

Common Core State Standards Initiative Standards-Setting Criteria

The following criteria guided the standards development workgroups in setting the draft college and career readiness standards.

Preamble: The Common Core State Standards define the rigorous skills and knowledge in English Language Arts and Mathematics that need to be effectively taught and learned for students to be ready to succeed academically in credit-bearing, college-entry courses and in workforce training programs. These standards have been developed to be:

- Fewer, clearer, and higher, to best drive effective policy and practice;
- Aligned with college and work expectations, so that all students are prepared for success upon graduating from high school;
- Inclusive of rigorous content and applications of knowledge through higher-order skills, so that all students are prepared for the 21st century;
- Internationally benchmarked, so that all students are prepared for succeeding in our global economy and society; and
- Research and evidence-based.

The standards intend to set forward thinking goals for student performance based in evidence about what is required for success. The standards developed will set the stage for US education not just beyond next year, but for the next decade, and they must ensure **all** American students are prepared for the global economic workplace. Furthermore, the standards created will not lower the bar but raise it for all students; as such, we cannot narrow the college-ready focus of the standards to just preparation of students for college algebra and English composition and therefore will seek to ensure all students are prepared for all entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses in English, mathematics, the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. The objective is for all students to enter these classes ready for success (defined for these purposes as a C or better).

Goal: The standards as a whole must be essential, rigorous, clear and specific, coherent, and internationally benchmarked.

Essential: The standards must be reasonable in scope in defining the knowledge and skills students should have to be ready to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

Workforce training programs pertain to careers that:

- 1) Offer competitive, livable salaries above the poverty line
- 2) Offer opportunities for career advancement
- 3) Are in a growing or sustainable industry

College refers to two- and four-year postsecondary schools.

Entry-level credit-bearing, academic college courses (e.g. English, mathematics, sciences, social sciences, humanities)

Rigorous: The standards will include high-level cognitive demands by asking students to demonstrate deep conceptual understanding through the application of content knowledge and skills to new situations.

High-level cognitive demand includes reasoning, justification, synthesis, analysis, and problem-solving.

Clear and Specific: The standards should provide sufficient guidance and clarity so that they are teachable, learnable, and measurable. The standards will also be clear and understandable to the general public.

Quality standards are precise and provide sufficient detail to convey the level of performance expected without being overly prescriptive. (the “what” not the “how”). The standards should maintain a relatively consistent level of grain size.

Teachable and learnable: Provide sufficient guidance for the design of curricula and instructional materials. The standards must be reasonable in scope, instructionally manageable, and promote depth of understanding.

The standards will not prescribe *how* they are taught and learned but will allow teachers flexibility to teach and students to learn in various instructionally relevant contexts.

Measureable: Student attainment of the standards should be observable and verifiable and the standards can be used to develop broader assessment frameworks

Coherent: The standards should convey a unified vision of the big ideas and supporting concepts within a discipline and reflect a progression of learning that is meaningful and appropriate.

Grade-by-grade standards: The standards will have limited repetition across the grades or grade spans to help educators align instruction to the standards.

Internationally benchmarked: The standards will be informed by the content, rigor, and organization of standards of high-performing countries so that all students are prepared for succeeding in our global economy and society.

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