

# COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES for PRINCIPALS

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## ABOUT

*Communication PRinciples for Principals offers key information and messages for principals to consider in communicating the basics and getting parents involved. It is written and published by the DoDEA Communications Office.*

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## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS IN DoDEA

### DoDEA IS MOVING OUT ON ITS TOP PRIORITY – COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

DoDEA's Community Strategic Plan, Volume II, contains a clear vision for the future of our schools that is focused on establishing and implementing a standards-based educational system that aligns our system to more rigorous college and career ready academic standards and establishing the organizational capacity to uniformly improve student achievement and school operations.

Our efforts are currently engaged in making sure that our resources, both human and financial, are aligned to ensure the success of our college and career readiness priority. These efforts have been extremely collaborative and have involved staff members from nearly every level and location in DoDEA. We begin implementing the college and career readiness priority with the rollout of DoDEA's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics (CCRSM). This is the first step in a multi-year process that will establish a strong foundation for future steps in our path to college and career readiness.

By the end of this month, all area and district leaders and school principals will have participated in training developed by our curriculum team, which will allow them to understand the instructional shifts that accompany the new standards as well as what teachers and students in our pre-K through grade 5 mathematics classes will experience this fall. Our administrators have a critical role

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***EQUALLY IMPORTANT IS THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EACH OF THE SYSTEM COMPONENTS WILL BE INITIATED BY ROBUST, TARGETED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR EDUCATORS. THESE STANDARDS AND COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS WILL HAVE A DRAMATIC, POSITIVE EFFECT ON EVERY STAKEHOLDER AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL.***

in making the change to more rigorous standards and the shifts in teaching practices that accompany this transition.

With the completion of administrator training, we will begin training in May to prepare our pre-K through grade 5 teachers to implement the CCRSM in their classrooms for the start of School Year (SY) 2015-2016. The training for this teacher orientation is being finalized and will focus on the Standards for Mathematical Practice and the key shifts to instruction that are required by the new standards. Teachers will also be introduced to the new standards and explore the differences with DoDEA's current standards.

As we begin the first steps of the journey to college and career readiness, it is important to keep in mind that our work and focus must be on our students and their success and achievement. It is our responsibility to provide them with the instruction and education experiences that are rigorous and relevant and ensure they are ready for the demands of post secondary education and careers.

The training that has been planned will go a long way towards increasing awareness and understanding of college and career readiness and more specifically, the CCRS.

As an instructional leader, you can help to increase awareness and understanding of college and career readiness among your educators and guide your educators in focusing their instructional efforts on the new standards.

While training will help increase educators' awareness and understanding of college and career readiness and the standards, principals have a big role to play in this area as well. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, here are some top-level concerns of educators whose states were implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which DoDEA has adopted and is implementing as CCRS:

- ✓ While educators' knowledge and awareness of the CCSS were growing exponentially, their knowledge and awareness of the deeper learning necessary to achieve the standards were not growing at the same rate.
- ✓ Many educators were focused on assessments and technology issues associated with implementing the standards.
- ✓ There was widespread initiative fatigue because of efforts to implement the new standards, new

educator effectiveness and other educational reform initiatives. DoDEA has benefitted from the experiences of other states and has made a conscious decision to incrementally implement College and Career Readiness and College and Career Ready Standards.

- ✓ The vast majority of educators want every child, in each school, in each community to be college and career ready, but there was a lack of understanding about the changes necessary to truly shift instruction to the higher standards.

## AS A PRINCIPAL, HOW YOU CAN HELP

As the educational leader in your school, you can help build capacity for and lead the change effort in your schools with the implementation of College and Career Readiness and the College and Career Ready Standards. Your leadership, willingness to listen and engage, particularly with your teachers, will help move this important priority forward.

- ✓ Establish confidence in your teachers that the CCR standards will unify what DoDEA students are learning across the world in DoDEA schools and with their peers in U.S. public schools. DoDEA's focus is on effectively teaching the highly-mobile, military-connected student.
- ✓ Ensure educators understand the key instructional shifts for the College and Career Ready Standards. Before addressing this, make sure you understand these shifts!
- ✓ Provide updates to your faculty; share information with other principals and their faculties; particularly with regard to best practices in implementation.
- ✓ Instill confidence on the part of your teachers that this top priority will be the best way to help students be prepared for college and the workplace.
- ✓ Reassure teachers that DoDEA has the ability to resource and support training and delivery of the CCR standards in the classroom. Teachers will have the time, tools, professional development and support to implement the CCR standards in the classroom.
- ✓ Creativity and individuality in lesson planning and instructional delivery will be preserved. The CCR standards establish what students will be taught, NOT how they are taught.
- ✓ Obtain feedback from teachers and communicate concerns and implementation issues with leadership.
- ✓ Determine challenges, barriers and resources your teachers need for implementing the standards. Share this information with your district superintendent.
- ✓ Above all, keep your efforts focused on students and what is best for them.

## TALK WITH TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND YOUR COMMUNITY ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE

Here are some ideas to get you started talking about college and career readiness and college and the CCRS:

### ON COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

- ✓ College and career readiness - the content knowledge and skills high school graduates must have in literacy and mathematics (such as; reading, writing communications, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving) to be successful in any and all future endeavors.
- ✓ Being “college and career ready” means being prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience.
- ✓ Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the literacy and mathematics knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework.
- ✓ Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the literacy and mathematics knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and education necessary for their chosen career.

### ON COLLEGE AND CAREER READY STANDARDS FOR EDUCATORS

- ✓ **The standards provide consistency.** Since the standards are consistent from school to school and state to state, teachers will have an easier adjustment if they transfer from one subject area to another. Teachers will be assured that the learning expectations and process will be similar.
- ✓ **The standards increase expectations.** These new standards will make teachers think differently about the way they teach. Expectations are higher. It will require a shift in how and when some content is taught.
- ✓ **The standards build on what works.** Don’t think of it as adding a new responsibility or more work. College and career readiness and the CCRS are supported by best practices and programs already in the majority of U.S. schools, with a special focus on student engagement.
- ✓ **The standards offer more support.** Because CCRS have been adopted by the majority of U.S. states, national organizations and individual teachers have already begun designing lessons, curriculum units and materials that can be easily shared.

### FOR PARENTS

- ✓ **The standards are the same wherever you go.** CCRS mean that DoDEA students are learning the same thing as their peers almost anywhere in the country. Students moving into or out of DoDEA schools or within DoDEA schools will have a smoother educational transition because the learning goals will be the same.

- ✓ **The standards are modeled on success.** The CCRS are aligned to international standards from the highest achieving countries. This means DoDEA students will be well prepared to compete both nationally and internationally.
- ✓ **The standards emphasize real life.** What students learn in school should be directly related to what they'll be required to do once they leave. The CCRS place a strong emphasis on reading informational and technical texts to prepare students for the demands of college and the workplace.

## FOR STUDENTS

- ✓ **The standards even the playing field.** The CCRS mean that students are learning the same content and skills as students from around the United States. This places everyone on an even playing field and eases transitions in and out of DoDEA schools and between DoDEA schools.
- ✓ **The standards emphasize math skills.** Basic math is not enough. The CCRS for mathematics emphasize conceptual understanding, not just computation, to make sure students are learning and absorbing the critical information they need to succeed as they move through school.
- ✓ **The standards emphasize reading and writing.** English class is not the only place students need to read and write. The CCRS include standards for reading and writing in social studies, science and technical subjects designed to help students apply and develop reading and writing skills in all of their classes.

## FOR THE COMMUNITY

- ✓ **The standards focus on 21st century skills for 21st century jobs.** The CCRS are designed to prepare students to compete in and contribute to the 21st century global economy. These standards will help produce graduates ready for today's and tomorrow's jobs.
- ✓ **The standards are aligned with global standards.** The CCRS are aligned to international standards from the highest achieving countries. This means our students will be well-prepared to compete both nationally and internationally.
- ✓ **The standards focus on real world skills.** What students learn in school should be directly related to what they'll be required to do once they leave school. The CCRS emphasize reading informational and technical texts to prepare students for the demands of college and the workplace.

### *THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PRIORITY PROVIDES:*

- ✓ *IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STUDENTS*
- ✓ *ACADEMIC CONSISTENCY FOR OUR STUDENTS*
- ✓ *CLEAR EXPECTATIONS*
- ✓ *AN AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT INFORMS TEACHERS*
- ✓ *PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND JOB-IMBEDDED TRAINING FOR TEACHERS*
- ✓ *INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES*
- ✓ *IMPROVED EDUCATOR ACCESS TO CURRICULAR RESOURCES*

## SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS!

The goal of early communications with faculty, parents, students, school staff members and community members is to make them aware of what college and career readiness is and to hopefully increase their understanding of this priority.

Take every opportunity to –

- ✓ Talk with faculty members at staff meetings about college and career readiness and the importance of this priority to DoDEA students and to DoDEA schools.
- ✓ Talk with parents about college and career readiness at school activities that parents attend.
- ✓ Consider inviting some parents to the CCR teacher training. These parents can possibly serve as key communicators with other parents and community members regarding the value of college and career readiness.
- ✓ Talk with reporters from your installation newspaper – get on their interview schedules!
- ✓ Engage students – ask them what college and career readiness means to them.

## RESOURCES

There are many places you can turn to for more information to help you, your faculty, staff, students, and parents better understand the college and career readiness priority. Some resources will be provided by the DoDEA Communications Office and some will be available through educational organization websites.

Some primary sources of information are:

DoDEA high school graduation requirements and policy has been revised, effective SY 2015-16. Ensure that all staff are familiar with the policy changes. Additional information is available at <http://www.dodea.edu/StudentServices/Graduation/index.cfm>.

Professional development resources are available in the Schoology Community, “High School Graduation Requirements and Policy.”

DoDEA’s CCR website: <http://www.dodea.edu/CollegeCareerReady/index.cfm>

