

Questions	Answers
<p><b>1. What are education standards?</b></p>	<p>Education standards set common understanding about what students should know and be able to demonstrate by providing clear goals for measuring student learning.</p>
<p><b>2. Why do we need educational standards?</b></p>	<p>We need standards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build a common understanding – a roadmap – about what students should know and be able to do to prepare them for college and careers.</li> <li>• know what to measure to verify that our students are learning what we've identified as common components.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Are education standards new?</b></p>	<p>No. Standards have been around for decades. In the past, they have been set by local districts, states, text book publishers, individual teachers and more. What's new with the CCSS is that states around the country have collaborated together to develop these standards so that all kids, no matter where they live, will have high expectations.</p>
<p><b>4. What are the New Hampshire College- and Career-Ready Standards (NH CCRS)?</b></p>	<p>The NH CCRS includes three components; knowledge, skills and work study practices. Students need background knowledge in a variety of subjects in order to efficiently and productively engage in academic and career products of learning and work. The skills students are required to demonstrate are written as learning goals for a variety of content areas and are based on the research work of experts in their respective fields. The work study practices of the NH CCRS includes such attributes as creativity, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, persistence, tenacity, regulating behavior and emotions, approaches to learning and other expressions of what is sometimes called habits of mind.</p> <p>New Hampshire has adopted standards in content areas such as: mathematics, English language arts/literacy, science, social studies, technology, early learning, the arts, career development and physical education. The state's new standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy are commonly referred to as the Common Core State Standards (see next question).</p> <p>We define college as any post-secondary (after high school) education experience. This may include a two-year and/or four-year higher education institution or a training program that has a course sequence and examination. We define career as much more than a job. A career may also have a training program or a certificate requirement that is often shorter than a two year program. Being ready for career also means the student will have an opportunity for longevity in that profession, advancement or promotion over time and that as an employee they are mentally engaged in their productive work life.</p>

<p><b>5. What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?</b></p>	<p>The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative is a <u>state-led effort</u> to establish a single set of clear educational standards for English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics that states can share and voluntarily adopt. The standards have been informed by evidence of best practices across the country and globe of standards implementation. They are designed by a diverse group of teachers, experts, parents, and school administrators, so they reflect both our aspirations for our students and the realities of the classroom. These standards, along with the other content areas, skills and work study practices within the NH CCRS, are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to go to college or enter the workforce no matter where they live .</p> <p>The CCSS are written in two content areas and both are divided into two parts. The two content areas are: <b>mathematics</b> and <b>English language arts/literacy</b>. Each content subject is divided into two parts by grades: K-5 and grades 6-12. Each document also comes with appendix that includes additional information.</p>
<p><b>6. Why has New Hampshire included the CCSS in the NH CCRS?</b></p>	<p>New Hampshire has embedded the CCSS in the NH CCRS in order to provide a roadmap for educators to fully prepare students to succeed in college and careers. Educators in New Hampshire have done a complete analysis of our standards against CCSS known in New Hampshire as the Side by Side analysis (<a href="#">mathematics</a> / <a href="#">English language arts</a>). New Hampshire is very closely aligned in some places and further apart in others. In general the CCSS were intended to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>fewer</b> in number to allow teachers and students the ability to focus on important content;</li> <li>• <b>clearer</b> in understanding so that students have time to develop deeper understandings ; and</li> <li>• <b>higher</b> by expecting mastery and proficiency for student produced work.</li> </ul> <p>The standards development process made careful use of a large and growing body of evidence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarly research;</li> <li>• Surveys on what skills are required of students entering college and workforce training programs;</li> <li>• Assessment data identifying college- and career-ready performance;</li> <li>• Comparisons to standards from high-performing states and nations;</li> <li>• National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) frameworks in reading and writing for English language arts; and</li> <li>• Findings from trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS) and other studies concluding that the traditional U.S. mathematics curriculum must become substantially more coherent and focused in order to improve student achievement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Are local school boards required to adopt the CCSS?</b></p>	<p>No. Local school boards are not required to adopt the CCSS. However, the state assessments, required under state and federal law must be aligned to state adopted academic standards. The NH State Board of Education adopted the CCSS as its standards in mathematics and ELA/literacy in 2010. Assessments aligned to the new standards will begin in the Spring of 2015.</p>

<p><b>8. Are there plans on adding/changing the Common Core Standards in an effort to improve them? IF so, will the administration offer a detailed document so the public can see this? If not, why not?</b></p>	<p>At this time, the NH DOE does not intend to add to or change the state’s new standards in mathematics and English language arts in the near future. A local district may decide to add to or change the standards if they choose to adopt the standards. The NH DOE will study the various ways districts implement their own standards and will share best practices along the way.</p>
<p><b>9. Are there other standards that are superior to Common Core and if so, why not focus on aligning w/those standards? If not, why not?</b></p>	<p>This work has already been completed. The standards are informed by the content, rigor and organization of standards of high-performing countries and states so that all students are prepared to succeed in a global economy and society. International benchmarking played a significant role in both sets of standards (mathematics and English language arts). In fact, the college and career ready standards include an appendix listing the evidence that was consulted in drafting the standards and the international data consulted in the benchmarking process is included in</p>
<p><b>10. Does having common standards lead to dumbing down the standards across the board?</b></p>	<p>Not at all. The new mathematics and ELA/literacy standards have been built from the best and highest state standards in the country. In addition, they are evidence-based, aligned with college and work expectations, include rigorous content and skills, and are informed by other top performing countries. They were developed in consultation with teachers and parents from across the United States, so they are also realistic and practical for the classroom. Far from looking for the “lowest common denominator,” these standards are designed to ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, are learning what they need to know in mathematics and ELA/literacy so they are ready for college or a career after graduation from high school.</p>
<p><b>11. Do the CCSS, or any content standards, define how teachers teach in our schools?</b></p>	<p>The CCSS <u>are not</u> a curriculum. They are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for what knowledge and skills will help our students succeed. Local teachers, principals, superintendents and others will decide <i>how</i> the standards are to be met. Districts and schools will continue to develop/adopt curriculum and teachers will continue to devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms.</p>
<p><b>12. Are having common standards the first step toward federalizing education?</b></p>	<p>No. Individual states make independent decisions regarding the adoption of standards and their related assessments. Current state and federal funding streams <u>are not</u> reduced if a state chooses not to adopt the CCSS and/or related assessments.</p>
<p><b>13. Will New Hampshire have assessments connected to the CCSS?</b></p>	<p>Yes. States that adopted the CCSS are currently collaborating to develop common assessments that will be aligned to the CCSS and replace existing state assessments in mathematics, reading and writing. New Hampshire is a part of the <a href="#">Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium</a>. These assessments are expected to be available for full implementation in the Spring of 2015.</p>
<p><b>14. What evidence exists that Common Core will lead to better results?</b></p>	<p>Since the Common Core State Standards are based on the best practices in standards development and implementation, there is full expectation that students will be better prepared for life after high school if they are able to master the knowledge and skills articulated in the standards.</p>

<p><b>15. Are there any identified flaws with the English/Math Common Core Standards?</b></p>	<p>The NH DOE has not identified flaws in the ELA and mathematics standards but has articulated intentional design limitations. The Common Core State Standards do NOT define:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How teachers should teach</li> <li>• All that can or should be taught</li> <li>• The nature of advanced work beyond the core standards</li> <li>• Standards in other content areas (science, social studies, art, etc...)</li> <li>• The interventions needed for students well below grade level</li> <li>• The full range of support for English language learners and students with special needs</li> <li>• <u>Everything</u> needed to be college- and career-ready</li> </ul>
<p><b>16. Why are the CCSS for just ELA/literacy and mathematics?</b></p>	<p>ELA/literacy and mathematics were the subjects chosen for the Common Core State Standards because students build skills in these content areas that support their success in other subjects. Because literacy and mathematics skills inform other learning content success, they are most frequently measured to provide evidence of student learning.</p>
<p><b>17. How will instruction change in classrooms as a result of CCSS?</b></p>	<p>The “key instructional shifts in CCSS” are a useful ways to think about the transition from current standards to CCSS. By focusing on these shifts, educators can transition instructional materials, lesson plans and units, and then practice the fundamentally different approach the CCSS require. The next three pages provide brief information on these instructional shifts.</p>
<p><b>18. How much will it cost to implement the CCSS?</b></p>	<p>Every year, local districts determine the necessary resources they will need to teach their students. This includes professional development for educators, instructional materials and technology. These cost items are part of the day-to-day experience for schools and districts. At the same time, the state does not collect the individual line-item budgets in each of these areas from each district so currently there is no way to accurately provide a cost estimate for the statewide implementation of the CCSS. However, we have put into place various tools to help us continue to gather data to understand if a district will struggle to implement the new standards, if they choose to use them.</p> <p>If a district chooses to adopt or use parts of the CCSS, the district will likely align their professional development to help teachers understand the new standards. This alignment will also not likely cost districts additional funds beyond what they would currently fund otherwise. Every time new standards are adopted or new curriculum is developed, instructional materials are reviewed at the local level to determine what is aligned and what is not. New materials are purchased, if necessary, or technology is used to supplement already owned materials. This varies from district to district around the state.</p> <p>Technology capacity of districts and schools also varies around the state and the NH Department of Education is collecting readiness information to determine what schools are ready to implement the new online assessment aligned to the CCSS in the Spring of 2015. Since paper and pencil will continue to be available for the first 3 years, and the testing window can be up to 12 weeks, we do not anticipate significant additional costs for most districts.</p>

**19. Did the state have to adopt the CCSS in order to apply for Race to the Top or the ESEA Flexibility Waiver?**

No state was ever required to adopt the CCSS in order to apply for the Race to the Top or ESEA Flexibility Waiver. No funding would have been lost had the state decided not to adopt the standards.

## COMMON CORE SHIFTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

### 1. Building knowledge through content – rich nonfiction

Building knowledge through content rich non-fiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the Standards. In K-5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50/50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading primarily includes content rich non-fiction in history/social studies, science and the arts; the K-5 Standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years. In 6-12, ELA classes place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In grades 6-12, the Standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing. To be clear, the Standards do require substantial attention to literature throughout K-12, as half of the required work in K-5 and the core of the work of 6-12 ELA teachers.

### 2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational

The Standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well---defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the Standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts with care. The Standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing. Likewise, the reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of *text---dependent* questions, questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.

### 3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the Standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. The Standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college--- and career---level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as *ignite* and *commit*).

## Common Core Shifts for Mathematics

### 1. Focus strongly where the Standards focus

Focus: The Standards call for a greater focus in mathematics. Rather than racing to cover topics in today's mile---wide, inch---deep curriculum, teachers use the power of the eraser and significantly narrow and deepen the way time and energy is spent in the math classroom. They focus deeply on the major work\* of each grade so that students can gain strong foundations: solid conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency, and the ability to apply the math they know to solve problems inside and outside the math classroom.

### 2. Coherence: think across grades, and link to major topics within grades

- **Thinking across grades:** The Standards are designed around coherent progressions from grade to grade. Principals and teachers carefully connect the learning across grades so that students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years. Teachers can begin to count on deep conceptual understanding of core content and build on it. Each standard is not a new event, but an extension of previous learning.
- **Linking to major topics:** Instead of allowing additional or supporting topics to detract from the focus of the grade, these topics can serve the grade level focus. For example, instead of data displays as an end in themselves, they support grade---level word problems.

### 3. Rigor: in major topics\* pursue: conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity.

- **Conceptual understanding:** The Standards call for conceptual understanding of key concepts, such as place value and ratios. Teachers support students' ability to access concepts from a number of perspectives so that students are able to see math as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures.
- **Procedural skill and fluency:** The Standards call for speed and accuracy in calculation. Teachers structure class time and/or homework time for students to practice core functions such as single---digit multiplication so that students have access to more complex concepts and procedures
- **Application:** The Standards call for students to use math flexibly for applications. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply math in context. Teachers in content areas outside of math, particularly science, ensure that students are using math to make meaning of and access content.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>*Priorities in Support of Conceptual Understanding and Fluency</b>
K–2	Addition and subtraction-----concepts, skills, and problem solving
3–5	Multiplication and division of whole numbers and fractions – concepts, skills, and problem solving
6	Ratios and proportional relationships; early expressions and equations
7	Ratios and proportional relationships; arithmetic of rational numbers
8	Linear algebra