6 TIPS TO START THE CONVERSATION

Whether you like to talk, write or go digital, use these steps that will help you communicate the benefits of Common Core standards.

#1: Speak Up.
Ask to present a Common Core minute at the start of parent and community meetings.

#2: Write About It.
Dedicate a recurring column in a parent newsletter to explain and illustrate what the Common Core learning standards really look like. Bonus Tip: Link to a video from this Toolkit to bring in voices from across the community.

#3: Make it Real.
Distribute the 1-page Fact Sheet in this Toolkit to parents and community members. Bonus Tip: Build on the Fact Sheet in this Toolkit to show more details of what Common Core looks like in a classroom.

#4: Get Social.
Use the Facebook Postings and Tweet Sheet in this Toolkit to start your social media presence. Bonus Tip: Link from postings and tweets to videos in the Toolkit.

#5: Go Digital.
Create a “Common Core” or “21st Century Learning” section on a parent website. If you don’t have the resources to maintain a new page, link to a trusted source from the front page of your site. Bonus Tip: Refer to the Resources section on the last page of this Toolkit.

#6: Engage.
Set up a Common Core-centered meeting with your school’s PTA or Parent Committee. Bonus Tip: Prepare for the meeting by reviewing the Key Messages, Common Core Minute and PowerPoint Presentation in this Toolkit. Designate one or two spokespersons (i.e. Experts/Champions).

COMMON CORE MINUTE #1

With one of these brief statements, you can quickly tell parents, students, school board members and community groups why Common Core matters.

• My name is XXXX. I am the parent of children who attend XXXX.
• I feel very fortunate that my children will benefit from Common Core. That’s because I believe Common Core will help our children develop important life skills, such as critical thinking. Going forward, our kids can use these skills to make informed choices, get a job and stand on their own two feet.
• The marketplace is changing so fast. For example, the cell phone in my pocket looks very different from the one I had when [insert name of child] was born. And the job skills [insert name of child] will need are changing so fast, it’s hard to keep up.
• Because of Common Core’s focus on critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication, I believe that [insert name of child] and [his/her] classmates will stand a better chance of mastering the skills they need to be successful and have a good life.

COMMON CORE MINUTE #2

• I talk with a lot of parents, and one thing is universal. We are all interested in the same thing — the best education possible for our children.
• That’s why I’m glad to see the higher standards and clear benchmarks we have with Common Core.
• Common Core is raising the educational standards for our students here in Orange County.
• Here’s what I mean. Schools still teach the facts — but are now going beyond them to challenge students to really think things through.
• Students are learning critical thinking skills that will help them in college, on the job and in their lives.
• They are learning to analyze information and to better communicate with others — not just go along with the loudest voice.
• This approach will help our children to be better prepared for college and careers in today’s