



Future Forward Colorado is a movement led by Colorado's business community to make Colorado's education system the best in the nation.

Today's global economy is dynamic, constantly evolving, and requires vastly different skills from its employees. To remain competitive, Colorado's schools must prepare its high school graduates with the knowledge and problem-solving skills necessary to meet the rising demands of post-secondary education and the 21st century workplace.

As a coalition of both employers and employees, Future Forward Colorado works to build statewide support, engagement, and awareness of efforts designed to ensure all students are ready to meet this demanding new reality. We believe in rigorous expectations, transparency, and accountability for our students, educators, and schools.

We support the Colorado Academic Standards, which incorporate the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts, because they raise the bar for what students must learn each year. They set a clear goal of what we want our students to know and be able to do by the end of their K-12 experience and the benchmarks they should reach along the way.

Future Forward Colorado Members:





FAQ's ABOUT THE NEW, HIGHER EXPECTATIONS

For more FAQ's, tools, resources, and other information about the Colorado Academic Standards, please visit: www.futureforwardcolorado.org.

Q. Why do Colorado's schools need these new standards?

A: According to a college and career readiness analysis by ACT, only 25% of Colorado students are proficient in all four core subjects, showing that our previous standards were insufficiently rigorous. With these new standards, Colorado's parents and educators will know whether students are on the right track for college and career readiness, and if not, teachers and their school support networks will have the information they need to improve, boosting students' chances for success in college and the workforce.

Q: How do the new Colorado Academic Standards compare to the old standards?

A: The new standards include ten content areas, postsecondary competencies, workforce readiness, and 21st century skills. A Thomas B. Fordham Institute study showed that the state's standards for English and Math, which include the Common Core, are superior to the old standards. Also, by incorporating the Common Core standards into the Colorado Academic Standards, our state can increase accountability and provide transparent data, allowing for true measurement from school to school, district to district, and state to state.

Q: How were these new standards created?

A: The Colorado Department of Education, along with educators, community leaders, and others, developed the Colorado Academic Standards in 2009. When the Common Core in English and Math were presented to the state shortly thereafter, the department adapted them to fit Colorado because they were more rigorous. The Colorado State Board of Education adopted all ten Colorado Academic Standards, including English and Math, in 2010.

Q: Do these standards shift control of education from the local to the federal level?

A: No. The standards are not federally mandated. Colorado, along with 45 other states, voluntarily adopted the standards. State leaders, accountable to their constituents, can withdraw their states from the standards at any time. Local school boards retain the same level of authority as prior to the adoption of the new standards, including authority around implementation.

Q: Do these changes mean that schools have to store student data?

A: No. There is no data collection requirement in the adoption of the Colorado Academic Standards, including the Common Core. Standards define expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. Implementing the Standards does not require data collection.