the development of the standards. This has been a state-led and driven initiative from the beginning. States will voluntarily adopt the standards based on the timelines and context in their state.

3. Who or what entity determined the Common Core State Standards?

CCSSO and the NGA Center have been leading the standards' development process in consultation with teachers, parents, experts and administrators. To ensure that this process was open, inclusive, and rigorous, several working groups and committees were formed. They included the:

- Standards Development Work Group - responsible for determining and writing the standards.
- Feedback Group - provided information backed by research to inform the standards development process by offering expert input on draft documents.
- Validation Committee – nominated by states and national organizations and selected by a group of 12 governors and chiefs who hold leadership positions at NGA Center and CCSSO. These independent, national education experts reviewed the standards to ensure they meet the development criteria.

Members of the work and feedback groups are listed at www.corestandards.org. The approval process for the standards also included public comment periods during which anyone who was interested in the standards could submit their comments for review.

4. By what criteria were the standards developed?

The standards were developed by the following criteria:

- Aligned with expectations for college and career success;
- Clear, so that educators and parents know what they need to do to help students learn;
- Consistent across all states, so that students are not taught to a lower standard just because of where they live;
- Inclusive of both content and the application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Built upon strengths and lessons of current state standards and standards of top-performing nations;
- Realistic, for effective use in the classroom;
- Informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society;
- Evidence and research-based.

Criteria have been set by states, through the national organizations CCSSO and the NGA Center.

5. What grade levels are included in the Common Core State Standards?

The English-language arts and math standards are for grades K-12. Research from the early childhood and higher education communities have also informed the development of the standards.

6. What does this work mean for students with disabilities and English language learners?

Common standards will provide a greater opportunity for states to share experiences and best practices within and across states that can lead to an improved ability to best serve young people with disabilities and English language learners. Additionally, the K-12 English-language arts and mathematics standards include information on application of the standards for English language learners and students with disabilities.

7. Why are the Common Core State Standards for just English language arts and math?

English-language arts and math were the first subjects chosen for the Common Core State Standards because they teach skills upon which students build skill sets in other subject areas. They are also the subjects most frequently assessed for accountability purposes.

8. Do these standards incorporate both content and skills?

Yes. Both content and skills are important and have been incorporated in the Common Core State Standards. One of the criteria by which the standards have been evaluated is whether or not they include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order thinking skills.