

To: Marlington Board of Education  
From: Mrs. Anna Minor, Assistant Superintendent  
Re: Curriculum and RttT Updates  
Date: January 10, 2014

## **Common Core State Standards FAQ**

*"The Common Core Standards are not a substitute for a local school board's responsibility for adopting curriculum and providing resources to ensure student achievement. Yet they will allow districts to know what their students must be capable of achieving in order to be prepared for the future. School districts will continue to have the freedom to determine how the standards will be met inside their classrooms."  
-Richard C. Lewis, Executive Director, Ohio School Boards Association*

### **What are educational standards?**

Educational standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning.

### **Why do we need educational standards?**

We need standards to ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workforce.

### **Do educational standards tell teachers how to teach?**

Standards **do not tell teachers how to teach**. They do help teachers figure out the knowledge and skills their students should have so that teachers can build the best lessons and environments for their classrooms. Standards can also help students and parents by setting clear and realistic goals for success.

Standards are a first - a key building block - in providing our young people with a high-quality education that will prepare them for success in college and work. Of course, standards are not the only things that are needed for our children's success, but they provide an accessible roadmap for our teachers, parents and students.

### **Is having common standards the first step toward nationalizing education?**

No. Common core standards are a state-led effort to give all students the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. The federal government has not been involved in the development of the standards. Individual states chose whether or not to adopt these standards.

### **What is the Common Core State Standards?**

The Common Core State Standards is a state-led effort to establish a single set of clear educational standards for English-language arts and mathematics.

These standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to go to college or enter the workforce and that parents, teachers and students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

Of course, standards cannot single-handedly improve the quality of our education system, but they do give educators shared goals and expectations for their students.

**What grade levels are included in the Common Core State Standards?**

The English-language arts and math standards are for grades K-12. Research from the early childhood and higher education communities have also informed the development of the standards.

**Who is leading the Common Core State Standards Initiative?**

Parents, teachers, school administrators and experts from across the country together with state leaders, through their membership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), worked together to develop a common core of state standards.

In addition, CCSSO and the NGA Center provided public comment periods for everyone to submit feedback on the draft standards document.

The Ohio Department of Education also held regional meetings to discuss the proposed standards and Ohio's State Board of Education held discussions at multiple public meetings which included opportunities for public testimony.

**Will the Common Core State Standards keep local teachers from deciding what or how to teach?**

No. Common core standards are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for what knowledge and skills will help our students succeed. Local teachers, principals, superintendents and others will decide *how* the standards are to be met. Teachers will continue to devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms. Local teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards will continue to make decisions about curriculum and how their school systems are operated.

**Were teachers involved in the creations of the standards?**

Yes. Teachers have been a critical voice in the development of the standards. The National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), among other organizations, have been instrumental in bringing together teachers to provide specific, constructive feedback on the standards.

Information resources:

- National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers, *Common Core State Standards Initiative Frequently Asked Questions*, March 2, 2010
- House Education Committee Chairman Gerald Stebelton (R-Lancaster), *Common Core Myths and Facts, Response to Pioneer Institute's "Controlling Education from the Top: Why Common Core is Bad for Ohio"*