

# Kansas State Department of Education Invites all Kansans to *Join the Conversation!*

*Online tool provides opportunity for public to study and submit feedback on current content standards*

TOPEKA – The Kansas State Department of Education today launched *Join the Conversation*, an online tool available at <http://standards.ksde.org> that provides Kansas citizens the opportunity to study and submit feedback on the state's current English language arts and mathematics academic standards. The standards, known in Kansas as the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards, were adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education in 2010 and represent what students should know and be able to demonstrate at each grade level.

Kansas has had content standards for more than 20 years and conducts a review of its standards every seven years. The current standards will be up for review in 2017. The goal of *Join the Conversation!* is to collect public input on each of the mathematics and English language arts standards at every grade level and provide that feedback to help guide the work of the standards review team.

"This *Join the Conversation!* initiative gives us an opportunity to not only collect feedback about the standards, but to really showcase what they are and what they require students to learn," says Interim Commissioner of Education Brad Neuenswander. "We are hearing from our schools and educators that the standards, while not perfect, are creating some really great things in the classroom. The public's feedback will help us tweak them to ensure they are providing the very best framework for our students to succeed in whatever path they choose after graduation."

The online tool will be available until October 30, 2015 for teachers, administrators, parents, students, higher education representatives and all others who are interested to read the standards by grade level and content area and provide feedback. Participants may make suggestions on moving a standard to another grade level, creating a new standard, or rewriting a specific standard.

"The College and Career Ready Standards raise the rigor, encourage relevance, and provide the complexity that will help students be successful in the 21st Century," says Jeff Baxter, Leavenworth High School English language arts teacher and 2014 Kansas Teacher of the Year. "Conversations between teachers and parents, conversations between teachers and anyone genuinely interested in education, are valuable whether about individual student growth or school improvement. In this instance, genuine conversations about the college and career ready standards will help understand and support improvement of education in our country. We may have issues regarding implementation, but I am confident anyone who thoughtfully considers the standards will see their merit."

Comments provided about specific standards will be evaluated by a team of Kansas educators from all levels specializing in the specific content areas. Any changes recommended by this team will be presented to the Kansas State Board of Education for its consideration.

To *Join the Conversation!*, go to <http://standards.ksde.org>.