



Illinois State Board of Education

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FACT SHEET

ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS

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The new Illinois Learning Standards are transforming the way teachers engage and challenge their students by focusing on application and real-world learning in the classroom. The newly implemented standards for K-12 education in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics set high expectations for what students should know and be able to do in order to succeed in college and careers.

The [Illinois Learning Standards](#) promote critical thinking and concept mastery. Although created by a national consortium of states, the Illinois Learning Standards based on the Common Core State Standards are independent of the federal government. Implementation decisions remain local, and teachers and school administrators continue to write local curricula and lesson plans for their classrooms.

Since the adoption of the new Illinois Learning Standards for ELA and math in 2010, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has developed professional learning opportunities, resources and technical assistance to support school districts as they put the new standards into practice. A [February 2014 ISBE survey](#) shows that 85 percent of teachers feel somewhat or completely prepared to implement the new standards. We expect to conduct the survey again this winter. Results from [Scholastic's Primary Sources Survey](#) of teachers released last fall confirm strong support for the new Illinois Learning Standards. A large majority believe the standards will have a positive impact on our students, especially on their ability to lead, focus and connect learning to other ongoing initiatives to improve the quality of education in our state.

Teachers and school leaders can refer to local, state and national resources as they determine how to meet the new benchmarks through instructional approaches and lesson plans. ISBE has dedicated a section of our website to a [Professional Learning Series](#) with hundreds of supplementary resource items available to prepare educators and aid the implementation process. ISBE has also developed an ELA and math [Listserv](#), reaching more than 2,000 teachers to notify them of new resources and share information about updates. A monthly newsletter, [Capture the Core](#), is available online, and content specialists have designed [ELA and Math Shift Kits](#) to assist educators in implementing the realigned standards. The kits include PowerPoints, handouts, research and advice on how teachers can use the

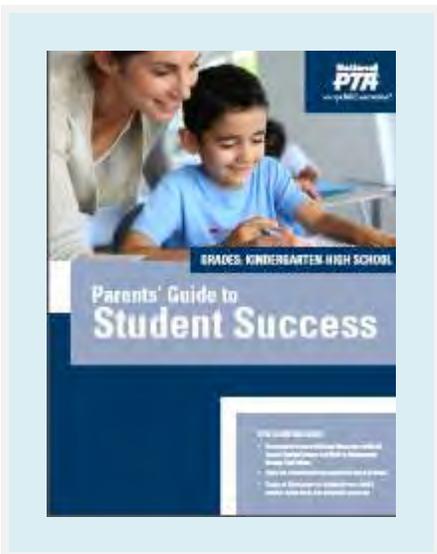
ILLINOIS TEACHER VOICES

A new ISBE website shares teacher stories and perspectives regarding curriculum and instructional changes as they implement the new Illinois ELA and math learning standards. [Illinois Teacher Voices](#) features teachers from across the state speaking on student engagement, classroom changes, professional development, teaching styles and parental issues and offering suggestions for fellow teachers.

information to gain a better understanding of how best to implement the standards. In addition, a [Model Math Curriculum](#) has been designed to help districts design a curriculum that aligns with the Illinois Learning Standards and Partnership for the Assessment of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. Many of the resources available online have been put in place to facilitate professional development without teachers having to leave the building and forfeit classroom time.

Resources are also available to help parents better understand the new standards and prepare their children for the higher expectations. Parental involvement is crucial to student success, so parents are encouraged to take advantage of these tools.

The [Core Coalition's Common Core Illinois](#) site provides valuable materials for parents to become more knowledgeable about the new Illinois Learning Standards and how they can help their children succeed. The site offers tips for talking to teachers, sample lessons to help parents see how their child is learning and answers to common questions about the new standards.



The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) also provides helpful resources, including a [video series](#) with an overview of the standards that also addresses myths about the Common Core.

Additionally, ISBE partnered with the Illinois PTA to distribute [Parent Guides](#) for kindergarten through high school. The parent guides are available in Spanish and English and provide clear expectations for what students should be learning at each grade level in order to become college and career ready.

Parents' Guides to Student Success include:

- An outline of the key items children should be learning in ELA and math in each

grade.

- At-home activities parents can do to support their child's learning experience.
- Approaches for helping parents to connect with their child's teachers.
- Tips for planning for college and careers aimed at parents of high school students.
- **Illinois' recently adopted science benchmarks** known as the [Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS) will be implemented in the 2016-17 school year. Classroom resources for NGSS will be available this winter at no cost to Illinois teachers. Additionally, new [Physical Education goals](#) have been implemented to enhance students' communication skills, teamwork and problem solving by using both their minds and bodies.

