

at all levels, and that substantial supports are developed so that the standards are fully operational in a cohesive accountability system. These supports would help with the following:

- ✎ Determining how multiple levels of assessment inform how well students are mastering the standards
- ✎ Developing engaging and challenging curricula that unpack the standards
- ✎ Creating lessons for instruction that align with the common core

The newer, higher standards will require schools and communities to better and more comprehensively support student learning if students are to meet these enhanced expectations. For the common core standards to succeed and have maximum impact, they also need to be part of a whole child approach to education that ensures students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. Click here for more information on [whole child education](#).

Equally critical to the success of the common core, classroom teachers must be fully equipped to elevate the standards from mere words to tangible improvements in learning. Indeed, the new standards are more advanced and require students to learn more specific content knowledge as well as demonstrate a deeper applied understanding of their learning. As such, prospective and veteran teachers will have to reconsider how best to teach students the standards and determine their comprehension. For future teachers, state teacher preparation programs and licensure policies will need to be revised to align with the new standards. Educators will need targeted professional development to help them understand the standards, develop new lesson plans, deliver effective instruction, and utilize assessments that are aligned with them. Click here for more information on [capacity-building professional development](#).

Issues to Consider

As states, districts, and schools begin to implement the common core standards, other issues need consideration. This ongoing implementation process provides school leaders with various opportunities to help further shape the standards, and the policies and resources that support them at both the state and local levels.

- ✎ **Additional standards**—At their discretion, states are allowed to supplement the common core standards with an additional 15% of state-specific standards. Furthermore, although standards in science and social science are being considered, the common core's standards currently address only English language arts and mathematics. Effectively integrating all content areas into instruction is essential for students to receive a comprehensive education.
- ✎ **Assessments**—Several critical issues must be resolved to equitably preserve the common core's capacity to bring comparability among states with new common assessments under development by the two state consortia that would replace existing individual state assessments and will require the establishment of new proficiency levels and cut scores.
- ✎ **ESEA reauthorization**—It remains to be seen how the common core standards will be incorporated into the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), particularly regarding assessment and accountability policies. Congress is expected to address ESEA in 2011.
- ✎ **Graduation requirements**—States may need to revise their graduation requirements to be consistent with the college- and career-readiness goals of the K–12 common core standards.
- ✎ **Special populations**—The special needs of students with disabilities and English language learners must be taken into account.

Visit ASCD's common core webpage at www.ascd.org/commoncore to stay informed on the latest common core developments and to access implementation resources.