

A Parent's Guide to the

# Common Core State Standards



## Common Core: A New Curriculum for Arkansas Students and Teachers

The Arkansas State Board of Education approved the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for all Arkansas Schools in July, 2010.

This new curriculum, which was developed at the request of the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, was designed to prepare students for college and career readiness. Unlike the Arkansas State Frameworks, this new Common Core Curriculum has fewer, more rigorous standards for students. The standards are internationally benchmarked to ensure that we are teaching our

students on a level that will help them compete globally. Students are expected to have thorough, concentrated learning experiences on more difficult skills. When compared to the Arkansas frameworks, many of the skills will be taught two grade levels below what has been taught in the past.

The timeline established by the Arkansas Department of Education required grades K – 2 to begin teaching this curriculum during the 2011-2012 school year; grades 3 – 8 began teaching the CCSS during the 2012-2013 school year; and grades 9 – 12 are implementing the standards this year. In 2014-2015, a new assessment

will replace our current Arkansas Benchmark and End Of Course Assessments. This assessment is being developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

The Cabot School District has embraced this significant challenge because the standards will better prepare our students for college and the workforce, making them nationally and internationally competitive. While teachers, administrators, and students will have to adapt to the new standards, our district is up to the challenge.

For more information, visit the CCSS website at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)



## **What your child will work on in high school:**

### **English Language Arts and Literacy**

To become ready for college and career, high school students learn to evaluate intricate arguments and surmount the challenges posed by complex written materials independently and confidently. Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students expand their literary and cultural knowledge and better understand references and images. They also develop the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality, first drafts of writing under tight deadlines. They are able to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts if needed. High school students master the essential “rules” of standard written and spoken English and resolve usage issues by consulting style and usage guides. By writing and participating in a variety of conversations, they assert and defend claims and show what they know about a subject using appropriate examples and evidence.\*

### **Mathematics**

To prepare for college and career, your child will study mathematics across a broad spectrum, from pure mathematics to real-world applications. Numerical skill and quantitative reasoning remain crucial even as students move forward with algebra. The study of algebra, functions, and geometry are important not only as mathematical subjects in themselves but also because they are the language of technical subjects and the sciences. In a data-rich world, statistics and probability offer powerful ways of drawing conclusions from data and dealing with uncertainty. The high school standards also emphasize using mathematics creatively to analyze real-world situations — an activity sometimes called “mathematical modeling.” The high school standards are organized into six major content areas: Number and Quantity; Algebra; Functions; Modeling; Geometry; and Statistics and Probability.\*

\*From the National PTA's *Parent Guide to Student Success*