

Diocese of Cleveland
OFFICE OF CATECHETICAL FORMATION AND EDUCATION

Common Core State Standards

What are the Common Core State Standards?*

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative is a state-led effort that established a single set of clear educational standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics that states voluntarily adopt. The standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to enter credit bearing entry courses in two or four-year college programs or enter the workforce. The standards are clear and concise to ensure that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of the expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and mathematics in school.

The Major Shift in Education

The major shift in education required by the CCSS is that education will concentrate on depth of knowledge and skill development as opposed to the very wide scope of general knowledge acquired. Students will be better able to understand the intricacies of problems, and they will be better equipped to solve real world problems and design workable, efficient and globally conscious solutions.

Ohio and the Ohio Department of Education

Ohio along with Forty-four other states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core State Standards so far.

The Ohio Department of Education has created models for school districts to use in aligning curricula to the CCSS. The Ohio Department of Education is also revising social studies and science standards to reflect the literacy standards in the CCSS. The CCSS represents the minimum of what students need in order to be successful in college and careers. The Office of Catechetical Formation and Education of the Diocese of Cleveland has a curriculum that goes beyond the standards.

Religion Education and Literacy Skill Development

Some Catholic institutions, such as the Center for Catholic School Effectiveness at Loyola University Chicago, have created guidelines to assist catechists and all teachers in using Common Core literacy skills in religion knowledge lessons and in the infusion of religion into the content areas. Students will apply the CCSS skills developed for reading comprehension, speaking and writing to religion education as well as Catholicity infusion into all content areas. This should promote a deeper understanding of Church teaching and greater skill in speaking and writing to evangelize the faith.

The Importance of the Common Core State Standards*

High standards that are consistent across states provide teachers, parents, and students with a set of clear expectations that are aligned to the expectations in college and careers. The standards promote equity by ensuring all students, no matter where they live, are well prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to collaborate and compete with their peers in the United States and abroad. Unlike previous state standards, which were unique to every state in the country, the Common Core State Standards enable collaboration between states on a range of tools and policies.

*Information taken from Common Core State Standards Initiative website:

<http://www.corestandards.org>