

Talking to Teachers about Ohio's New Learning Standards

A Tip Sheet for Principals – Fall 2012

Schools are gearing up to fully implement Ohio's New Learning Standards by the 2014-2015 school year - standards that will help our students thrive in a 21st-century global economy and society. Here are some messages you can share with your team.

The standards will allow for instructional flexibility.

The best understanding of what works in the classroom comes from the teachers who are in them. The standards and corresponding model curriculum allow each teacher in each classroom to figure out specifically what works best for his or her students.

The standards will give teachers more time to teach what's important.

Because the standards cover fewer concepts but go more in-depth in each, teachers will have more time to deeply engage their students' minds in a given topic and to demonstrate how the topic relates to real-world applications.

The standards can make teaching more satisfying.

Many teachers will find Ohio's new learning standards rewarding because they cultivate higher-order skills in students, such as creativity, analytical thinking, communication and teamwork. These are things that make for more involved and successful students.

The standards should not increase teacher workload.

Ohio's new learning standards do not add an additional layer to the things teachers are asked to do in the classroom. Although the standards require more in-depth teaching, there are some things teachers can *stop* doing. For example, they can stop teaching about some subtopics within each subject so they can concentrate only on the *most important and relevant* subtopics.

Ohio's new learning standards will help prepare our students for the future.

International tests show that for several years now, U.S. students have been falling behind their peers in at least 18 nations in math, reading and science. Soon our children will be competing with these better-prepared students for jobs in the U.S. and abroad. Clearly, our nation needs an education system that will better equip our children for success in college and for careers in an increasingly competitive global workforce.

Where Do We Stand Today?

This school year, 2012-2013, you should be developing expertise in the new content for your grade level and subjects and begin to using your district's corresponding curriculum through lessons, projects and activities.

You should attend all district-sponsored, standards-based professional development programs that are relevant to your grade and subjects, and you should take advantage of professional development and resources offered by the Ohio Department of Education at www.curriculum.education.ohio.gov. In 2013-2014, you should expand and refine your instruction under the new standards so you are fully implementing the standards and curriculum in your classroom by 2014-2015.