



Common Core State Standards Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)



Q: What are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

The Common Core State Standards, also called the Core Academic Standards in Missouri, define what students should know and be able to do at every grade level in grades K-12.

Q: What is the purpose of the CCSS?

Under No Child Left Behind, it became clear that states had their own standards and assessments. The level of rigor differed greatly from state to state.

The CCSS were developed in order to give states the option of adopting common standards. Additionally, the assessment will be common across many states, which will enable more accurate comparisons.

Q: Who developed these standards?

The CCSS were developed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Teachers, school administrators, and experts representing 48 states collaborated to develop the standards.

Q: Are the CCSS national standards?

No...although they were developed by leaders from 48 states, individual states are not required to adopt or use the CCSS. Missouri decided to adopt the CCSS and transition the state assessment/ test to the CCSS.

Q: How many states are adopting the standards and what are the advantages?

The standards have been adopted by 45 states and 3 territories. There are several advantages to adopting the standards. There will be a rigorous assessment which will allow Wentzville and Missouri to compare performance to other districts and states. Professional development and materials will be available from many more resources. The rigor in the standards will continue to improve our student readiness for college and career.

Q: How are the CCSS different from Missouri's previous standards?

Missouri's previous standards, Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) or Course Level Expectations (CLEs), were developed by Missouri educators. Educators started with what students should learn in Kindergarten and built upon that learning.

The CCSS began with College and Career Readiness Standards, what students need to be successful in college or work, and worked backwards to kindergarten. The purpose is to close the gap between high school and college and career readiness.

Q: Will this increase the rigor of the curriculum?

The standards are more rigorous than the previous standards. The focus of the standards closes the gap between high school and college/ career readiness. In addition, the standards will require less rote memorization and more concepts applicable to real-world problem solving.

Q: What is Wentzville doing to prepare for the CCSS?

Wentzville teachers and administrators have been learning about the standards through book studies and presentations. During professional development time and/ or faculty meetings, teachers will continue to learn about the standards this year. The English Language Arts curriculum is being revised in 2012-2013; math curriculum will be revised in 2013-2014. The new assessments will be used to measure school success beginning in 2014-2015.

Q: How will this change what my child is learning in school?

The standards will provide more clarity about and consistency in what is expected of student learning across the country. Until now, every state has had its own set of academic standards, meaning public education students at the same grade level in different states have been expected to achieve at different levels. This initiative will allow states to share information effectively and help provide all students with an equal opportunity for an education that will prepare them to go to college or enter the workforce, regardless of where they live. The CCSS focus on the content that students need to know. Students will be required to apply their learning through real world problem solving including reading, writing, and mathematical practices across all subject areas.

Q: How will these standards impact teachers?

The standards will provide important goals for teachers to ensure they are preparing students for success in college and the workforce. They will help teachers develop and implement effective strategies for their students by

providing benchmarks for skills and knowledge that their students should have by the end of the year.

Q: Will students still have to take the MAP tests or End-Of-Course tests?

Missouri students will continue to take MAP and EOC assessments during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. In the 2013-2014 school year, students will be piloting the new assessments. Students will take the new assessments in grades 3-8 and 11. In addition, high school students will be required to take End of Course exams in several core content area classes.

Q: Will the new assessments be different from the MAP and EOC?

Yes, the new assessments are being developed by a group of 27 states that belong to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and Missouri is a governing state. This group is writing assessments for English Language Arts and Math for grades 3-8 and 11. The assessments will require more problem solving, writing, and technology.

Q: How can I keep up with all of the changes?

The WSD website will have monthly updates found under the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Department tab. Buildings will be sharing updates with parents on a monthly basis as well. For additional information, go to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website at www.dese.mo.gov the Common Core State Standards Initiative website at www.corestandards.org or the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website at www.smarterbalanced.org .