

**Ohio is Moving to New Education Standards
This is what it means for our school.**

What parent doesn't want his or her child to enter adult life prepared to take on the world? That's why you have your child in a school you trust.

But the world our children will live in will be much different than the one we have known. That is why Ohio is updating the curriculum standards that outline the knowledge and skills students need to have in key subjects in every grade.

Ohio and 44 other states have volunteered to adopt "Common Core State Standards" in math and English languages arts. Ohio also has written its own new standards in science and social studies.

What are education standards? They help teachers ensure that their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning. Standards do not tell teachers *how* to teach, but they do help educators identify the knowledge and skills their students should have so teachers can build the best lessons and environments for their classrooms.

Teachers at Smith are analyzing the standards now so we can put them into action by the fall of 2014. What does this mean for your student?

- Your child will be studying fewer topics within each subject, but drilling deeper into each to gain more understanding.
- Your child will be carrying well-understood key concepts from grade to grade to broaden and build on his or her knowledge.
- Your child will learn to relate key ideas from math, science, language arts and social studies to real-life situations.
- Your child's teacher will be using more in-depth teaching methods and getting frequent measurements of how your child is doing.

I encourage you as a parent to visit the National Parent Teacher Association website at <http://www.pta.org/4446.htm> for more information and guides on how to support your child's learning under the Common Core State Standards. I also invite you to watch a brief video from the Ohio Department of Education that explains more about why the state is updating its standards. You can see *Higher Expectations for a Brighter Future: Ohio's New Learning Standards* at www.youtube.com/ohioeddept.

Standards are a first step – a key building block – in helping us to continue providing our young people with a high-quality education that will prepare them for success in college and work. Most importantly, the hard work of our dedicated teaching staff and the continued support of parents will ensure that our children enjoy the bright future we all want for them.