

Will There Be New Tests for the New Standards?

Yes, California is a governing member of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The consortium includes 25 states. As a group, they are developing new tests that will measure student progress toward career and college readiness. You may learn more about the new tests and California's participation in the SBAC at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp. A separate brochure dedicated to assessment is under development and will be available soon.

California's CCSS Implementation Plan

The Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California is a living document approved by the State Board of Education in March 2012. The plan, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>, identifies the major phases and activities involved in implementing the CCSS and serves as the blueprint for remodeling the education system to support student success in career and college.



Resources for Educators & School Board Members

The following Web resources provide the most current information from the California Department of Education (CDE) Web Site and are continuously updated. The first reference is the main CDE CCSS Web Page which includes the Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California, the Significant Milestones Timeline, and a "Learn More" section that provides additional links to audience specific information.

California Department of Education CCSS Web Page:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>
(Select the "Teachers" tab)

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Info.:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>



Content Developed by the California
Department of Education

A guide for Educators & School Board Members



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Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world – by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college.

Despite the state's budget problems, California must move forward now so that all children – no matter where they come from or where they live – receive a world-class education that's consistent from school to school, and graduate ready to contribute to the future of our state and our country.

California is putting these standards to work, using them as the foundation for **remodeling our education system**. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace traditional ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.



Transitioning to the CCSS: What Educators Can Do Now

Although CCSS-aligned summative assessments will not be fully operational until the 2014–15 school year, we can begin to make changes to instruction that will prepare students for the CCSS while helping them succeed on current state assessments. In order to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the new standards, educators can **review and understand** how the new standards are similar to and different from California's 1997 content standards, inform parents of the new standards, meet with your grade levels, departments, and school leadership team to discuss how your district and school is transitioning to the CCSS, and:

For English language arts (ELA) instruction:

- Clarify with colleagues the implications for teaching more informational text and determine common strategies for implementation across the grade levels
- Incorporate into instruction more text-dependent questions that require students to read a text closely to determine what it says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it
- Have students read more **non-fiction** and **complex texts**
- Focus **writing instruction substantially on writing to inform and structure an argument**, not only writing stories

For mathematics instruction:

- Discuss the mathematical practices with colleagues and discuss what evidence of student demonstrations of these practices might inform your instructional designs and activities
- Focus instruction more on the few key topics emphasized in each grade in the standards
- Emphasize problem-solving and real-world application

Transitioning to the CCSS: What School Leaders and School Board Members Can Do Now

- Set aside time to review CCSS and their implications, prepare key district messages about where the district is now and plans for implementation.
- Recognize the emerging nature of the CCSS implementation timelines, communicate how implementing the CCSS strengthens and extends existing district efforts to prepare students for successful futures. Acknowledge concerns related to resources, increased expectations for all students, and what changes students and teachers might experience.

Set Direction – Identify present strengths and future needs of the district and generate enthusiasm about the new standards.

Establish Structures – Establish budget priorities as possible to assist in the transition to CCSS, with aligned curriculum and appropriate instructional materials, and professional development.

Provide Support – Be knowledgeable about the district's goals related to the CCSS to explain them to the public.

Ensure Accountability – Understand the timelines in place for CCSS transition and monitor district plans and progress toward successful implementation of the new standards.

Demonstrate Community Leadership – Involve all stakeholders in the setting directions processes and continually communicate district progress toward the implementation goals and priorities. Gather feedback on what parents want to know more about and try to provide answers to “hard” questions.