

Gallup Common Core Survey of Teachers, August/September 2014

Verbatim responses to: What do you think is the most POSITIVE thing about the Common Core?

The following verbatims are sorted by category. They are the responses of the subset of public school teachers (approximately 450 out of 854) who gave their permission for Gallup to publish their comments.

Standards throughout the U.S./equal education

Commonality amongst the states. It would be great to have a universal standard as a nation.

Consistency across states with respect to curriculum.

Regardless of what state an American child lives in, he or she will be held to the same standards and be offered the same opportunities to learn.

Common standards nationwide.

They are trying to ensure that all students are taught certain topics and that students who move a lot will not be lost as they try to negotiate the curriculum in a new school.

Same standards in all states.

Uniform expectations for students across the country. Fifth graders in Connecticut should be learning the same material as fifth graders in Arizona.

Curriculum stays the same from state to state.

Helps those who move around a lot.

Consistency, i.e., 4th grade students in Colorado would be learning the same thing as 4th grade students in Michigan and Maine.

Commonality of education from state to state.

The consistency they provide from school district to school district.

They are a set of educational standards, which not all states have had before now.

They make learning standards more uniform from state to state. So that if a third grader moved from Iowa to California, they will have had the same objectives covered.

All students learning the same information regardless of which state they live in.

Attempt to have consistency in education between states.

Everyone has a curriculum goal that is similar.

The ability to move to a new geographic area and have similar curriculum.

It will provide a baseline for all states.

Unification of state standards.

Consistent goals.

Uniform standards

Across-the-board standards between states (students who move around a lot would be held to a consistent set of standards).

Sets a national standard.

The most positive thing is that students will be learning similar (if not the same) material across most of the US.

Standards that are consistent from one state to another.

Students do learn to work collaboratively.

The standard are excellent. It will be the testing that will be the downfall. Also, the delivery of the standards are being interpreted differently in different school systems, which is fine.

Standardization across the nation.

The standard are direct and skill based. The previous state standards were too vague. Also, I like knowing that when my state is compared to others we are no longer comparing apples to oranges.

Standards!

All the states should be teaching similar concepts at the same grade level.

It provides consistency of curriculum to address needs of kids traveling between districts and states.

Uniformity.

It creates a set of standards that most of the country will have in common, better guaranteeing a quality education to children throughout the country.

The idea of a minimum level of knowledge retained by the student.

That there is now standards for high school.

These are clearer and better standards for students.

It creates a common baseline of basic skills for reading, writing and math. It's a map to help guide/inform instruction.

They provide guidelines for curriculum.

A nationwide set of standards that would better transition students from one state to another.

I believe a move towards "national" standards (I know they're not technically national standards) is a good thing; it works for every other industrialized country in the world.

On the surface it seems like a reasonable initiative to align what is being taught across the country.

It sets high standards for all students and makes standards consistent from district to district and state to state.

The alignment of the entire country to the same standards.

Having objective standards for history and science are particularly good things.

It is a good idea that with this mobile society kids could be expected to know certain concepts at each grade level.

That everyone should be being taught the same material at each grade level, making it easier on students who move around a lot.

National standard is ok.

All the states should have similar standards for each grade level.

Making sure that age standards are taught across the country.

I like the concept of national standards.

Great for kids who move. I like that things will be taught consistently from one school to the next.

The attempt to create a portable, national instruction, standard for our children.

That it's a national curriculum. Every teacher will know exactly what their students will learn. Any students who move won't have lapses in their learning.

Gives all the schools in the nation similar standards and benchmarks.

It is very clear what each student must be able to do in order to show mastery of the content being taught.

Establishes uniform standards.

It tries to find a common set of grounds to base a sound education.

Opportunity for students to move from state to state and receive the same levels of education.

Common national standards will help students who move from state to state have similar educational opportunities.

All students are learning specific grade level skills that build a foundation for the next skill or grade level.

Having high learning standards for kids across different states is a good start to improving education.

It is a standard.

Bringing the nation together to address education.

Uniformity. Students need to master basic skills across the board. If all students are learning the same math, verbal, and writing skills the nation will be better off in the future.

It is a uniform curriculum used throughout the US. If a student transfers to another state, he/she would not have to take additional classes in order to meet the different criteria of that state.

A student will be able to change schools and be able to understand the curriculum at the new school.

Nationalized expectations.

Students must learn certain things at a certain time, not just whenever the subject happens to come up.

It would be a nice idea to have everyone in the country teach the same thing.

That at least everyone in the state will be teaching the same standards, but shouldn't the whole country be teaching the same standards? Not to mention shouldn't the end test be the same?

Concise standards that give all teachers a base to aim for with our kids.

Provides uniformity and consistency in schools.

States with poor academic standards will improve the quality of the education they deliver.

Curriculum and testing alignment throughout the state.

To have students across the nation learning the same standards.

National alignment.

The unification of our nation with more rigorous standards that allow us to compete globally.

Common standards and the idea of consistency between districts.

When students move from school system to school system, there is continuity of curriculum.

Allowing for a transient population to have some consistency in educational expectations from state to state.

Provides guidelines.

The focus on fewer standards and more appropriate standards.

Uniform math standards.

If a student moves from one state to another the transition should be easier academically.

Should create consistent, standardized curriculum.

What the students learned is more streamlined and in depth.

Expectation that all students are expected to be at a minimum level for proficiency.

Holding schools to regulated standards.

Having common language across districts.

The idea of trying to standardize learning goals nationwide was a good idea; however under our Constitution the right and responsibility for education is a power left to the individual states.

I like the idea of having National standards so that teachers are focusing on the same essential skills and concepts.

Each state should be following the same standards.

Some of the standards are good.

That it is common and consistent across states.

Consistency among states for expectations.

Organization.

Organization.

Same standards for all students, not just within a state.

Getting schools unified and teaching the same subject matter.

Similar standards among the states.

Guarantee of basic outcomes for every student.

Common standards across the nation.

It sets standards to be met across the curriculum.

Being consistent across the nation.

If a child is transferring to another city he or she should have had the opportunity to study the same subject matter as any other student.

The ability to compare students across state lines and emphasis on problem solving.

It will align standards state to state and this helps with the mobility of students.

Consistent expectations for all students in the United States.

That everyone across the US will be learning the same thing at the same time throughout the year.

Puts all students on the same page, while still allowing teachers freedom with their curriculum.

The Core specifies competencies required for students to be successful, but teachers get to decide how to teach those skills.

They combine essential Ohio State standards that are worthwhile. They focus more in social studies on process of thinking rather than straight facts.

Having a uniform curriculum, scope and sequence, and set of student expectations across the nation should help standardize instruction that children experience.

The country will have uniformity for all students.

When students move they should be on par with any school they move into.

Establishing a consistent format to be used district/state wide.

Same grade students across the country will have instruction on the same material at roughly the same time. Students who move between states will walk into a classroom and pick up where they left off.

Standardization across the US.

Excellent for students to be able to move from state to state and not have learning gaps.

Consistency of curriculum across districts and states, 8th grade reading level is the same for all. Algebra I is the same for all.

The Common Core standards attempt to encourage higher level thinking skills.

These are standards everyone can follow.

It holds individual states to the same standards. It is built from 12th grade backwards so that students will graduate with what they need for life after high school. It is a much simpler system.

The standards themselves are well designed. I find the emphasis on critical thinking and deep reading to be very positive.

Having students from all states learning the same thing.

Standardize the learning across state lines.

As a document, I appreciate the attempt to make public education more uniform across the nation.

I like having standards across the US so kids are learning the same things across the country.

It does outline specific performance objectives for the students. It does emphasize writing objectives which will create better writers at the college level.

Standardizing curriculum across states and districts.

Every child is held to the same rigorous standards, standards that promote higher level thinking.

The most positive thing is for educational institutions to have standards.

The national standardization of the education process.

More cross curricular instruction.

Basic standards across the country to provide consistency.

It levels the playing field so that when students move from state to state they are in the same place as other students, supposedly.

Students across the country are being exposed to the same content in the same grade.

Gives teachers (who need one) a template in which to teach.

National attention is being brought to education.

Society is transient, so it is necessary to have a commonality between schools as to what is being taught at each grade level. Students have a better chance of not being "lost" at a new school.

I think that it's good to have a national curriculum. It benefits a transient population and ensures that a student moving from one state to another has a minimal interruption in his/her education.

Multiple states using same standards and testing.

It attempts to standardize education across the United States by helping Americans in all states learn the same material.

It attempts to normalize what students are expected to learn in math and language arts, from state to state.

That if you move from state to state, your children will be on the right track for the state they are moving to by the work they did at the state they are coming from.

Everyone gets on the same page. There are benchmarks and open to how to teach the standards.

If everyone learns the same things, perhaps we can have a more educated populous.

It creates a minimum standard of knowledge that students should learn.

Common Core will help with consistency.

Students across American should be given the same education content and not vary from state to state.

Establishing nationalized educational standards.

A standard is set that students should know about a subject.

More consistency.

It attempts to ensure uniformity.

National standards in all schools.

Consistency among all classrooms in the country.

Everyone is on the same page.

Uniformity.

It would allow students moving from one state to another to be at the same place in their studies.

Having the same standards in each state is a positive step.

Standardization.

Common standards in theory are fair for all students.

I don't think the idea of a national set of basic standards is a bad one (it was just implemented in a horrible way).

Accepted throughout the USA.

They unify the education system so students across the nation should have the same set of academic standards.

Setting goals for education that are uniform around the country.

Common Core makes sense in theory. By standardizing the requirements nationally, students will learn the same things at the same time and would be coming to university with the same knowledge base.

That each state will be more uniform in the content taught.

I think the goals of the standards are good ones, however not all are age appropriate for the students they were intended for.

Having the same standards across the nation.

Some type of standards are being implemented.

Nationwide set of standards and expectations.

Having a national set of standards.

National standard across country, everyone on same page so to speak; same information being taught; similar strategies.

Common Core Standards ensure that students from school districts across the nation complete the same curriculum and are held to the same standards.

It's continuity throughout all schools and states.

Consistency between the states.

A national plan for educating students.

I thought it was nice that the whole United States would have the same standards and wherever you moved to or lived they would be the same. However, my state decided to not do them.

A comprehensive nationwide course of study makes sense.

The fact that it is a set of common standards that exists among many states, no longer all entirely different standards.

That there will be, in theory, a uniform base of knowledge every child will have when they graduate.

It's important to have high standards for our children. It's also important to have standards that are similar and comparable across our nation.

That all students should be on one accord and learning the same curriculum.

It helps make sure that there's a point of comparison between states. Also, the actual standards are a huge cognitive step up for most states.

We are trying to set a common standard of required material federally.

Unifying what is taught from district to district and from state to state.

Provides a unified set of standards for all students.

Everything will be standardized across the county.

They are national standards so standards won't vary from state to state.

The standards are national.

Teachers, parents, and students will know the body of knowledge and skills they will be expected to learn (instruct) in each particular grade level and subject.

The fact that they are checking that students meet a certain standard.

National standards by which to align curriculum.

Applying the same standards to all children across the United States. That's something that is needed so that all children from Louisiana to California to New York have the same goals.

The idea that all schools have to implement the same standards is something that is very positive.

States aligning and rigorous curriculum.

It aligns the curriculum.

The idea of national standards for student performance is a good one.

Streamlines standards state to state.

States will now share the same set of standards. So students in Nevada should be learning the same thing as a student in New York. This will benefit students who move back and forth.

It is an attempt to define standards that can be used across multiple states.

Consistency among the states and grades.

Giving everyone the same goals.

Standards and accountability are good.

The Common Core give teachers across the country standards based concepts to teach to students. It ensures that students will be prepared for college & career upon graduation from high school.

The positive thing is that if a student moves from state to state they will have the same standards.

We have a large transient population. Hopefully those children will have an easier time with academics as they transfer between schools.

Unity.

There are national standards.

Uniform standards that can be applied between schools... Especially helpful for students who move between schools for varying reasons.

They give teachers a guideline about what to teach. Just like all the "standard" before it.

Having all students in our nation on track. I like that what is expected in Kindergarten or sixth grade reading and math in one state is the same in another state.

We have a common idea of what successful looks like in the classroom.

These items should be part of curriculum.

Similar expectations across nation.

Good critical thinking techniques

It teaches kids to think!

That children are to learn to think and apply knowledge to real-life situations. And that the bar is being raised.

Teaching critical thinking.

It engenders critical thinking in students at a younger age.

Make students think and analyze.

It claims to require students to think critically. I claim to require students to think critically. We're on the same page regarding claims!

It will have the students think about how they achieved their answers and the students will discover that sometimes there is more than one way to solve a problem.

Higher level thinking.

Developing mathematical understanding of students that moves from the concrete to the representational to the abstract.

Emphasis on higher order thinking. Approach to teaching math.

A focus on logic and reason.

Focus on critical thinking, opinion writing, and problem solving. I think text dependent questioning is quite valuable.

Common Core goes deeper into levels of thinking and explaining answers.

Fewer standards, but developing them deeper, and requiring students to do more problem solving without giving up--Individual districts, as well as states, are teaching the same content.

Emphasis on critical thinking skills.

The focus on CER -- Claim, Evidence & Reasoning.

The new standards require higher level thinking for students.

It gets students thinking deeper.

Commitment to critical thinking.

Emphasis on problem solving and critical thinking skills.

It helps students to use meta cognitive thinking to see how they learn and why they learn. It also helps them to see the reasoning behind doing things a certain way.

Requires higher level thinking skills.

Its emphasis on teaching thinking skills and not just content.

Common Core puts the students in real world situations. Students learn to be critical thinkers and problem solvers.

It teaches problem solving skills and how to use what you know to figure out what you don't know. These are necessary lifelong skills.

Emphasis on critical thinking.

It is focused on thinking, not memorizing facts without being able to apply them. It emphasizes reasoning skills which are much more applicable in multiple situations. More to say, but no room in box.

Emphasizes critical thinking and higher order thinking skills.

Emphasis on understanding the why at least as much as the how. Encourage exploratory thinking.

I like that it focuses on mastery of skills and problem solving and not just spiraling of rote information.

The Common Core is not about cramming facts into students, but rather about having them process, question and think through, and then writing about it.

Directing your teaching for higher level thinking.

It should teach students to think. Critical thinking skills are lacking in most schools.

Students will be required to learn concepts and think critically rather than parroting back disjointed information about math and English Language Arts.

I like that students in Math have fewer problems to do, but they are pushed to think more deeply about each one.

Students will be challenged to think more.

Makes people aware and think.

These standards could help guide departments develop more inquisitive thinking and learning.

Shifting to a focus on critical thinking skills and process over product.

Critical thinking skills.

It test students' abilities and achievement levels and mastery of curriculum.

It will allow students to begin learning to think critically, analyze text and data, and learn to provide explanations for their analysis and reasoning.

It allows for higher order thinking instead of regurgitation. It allows teachers to design instruction where students can collaborate and engage in peer groups, discussion and problem solving.

I think the Math Common Core standards for K-1 help students with learning to think critically.

Emphasis on critical thinking skills, connectivity and extrapolation.

Has higher standards/rigorous

High level of rigor.

Raising standards is always a good idea.

Rigorous standards that can be consistent throughout most of the country.

It raises the academic bar tremendously, and expectations do need to be higher.

They set high standards for student achievement.

Higher standards are a good thing.

Rigor is common across states.

The idea that we should be raising expectations for all students is most positive.

Wants to challenge kids to excel.

Increasing rigor.

Raises and maintains student expectations.

It is a rigorous set of standards that has been developed by states for states use to give educators common goals by which to design and implement curriculum and instruction.

High standards.

It's an attempt to raise the standards so that all schools are equal in what they teach.

It challenges students and pushes the rigor.

Good for low achieving schools to aspire to.

It elevates the expectations for students' learning.

They introduce a more rigorous type of thinking than the more shallow state standards.

They raise our expectations for kids.

The standards are high but very attainable if students are held accountable.

Increased rigor focused on skills that will help students prepare for their future.

High expectations.

Higher standards shared nationwide- challenge can influence states with lower standards to make important changes.

Rigorous goals, more expected from students.

They are rigorous, will allow students to move from state to state without getting behind, they don't proscribe a curriculum, they focus on real world skills and they represent a change in teaching.

It is rigorous for most students.

Standards are higher.

They raise standards in states that were not as rigorous.

The standards are ostensibly high.

They increase the rigor of what students must do to show proficiency in an area. They allow for more student talk, and less teacher talk.

I like the demand for rigor.

Higher level, more analytical thinking and assessment.

They spiral from K to 12 in a systematic and increasingly rigorous way.

None/NA/nothing

Nothing!

Nothing!

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

None.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Not much.

Nothing.

Not much.

Nothing.

Attempting to make positive changes/having good conversations about education

Attention to needed curriculum changes.

It opens a discussion of public education.

That it shows that maybe someone at least cares about education.

Attempt to improve education.

Its intentions are good.

I think that it is wonderful that there is a movement to improve education.

Good intentions.

The effort being put into it.

It shows that somebody cares about education.

Well intentioned idea; laudable to want to standardize learning goals/ benchmarks across the country.

It is bringing attention to education in America and the poor job we are doing.

It draws attention to what schools should be teaching to those states that had not thought about it.

It's good getting the public to discuss the status of public education.

Attempt to fix "No Child Left Behind".

That someone says that they want to improve education.

At least they are trying something.

There are some great ideas of things we do need to teach students.

Improves reading & writing

Emphasis on writing.

Returning to an emphasis on non-literature reading skills.

I think it's important to raise the overall reading and critical thinking standards for all kids.

Common Core increases the amount and level of students' reading and writing.

The concentration of literacy and the privileging of higher level thinking.

I like the greater emphasis on students' ability to read and express information.

Focus on writing in the content areas.

Importance of teaching literacy across curriculum.

Writing and problem solving.

Covers the basics

The idea of students meeting or working towards common BASIC standards.

Students should possess the skills demanded by the Common Core curriculum. Today's students lack the reading, writing, and thinking skills of past generations. Read AMUSING OURSELVES TO DEATH: Postman.

That there is a core.

More classroom emphasis on the core subjects and reduce the number of electives.

These are basic skills all students should know.

Includes basic skills.

It seems the goal for students is to learn how to learn rather than just learn facts to regurgitate. The focus on basic essential skills needed by all students regardless of their learning levels; i.e. advanced students, average and special needs students have curriculum based on their learning level.

They require that students learn the basics. The standards are really nothing new.

In-depth learning

Going into greater depth and detail; more opportunities for collaborative student work; more holistic approach; more demanding of students to explain their thinking.

I firmly believe that the Common Core Standards, if taught properly, will give students a deeper understanding of key concepts.

The depth of the content. It is inclusive of all the science.

In depth learning.

Less breadth of topics & greater depth. Consistency across states vs now. For example, I had students move into my class recently from Florida & Wisconsin. Both were bright, but far behind WA in math.

In depth study, integrated curriculum.

The subjects are taken to a deeper level. Not so surface.

You can go deeper in subject matter on standards listed in Common Core.

The concept that a student has an opportunity to explore as deep into an area as he/she desires.

They are trying to move away from the "mile wide and inch deep" approach to education.

Negative comment/nothing positive

What I have learned is it lowers students' ability and collects data.

I do not think there is anything positive about Common Core.

Nothing. In New York State, anything positive was overshadowed by a haphazard implementation.

It shows how far liberals will go to mold our children's minds.

It is part of a scheme to help corporations siphon off tax dollars that were collected to benefit public schools. (Positive for corporations like Pearson).

I can't think of anything positive about Common Core, it's a disaster.

Nothing positive about it.

Absolutely nothing!

There are no positives....

Absolutely nothing is positive about the Common Core.

Holds teachers /schools/districts accountable

Makes teachers be held accountable for teaching correct content.

It will force mediocre teachers to work harder.

Accountability of teachers.

Provides a means by which some teachers can be determined to be unworthy of the profession.

It may make some schools more accountable for teaching students the right things.

Has a good curriculum

Social studies and science texts are now considered important informational text instead of an add-on if there is time after math and English Language Arts (basal reader).

The information that is required for our students.

More up to date and unified.

The concept is good - teaching less content but deeper. Provoking more thoughtful discussion.

It attempts to focus on important learning standards.

They prioritize the items to be taught.

Improves student's ability to communicate their thoughts

It requires students to produce proof or evidence of their learning by explaining their reasoning.

The Common Core emphasizes the why, and asks students to explain their thinking. It also provides many hands on ideas (or at least my state has helped with this).

The positive side is that it requires students to explain their thinking instead of just picking a multiple choice answer.

Focuses on the student/their individual needs/interests

It is not about what students know, but about what they can do!

This is an opportunity for schools across the country to show where they shine as well as to show how they struggle serving America's kids. Data should be easier to compile and compare.

Common Core addresses individual students' needs. This is the most important thing about it. We have been implementing "piloting" common core in our county for two years. It is great.

Focus on student processes and skills rather than knowledge acquisition.

Encourages collaboration

Teaching teamwork and personal communication skills.

It links social studies performances with literacy standards instead of placing that solely on English teachers.

Holds students accountable

Holding students and teachers to higher standards is a smart idea. However, the standards must be on target for the proper pedagogy.

The attempt to hold students to a high standard.

Improves learning

Common Core is a way to teach that increases a learning of the student when done correctly. It is not new; it is something that is already being done.

Increasing student learning.

Common Core is working to increase learning productivity throughout the different school. Everyone teaches something different and this gets everyone to teach the same things at the same level.

Integrates subjects

I like incorporating all of the subject areas together and showing how they all work together.

Mixing informational texts with fictional texts.

It integrates the subjects and allows teachers to be more creative in teaching. It brings unity among the standards throughout the states.

Integration of multiple content areas.

The integration of reading, math, and science forcing students to really think and write on essays.

The use of multiple text to explore an issue or event.

Integration of educational disciplines.

Teaches real-life concepts/prepares students for life

The idea of teaching kids to think and solve real problems.

Students will acquire a basic set of skills which will enable them to choose a career path.

Helping to prepare our students to compete in a global society.

It uses life skills in lesson learning, and assignments mimic the workplace.

Actual life application.

It reinforces necessary skills.

It will help all children to become career ready for the present and future years.

Less testing

Moves teaching back to older strategies not so much teaching to the test.

Less testing.

Other

They leave no place for speculation. You know exactly what you need to teach, how kids will be evaluated, how you will be evaluated. Parallel to CCSS there is a uniform assessment system.

Starting the kids in the beginning (pre- K, K) is a good thing.

Well-organized, updated standards.

That it isn't in Texas.

Progression.

The core subjects will begin teaching like the elective subjects have been teaching for decades.

Measurement of success.

Emphasis on process.

They are a bit more streamlined.

NA

Vertical alignment of grade levels.

It's precisely what we have been doing.

The standards are a good goal and actually include very little "new" instruction. They describe what public education has already been aiming for.

If we stick to the states' needs & quit using tests that are not normed for our area we will help our students.

It's already completed.

It will meet a timely death!!

The concept is courageous, but I'm only a substitute teacher and haven't had any training. Empowering students to take responsibility for their education will be seriously challenging.

Elementary math.

Content knowledge is addressed in a different way.