

Maryland's New Common Core State Standards And PARENTS



What Are The Standards?

The Common Core State Standards are a set of high-quality academic expectations in English/language arts (ELA) and mathematics that define both the knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each grade level to be on track for success in college and careers. They were created through a state-led initiative and have been adopted by more than 40 states, including Maryland, which is revising its Curriculum to align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The standards establish consistent learning goals for all students — regardless of where they live — so that children will stay on track in school when moving from one state to another.

With a clear roadmap of academic expectations, students, parents, and teachers can work together toward shared goals.

The standards are relevant to the real world, focusing on the knowledge and skills students will need to succeed in life after high school, in both post-secondary education and a globally competitive workforce.

A diverse team of teachers, parents, administrators, researchers, and content experts developed the CCSS to be academically rigorous, attainable for students, and practical for teachers and districts.

What's Different With The New Standards?

Shifts in English/Language Arts (ELA)

These apply to content area (social studies, science, and technical subject) teachers, as well as to English teachers.

1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts in addition to literature.
2. Reading and writing grounded in evidence from the text.
3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary (words like commit and synthesize).

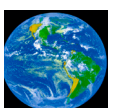
Shifts in Mathematics

1. Focus: 2-3 topics intensely focused in each grade.
2. Coherence: Concepts logically connected from one grade to the next and linked to other major topics within the grade.
3. Rigor: Fluency with arithmetic, application of knowledge to real world situations, and deep understanding of mathematical concepts.

The Road Ahead - The PARCC Assessments

Maryland is a Governing State in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a consortium of 24 states working to develop an assessment system aligned with the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics. The PARCC assessments will track student progress over time and will report status on a trajectory toward college- and career-readiness. The assessments will be computer-based and will utilize a mix of constructed response items, performance-based tasks, and computer-enhanced, computer-scored items to measure higher-order skills such as critical thinking, communications, and problem solving.

PARCC will replace the Maryland School Assessments (MSAs) in school year 2014-2015.



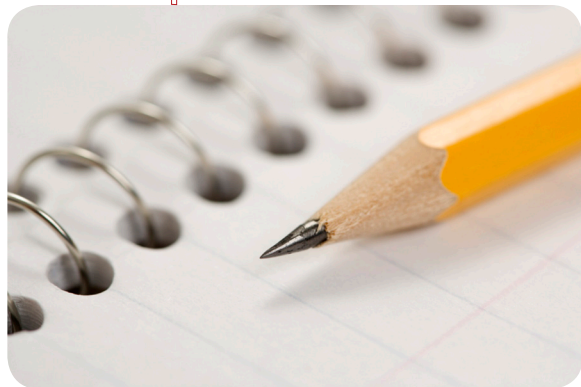


English/Language Arts



Educator Effectiveness Academies

Mathematics



Frameworks



Online Curriculum Toolkits

Implementing the Common Core State Standards in Maryland

Several efforts are underway in Maryland to bring the Common Core State Standards into our classrooms.

Maryland adopted the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics in June 2010 as part of the State's Third Wave of Reform. These internationally benchmarked standards are the overarching learning expectations that are guiding Maryland's development of the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum.

During the 2010-2011 school year, educators statewide worked to create the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks in English/language arts and mathematics. This 600-page document defines the essential content and skills that students need to know and be able to do in order to meet the Common Core State Standards. The Frameworks are the foundation of Maryland's new State Curriculum.

Development of the Online Curriculum Toolkit to support the Frameworks is currently underway. The Toolkit will provide teachers with a variety of resources to assist them in designing instructional programs that are aligned with the new curriculum and the new assessments, such as model lessons, model units, formative assessments, multi-media resources, intervention and enrichment modules, and online courses for students and educators.

During the 2011-2012 school year, teams of educators representing all Maryland local school systems participated in the development of model units and lessons in English/language arts and mathematics aligned to the Common Core State Standards. These model units and lessons were presented at this summer's Educator Effectiveness Academies in addition to instruction on using the Curriculum Toolkit.

The completed curriculum will be fully implemented in all Maryland schools in school year 2013-2014. To view the Maryland Common Core Curriculum Frameworks go to mdk12.org/instruction/commoncore/index.html.

Educator Effectiveness Academies

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) initiated its Educator Effectiveness Academies program in summer 2011 to begin providing professional development on Maryland's new reform initiatives to educators from every school in the State. Each of Maryland's 1,400 schools sent a team to participate, consisting of an English/language arts teacher; a mathematics teacher; a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) teacher; and the school's principal.

During the 2011 Academies, educators developed an understanding of the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Standards and Frameworks and how STEM education aligns with the new curriculum. School teams also created transition plans to bring the knowledge they gained at the Academies back to their schools. The school teams also participated in online Academy follow-up sessions throughout the school year to reinforce and expand upon what they had learned.

In summer 2012, MSDE held 10 regional Educator Effectiveness Academies at sites across the State. Attendees reviewed and built upon their knowledge of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks in English/language arts and mathematics, as well as developed an understanding of the new content literacy Frameworks and Maryland's new STEM Standards of Practice and STEM Frameworks. In addition, participants received an update about the new PARCC assessments.

Participants also worked with model units and lesson models that teachers across Maryland have helped to develop over the past year and received an update about the new assessments. The 2012 Academies again concluded with time devoted for each school team to develop a transition plan to deliver this material to their faculty during the 2012-2013 school year.

The Educator Effectiveness Academies and the continuing work of the attendees to lead professional development at their schools will help to ensure that all teachers are trained and knowledgeable about Maryland's new curriculum, assessments, and evaluations.

The summer Educator Effectiveness Academies and online follow-up sessions will continue through 2013. After that time, Academy content will be delivered entirely online.

Timeline for Implementation

Reform Initiative	<u>2011-2012</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>	<u>2013-2014</u>	<u>2014-2015 and Beyond</u>
New Maryland Common Core State Curriculum	Transition Plans & Writing New Curriculum		Full Implementation of New State Curriculum	
PARCC Assessments	Assessment Development Begins	Pilot Field Testing, Research, Data Collection	Full Field Testing, Research, Data Collection	PARCC Assessments Fully Implemented

What Do The Standards Mean For Parents?

- With the Common Core State Standards, parents will know exactly what their children should learn by the end of each grade level.
- Establishing clear expectations for students will better enable parents, teachers, and students to work together toward shared goals.
- The Common Core shifts instructional intent from high school completion to college- and career-readiness for every student.
- When the standards are fully implemented, parents will see that each grade covers fewer topics, but teaches content in much greater depth.
- Over the next several years, curriculum and assessments will evolve to align with the Common Core.
- With the Common Core, parents can be assured that their students are learning to the same high-quality standards as other students in Maryland and across the country.

What Can Parents Do Now?

The standards will be fully implemented in Maryland by school year 2013-2014. In the meantime, changes are being made to instruction that will prepare students for the CCSS while helping them succeed on current State assessments. To lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards, parents can:

- Learn about the Common Core State Standards and Maryland's transition plans.
- Meet with your child's teacher to discuss what your child will be learning over the coming year and how classroom instruction will shift to align to the Common Core.
- Play an active role in your child's education at home. If you notice your child is struggling in a certain area, consult with his or her teacher to identify strategies and resources that might be helpful.
- Educate other parents about the transition to the Common Core.
- Explore opportunities to become actively involved in the Common Core transition through the Maryland PTA and your local PTA/PTO. In fact, PTAs in cities throughout the country are holding sessions to help parents better understand the standards, and equip them with advocacy skills to support the standards implementation.



Additional Resources For Parents

Common Core State Standards Initiative, www.corestandards.org.

Maryland Race to the Top, www.MarylandPublicSchools.org/MSDE/programs/race_to_the_top/.

Maryland Common Core State Standards, www.MarylandPublicSchools.org/MSDE/programs/ccss.

Maryland Common Core Curriculum Frameworks, mdk12.org/instruction/commoncore/index.html.

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Common Core Resources, www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Common_Core_State_Standards_Implementation_Tools_and_Resources.html.

Common Core Implementation Video Series (CCSSO), www.ccsso.org/Resources/Digital_Resources/Common_Core_Implementation_Video_Series.html.

PTA's Efforts Regarding the Common Core, http://www.pta.org/common_core_state_standards.asp.

PTA's Parents Guide to Student Success, <http://pta.org/4446.htm>.

Maryland PTA, <http://www.mdpta.org/>.

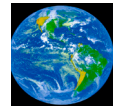
Educator Effectiveness Academies, mdk12.org/instruction/academies/index.html.

PARCC Model Content Frameworks, www.parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks.

National Education Association (NEA) Position on Common Core State Standards,

www.nea.org/commoncore.

Maryland Classroom, Focus on Transition: *The New Curriculum, Assessments, and Educator Evaluations*, http://www.msde.state.md.us/mdclassroom/Vol17_No3_052012.pdf.



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