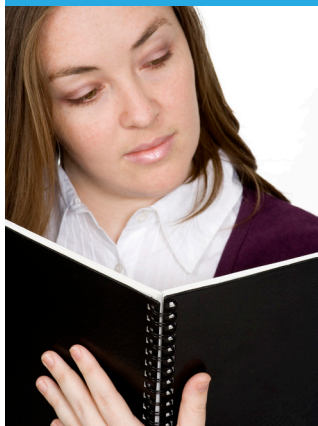


# NEW STATE READING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS



*On May 19, 2011, the Oregon State Board of Education voted to increase reading achievement standards (cut scores) for grades 3-8, beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. These changes are a move to help prepare students for the increased rigors of the new Common Core State Standards and the Oregon Diploma. The current high school achievement standard for meeting the benchmark of 236 will remain the same. The new cut scores follow increases to the state math achievement standards by the State Board in October 2010. Increases to science achievement standards are expected to be made in the fall of 2011.*

**What** will the new reading achievement standards mean to my student?



As a parent of an elementary or middle school student, there is a possibility that your child's test results on the reading assessments could appear to decrease from previous years. However, this potential drop doesn't mean students know less than the year before, that they're underperforming, or that teachers have done something wrong. These new benchmarks require a higher level of mastery, and it will take some time to ramp-up teaching to the new standards in your child's school.

**Why** is the State Board of Education doing this now, without time for more preparation?



Oregon reading achievement standards were reviewed by an expert panel in January 2011, which made recommendations to the State Board to increase the level of reading students are expected to know in elementary and middle school. This is expected to create better alignment between the lower grades and high school graduation requirements for reading.

In addition, the new standards are necessary to prepare students for tougher graduation requirements to acquire the Oregon Diploma. The higher benchmarks in both math and reading aim to give students a better chance at meeting standards when tested on National Common Core Standards (a shared set of clear educational standards for K-12 math and English adopted by 42 states, including Oregon), which are scheduled to be in place by 2014. The fear was that if the increase in benchmarks was delayed any longer, students wouldn't be ready in three years. *(continued on reverse...)*

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## What are Achievement Standards?



Achievement Standards, also called Cut Scores or Performance Standards, define the amount of knowledge and skills a student must demonstrate in each grade level and content area on state assessment tests, known as the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS). The state's goal is for every student to achieve a level of "meet" or "exceed."

## How do my student's school and teachers feel about this?



School staff are feeling some frustration regarding the challenge of preparing students for the new reading cut scores, especially during this time of doing more with fewer resources. However, they also understand what lies ahead with the new National Common Core Standards and want their students to be adequately prepared. Teachers are prepared to rise to this new challenge and support students in meeting these new performance standards.

## Is there anything I can do to help my student?



Talk to your student's teachers to see if there are any skill-building lessons you might be able to help with at home. Your encouragement of your child's success and achievements will go a long way in supporting his/her efforts. Please take the time to talk with your child's teachers about these changes and how to best support your child's learning



To learn more about the new State Reading Achievement Standards, please visit the Oregon Department of Education's Web site, [www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us). To learn more about the National Common Core Standards, please visit: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)