



FACT SHEET: Common Core State Standards and River Forest District 90

What are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

- They are a set of internationally benchmarked, agreed-upon learning targets for all children, involving a progression of skills, building in complexity from kindergarten through 12th grade.
- The learning targets are aligned to skills that are essential for college and career readiness.
- They shift from an emphasis on facts and recall to a greater emphasis on depth and complexity.
- They are specific to English-Language Arts, Math and the literacy content in Science and Social Studies. The focus is on the integration of skills in all learning areas, with an emphasis on elevating literacy skills across the curriculum. High value is placed on making meaning from and applying mathematical concepts.
- Currently, 45 states have fully adopted and intend to implement the CCSS.

How will the CCSS change my child's education?

District 90 initiated a study of the new standards in 2011. Many of the standards were already taught in our classrooms. However, the shift from "breadth" to "depth" of content coverage will change how and what we teach.

- Teachers will continue to expand upon their extensive repertoire of teaching strategies. Some units and areas of study will be eliminated or reduced to delve deeper in critical areas of study. For example, classroom instruction will allow for more time to read from multiple sources about key content, and provide an emphasis on problem-solving and content-specific research. Many children will also see heightened text complexity in some reading materials.
- There will be a stronger emphasis on nonfiction, also known as informational reading. Beginning in kindergarten, children will increasingly be required to analyze and write persuasively about what they learn, making claims and using evidence to support them.

Moving Toward Implementation

District 90 is committed to a thoughtful and deliberate implementation process. While some content areas will change significantly, adjustments in other areas will be less pronounced. We will continue to examine avenues to assess students and share our findings in meaningful ways.

- Our goal is to fully implement the Common Core Standards in the 2013-2014 school year.
- In 2014-15, the ISAT (currently for students in grades 3-8) will be replaced by the PARCC assessment. This test will assess application of knowledge reflected in the standards.
- District 90 teachers have been participating in professional development opportunities that support the change in curriculum focus. Teacher leadership is critical in facilitating the transition process, and a core group of teacher leaders collaborated in a three-day workshop to advance the implementation process. In the coming months, our teachers, principals, and district administrators will continue to work together in the pursuit of this important work.

District 90 values an unwavering commitment to excellence and the success of all our students. We believe that the adoption of the Common Core State Standards will improve student achievement and our students' ultimate success in college and career.