

Yadkin County Schools

Common Core/Essential Standards

What are Common Core State Standards?

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort to establish a shared set of clear educational standards for English language arts and mathematics. These standards were created by teachers and other education experts and have been adopted in 45 states and 3 territories. North Carolina has adopted this curriculum called Common Core.

What are Essential Standards?

For all other subject areas, from Science to Physical Education and everything in between, the new curriculum is called the Essential Standards. North Carolina created and adopted the Essential Standards curriculum.

Why are Common Core State Standards important?

We want to make sure that every child across the country is given the tools they need to succeed. High standards that are consistent across states provide teachers, parents, and students with a set of clear expectations that everyone can work toward together to ensure that we maintain America's competitive edge. In order to keep pace, America's children must be prepared no matter where they live or where they go to school. In the past, academic standards have been different from state to state, thus, leaving some of our students at a competitive disadvantage.

What will Common Core State Standards mean for learning?

Common Core Standards in English and Mathematics and the new Essential Standards in all other subjects represent a shift from memorizing information toward helping students make better connections between topics, seeing relevance of what they are learning, and studying topics in more depth at each grade level than ever before. The ultimate goal of the new curriculum is to prepare students for success in college or the workforce. The world of the 21st Century is changing rapidly. In all subject areas, the emphasis will be on asking questions and getting students to think and interact with one another instead of memorizing information which is called inquiry-based learning.

What will Common Core State Standards mean for learning? (cont'd)

Students actively engaged in learning as opposed to teacher-directed assignments will result in a deeper understanding and student ownership of learning. Students need to know how to access and sort the vast amount of information available to them through today's technology. Students need to learn how to be critical thinkers, to be effective problem solvers, and to work effectively in teams, all skills employers say are needed for today's workplace.

How has Yadkin County Schools prepared to teach the new standards?

Educators spent the 2011-2012 school year attending professional development sessions provided by selected Yadkin County teachers and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. During the summer, teachers volunteered to create curriculum maps and began to develop assessments aligned to the new standards. In the 2012-2013 school year, teachers will continue to be offered ongoing sessions that target the instructional shifts in teaching and learning. Content teachers, who attended the state subject-area sessions, will provide training and serve as mentors for their colleagues. Implementing the new standards in a way that transforms all instruction will be a three-to-five year process.

How will students be assessed under the Common Core Essential Standards curriculum?

North Carolina has developed new End of Grade tests for students in grades 3-8 in English Language Arts and Mathematics and grade 5 and 8 Science to assess students understanding of the new curriculum. At the high school level, new End of Course tests in Math 1, Biology, and English 2 have been created to measure students' understanding.

Where can I go for more information?

You can talk with your child's teacher about the Common Core curriculum or visit these websites:

Information from the North Carolina PTA

<http://ncpta.org/index.php/programs/parent-involvement/common-core-state-standards/>

Parent Guides by grade level from the National PTA

www.pta.org/4446.htm

Information from the North Carolina Public Schools website

www.ncpublicschools.org/parents/

Yadkin County Schools

Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow