

The Common Core State Standards

A guide for MCS parents



This guide provides an overview of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), how they will impact your child's education and what you can do to help ensure your child's success in school.

What are content standards and how are they used?

- **Content standards** provide clear, consistent expectations about what knowledge, skills and practices students should have and learn at each grade level so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help students achieve them.
- Standards guide both **curriculum** (the subject matter that is taught at each grade level) and the **assessments** (tests that determine the level of learning a student has achieved.)

What are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

- The CCSS set high quality academic benchmarks for English Language Arts (ELA)/ literacy and mathematics that clearly define the knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each school year in order to be on track for success in college and career. They make it clear to every student, parent, and teacher what the standards of success are in every school.
- The standards provide consistent learning goals for all students – regardless of where they live – so that when children move from one state to another, they will stay on track in school, making the transition of moving more seamless for both students and teachers.
- The standards incorporate the best and highest of previous state standards in the US and are internationally benchmarked to the top performing nations around the world.
- More information on the CCSS can be found at www.engageny.org/common-core/

Why are we adopting new content standards in New York?

- New York State is one of 45 states across the country that have adopted the CCSS.
- NYS has seen an increase in graduation rates however students are graduating unable to meet the demands of college and the work force. The state realized they have a significant achievement gap to close.
- NYS has embarked on a comprehensive reform initiative to ensure that schools prepare students to graduate college and career ready. Changes will occur in our standards, curricula, and assessments.

What will change in NYS as a result of the new Common Core State Standards?

- With NYS's adoption of the CCSS both instruction and assessment will change.
- Students will be assessed using new common core aligned assessments starting in 2012-2013 for grades 3-8 ELA and Math. Other courses and grade levels will follow.
- Classroom instruction is becoming aligned to the new standards across all grade levels. Teachers are currently receiving professional development on how to align their instruction and shift their instructional practice.
- NYS is a governing state in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) PARCC is scheduled to have computer-based assessments that measure the CCSS in ELA and Math in grades 3-11 beginning in 2014-2015. More information about the PARCC assessments can be found at www.parcconline.org.

How will the CCSS impact my child's education?

The standards are designed to be more rigorous for students in grades K-12. This means that students will be expected to read more complex texts and solve real world problems. Academic rigor in instruction and assessment will increase.

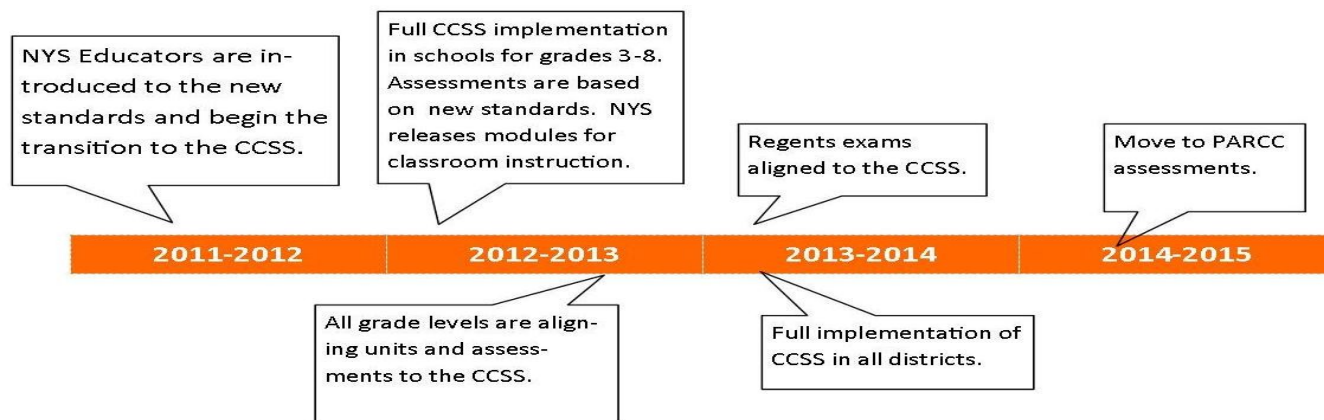
Shifts in ELA/Literacy instruction will include:

- ⇒ Reading increasingly more non-fiction text over fictional text.
- ⇒ Learning about the world through reading.
- ⇒ Reading more challenging material more closely.
- ⇒ Discussing what they have read using evidence from the text.
- ⇒ Writing more non-fiction using evidence from text to support their claims.

Shifts in Math instruction will include:

- ⇒ Focus: they will learn more about fewer and key topics
- ⇒ They will build skills within and across grade levels
- ⇒ Fluency –develop speed and accuracy with their facts
- ⇒ Really know and be able to do topics
- ⇒ Use their math in real world situations
- ⇒ Be able to think fast and solve problems

What is the timeline for implementation of the CCSS and new assessments in New York State?



How can I get involved?

Parents' involvement with their children's education is a critical factor for success. There are many ways that you can be involved to help ensure this success:

- Stay informed about what's happening in your child's school:
 - * Go to parent nights, parent-teacher conferences, and other school activities
 - * Talk with your child's teacher(s) about your child's progress
 - * Join your local parent teacher organization
 - * Volunteer at your child's school
- Encourage your child to put an effort into his/her school work and acknowledge his/her efforts as well as success.
- Read about CCSS and PARCC— Here are some websites that can be helpful:
 - * NYSED website on educational reform agenda — <http://engageny.org/>
 - * National PTA website with CCSS information for parents—<http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>
 - * Council of the Great City Schools: CCSS—<http://www.cgcs.org/Page/192>