



CCGPS

Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

Georgia joined with 47 other states well over a year ago to develop a set of core standards for K-12 in English language arts and mathematics. On June 2, the Common Core State Standards were released. These standards provide a consistent framework to prepare students for success in college and/or the 21st century workplace. These standards represent a common sense next step from the Georgia Performance Standards. The Georgia State Board of Education adopted the CCGPS on July 8, 2010.

What do they mean for Georgia?

A set of consistent standards that states can share provides the...

Students of Georgia:

- Rigorous knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college and/or careers
- Consistent expectations across states, regardless of whether they decide to go to school at Georgia Tech or UCLA, or find a job in Georgia, Maine or Indiana
- Relevant content and application of knowledge through high-order skills

Educators of Georgia:

- Clear, focused expectations that assist them in being on the same page and working together with students and parents for shared goals
- A common-sense next step that is aligned to our Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)

Taxpayers of Georgia:

- Long-term potential savings on textbooks and instructional resources that come with consistent materials developed throughout the country

About the Common Core State Standards

- Led by National Governors Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
- Governor Perdue was selected by NGA to co-chair the initiative
- Developed by standards experts and educators
- Received multiple rounds of feedback from states and national organizations representing educators. (e.g., International Reading Association (IRA), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE))

Common Core State Standards Timeline

- June 2, 2010** CCSS Released
- July 8, 2010** Adopted by SBOE
- 2010-2011** Communication and Administrator Training (Crosswalks GPS/CCSS)
- 2011-2012** Teacher Training
- 2012-2013** Classroom Implementation
- Spring 2014** Projected Date for Common Assessment

Why did Georgia adopt the Common Core State Standards?

Adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) helps our teachers improve, better prepare students for success, and potentially yield long term financial savings for Georgia. First, while our GPS give our teachers an excellent tool to prepare our young people, we are always looking for opportunities to improve. The CCSS integrate much of the GPS, but also take them a step further, creating an opportunity to even better prepare our students for college and work.

Second, the CCSS allows for a meaningful comparison of our students' achievement with students in other states. Currently, states operate with different standards, making it impossible to accurately compare data nationally or internationally. Our students will be competing for jobs with students from all over the world. We must be able to compare ourselves to the rest of the U.S. and other countries to ensure that we are providing students with the tools they need to be competitive.

Third, the initiative allows for better purchasing power. Since participating states will have a consistent curriculum, textbook and instructional resource companies will be able to develop and target resources to one set of standards. This will help to reduce prices and ensure that funds are spent wisely.

How was Georgia involved in the creation of the Common Core?

Georgia teachers and other experts in standards have been at the table since the process began. The Common Core State Standards Initiative is state-led - launched over a year ago by state leaders through their membership in the CCSSO and the NGA Center.

When the expert development groups that the CCSSO and NGA pulled together began writing the standards in mathematics and English language arts, they built off of the work of states that had already developed rigorous college- and career-ready standards. Georgia was one of the states, and when reading the CCSS, one can see elements of the GPS throughout.

With the adoption of the Common Core will there be a huge change for Georgia's teachers or students?

While the adoption of the CCSS in Georgia was a step forward, giving our teachers more refined tools to better prepare our students for work and college, it will not be a drastic change for either our teachers or our students. Some of the standards are introduced at different grade levels, but teachers have, essentially, been implementing the CCSS while they've been teaching the GPS.

Was the Common Core created by the Federal government?

No. The Common Core is a state-led initiative - launched over a year ago by state leaders through their membership in the CCSSO and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center). Georgia educators and officials have been involved with the process all along the way.

What does this mean for integrated math?

Without question, there has been extensive conversation about the integrated approach of our mathematics GPS. All of us want our students to rise above the rest, and unfortunately, for too long, Georgia has lagged behind the nation and other countries in mathematics achievement. An integrated approach to math is one of the ways that states can help students master the skills and knowledge outlined within the Common Core. We look forward to continuing a conversation with parents, teachers and the community on how to help students excel. Once our mathematics curriculum is fully implemented, we have every confidence that our students will be the winners. Our mathematics GPS, supported by the Common Core standards, will help Georgia's students rise above the rest.

Do these Standards actually amount to a national curriculum for our schools?

No. The Standards are not a curriculum. They are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for what knowledge and skills will help our students succeed. Georgia teachers, principals, superintendents and others will decide how the standards are to be met. Teachers will continue to develop lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms.



What does this mean for curriculum?

In the simplest terms, standards set the goals for what students should know and be able to do by the time they complete a grade level and then ultimately graduate from high school. Curriculum, on the other hand, guides how a teacher teaches to help students achieve the goals/standards. Since 2004, we have been overhauling our state's curriculum. The new curriculum is the product of a lot of hard work by classroom teachers, parents, businesses and curriculum experts. And our award-winning curriculum is nearing full implementation with great results. We will not be abandoning our curriculum.

Will Georgia be lowering its standards?

No. The Standards are designed to build upon the most advanced current thinking about preparing all students for success in college and their careers. This will result in moving the GPS to the next level. In fact, since this work began, there has been an explicit agreement that no state would lower its standards. The Standards were informed by the best in the country, the highest international standards, and evidence and expertise about educational outcomes. We need college and career ready standards because even in high-performing states – students are graduating and passing all the required tests and still require remediation in their postsecondary work.

Does the adoption of the Common Core tell teachers how to teach?

No. The best understanding of what works in the classroom comes from the teachers who are in them. That's why these standards will establish what students need to learn, but they will not dictate how teachers should teach. Instead, schools and teachers will decide how best to help students reach the Standards.

How is adoption defined?

100% of the Common Core K-12 standards in ELA and mathematics must be adopted within 3 years. Each state can then decide on an additional 15% to add to the Common Core Standards.

Common Core Assessments:

- Common Core Summative Assessment Partnership - GaDOE has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Achieve, Inc. to assist in unifying Common Core assessment consortia
- State Consortium Developing Balanced Assessments of the Common Core Standards – CCSSO led/GaDOE has signed a Memorandum of Understanding

A Message from State Board of Education Chair Wanda Barrs



The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA), co-chaired by

Governor Perdue, recently issued a common set of English language arts and mathematics standards that the State BOE adopted. Through these Common Core State Standards (CCSS), students, teachers, parents, colleges and employers throughout Georgia, and indeed much of the United States, will have a first-class guide to what our children must know and be able to do to succeed in college, the 21st century workplace and as contributing citizens in our democracy.

When a new and far-reaching initiative is proposed, citizens rightfully pose questions. Will implementing the Common Core State Standards in Georgia reverse or shut down the implementation of our Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)? Is this a federal mandate to “take over” education?

The answer to these questions is a resounding NO.

The CCSS is a state-led initiative - not a federal mandate. Georgia teachers and other experts in standards setting have been at the table since the process began. When the expert development groups that the CCSSO and NGA pulled together began writing the standards in mathematics and English language arts, they built off of the work of states that had already developed rigorous college- and career-ready standards. Georgia was one of these select states, and when reading the CCSS, one can see elements of the GPS throughout. Therefore, while adopting the CCSS in Georgia is a step forward – and gives

our teachers more refined tools to better prepare our young people for work and college – it is not a drastic change for either our teachers or our students. Some of the standards are introduced at different grade levels, but teachers have, essentially, been implementing the CCSS while they’ve been teaching the GPS.

Without question, there has been much conversation about the integrated approach of our mathematics GPS. While all of us want our students to succeed, unfortunately, for too long, Georgia has lagged behind the nation and other countries in mathematics achievement. An integrated approach to math is one way that states can help students master the skills and knowledge outlined within the CCSS. We look forward to continuing a conversation with parents, teachers and the community on how to help our students excel. Once our mathematics curriculum is fully implemented, I have every confidence that our students will be the winners. Our mathematics GPS, supported by the CCSS, will help Georgia’s students rise above the rest.

In the simplest terms, standards set the goal for what students should know and be able to do by the time they complete a grade level and then ultimately graduate high school. Curriculum, on the other hand, guides how a teacher teaches the standards. Since 2004, we have been overhauling our state’s curriculum. The new curriculum is the product of a lot of hard work by classroom teachers, parents, businesses and curriculum experts. And our award-winning curriculum is nearing full implementation with great results.

We will NOT be abandoning our curriculum. So, if our curriculum is already good, why join this initiative?

First, while our GPS give our teachers an excellent tool to prepare our young people, we are always looking for opportunities to improve. The CCSS integrate much of the GPS, but benefit from the best and latest research allowing them to advance the groundwork we have laid.

Second, the CCSS allows for a meaningful comparison of our students’ achievement with students in other states. Currently, states operate with different standards, making it impossible to accurately compare data nationally or internationally. Our students will be competing for jobs with students from all over the world. We must be able to compare ourselves to the rest of the U.S. and other countries to ensure that we are providing students with the tools they need to be globally competitive.

Third, the initiative allows for better purchasing power. Since 48 participating states will have a consistent educational framework, textbook and instructional resource companies will be able to develop and target resources to one set of standards. This will help to reduce prices and ensure that funds are spent wisely. In these difficult economic times and beyond, it is essential that we maximize resources and invest wisely.

I am proud of the work done by teachers, parents, administrators and others to improve education in Georgia over the last few years, and we are excited to share and leverage our efforts with other states. By collaborating on the CCSS, working together we can take the next step to move Georgia’s schools from great to world-class.

Wanda Barrs - a parent, trained educator, small business associate and community volunteer - is Chair of the State Board of Education.