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COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS FOR

Mathematics



Two major design principles, based on evidence:

Focus
Coherence

Focusing on Arithmetic in early grades

“...the early development of arithmetic is the foundation for future mathematics and should be distinguished as the most important content. For example, crucial standards about learning to add should take priority over predicting the result of playing with dice (or spinners). Unfortunately, both of these are frequently mentioned in the early grades and, in the absence of any guidance, appear to have equal priority.

Common Core avoids this widespread problem. It sets excellent priorities that are expressed both explicitly and implicitly. The grade-level overviews for elementary school offer explicit guidance by identifying the three or four areas that students are expected to master in each grade and making it clear that arithmetic is the most important topic in the early grades. This is further supported by the standards themselves, of which well over half deal with arithmetic. **This prioritization of arithmetic, which provides the foundation for the subsequent study of mathematics, is exemplary.”**

Fordham Report, *The State of State Standards—And the Common Core—In 2010*

Focus and coherence in Number and Operations



