

The majority of Arizonans favor implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments.

TO: EXPECT MORE ARIZONA
FROM: PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES & GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH
DATE: JANUARY 22, 2014

On behalf of Expect More Arizona, Public Opinion Strategies and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research conducted a statewide survey of N=500 likely voters in Arizona. The survey was conducted Dec 15-17, 2013, and has a margin of error of $\pm 4.4\%$.

SUMMARY

A broad plurality of likely Arizona voters favor implementation of Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards and assessments (Common Core State Standards), including Republicans, Democrats and Independents. When likely voters hear a description of the standards and assessment, support for implementation grows to over two-thirds. That said, awareness of the standards remains low and sharing information can build support for the standards and assessments among Arizona voters.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Arizonans support implementing the standards and tests.** Voters were asked, "Based on what you know about them, do you favor or oppose implementing the Common Core State Standards here in Arizona?" A plurality (43%) favor implementation, 24% oppose, and one-third (33%) say they are not sure. This support holds across party lines, with a plurality of Republicans, Democrats and Independents supporting the implementation of the standards.
- **When provided with short descriptions of the standards and tests, a solid majority support implementation. Both the standards and assessments garner majority support regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, education level, partisan affiliation, or region of the state.**
 - When read a description of the standards,ⁱ 71% of likely Arizona voters support their implementation, with 47% in strong support.
 - When read a description of the assessment,ⁱⁱ 67% of likely Arizona voters support its implementation, with 38% in strong support.
- **However, a majority of Arizona voters are not that familiar with the standards.** With implementation of the standards well underway, this survey shows the majority of Arizona voters know little or nothing about the standards.
 - Forty-two percent (42%) of voters say they have heard "a lot" (21%) or "some" (21%) about the CCSS. Fifty-eight percent (58%) say they have heard "not much" (19%), or "nothing at all" (38%) about them.

- Among those who are aware of the standards – that is, they have heard “a lot,” “some,” or “not much” about them, impressions are divided.
 - Forty percent (40%) say that what they have seen, read or heard recently has given them a favorable impression of the standards, while 38% say what they have seen and heard has given them an unfavorable impression. Roughly one-fifth (22%) say what they have seen or heard has had no impact or they are unsure of their opinion.
- **A majority of voters support implementing the assessment even if test scores drop.** Voters were told that students test scores are expected to drop significantly and seem different compared to previous test scores as the new tests are implemented and students and teachers get used to the level of difficulty required. Upon hearing this information 62% of voters say they favor implementing the tests versus 30% who say they would oppose implementation.
- **In assessing test components, voters place the greatest importance on knowing if students are on track and measuring critical thinking and problem solving skills by requiring students to show their work.** Voters were asked to rate components and features of the new tests and rate them on a zero to ten scale, where ten means it is extremely important and zero means it is not important at all.

The Components Ranked By Mean Score	% Very Important (8-10)	Mean
Let students and their parents and teachers know if they are on track for being prepared for college and career.	72%	8.0
Measure critical thinking and problem solving skills by requiring students to show their work instead of just filling out multiple choice questions.	67%	7.8
Provide results within one to two weeks of taking the test so they can be used by teachers to support student learning.	61%	7.5
Assess student understanding of content and skills for their grade or course.	60%	7.5
Measure student progress in the Common Core State Standards in English and math, in grades three through eight, and in high school.	60%	7.4
Be developed with leadership and advice from educators here in Arizona.	57%	7.2
Be the same across multiple states so that student, school and district scores can be easily compared.	50%	6.8
Be used to hold schools accountable and to evaluate teachers.	50%	6.7
Be conducted on computers.	31%	5.5

ⁱ These new standards have been set to internationally competitive levels in English and math. This means that students may be more challenged by the material they study, and the tests they take will measure more advanced concepts and require students to show their work.

ⁱⁱ As the Common Core State Standards are being implemented and taught, new tests aligned to the standards are also under development. These new tests are designed to help determine what students know and can do, and whether they are on track to graduate from high school ready for college or a career. Next year, these new tests would replace the current end of year state tests, also known as the AIMS test, being given here in Arizona.