



## **Why is it important for a museum to align curriculum with Common Core Standards?**

There are many opinions on this, but the crux of it is that it helps to know the required skills before and the skills obtained after a learning task is attempted. Standards have evolved since the mid-seventies. They went from minimum standards to standards of excellence. They help the educator to assess what is needed to move forward in skill level. If you are here, that educator is you.

Standards build on themselves. This is why we can use scaffolding to help the learner. So, for example, a fifth grader could come across this website independently. They could look and start where their skill level is. Now in order to do this they would read all the prompts from K to 5. Then they could proceed and likely challenge themselves to the next level(s). A kindergartener would obviously need an adult to guide them, just as a kindergartener would need an adult to visit a museum.

In New Mexico, the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) was created in 1995. Prior to this, state standards in education existed as minimum requirements. They were regulations. Standards for excellence were initiated in 1996. There was a time period of revision and repeal. The current Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) were adopted in 2010. School districts had until 2012 to implement these Standards and until 2013-2014 to fully engage.

Common Core State Standards were desired in part because of the large increase of mobility within our nation. If a student moved, their education essentially would be smooth and loss of skills would be minimized. New Mexico chose to adopt additional standards to encompass the need for integrating and honoring knowledge shared and lived within the Hispano and Native American cultures that reside here. Another benefit of Common Core Standards has to do with access to education for all students. No matter where your current skill level is, you can strive toward excellence.

Many people are against the homogenization of education through mandated testing and Common Core Standards. Though we take this viewpoint into consideration, we support the use of Standards of Excellence that have been adopted by the State of New Mexico. We will try our best to forge relationships of understanding and offer our skills in assisting our visitors and community to navigate this landscape to the best of our ability.

Feel free to contact the museum with questions, concerns, or ideas.

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