



**PEKIN  
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Dear PCHS Parents and Guardians,

As the first semester draws to a close, we wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude for all you do to support your children and students here at PCHS. The excellence we see our students exhibit in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities is testament to the foundation, encouragement, and support you provide. It is our continued partnership with you that will truly prepare our students for success in high school and beyond.

To keep our partnership moving forward as our students prepare for a global, high-tech, high-skill world, we want to keep you informed of developments not only here at PCHS, but also of changes in the state and federal educational landscape. One such change was developed at the federal level and mandated at the state level: It is the development of a single set of educational standards that ALL students need to master to be successful today and in the future. In the past, states developed their own standards – some more rigorous than others. Now, almost all states have ascribed to this single set of standards, called the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**.

Rest assured that PCHS administration and faculty have been hard at work the past couple years learning about the shifts the standards require in our curriculum, assessments, and instruction. Departments across the school are moving toward full implementation of the standards by 2014-2015.

You may already be familiar with the CCSS, as they have made headlines in the print and digital media (even including TV commercials!). To increase your familiarity with the standards and to offer resources for deeper understanding, we have included some general information on the reverse side of this letter. Also, be sure to check our website for resources and updates about the CCSS and details of what will be expected of your student(s) in the years to come.

Thank you again for your continued support. We hope you and your family have a wonderful holiday season!

Go Dragons!

Melissa Bloom, Principal  
Amy Hubner, Assistant Principal for Operations  
Seth Mingus, Assistant Principal for Curriculum  
Steve Huey, Career & Technology Education Chair  
Donna Klima, Cultural Studies Chair  
Rick Kestner, Driver's Education Chair  
Sheila Coussens-Martin, English Chair

Shauna Schwader, Math Co-Chair  
Jeff Walraven, Math Co-Chair  
Dale Patton, PE & Health Chair  
Mark Henry, Science Chair  
Rich Schurter, Social Studies Chair  
Meg Thurman, Special Education Chair  
Cynthia Hinderliter, Technology Chair

*PCHS...where we do many things and do them well.*

# Common Core State Standards at PCHS

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## What are the Common Core State Standards?

The Common Core State Standards initiative is a state-led effort to provide a single set of clear standards for K-12 students across the country, though it is not a federal curriculum. They set the benchmarks and guidelines for what each student should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school.



## Will every subject have new standards?

Eventually, most subjects will have Common Core State Standards. Currently, there are new Content Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics for students K-12. There are also Literacy Standards for English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

various support systems. For the past two years, the PCHS staff has been aligning curriculum to the new standards. Full implementation is expected by the 2014-2015 school year, when a new state assessment will be given.

## Why is the Common Core State Standards Initiative important?

These standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to go to college or enter the workforce and that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The standards are benchmarked to international standards to guarantee that our students are competitive in the emerging global marketplace.

## What will parents notice now?

### Across all subjects, students will:

- Read more difficult texts and discuss at a more complex level.
- Read more non-fiction material in preparation for college and work readiness.
- Apply learned skills from all subject areas.
- Analyze information, write essay responses, and answer in-depth questions to show how much they understand.

## How are the new Common Core State Standards being implemented?

The process to fully implement new standards impacts many aspects of our school, including assessment, curriculum, professional development, instruction and

For more information, please see the Common Core link on our web site under the "Parent" tab.

Additional resources will be added as they become available.