



What do these standards mean for my child?

What a parent can expect from the New Illinois Learning Standards

The New Illinois Learning Standards better prepares your child for success. The new standards – what your child should know and be able to do at each grade level – are aligned to college- and career-expectations so when your child graduates from high school, he or she will be ready to take the next step into a college/career and be successful.

The New Illinois Learning Standards establish clear expectations for students, including the ability to:

- apply math in real-life situations
- read and analyze both literature and informational text
- construct viable arguments and critique reasoning of others
- solve problems
- communicate effectively

The new standards are one of many changes in Illinois public schools that when combined are designed to provide a world-class education for all students. Rigorous standards, aligned assessments, teacher and leader effectiveness, and professional learning and growth of our educators all work together to maximize student potential and ensure college/career-readiness for all students.

The system promotes:

- deeper understanding of the key concepts students need to succeed as independent thinkers
- students' ability to apply knowledge to real-world situations
- instruction that places more emphasis on understanding and application as opposed to memorization and test taking

The standards are structured so that students build upon what they learn. Concepts become increasingly complex as the student moves from grade to grade.

Your child will be prepared to compete for the best jobs.

Because the standards are on par with what is being taught in other states and leading countries around the world, your child will be ready for the newest 21st-century jobs and to compete in the global economy.

The New Illinois Learning Standards allow for local decision making.

The standards provide a framework for learning expectations; they do not dictate curriculum. The Illinois State Board of Education is responsible for establishing standards in the various content areas. Local school boards, administrators and teachers are responsible for determining how to teach the standards, including selection of instructional materials and instructional practices.



The adoption of the New Illinois Learning Standards saves money.

Because the standards are more rigorous and aligned with college/career expectations, your child is less likely to need remediation in college – courses that cost money but don't count toward a degree. A U.S. Department of Education study found that 58 percent of students who do not require remediation earn a bachelor's degree, compared to only 17 percent of students enrolled in remedial reading and 27 percent of students enrolled in remedial math. If students choose to enter immediately into a career, he or she should be better equipped with the skills they need to land a good paying job and become financially independent at an earlier age.

New assessments will more accurately reflect student preparation than previous state assessments.

Scores will be low for a few years but start improving the longer the standards are taught. Remember we've raised the bar. Just like a high jumper who is used to clearing six feet, if the bar goes up to 12 feet, it takes them a while to learn what they have to do to clear it. They have to train and refine their technique. It will take time for teachers and students to get used to the more rigorous standards and the kind of teaching and learning they demand. Scores should start to rebound as students build a stronger foundational knowledge based on the standards and educators gain greater experience teaching them.

The new standards are aligned with postsecondary expectations and requires more than rote memorization. Students are required to think creatively, critically, reason and solve problems – skills they must learn and that will serve them well in the long run.

With new state assessments, parents should be able to tell as early as 3rd grade if their student is on track for college/career-readiness, and if not, inquire what is being done to get them back on track.

Stay the course and don't get discouraged by lower assessment scores. This is the right thing for kids to ensure they are ready for college/career and to compete in a global economy.

Should you move, your child can pick up where he/she left off.

With more than 45 states implementing the new standards, if you move, your child won't have to start over with standards based on different expectations at different grade levels leaving them vulnerable to learning gaps. The new standards are portable.

Adapted from Kentucky Department of Education

