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# PRIMARY SOURCES

America’s Teachers on Teaching in an Era of Change

*A project of Scholastic and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

*Common Core State Standards Preview*

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“Common Core raises expectations for the students as well as teachers.”

“I like the idea that no matter where students go in the U.S., they will be on the same page.”

“I feel strongly that the Common Core State Standards will do wonders for education. For the first time in a long time, I think education is getting back on track!”

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## VIEWS FROM 20,000 TEACHERS

The third edition of Primary Sources is in final preparations and features 20,000 of our nation's public school teachers sharing their thoughts on teaching in an era of change. In advance of the full report, teachers' views are now available on the Common Core State Standards, a set of clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in math and English language arts to ensure they are prepared for success in college and careers.

- **AWARENESS:** Teachers' awareness of the Common Core State Standards is now universal.
- **IMPACT:** Teachers expect the Common Core to enhance students' ability to think critically and use reasoning skills. This is especially true of teachers who have the most experience with the standards including math and English language arts teachers, and those who teach elementary grades.
- **IMPLEMENTATION:** Teachers are enthusiastic about implementation. At the same time, teachers share the realistic view that implementation is going to be challenging and have concerns for specific student populations, but are able to point to supports and resources needed to help these students succeed.

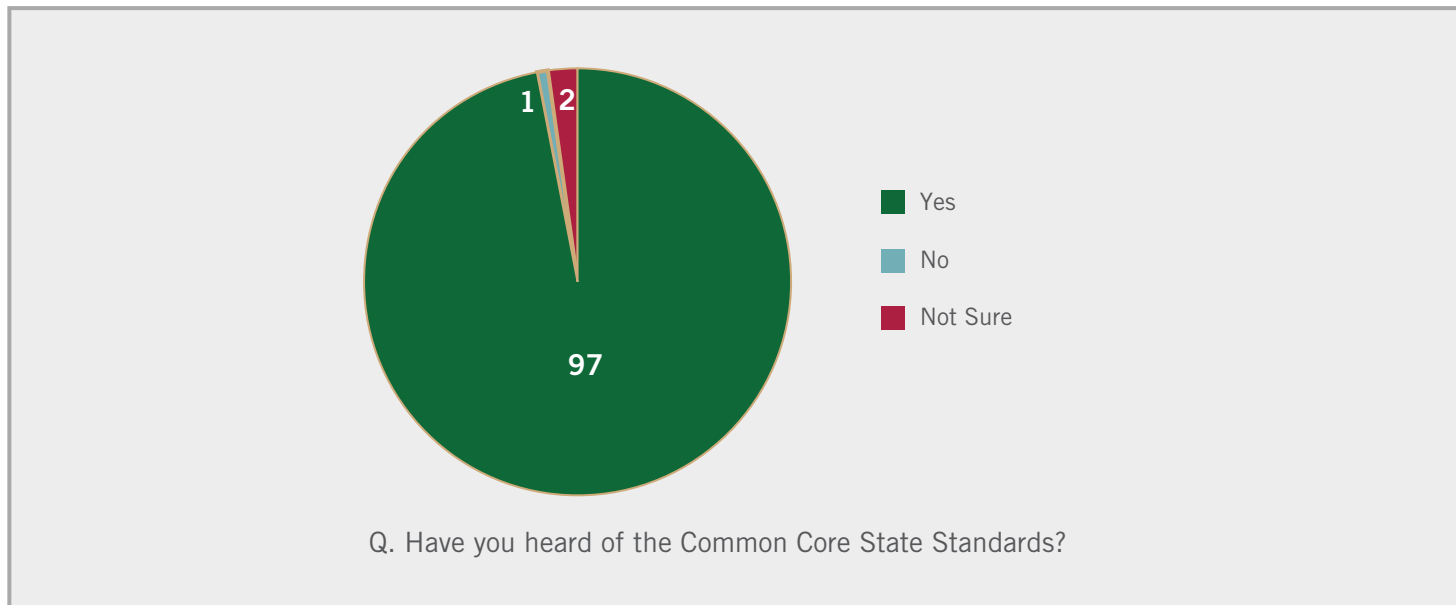
Forty-six states and the District of Columbia have adopted and are moving forward with the Common Core State Standards.

## AWARENESS

Nearly every teacher in America is now aware of the Common Core State Standards. Many parents and their children are hearing about the standards for the first time as students return to school, but 97% of classroom teachers are aware.

### Whether or Not Teachers Have Heard of the Common Core State Standards

Base: Total Respondents



In the states that are implementing the Common Core, awareness among teachers is universal (100%).

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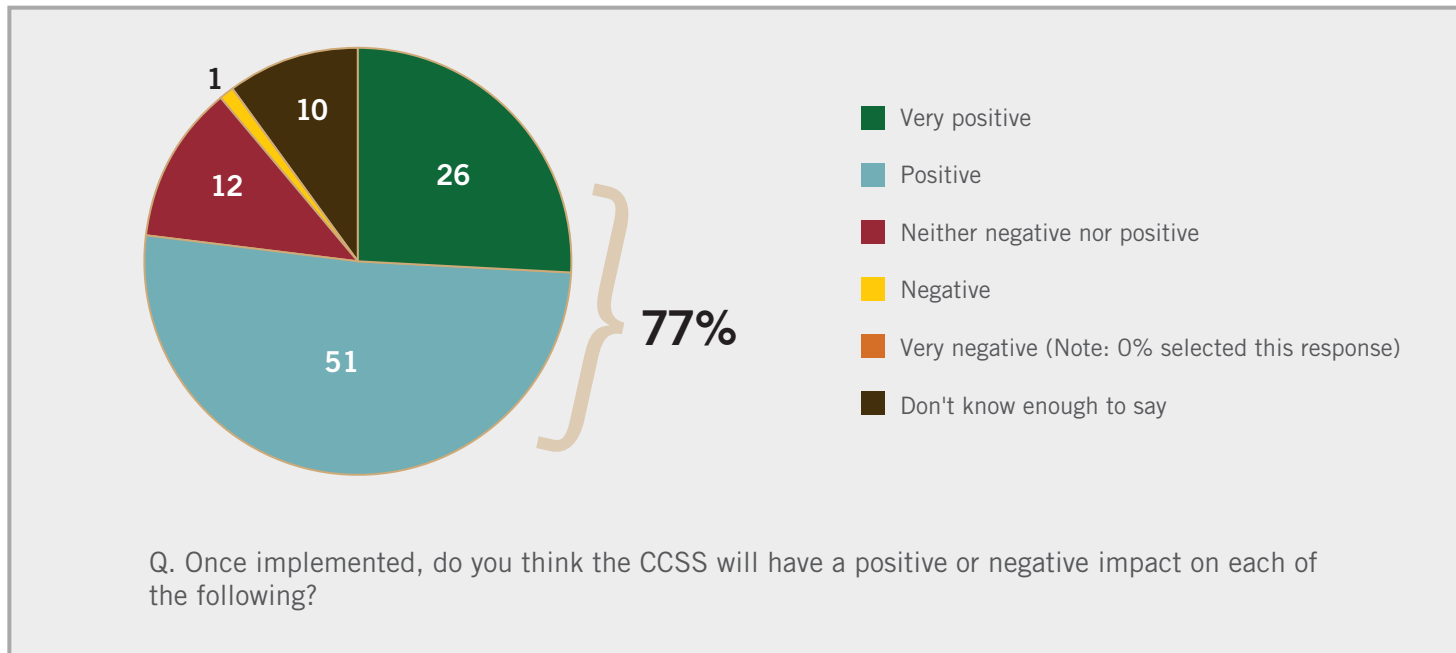
*"The Common Core requires a higher level of thinking. It makes students individual thinkers with their own strategies and tools." – Elementary School Teacher*

## IMPACT

Three-quarters (77%) of teachers who teach math and/or English language arts believe the standards will have a positive impact on students' ability to think critically and use reasoning skills. Only 1% believe the Common Core State Standards will have a negative impact on these skills; 22% do not expect an impact either way or do not know enough to say.

### Teachers' Views on the Impact the Common Core State Standards Will Have on Students' Ability to Think Critically and Use Reasoning Skills

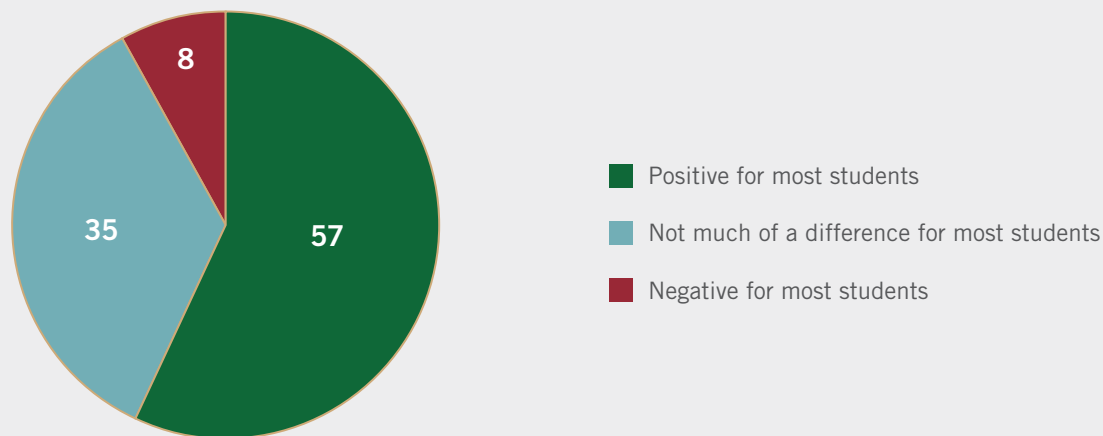
Base: Teach in a CCSS Adoption State and Teach Math and/or ELA



More than half of teachers (57%) in Common Core states say that the Common Core State Standards will be positive overall for most students, with only 8% reporting it will be negative. About one-third (35%) of teachers say that the standards will not make much of a difference.

## Teachers' Views on Whether the Common Core State Standards Will Be Positive, Negative or Will Not Make Much of a Difference for Most Students

Base: Teach in a CCSS Adoption State



Q. Do you think the CCSS will be positive for most students, will they not make much of a difference for most students or will they be negative for most students?

## IMPLEMENTATION

Half (52%) of teachers who currently teach math and/or English language arts in Common Core states say that implementation in their school is fully complete or mostly complete in at least one of these areas. Forty-two percent (42%) say implementation is in its early stages. Just 6% say implementation has not started.

Among teachers who teach math, English language arts, science and/or social studies in schools where Common Core implementation has started, 62% agree that implementation of the Common Core State Standards is going well in their school. This number increases to 67% among teachers in elementary grades where implementation is happening first; however, middle school and high school teachers are less likely to agree (60% and 52% respectively). Sixty-four percent (64%) of math and/or English language arts teachers agree implementation is going well.

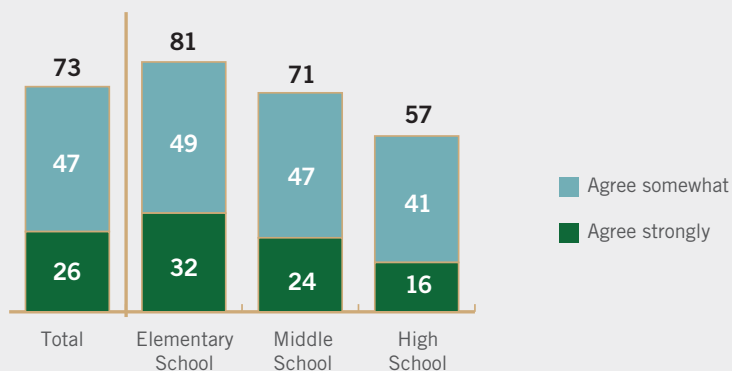
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*"I feel I have flexibility. You can do what you want in every trimester, so long as the kids get what they need by end of year." – Elementary School Teacher*

Overall, 73% of teachers who teach math, English language arts, science and/or social studies in Common Core states agree that they are enthusiastic about the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in their classrooms. Elementary school teachers are more likely to agree at 81%, while middle school and high school teachers are less likely to agree (71% and 57% respectively). Seventy-seven percent (77%) of math and/or English language arts teachers agree that they are enthusiastic.

## Teachers' Agreement with Statement: I am enthusiastic about the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in my classroom, in Total and by Grade(s) Taught

Base: Teach in a CCSS Adoption State and Teach Math, ELA, Science or Social Studies



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the CCSS? Full scale: "Agree strongly"; "Agree somewhat"; "Disagree somewhat"; "Disagree strongly"

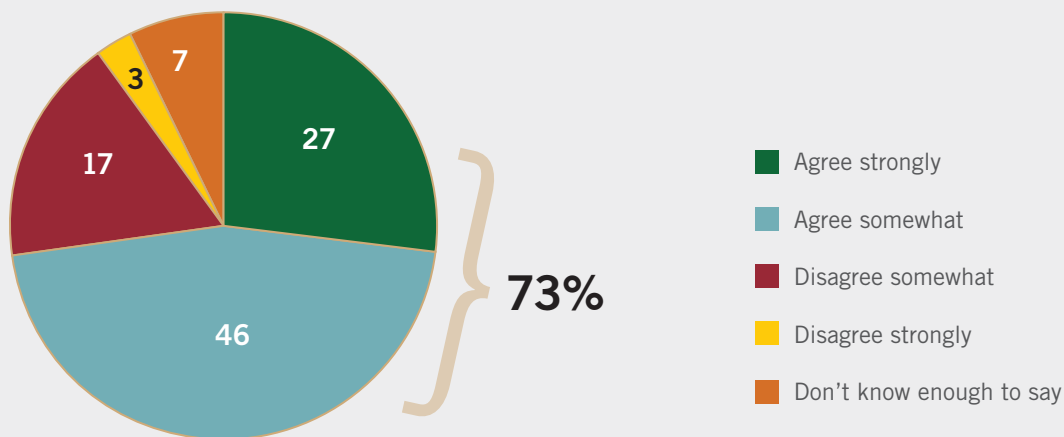
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*"Principals and evaluators have to understand we're all new at this. We're not going to be perfect." – Elementary School Teacher*

At the same time, 73% of teachers who teach math, English language arts, science and/or social studies in Common Core states believe implementing the standards is or will be challenging.

## Agreement with Statement: I believe implementing the Common Core State Standards is challenging or is going to be challenging

Base: Teach in a CCSS Adoption State and Teach Math, ELA, Science and/or Social Studies



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the CCSS?



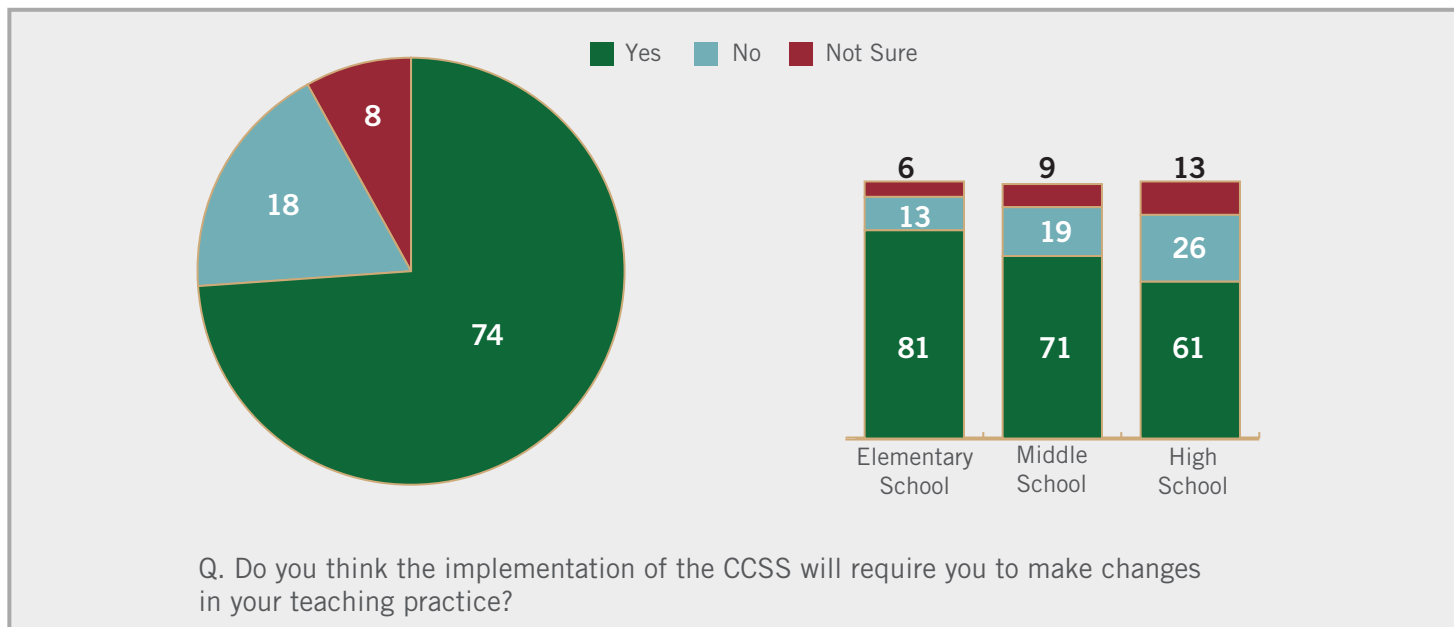
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*"We had a meeting the other day and they said it won't change what we teach, but how we teach it." – High School Teacher*

Seventy-four percent (74%) of all teachers in Common Core states say implementation will require them to make changes in their teaching practice.

## Teachers' Views on Whether Implementation of the Common Core State Standards Has Required or Will Require Changes to Teaching Practice, in Total and by Grade(s) Taught

Base: Teach in a CCSS Adoption State



In order to successfully implement the Common Core State Standards in their classrooms, the number one need reported by math and/or English language arts teachers (76%) is more planning time to find materials and plan lessons. Quality professional development follows closely, with 72% of teachers reporting a need for this.

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*"You have some students who are emerging, some who are almost there, some who aren't. You want them all to 'be there'." – Elementary School Teacher*

When asked about student populations in their classrooms meeting the Common Core State Standards, teachers in Common Core states are most concerned about students who are currently working two or more grades below grade-level (40%) and special education students (26%).

For these students, as well as for students who are on grade-level and who are English language learners, teachers rank age-appropriate, leveled instructional materials as the number one need to help students meet the Common Core State Standards.

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*"The feeling of the kids' 'aha' moments is special. It means that all of the effort you have put in has been absorbed." – Elementary School Teacher*

Despite this and numerous other challenges facing teachers in this era of change, 88% of teachers agree that the rewards of their profession outweigh the challenges and 89% are either very satisfied (38%) or satisfied (51%) with their job as a teacher.

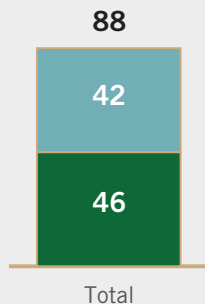
## Teachers' Views on Teaching

Base: Total Respondents

### Agreement with Statement:

The rewards of teaching outweigh the challenges

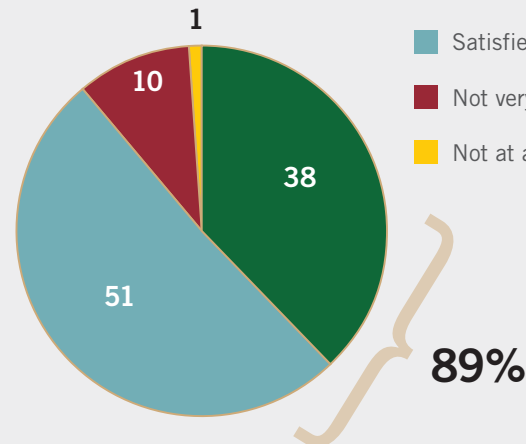
- Agree somewhat
- Agree strongly



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

### Teacher Satisfaction

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied



Q. In general, how satisfied are you in your job as a teacher?

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In the coming months, the full report, *Primary Sources: America's Teachers on Teaching in an Era of Change*, will provide additional findings on the Common Core, including activities teachers have participated in to prepare for implementation, teachers' views on the impact of the Common Core, and additional analysis on what teachers need in order to help their students achieve the goals of the Common Core. Further, the report will provide insight into teachers' experiences with and opinions on teacher evaluation systems, how teachers are lifelong learners seeking out information on their profession and how they are using technology to collaborate, find lesson plans and gain support from peers. Teachers also share with us the challenges and rewards of being in the classroom, the characteristics of great teachers, plus views on the most helpful ways parents can support children's success in school.

Visit **[www.scholastic.com/primarysources](http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources)** to sign up for more information on the full report release.

## The History of Primary Sources

Designed to bring the voice of teachers to the forefront of the national dialogue on education, the Primary Sources series of reports from Scholastic and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was first released in 2009 with findings from more than 40,000 teachers – the largest-ever survey of America’s teachers – sharing views on America’s schools.

The second edition, launched in 2011, took a more personal look at the teaching profession and its view from the classroom while keeping the pulse on current issues.

## Methodology, in brief

The findings of the third wave of Primary Sources are based on a national online survey conducted by Harrison Group, a YouGov company, among 20,157 PreK–12th grade public school classroom teachers. The survey was conducted between July 1 and July 22, 2013. The data were weighted to ensure alignment with their actual proportions in the population according to grade(s) taught, teacher gender, years of teaching experience and geography. Eighty-five percent of teachers in the survey teach math, English language arts, science and/or social studies in Common Core states.

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## About Scholastic

Scholastic Corporation (NASDAQ: SCHL) is the world's largest publisher and distributor of children's books and a leader in educational technology and related services and children's media. Scholastic creates quality books and ebooks, print and technology-based learning materials and programs, magazines, multi-media and other products that help children learn both at school and at home. The Company distributes its products and services worldwide through a variety of channels, including school-based book clubs and book fairs, retail stores, schools, libraries, on-air, and online at [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com).

## About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health with vaccines and other lifesaving tools and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to significantly improve education so that young people have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

## About Harrison Group

Harrison Group, a YouGov company, is a leading market research and strategy consulting firm headquartered in Waterbury, Connecticut. The company's cornerstone is providing sophisticated strategy, analytics, and survey and forecasting services. Harrison Group consists of a cohesive team of researchers, analysts, field experts, focus group facilitators, content-area experts, brand specialists and multivariate statisticians who deliver definitive results for many of the world's most demanding clients. [www.harrisongroupinc.com](http://www.harrisongroupinc.com).

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**PRIMARY SOURCES** is part of an ongoing dialogue with America’s teachers. For more information, visit:  
[www.scholastic.com/primarysources](http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources)

*Common Core State Standards Preview*

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