



FAQ's ABOUT THE HIGHER EXPECTATIONS

For more FAQ's, tools, resources, and other information about the Colorado Academic Standards, please visit: www.futureforwardcolorado.org.

Q. Why do Colorado's schools need these higher standards?

A: According to a college and career readiness analysis by ACT, only 25% of Colorado students are proficient in all four core subjects, showing that our previous standards were insufficiently rigorous. These new standards, implemented in classrooms across the state during the 2014-2015 school year, allow Colorado's parents and educators to know whether students are on the right track for college and career readiness, and if not, teachers and their school support networks will have the information they need to improve, boosting students' chances for success in college and the workforce.

Q: How do the new Colorado Academic Standards compare to the old standards?

A: The newest standards include ten content areas, postsecondary competencies, workforce readiness, and 21st century skills. A Thomas B. Fordham Institute study showed that the state's standards for English and Math, which include the Common Core, are superior to the old standards. Also, by incorporating the Common Core standards into the Colorado Academic Standards, our state can increase accountability and provide transparent data, allowing for true measurement from school to school, district to district, and state to state.

Q: How were these new standards created?

A: The Colorado Department of Education, along with educators, community leaders, and others, developed the Colorado Academic Standards in 2009. When the Common Core in English and Math were presented to the state shortly thereafter, the department adapted them to fit Colorado because they were more rigorous. The Colorado State Board of Education adopted all ten Colorado Academic Standards, including English and Math, in 2010. The standards were implemented in classrooms across the state during the 2014-2015 school year.

Q: Do these standards shift control of education from the local to the federal level?

A: No. The standards are not federally mandated. Colorado, along with 42 other states, voluntarily adopted the standards. State leaders, accountable to their constituents, can withdraw their states from the standards at any time. Local school boards retain the same level of authority as prior to the adoption of the new standards, including authority around implementation.

Q: Do these changes mean that schools have to store student data?

A: No. There is no data collection requirement in the adoption of the Colorado Academic Standards, including the Common Core. Standards define expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. Implementing the standards does not require data collection.