

DO YOU CARE ABOUT

Alabama Businesses

Why Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards Are Important



What are Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards / Common Core?

Every student a graduate; every graduate prepared for real life

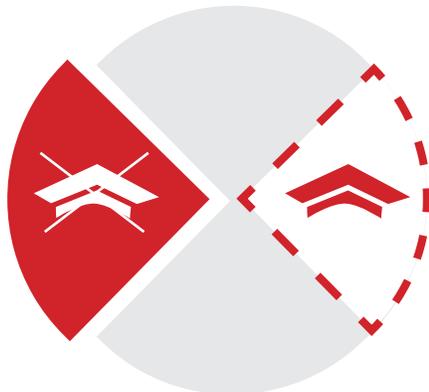


- The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS), which include the Common Core State Standards, are a set of **academic standards for math and English** used in K-12 classrooms across Alabama.
- Academic standards are **goals for what students should know** by the end of each school year. Alabama's standards focus on helping students gain a **deep understanding of the concepts** being taught and how they apply to real life.
- With the CCRS, Alabama students rely less on memorization and filling out worksheets. Instead, they **focus on critical-thinking and problem-solving skills** that will benefit them long after they finish their academic career.



Why should businesses support the CCRS?

25%
of Alabama high school students do not graduate¹



Of those who do,

33%
are required to **take high school-level classes in college** that reteach concepts they were supposed to learn in high school.²



In Alabama, there are

100,000

persons age 18 to 24 who: (1) are not presently enrolled in school; (2) are not currently working; and (3) have no degree beyond a high school diploma or GED.⁴

There are **3.9 million**

job openings in the U.S. today.

1.4 million

of them are in the South.³



“Alabama is competing with the rest of the nation and the world for aerospace, automotive, biotech, information technology and other high-growth industries, and our graduates must be able to perform as well or better than those in other states and countries.”

- Joint letter in support of the CCRS / Common Core

signed by the presidents of the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce, the Birmingham Business Alliance, the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce and the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce



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GRADUATE READY. IMPACT TOMORROW.

? What do Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards mean for my business?

Partnering to Strengthen the State's Workforce



- Alabama adopted College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS) after conversations with business officials about what Alabama schools need to do in order to prepare all of our kids for success in their next phase in life.
- The CCRS give business leaders and educators a reason to come together and develop new programs to train students in the skills sought by employers.
- The CCRS provide a strong foundation to strengthen Alabama's workforce by closing the gap between the skills employees have and what employers need.

? How are the CCRS Different From Previous Courses of Study?

Students must do more than just memorize material long enough for their next exam.



The CCRS **expect more of students** than previous standards, and they will help ensure students are prepared for real life. University of Alabama professor Jeremy Zelkowski, a former high-school math teacher, has extensively studied Alabama's new math standards and says that the new standards will help make Alabama schools **more competitive** internationally. According to Zelkowski, Alabama's old standards only asked students to have a basic understanding of what was being taught, while the CCRS require students to *do more than just memorize material long enough for their next exam.*⁵

Additionally, the CCRS make it easier for children who move. Until recently, every state had different expectations for students. As a result, a high school diploma in one state might not mean as much in the next state, and children who moved (*like those in military families*) were at a major disadvantage. To date, 46 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards. The Alabama State Board of Education adopted the CCRS, which include the Common Core, in 2010.

Alabama's State Board of Education has the only authority on what standards (*goals*) our state adopts. Local school systems still develop their own curricula (*how it's taught*) and choose their own textbooks to teach from every day. Individual teachers still develop their own lesson plans.

How can I help? *Learn. Connect. Advocate.*

Join the effort to make the CCRS a success in your community.

Talk to teachers and **Tour** a classroom in your community.

Speak-Up about how setting high expectations will help your business and community.

Visit www.alabamaGRIT.org and

Sign the "Got GRIT" pledge.

Like Alabama GRIT on Facebook and share the resources,

Follow @AlabamaGRIT on Twitter and post tweets with #realllearning.

Organize a CCRS Informational Meeting.

Spread the Truth about what is really taking place inside Alabama classrooms.

1 <http://www.wsfa.com/story/22563032/alabama-department-of-education-releases-2011-2012-graduation-rate-statistics>

2 http://blog.al.com/wire/2013/10/are_alabamas_high_school_gradu.html

3 <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/jolts.pdf>

4 <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5063-persons-age-18-to-24-not-attending-school-not-working-and-no-degree-beyond-high-school?loc=2&loct=2#detailed/2/any/false/867,133,38,35/any/11484,11485>

5 http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/local/article_c63e5392-28bc-11e3-9458-0019bb30f31a.html

