



Supporting the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The widespread adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) presents an unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the United States. The Common Core State Standards offer a foundation for the development of more rigorous, focused, and coherent mathematics curricula, instruction, and assessments that promote conceptual understanding and reasoning as well as skill fluency. This foundation will help to ensure that all students are ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school and that they are prepared to take their place as productive, full participants in society.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) is committed to helping educators interpret and understand the Common Core State Standards. The Council supports educators' efforts to develop and put in place the associated comprehensive and coherent school, district, and state systems of instruction and assessment. Instruction and assessment that are aligned with these standards must be rooted in and promote principles of access and equity. When properly implemented, the Common State Standards will support all students' access to, and success in, high-quality mathematics programs. Such programs lead to knowledge of mathematics content and reasoning skills that enable students to apply mathematics effectively in a myriad of careers and in everyday life.

The Common Core State Standards are a significant component of systemic improvement in mathematics learning, but on their own they are not sufficient to produce the mathematics achievement that our country needs to be competitive in the global economy of the 21st century. Other factors are critical to realizing the potential of the Common Core:

- *Substantial opportunities for ongoing professional development* to ensure that all teachers understand and are prepared to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and that all administrators and policymakers understand teachers' needs
- *Accommodations in teacher evaluation systems* to allow time for the profession and institutions to adjust and adapt to the Common Core State Standards before evaluation systems include accountability for student achievement as one element of a valid, multifaceted teacher evaluation
- *Ample funding for education*, including funding for preschool education, to ensure that all students enter kindergarten with basic knowledge essential for school success
- *Funding for research and implementation of Common Core assessments* to ensure that these assessments meet the goal of measuring conceptual understanding and reasoning, as well as procedural fluency
- *Adequate state funding* to ensure that all students have access to Common Core assessments in formats that allow them to demonstrate their proficiency in all aspects of mathematics

Most important, all stakeholders must acknowledge that systemic improvement takes a number of years, and a long-term commitment to supporting the Common Core State Standards is necessary, even if initial assessment results do not show substantial improvements in student achievement.

Finally, for the Common Core State Standards to have long-term, positive effects on mathematics education, they must be dynamic. They must be updated periodically to reflect both emerging research on students' learning and practitioners' experiences with the current standards. NCTM is committed to working with other stakeholders to develop and implement a transparent, research-based process and realistic timetable for CCSSM's improvement over short, medium, and long terms to best support high levels of mathematics learning by all students.