New Jersey Department of Education

Educational Partnerships

Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

Back-to-School Talking Points for Members of the Board of Education to Welcome Parents & Families

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

- I would like to welcome you with a few words about our academic standards in math and English language arts (ELA). This is what our superintendent referred to as the Common Core State Standards.

- Like you, I care about our children, and when I learned about the Common Core State Standards I was impressed. These are not just any learning standards; they were informed by educators, university experts, researchers, business leaders, and members of the public.

- I was surprised to learn that the folks from the SAT and the ACT (the people that provide the college entrance tests) found that three-fourths of young men and women entering college "were not sufficiently prepared for their first year college courses." In addition, business leaders say that many recent high school graduates don't have well-developed skills to begin work. This tells us that the prior academic standards in ELA and mathematics are not effectively preparing our students to be college and career ready. We need to do more to help our children.

- The Common Core State Standards help your sons and daughters build the knowledge and skills they need to become successful after high school as college freshmen, as highly valued employees and as productive members of their communities … and we can't argue with that!

- We don't know what tomorrow's jobs will be, but we do know that the future depends on a strong workforce in which critical thinking and problem-solving skills can be applied in any context.

- (For lower grades) This may sound like we are talking about way off in the future, but these standards don't work that way. The skills and knowledge outlined at each grade level build on the last grade and prepare the student for the next grade. With these standards, everything fits together; the skills, knowledge, and application of that information make sense to students. That is how the standards work … they help your child build on their experiences creating a foundation for future success.

- You have a commitment from me, and the other board members, to do everything that we can to ensure that your children get the best education possible. That means we will ensure that our students and our schools implement the Common Core State Standards and bring your children to success.