New Jersey Department of Education

Educational Partnerships

Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

Back-to-School Talking Points for Superintendents to Welcome Parents & Families

Superintendents may want to consider using some of the talking points below when communicating with parents about the Common Core State Standards.

- We are extremely proud to tell you that we will raise our learning standards for your children. (The standards are titled the "Common Core State Standards.") Everything that we do in our district is based on high academic standards for your son or daughter.

- The Common Core State Standards describe the knowledge and skills that a student needs by the end of each school year and when they graduate from high school.

- You may have heard that all New Jersey schools have been updating their academic standards in English language arts and mathematics. We have been making this transition since New Jersey adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010.

    - This means that in English language arts your son or daughter will strengthen their knowledge in reading, writing, speaking, presenting ideas, listening, and understanding. They will learn from all different types of literature and will have the opportunity to express their work in creative ways. The Common Core defines the skills that build the foundation for effective communication. Like always, here in our district, we develop the lessons for your child.

    - In math, your children will begin with a strong base including whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and decimals. These skills support a student's ability to learn and apply more demanding math concepts and procedures as they move up the grade levels. In the middle school and high school, students practice applying analytical ways of thinking to real-world issues and challenges. The standards prepare students to think and reason mathematically. Each year of math builds on the prior year and prepares students for the next year of challenges. When your sons and daughters graduate from 12th grade, they will have the knowledge and skills to begin college or enter the workforce.

- We are excited to bring the Common Core State Standards to our students because they:

    - Set clear and consistent learning goals for every student.
    - Utilize the knowledge and experience of teachers, the higher learning and business communities, academic experts, leading education researchers, and you - the public.
    - There will be a focus on students' critical thinking skills and their ability to solve real-world problems.

- We are very proud of your sons and daughters *and* our school(s), and we hope that as you begin to see your child learning with the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics that you will see how the standards define the quality and excellence of your child's education here at _____.