

PA Core Standards Business and Community Fact Sheet

WHAT ARE THE PENNSYLVANIA CORE STANDARDS?

The State Board adopted Common Core Standards in July 2010. Since that time, the decision was made to craft a set of Pennsylvania (PA) Core Standards tailored to meet our state specific needs in English Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as for Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science/Technical Subjects. A group of Pennsylvania educators crafted the PA Core Standards, which mirror the academic rigor of the Common Core State Standards, are attainable for students, practicable for teachers and districts, and reflect the organization and design of the PA Academic Standards.

In compliance with Chapter 4 (§4.11), Pennsylvania's Core Standards are a set of rigorous, high-quality academic expectations in English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics that all students should master by the end of each grade level. The PA Core Standards are robust and relevant to the real world and reflect the knowledge and skills our young people need to succeed in life after high school, in both post-secondary education and a globally competitive workforce.

WHAT DO THE PA CORE STANDARDS MEAN FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY?

Pennsylvania Core Standards are critical to Pennsylvania's economic development, because they were designed to give all students the knowledge and skills they will need to be prepared for the careers of tomorrow, including the ability to communicate effectively, work in groups, apply math in real-world situations, read and analyze both literature and informational text, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, and persevere in solving problems. The standards are an important step in building a stronger workforce in Pennsylvania.

PA Core Standards mean:

- Successful citizens and productive workers
- More highly skilled workforce
- Workers better equipped to meet the needs of employers at home and around the globe
- More opportunity for economic growth locally, statewide, nationally, and globally

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PA CORE STANDARDS SHIFTS	
ELA/LITERACY	MATHEMATICS
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational text.3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Focus strongly where the Standards focus.2. Coherence: Think across grades, and link to major topics within grades.3. Rigor: In major topics pursue conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity.

IMPLEMENTING THE PA CORE STANDARDS:

The Pennsylvania Department of Education worked with state teachers and curriculum experts to develop a **model curriculum** that schools may **voluntarily** use if they wish. The PA Department of Education continues to provide educational resources through the Standards Aligned System (www.pde.sas.org). Information and resources related to PA Core Standards are located in the Standards, Assessment, Curriculum Framework, Instruction, and Materials & Resources section of the website. Currently, state assessments are being developed that align to the PA Core Standards. Because these standards are more rigorous than the previous state standards, Pennsylvania has the following implementation schedule for the PA Core Standards aligned assessments:

- Students in grades 3 – 8 will continue to be assessed using the current PSSA, which will include PA Core standard related questions ONLY if the PA Academic Standard and PA Core Standard are similar. In 2015, students in these grades will be assessed on the PA Core Standards.
- PA has replaced the 11th grade PSSA with end of course exams in Algebra 1, Literature, and Biology. These exams are called Keystone Exams. They have been aligned to the PA Core Standards.
- Although Keystone Exams were given during the 2012-13 school year, it is not until the 2016-17 school year that students must score at least “proficient” on these exams in order to graduate. Pennsylvania has developed an alternative means for some students to demonstrate proficiency on the PA Core Standards, if needed.



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- Pennsylvania has developed an online testing option that is available to schools for both the PSSA and Keystone Exams; however, completing the test online is not a requirement.

WHAT CAN BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DO NOW?

- Provide information about the PA Core Standards being taught in Pennsylvania schools and their importance to the local, state and national economic growth.
- Promote supporting students, teachers and schools within businesses, organizations, and across the local community.
- Reach out to schools to find ways to help students understand the real-world demands of the modern workplace
- Encourage local civic groups to learn more about the work now underway in schools.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[Four Guiding Strategies and Key Questions \(pdf\)](#)

[PA Core Standards Implementation Stages Graphic \(pdf\)](#)

[PA Core Standards Stages of Implementation Table \(pdf\)](#)

[PA Core Standards Timeline \(pdf\)](#)