



OC STEM
INITIATIVE



New California Standards

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

ON COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS

For Business & Community Leaders

VISION

- All students possess the requisite STEM skills to be competitive for 21st century jobs in Orange County
- All educators and teachers are provided the tools and support to ensure their students are STEM competent and STEM literate
- Orange County is a leader in STEM workforce competitiveness in California and the United States

STRATEGY AREAS

1. Organizational Structure
2. Communication Strategy
3. STEM Learning
4. Professional Development
5. Workforce Development
6. Research and Evaluation

MEMBERS

The Allergan Foundation
The Boeing Company
Broadcom Foundation
Children and Families Commission of Orange County
Cotsen Foundation
Edwards Lifesciences
JP Morgan Chase Bank
Kaiser Permanente
Kay Family Foundation
OCTANE
Orange County Department of Education
Orange County United Way
Samueli Foundation
Tiger Woods Learning Foundation/Center
Time Warner Cable
The Henry Samueli School of Engineering
University of California, Irvine



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Dear Friends:

We want to thank you for your interest in helping communicate the benefits of the more rigorous standards being implemented in our Orange County schools.

Schools have been listening to business leaders and college administrators who are saying we need students and employees to be better problem solvers, communicate effectively and work in teams. Those are the attributes of the new California Standards, also known as the Common Core Standards.

When students focus on the skills needed to solve complex problems, they will be better prepared for college, as well as for today's jobs and the jobs of tomorrow – benefitting Orange County's businesses and the economy.

Your support and involvement are critically important to the future of our children, community and workforce. The word "change" often brings concern and even fear to many people. Even when the change is beneficial, like the new California Standards, people still find it easier to keep doing things the old way.

Unless business and community leaders understand the benefits that the new California Standards bring to Orange County's children, there may be misinformation and confusion. That's why your efforts to communicate the reality of the Common Core Standards are so important. With your help, there will be a better understanding of this important change and what it means to students – today and in the future.

Contrary to what you may have heard, teachers will have more control of their classrooms, not less. Common Core gives teachers the flexibility to do what they do best – be creative in choosing the teaching methods and selecting the curriculum that best fit their students' needs.

Schools and businesses are recognizing they must be aligned to better serve our children. Many Orange County employers, both large and small, are enthusiastic supporters of the Common Core Learning Standards.

The bottom line is that Common Core is a way for students to acquire the life skills they need. Common Core will help them stand on their own two feet to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead.

We hope you find this Toolkit useful. Please download it, and find ways to use it to communicate the benefits of Common Core. Your involvement is invaluable. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Gerald Solomon

Gerald Solomon
Executive Director, Samueli Foundation
Chair, OC STEM

Linda Christopher

Linda Christopher
Executive Director
OC STEM

WELCOME

This Toolkit has been customized to help Orange County business and community leaders easily and effectively communicate the benefits of the new California Standards, also referred to as the Common Core Standards.

Look for videos, key messages, talking points, handouts, newsletter items and social media messages, along with other tools, to help you spread the word about the advantages of higher standards for our children, their futures and our communities.

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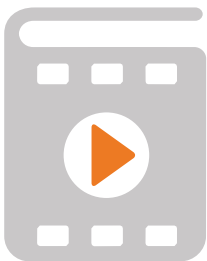
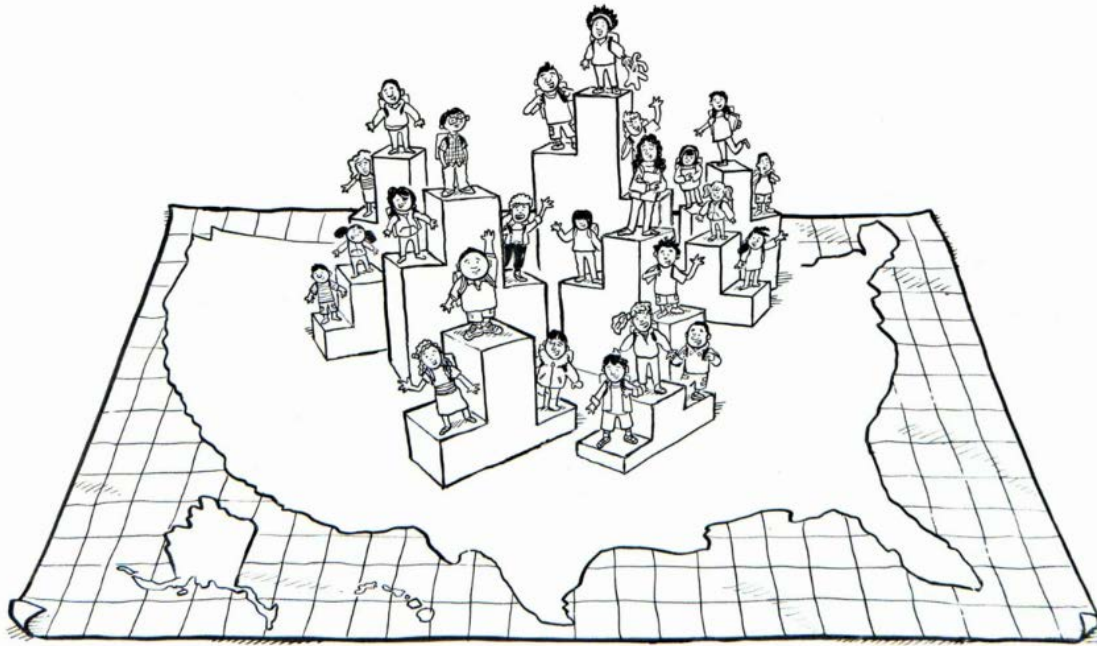


Resources / Acknowledgements

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WHAT IS COMMON CORE?

The new California Standards, also known as Common Core represents higher standards that help students become critical thinkers ready for college and career, putting them on a path to prosperity in Orange County's bright economic future.



VIDEO

Please take a look at this 3-minute overview from the Council of the Great City Schools explaining the Common Core State Standards. Please share this link with your friends.

<http://vimeo.com/51933492>



WEBSITE

For more detail on the Common Core State Standards, go to the California Department of Education website:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS COMMON CORE?



Common Core provides clear standards for grade levels and across schools. Parents can be confident they understand what their children need to know for each grade level. Students continue to learn factual information, but will also receive

a deeper education that will focus on critical thinking and analysis. Students will benefit by being better prepared to succeed in college and careers as the 21st Century evolves.

WHAT BUSINESS LEADERS SAY



Business leaders are looking for critical thinkers and problem solvers. These skills, which are at the center of Common Core, are currently needed in the workforce. As jobs in the 21st Century continue to change, business leaders need people who can analyze the changes and

determine how the business can evolve to meet them. Business leaders are looking to high schools, community colleges and universities to help their students develop these vital capabilities. Capable employees are not only critical to the health of individual businesses, but to Orange County's economy as a whole.

HOW COMMON CORE BENEFITS STUDENTS

In addition to learning factual information, students will be developing the ability to solve problems as they arise. That's what we all need to do in real life and what businesses are looking for in the people they hire. In

a world where we don't know what the jobs of tomorrow will look like, being able to analyze the situation and solve problems will be key for a student's future success.

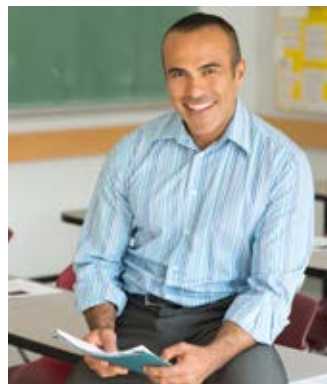
HOW PARENTS CAN HELP



Homework will be tougher, as students work to meet new, higher standards. Families are uniquely positioned to help children build a bridge between their schoolwork and the world. Including children in developing the family budget or mapping out a road trip can bring classroom concepts into real life. Parents

can also model skills like persistence, teamwork and patience. Students are more likely to succeed and have a positive attitude when family members encourage them to be persistent. Talk with your children's teachers for tips on how to help your child succeed.

WHAT COMMON CORE MEANS TO TEACHERS



Common Core learning standards give far more flexibility to teachers and districts than they have had before. These standards set out what each student is expected to know by the end of the school year. However, the standards do not tell the teacher how to teach.

The curriculum, specific books, lesson plans and classroom exercises are left up to each district to decide on its own. By doing this, the Common Core learning standards allow individual communities to tailor learning exercises and lessons to their own students and histories.

KEY MESSAGES

These Key Messages are designed to clearly and consistently explain the benefits of the new California Standards, also known as Common Core to employees and business and community leaders.

LIFE SKILLS



Common Core is a way for students to acquire the life skills they need, such as the ability to think critically, communicate and collaborate. Common Core will help them stand on their own two feet to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead.

TIME IS NOW



Businesses need skilled workers – now. By ramping up Common Core, students have a much better chance of acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in today's economy and emerging opportunities as the 21st Century workplace evolves.

CHANGE IS GOOD

It's true, Common Core represents a change. Because of its focus on solving complex problems students will learn the skills they need for today's jobs and the jobs of tomorrow.

WORKPLACE SKILLS

Some of the most important attributes of Common Core, such as the ability to solve problems creatively, communicate effectively and work in teams, are needed every day by Orange County companies and entrepreneurs.

GETTING THERE



Common Core's assessments, like the dashboard in a car, will help parents, students and teachers navigate the learning process. Everyone can see if students are getting to their destinations, or if course corrections are needed.

WHAT TEACHERS DO BEST

Common Core gives teachers the flexibility to do what they do best – be creative in choosing the teaching methods and selecting the curriculum that best fits their students' needs.

SUPPORTED BY JOB CREATORS

Employers* across the region are enthusiastic supporters of Common Core. Tomorrow's employees need to be creative and innovative critical thinkers.

** Companies supporting Common Core include: Aetna, AT&T, Bayer, Boeing, Broadcom, Chevron, Dell, Dow Chemical, DuPont, Exxon Mobil, Ford, GE, Harley Davidson, Hitachi, IBM, Intel, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft, Motorola, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Rockwell, State Farm, Symantec, Taco Bell, Texas Instruments, Time Warner Cable, Verizon, Walmart, Xerox*



TAKING ACTION: FACE-TO-FACE

Clarify the new California Standards, also known as Common Core benefits. Make clear, powerful points.



POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

[Click here](#) to download a brief PowerPoint presentation. Refer to the Notes pages for help in delivering a presentation to employees or community members on the benefits of the Common Core standards.

COMMON CORE MINUTE

Open a business meeting or begin a Lunch 'N Learn with a brief statement of why California Standards matter to businesses and our community.

- Our business needs employees who have the skills to be successful in the 21st Century – and we need them now.
- The problem is, we aren't seeing enough graduates from high school, community colleges or even four-year programs who have the attributes we need.
- That's why my company is one of the many U.S. employers who are enthusiastic supporters of Common Core.
- Some of the most important attributes of Common Core, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity, are needed every day in our business – at every level of our organization.
- By ramping up Common Core, students have a much better chance of acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace, and to help us continue creating jobs right here in Orange County.
- Today's students will someday work in a company. Perhaps sitting next to one of us. We want them to be ready.



TAKING ACTION: REACHING OUT

Emphasize the benefits of the California Standards. Connect with your community.

NEWSLETTER / WEBSITE ITEMS

VALUE

These mini-articles are designed to help you drop information about the Common Core standards into a communication.



METHOD

Timing is key. It is most effective to publish these snippets at regular intervals. Publishing them all at once will overwhelm your audience. Include a link to one of the videos in this Toolkit.

#1 Goals of the New California Standards

New, more rigorous academic standards, called Common Core, have been set out by the state of California. These new Common Core learning standards raise the bar on what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.

Our company supports Common Core standards because the goal is to ensure that graduates are better prepared to go on to college or join the workforce – now and in the future. Common Core emphasizes real-world skills like working with a group, applying concepts to new situations and analyzing the quality of information being used in our work.

California's Common Core learning standards are giving rise to a new way of teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers are focusing on conceptual understanding, digging deeper into subject matter and building on what kids already know to help them discover the next level.



Students will work to understand each other's thought process while they focus on the right answer.

Students will not only learn information and the answers to specific questions, they'll be developing the ability to solve problems as they arise. That's what we all need to do in real life and what we look for in the people we hire. And in a world where we don't know what the jobs of tomorrow will be, having employees who are better able to analyze a situation and solve problems will be key to our success.



#2 Teachers Implement California Standards

You may be wondering if California's Common Core learning standards means there is less local control by our schools. Under Common Core, even though there are higher state standards, individual teachers will decide how to teach in their classrooms.

The key to a student's success under the new learning standards is in the implementation. Teachers will constantly identify what works and which teaching techniques need to be added to build a stronger, more valuable education for students in the long run.

For example, instead of delivering scripted lesson plans and worksheets, teachers are expected to engage their students in discussion and learn how a student is thinking about the problems that are being presented. This means teachers and students spend a lot of time listening, quoting what they've heard back to each other and asking, "Why?"

This type of learning will result in graduates who have more job-ready skills that businesses, such as ours, need now and in the future.

#3 California Standards: Benefits to Business

California's Common Core learning standards aim to prepare students for life outside of the classroom.

For example, when you walk into work each morning, nobody warns you that, "Today will be a multiplying fractions day." Instead, you need to handle questions and solve problems as they arise. Sometimes, you need to work across divisions to find solutions.

Students need to realize there are no notes to consult and often no "right" answers that can be memorized. Often, employees need to work as a team to solve an issue. Some of Common Core's most important attributes, such as the ability to solve problems creatively, communicate effectively and work in teams, are needed every day by Orange County companies and entrepreneurs.

As students prepare for this reality, teachers are focusing more than ever on real-world skills.



#4 How Group Learning Spurs Personalized Learning

California's Common Core learning standards are designed to ensure that each student is able to gain a set of skills before moving on to the next one. The only way teachers can do this is by understanding each student's comprehension level, and focusing on how they learn. That's why the standards place such high priority on understanding a learner's thought process — whether for a math problem or a classic novel.

This focus on individual student skills is why students are working on more group projects. Teachers are trying to understand what students are saying and how they explain their reasoning to their peers. This, in turn, helps the teacher teach each student at his or her own level.

FOR EXAMPLE:

1. The student explores a problem and comes to conclusions on their own.
2. The teacher leads a discussion about the conclusions students make. Students are encouraged to share their ideas and the teacher guides them toward the concept being taught.
3. The teacher then steps in and teaches the mathematical concept and provides exercises for students to practice.

That means that instead of a sheet of multiplication tables, teachers are helping students understand why multiplication works the way it does. Once the student has learned that, he or she will be able to apply the concepts of multiples in any situation, not just on a test.



#5 Local Control of the Classroom

California's Common Core standards give far more flexibility to teachers and districts than in the past.

These standards set out what each student is expected to know by the end of the school year. However, the standards do not tell the teacher how to teach. The curriculum, specific books, lesson plans and classroom exercises are left up to each district to decide on its own. By doing this, California's Common Core standards allow individual communities to tailor learning exercises and lessons to their own students.

Previous standards had sometimes provided teachers with standard scripts to read and encouraged them to stick to the textbooks. The new standards allow those decisions to be made at the district level, much closer to the frontlines of teaching.

District officials and teachers are working in professional learning teams across the region to compare notes and ideas and to learn from one another.

#6 Literature in California's new Core Learning Standards

The idea behind California's Common Core learning standards is to help students be ready for careers and life in the 21st Century.

Common Core sets students up to truly understand what they read, so they enter college and the workforce with strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills. That's why the standards emphasize depth over breadth in reading.

At a practical level, that means students in English classes will still be reading literary classics and engaging with them more deeply, taking the time to do more than just follow the storyline. The questions will be around why things happened, not just what happened. They're going to be asked to show they have really thought through what it means. And more often, they will also read paired nonfiction books that help them to understand a novel's historical setting. If students can learn to do that with one book, they will have a skill they can apply to any text.

Students will be asked to read more in most classes, including interesting and challenging informational articles that have rich vocabulary and can deepen students' content knowledge.

In the end, these skills will better equip students to take on the challenges of tomorrow's workforce.



#7 Formative Assessment

When you write a report or email, have you ever asked a colleague to, "Take a quick look?" When you do, you're asking for a formative assessment.

Formative assessment is the ongoing process of collecting data on what people know or don't know, and changing track accordingly. At school, the idea is that with a clear vision of the progress each student is making, teachers can adjust their lesson plans and provide necessary interventions to improve individual achievement.

California's Common Core standards urge teachers to engage in formative assessment instead of waiting until the end-of-semester final to gauge a student's progress. The standards are aimed at "building children's capacity to think, analyze, communicate and reason." To test that, teachers need to find out where the students are with grappling with complex ideas.

Formative assessment is the ongoing process of collecting data on what people know or don't know, and changing track accordingly. With a clear vision of the progress each student is making, teachers can adjust their lesson plans and provide necessary interventions to improve individual achievement.

To get a full picture of student understanding, teachers ask open-ended questions and get students to explore ideas aloud. They listen in when kids are working together. They even encourage students to assess each other and themselves.

Checking in with children to figure out whether they've understood a concept or lesson is more important than ever.



#8 Smarter Balanced Assessments

People across the country have asked whether the new learning standards set out by the Common Core framework will be effective. The only way to answer that question is to measure students' progress under the new teaching methods. That's why, at the end of the year, all 3rd through 8th graders and 11th graders will be tested under the new Smarter Balanced assessments. The old STAR system has been retired in California. The new system is called the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

The new tests will indicate the level of preparation for careers or college courses. Students will see fewer multiple-choice questions and will need to provide more short answers and extended responses that focus on their thought process. Like the Common Core learning standards, the tests are designed to push students' critical-thinking and real-world problem solving skills.

The tests are designed to provide flexibility for individual student needs. They're conducted on computers, which give students access to things like scratch pads and calculators. By putting the assessments online, results will be returned more quickly, and schools can use them to plan for teacher professional development and to improve the curriculum and instruction.

A child's score on new tests will NOT determine whether he/she goes on to the next grade. However, the results will be compared over time to measure progress.

This year's test results may initially be lower than STAR results in previous years. This doesn't mean that students have learned less or fallen behind. Instead, it reflects the higher expectations under the Common Core learning standards. The assessments are new, as are the lesson plans. It will take a bit of time to put the whole process in place.

The goal of the tests is to better understand how children learn and how schools can better prepare students to be more successful in higher education and on the job.

POSTER



[Click here](#) to download a Common Core poster. Post in your break room or use as a handout at employee or community meetings. You can also have a professional printer enlarge it for posting at a meeting.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The new California Standards, also known as Common Core is good for business and the economy.

SUBMITTING LETTERS

(These sample letters will get you started. Either fill in the blanks and email it to your local newspaper or create your own. When submitting a Letter to the Editor, include your phone number or email address. The editors will want to contact you to confirm that you are the writer.)

WHERE TO SUBMIT

There are many other newspapers in Orange County. Most of them are weekly publications and are devoted to news in a single city. Many of these papers are owned by either the Times or the Register.

When talking to an editor, ask what other local publications would consider publishing your letter.

NEWSPAPERS IN ORANGE COUNTY

The Los Angeles Times

letters@latimes.com, 1.800.LATIMES, ext.74511

The Orange County Register

letters@ocregister.com

Avery Bissett, editor for letters

abissett@ocregister.com, 714.796.3644

Letter #1

As a *[business leader / community leader]* in Orange County, I encourage you to support California's Common Core standards. The reasons are quite simple. Businesses need skilled workers – now. By ramping up Common Core, students have a much better chance of acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in the 21st Century workplace. Some of the most important attributes of Common Core, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity, are needed every day – in offices and throughout organizations.

Parents will be pleased to know that many major U.S. employers are enthusiastic supporters of Common Core. Like them, I know that your children and our future employees need better 21st Century skills – which are the same skills that Common Core demands.

Better prepared employees are not only critical to the health of individual businesses, but to creating Orange County's bright economic future.

Letter #2

Some of the most important attributes of California's Common Core are needed every day in our Orange County businesses.

Schools and businesses are beginning to align to better serve our children, preparing them with the skills that will help them be more successful in the workplace and in their lives. Many major U.S. employers are enthusiastic supporters of Common Core.

Business leaders are looking for critical thinkers and problem solvers. These skills, which are at the center of Common Core, are currently needed in the workforce. As jobs in the 21st Century continue to change, business leaders need people who can analyze the changes and determine how the business can evolve to meet them.

Business leaders are looking to high schools, community colleges and universities to help their students develop these vital capabilities. Capable employees are not only critical to the health of our individual businesses, but to Orange County's economy as a whole.

VIDEO TESTIMONIALS

Hear from Orange County business & community leaders. Share the videos.



JIM EVERETT

Former NFL Quarterback & School Board Member

<http://youtu.be/i6MlleefixY>



MARY ANNE FOO, Executive Director, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance

<http://youtu.be/ZMsCHnK4H10>



MAX GARDNER

President & CEO, Orange County United Way

<http://youtu.be/E5mibjAPygl>



JIM MAZZO

Chairman & CEO, AcuFocus

<http://youtu.be/la48FZVsGKA>



TRICIA NGUYEN

CEO, Vietnamese Community of Orange County

http://youtu.be/x8SQa1LA_I0



HENRY SAMUELI, Co-founder, Chairman of the Board & Chief Technical Officer, Broadcom Corp.

<http://youtu.be/XHmA402HU0c>



LUCY SANTANA

CEO, Girls Inc. of Orange County

<http://youtu.be/zn75v1wmsMU>



ROBERT SANTANA

CEO, Boys & Girls Club of Santa Ana

<http://youtu.be/nnzNhGrhhOQ>

Listen to Orange County teachers & administrators. Share the videos.



JIM DOTI

President, Chapman University

<http://youtu.be/Xu4XhbUPYWk>



HOWARD GILLMAN

Chancellor, University of California, Irvine

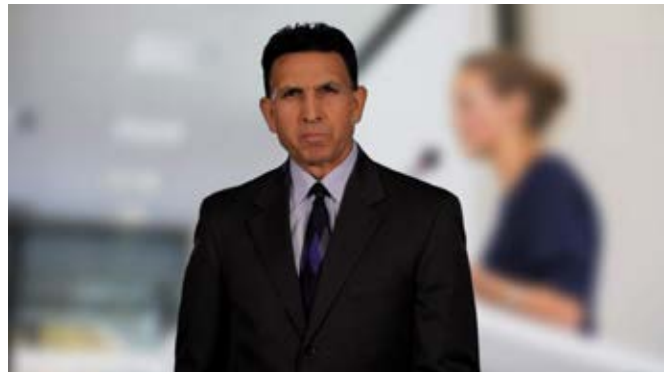
<http://youtu.be/o-JAdxRd0AA>



MIKE MATSUDA

Superintendent, Anaheim Union High School District

<http://youtu.be/tKC-9acB7nU>



AL MIJARES

Superintendent, Orange County Department of Education

<http://youtu.be/SIPWt7omrBU> (1 of 3)

<http://youtu.be/gLH2QeH3EoE> (2 of 3)

<http://youtu.be/9NxLm3RbvAc> (3 of 3)



JEANNE JELNICK, Orange County Teacher

<http://youtu.be/bFv8XX562IE>



TERI ROCCO, Orange County Teacher (retired)

<http://youtu.be/BXia28uKwnM> (English)

<http://youtu.be/1lc-DG7fKPI> (Spanish)

Be inspired by Orange County parents & students. Share the videos.



CELIA JAFFE, Orange County Parent

<http://youtu.be/RUsGRK6eTT8>



HELEN KIM, Orange County Student

<http://youtu.be/MFJT1X-Nkd0>



TAN LUONG, Orange County Parent

<http://youtu.be/xYMytTmDQtE> (English)

<http://youtu.be/yOmZc1u1GmY> (Vietnamese)



AMELIA RAMOS, Orange County Parent

<http://youtu.be/jLMojFyZ4XY> (English)

<http://youtu.be/suTh4m-5F-Q> (Spanish)



ANA ROBLES, CSUF Student

<http://youtu.be/wBq-ythoGec> (English)

<http://youtu.be/mjrSFS9lnHQ> (Spanish)



JULIAN RODRIGUEZ, Orange County Student

<http://youtu.be/SjMCQxreJyl>



RAISSA URRELO, CSUF Student

<http://youtu.be/wkLlicgjxig> (English)

<http://youtu.be/BQpgMVEd9x8> (Spanish)



KEVIN YOON, Orange County Student

<http://youtu.be/YdstlGOj9f4> (English)

<http://youtu.be/8jC7q8utQZo> (Korean)



SHANIN ZIEMER, Orange County Parent

<http://youtu.be/EosPL8gElsQ>

FACEBOOK POSTS



Drive the conversation. Share the benefits of higher standards.

(These posts will get you started. Obtain approval from your company to post them on a company-sponsored Facebook page or post them in your personal account. Try adding a link to one of the videos in this Toolkit. To be effective, post at least once a week.)

- Businesses are looking for critical thinkers and problem solvers. These skills, which are at the center of Common Core standards, are currently needed in today's workforce.
- As jobs in the 21st Century continue to change, business leaders need people who can analyze the changes and determine how the business can evolve to meet them. Common Core standards will help students – as future employees – be more successful.
- Business leaders are looking to schools, community colleges and universities to help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Common Core standards focus on these capabilities.
- Capable employees are not only critical to the health of individual businesses, but to Orange County's economy as a whole. Common Core standards help students become critical thinkers ready for college and career.
- Common Core standards help students become critical thinkers ready for college and career, putting them on a path to prosperity in Orange County's bright economic future.
- Common Core provides clear standards for grade levels and across schools. Parents can be confident they understand what their children need to know for each grade level.
- With Common Core standards, students continue to learn factual information, but will also receive a deeper education that will focus on critical thinking and analysis. Students will benefit by being better prepared to succeed in college and careers in the 21st Century.
- Common Core learning standards give far more flexibility to teachers and districts than they have had before. These standards set out what each student is expected to know by the end of the school year. However, the standards do not tell the teacher how to teach.
- Common Core standards allow the curriculum, specific books, lesson plans and classroom exercises to be left up to each district to decide on its own. So, individual communities tailor lessons to their students.
- With Common Core standards, students will learn factual information, but they will also develop the ability to solve problems as they arise. That's what we all need to do in real life and what our business is looking for in the people we hire.
- In a world where we don't know what the jobs of tomorrow will look like, being able to analyze the situation and solve problems will be key for future success. That's why Common Core learning standards are valuable.



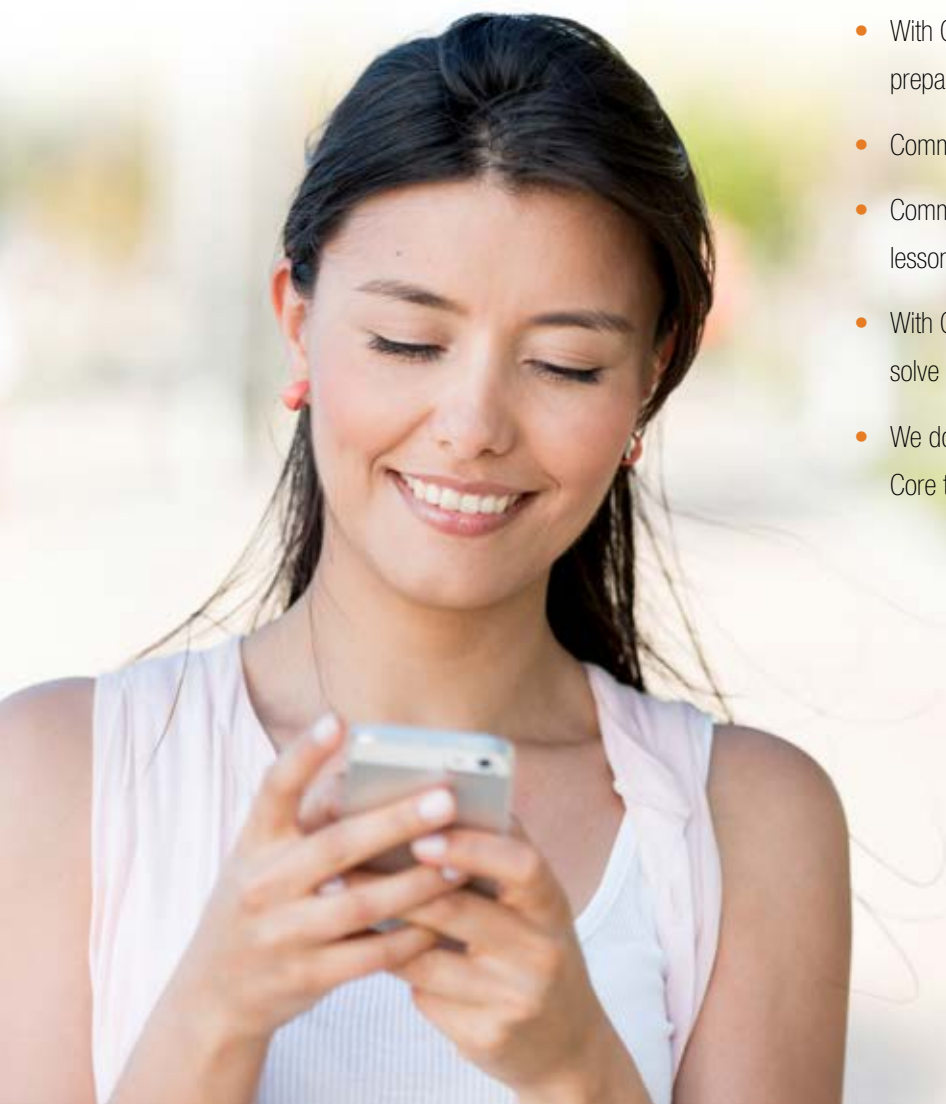
TWEET SHEET



Put your 140 characters to work. Tweet the value of Common Core.

(These tweets will get you started. Get approval from your company to tweet in a company-sponsored Twitter account or open a personal account. Try adding a link to one of the videos in this Toolkit. To be effective, tweet at least once a day.)

- Business needs critical thinkers who solve problems. These skills are at the center of Common Core standards.
- As jobs in the 21st Century continue to change, we need people who can analyze the situation and help the business evolve.
- Common Core standards will help students – as future college students and employees – be more successful.
- Businesses need employees who have critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Common Core standards focus on these capabilities.
- Capable employees are critical to the health of individual businesses and to Orange County's economy. Common Core supports this.
- Common Core standards help students become critical thinkers ready for college and career.
- Common Core provides clear standards, so parents understand what their children need to know for each grade level.
- With Common Core standards, students continue to learn factual information, but will also focus on critical thinking and analysis.
- With Common Core standards, students will benefit by being better prepared to succeed in college and careers in the 21st Century.
- Common Core standards do not tell the teacher how to teach.
- Common Core standards allow the curriculum, specific books, lesson plans and classroom exercises to be left up to each district.
- With Common Core standards, students will develop the ability to solve problems as they arise. That's a real-life skill.
- We don't know what the jobs of tomorrow will look like. Common Core teaches students to analyze a situation and solve problems.



KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS

Take a deeper dive in the new California Standards, also known as Common Core. Here's what the experts say.

CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking is highlighted in almost every discussion of key competencies for the 21st Century. Critical thinking includes inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as making correct analyses, inferences and evaluations. These competencies are important for deeply understanding academic content, and they also relate to later career performance. Research suggests that for a company to compete in the global economy, it needs workers who will think about how to continuously improve its products, processes or services. In another study, executives say the heart of this continuous improvement process, knowing the right questions to ask, is a function of critical thinking.

Studies also tie critical thinking to other important societal outcomes. For example, one study says that citizens who think critically are more likely to be self-sufficient and therefore less of a drain on state resources. Meanwhile, others suggest that such citizens are better equipped to give back to society, including through social entrepreneurship aimed at benefiting others.

Reason Effectively

- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation

Use Systems Thinking

- Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems

Make Judgments and Decisions

- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes

Solve Problems

- Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

A term intended to encompass the broad move toward deeper and more relevant learning, used by a variety of organizations. The “Partnership for 21st Century Skills” is a national organization that advocates for the integration of skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication into the core academic subjects, using the “four Cs” as guidance: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. About 20 states have adopted its goals and principles. For more information, go to: www.p21.org

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

The Common Core State Standards is an initiative that seeks to bring diverse state curricula and standards into alignment with each other by following the principles of standards-based education reform. It is sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Developed by education experts from 45 states, these K-12 learning standards go into key concepts in math and English/language arts. They require a practical, real-life application of knowledge that prepares students for success in college, work and life. They were developed around the principle that understanding is more important than memorization, and provide the national education community with consistent learning expectations for all students. Find additional information at:

www.corestandards.org/

RESOURCES/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Learn as much as you can about the new California Standards, also known as Common Core from these trusted sources. Then pass it on. Accurate information deserves to be shared.

OC STEM: Find this Business & Community Leaders Communications Toolkit on the OC STEM website, along with customized toolkits for Parents & Students and Teachers & Administrators: <http://ocstem.org/>



ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

OC STEM thanks these organizations for their support:

California Department of Education

Common Core State Standards:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

Smarter Balance Assessment System:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>

Council of the Great City Schools

<http://www.cgcs.org/domain/72>

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

<http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework/260>

Framework for 21st Century Learning

<http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework>

Intel: Common Core State Standards

<http://www.businessandeducation.org/sites/default/files/resources/Intel%20-%20What%20Parents%20Should%20Know%20about%20Common%20Core.pdf>

Measuring 21st Century Competencies: *Guidance for Educators*

<http://asiasociety.org/files/gcen-measuring21cskills.pdf>

Silicon Valley Community Foundation

http://embracethecore.curatasite.com/pages/communications_toolkit

