



Kenowa Hills Public Schools

High Levels of Learning for Each and Every Student

Quick Guide to Common Core State

The State of Michigan adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to make sure all children succeed upon graduation from high school. This guide is designed to help you understand how the standards will affect your child, what changes you will see and what you can do to help your child in the classroom.

The CCSS are important because they will help all students learn the same skills. Clear expectations of the CCSS allow teachers, parents, and students identify the key areas in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and math. If you know what expectations are, you can work together with the teacher to assist your child.

Mathematics

The Common Core State Standards make several important changes to current standards. The table below indicate some of the changes you might see in your child's school work and what you can do to help your child.

What is Changing?	What Changes to Watch For.	What You Can Do.
Your child will work more deeply in fewer topics, which will ensure full understanding. (Less is more!)	Look for assignments that require students to show their work and explain how they arrived at an answer.	Know what concepts are important for your kids based on their grade level and spend time working on those concepts.
Your child will keep building on learning year after year, starting with a strong foundation.	Look for assignments that build on one another. For example, students will focus on adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Once these areas are mastered, they will focus on fractions. Building on that, they will then focus on Algebra. You should be able to see the progression in the topics they learn.	Be aware of what concepts your child struggled with last year and support your child in those challenge areas moving forward especially during the summer months.
Your child will spend time practicing and memorizing math facts.	Look for assignments that ask your child to master math facts such as addition groupings up to 20 or multiplication tables.	Help your child know and memorize basic math facts. Ask your child to "do the math" that pops up in daily life.
Your kids will understand why the math works and be asked to talk about and prove their understanding.	Your children might have assignments that ask them to show or explain their mathematical thinking – to SAY why they think their answer is the right one.	Talk to your children about their math homework and ask them to teach you new concepts. Help them figure out ways to explain their thinking.
Your child will now be asked to use math in real-world situations.	Look for math assignments that are based on the real world. For instance, homework for 5 th graders might include adding fractions as part of a dessert recipe or determining how much pizza friends ate based on fractions.	Provide time every day for your child to work on math at home.

English Language Arts

The Common Core State Standards make several important changes to current standards. The charge below indicate some of the changes you might see in your child's school work and what you can do to help your child.

What is Changing?	What Changes to Watch For.	What You Can Do.
Your child will now read more non-fiction in each grade level	Look for your kids to have more reading assignments based on real-life events, such as biographies, articles and historical stories	Read non-fiction books with your children. Find ways to make reading fun and exciting.
Reading more non-fiction texts will help your child learn about the world through reading.	Look for your kids to bring home more fact-based books about the world. For instance, your 1 st Grader or Kindergartener might read Clyde Robert Bulla's <i>A Tree is a Plant</i> . This book lets students read and learn about science.	Know what non-fiction books are grade-level appropriate and make sure your children have access to such books.
Your kids will read challenging texts very closely, so they can make sense of what they read and draw their own conclusions.	Your kids will have reading and writing assignments that might ask them to retell or write about key parts of a story or book. For example, your 2 nd or 3 rd Grader might be asked to read aloud Faith D'Aluisio's non-fiction book titled <i>What the World Eats</i> and retell facts from the story.	Provide more challenging texts for your kids to read. Show them how to dig deeper into difficult pieces.
When it comes to writing or retelling a story, your kids will use "evidence" gathered from the text to support what they say.	Look for written assignments that ask your child to draw on concrete examples from the text that serve as evidence. Evidence means examples from the book that your child will use to support a response or conclusion. This is different from the opinion questions that have been used in the past.	Ask your child to provide evidence in everyday discussions and disagreements.
Your kids will learn how to write from what they read.	Look for writing assignments that ask your child to make arguments in writing using evidence. For 4 th and 5 th graders, this might mean reading and writing about <i>The Kid's Guide to Money</i> , a non-fictional book by Steve Otfinoski.	Encourage writing at home. Write together using evidence and details.
Your child will have an increased academic vocabulary.	Look for assignments that stretch your children's vocabulary and teach them "language is power."	Read often to babies, toddlers, preschoolers and children.

Parent Resources

Michigan Department of Education	http://www.michigan.gov/mde/
MI School Data	https://www.mischooldata.org
National PTA	http://www.pta.org
Institute of Education Sciences (IES)	http://ies.ed.gov

