

MYTHS ABOUT COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Information from [PDE Fact Sheet on PA Academic Standards and the Common Core](#)

Myth – “This is a federal government initiative that encroaches upon states’ rights”

- ✓ *Fact – This process began as a states-led initiative with support from NGA and CCSSO (organizations that represent state officials), and continues to be a state-led process. The model standards created by the state-led bodies are a recommended floor. State participation is voluntary and states reserve their right to do with these standards as they feel best for their states’ educational systems and students. In Pennsylvania, we have used the model standards as a base.*

Myth – “Common Core includes data mining and large collections of unnecessary data on students and families”

- ✓ *Fact – There is no new data collection requirement tied to Common Core. The model standards of Common Core that states may consider using do not jeopardize or preempt existing federal and state statutes protecting data and privacy concerns. The FERPA Law (Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act) protects education records from being disclosed without written parental consent, along with other federal and state statutes that guide the collection and use of data.*

Myth – “These standards are a national curriculum for schools”

- ✓ *Fact – These standards are not curriculum. They are a set of goals and expectations for the necessary knowledge and skills that will help our students succeed. State officials, local teachers, principals, superintendents and others still decide how the standards will be met. Local school districts have complete control over what curriculum to use to meet the standards. In short, Pennsylvania teachers and administrators are still in charge of curriculum used in their classrooms.*

Myth – “Common Core will lead to Pennsylvania students taking a National Test”

- ✓ *Fact – The regulations adopted in Pennsylvania in 2010, and any subsequent regulations under consideration, do not involve a national test. Pennsylvania students are not being asked to take a national test.*

Myth – “Common Core brings down state standards”

- ✓ *Fact – Common Core was a state-led initiative to improve standards across the country and is considered by educational experts to improve rigor in schools. In 2010, the State Board of Education commissioned an alignment study (conducted by the University of Pittsburgh) that found the recommended Common Core standards were highly correlated to math and English standards revisions the Board was already considering. This alignment study helped to assure the recommended Common Core standards were rigorous and similar to standards revisions being developed independently by Pennsylvania educators. It is also very important to stress that Common Core is a baseline model for standards and Pennsylvania adopted standards above the recommended model. States reserve the right to create standards as they feel best for their students; any state can exceed the baseline set in the model standards if they choose.*