

# MYTH BUSTERS

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**Kansas  
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## Common Core State Standards—Not a Federal Takeover

**FACTS:** The federal government is not taking over Kansas schools. Nor have

Kansas schools lost local control of K-12 education. The initiative to develop the Common Core States Standards (CCSS) was a voluntary effort on the part of states leaders to raise education standards.<sup>1</sup> The [Kansas College and Career Ready Standards](#)<sup>2</sup> in mathematics and English language arts & literacy were adopted, as part of a routine seven-year cycle to update and realign Kansas K-12 education goals with the demands of a rapidly changing global society.

**MYTH:** Common Core State Standards are a federal government takeover of K-12 public education and must be stopped.

**FACT 1 – LOCAL CONTROL.** Local school boards across Kansas have full authority to determine the curriculum. Adoption of the new state standards does not override the constitutional right of “*local public schools under the general supervision of the state board of education [to] be maintained, developed and operated by locally elected boards.*”<sup>3</sup> Kansas school districts continue to make the decisions regarding *how* students are taught.<sup>4</sup> The State Board of Education also has complete authority to change the state’s education standards as warranted, regardless of federal incentives.<sup>5</sup>

**FACT 2 – STATE INITIATIVE.** The process of revising and updating education standards is the responsibility of the Kansas Department of Education, under the leadership of the State Board of Education. The process involves input from experts and key stakeholders, through critical analyses, public forums, and online comment periods, along with repeated presentations and updates by the Department of Education to the Board, often extending over a period of years (see [Science standards for example](#)).<sup>6</sup> While Kansas was an active member of the CCSS development teams, enhancements were made for our own state under the ‘15% addition rule’.<sup>7</sup> For example, the Kansas mathematics standards review committee added two major topics (probability and statistics, algebraic patterning)<sup>8</sup>. The committee further recommended that local school districts retain the authority to decide in what grade levels to incorporate these additions. In essence, Kansas considers the CCSS as a ‘floor not a ceiling’ and enriched the expectations of the Common Core to best fit the State’s priorities.

**Standards**—Skills and concepts that youth are expected to acquire by the end high school.

**Curriculum**—Program and instructional materials chosen by local districts and school boards, used by teachers to help students meet state standards.

**Lesson Plans**—Instructional plans and materials prepared and selected by teachers.

**FACT 3 – ROLE OF FEDERAL FUNDS.** No federal money was attached to the State’s 2010 adoption of the CCSS in mathematics and English language arts. While the U.S. Department of Education requires that each state have an accountability system in place for K-12 public education, the federal government does not dictate how Kansas educates students or how we assess our public education system; the specifics are up to each state.<sup>9</sup> The majority of federal education funds Kansas does receive (less than 10% of Kansas education budget, and underfunded) are for mandated instructional support to special needs students (disabled, poor, second language) and program support to feed hungry students during the school day (free/reduced lunch program). The associated federal rules and regulations are in place to ensure that the funds are used for the intended purposes.

**Kansas Education Standards Status:**<sup>10</sup>  
[English Language Arts & Literacy](#) updated 2010  
[Mathematics](#) updated 2010  
[History/Government/Social Studies](#) updated 2013  
[Science](#) updated 2013

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- 1 *Common Core State Standards Initiative; PTA on CCSS; Conservatives for Higher Standards*
- 2 *KSDE, Kansas College and Career Ready Education standards*
- 3 *Kansas Constitution, Article 6, Sect 5*
- 4 *KSDE Common Core Fact Sheet*
- 5 *Kansas Constitution, Article 6, Sect 2*

- 6 *Adoption of new Science Standards (March 2013)*
- 7 *The Common Core 15% Rule*
- 8 *Kansas input on Common Core Mathematics Standards, see p. 9.*
- 9 *See ESEA Flexibility*
- 10 *KSDE Content Standards: English Language Arts, Mathematics, History/Government, Science*