

Topeka Public Schools Talking Points

Common Core State Standards

February 23, 2015

- The Common Core Curriculum was developed at the suggestion of governors across the nation and Chief Education Officers from each state in order to have consistent curriculum standards.
- Topeka Public Schools' teachers sat on the committee that developed the final product. Each state could add additional state standards to the national document.
- Topeka Public Schools is in full implementation for English Language Arts on the Common Core State Standards. The curriculum was aligned last summer and implemented this past year. New textbooks have been adopted aligned to the curriculum.
- Topeka Public Schools implemented some of the Common Core State Standards in math last year but chose to make it a two year implementation. This year we will be in full implementation. We recently adopted new high school materials aligned to curriculum.
- These standards are much more rigorous than our previous standards and will prepare students for post-secondary education.
- Students that move, such as military children, will have a consistent curriculum and not miss key points in learning.
- These standards are geared for students to perform and use critical thinking to solve a problem, versus answering a question on a test.
- Our teachers are enjoying the change for several reasons. It allows them to do more project based learning and not teach to narrow, specific indicators. An example of a project at Topeka High School is our students researched Vietnam, wrote a children's book about their research, used different literary techniques (eg. metaphors, foreshadowing, etc.) and illustrated them. They were loaded onto YouTube and were shared on the internet. They then presented this to the community and shared their product. Students shared with us that they were so excited about the project that they spent hours collaborating on the final projects. (We did not see this kind of engagement with previous standards!)