

January 26, 2016

State Board of Education
Oklahoma State Department of Education
Oliver Hodge Building
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

RE: Letter of Support

Dear State Board of Education,

I am writing to offer my support of the new Oklahoma Academic Standards for Math. I have taught Algebra I at Norman High School for the last four years and am currently serving as our state's 2016 Teacher of the Year. I have visited with many other math teachers about the standards and am confident that by approving these standards, Oklahoma will better prepare our students for college, careers, and life.

As I was reading the standards, I considered how teachers might feel about implementing them. I wondered what our classes might look like if these standards took effect immediately and I believe teachers will readily embrace the change. The guiding principles are at the heart of what matters most when teaching mathematics. Oklahoma's math educators should always be mindful of equity, strive to find ways to stimulate curiosity and create enjoyment of mathematics, focus on problem solving, and incorporate technology.

The common theme throughout the mathematics standards that is most beneficial is the focus on solving real-world problems in addition to mathematical problems. It is critical that we have students who not only understand computation and calculations, but understand how to apply them to the world around them. These standards will build mathematic innovators in our state.

I am happy to endorse the Oklahoma Academic Standards for Math as Oklahoma's Teacher of the Year and as a teacher at the ground level working with some of the students who struggle significantly with math. I am grateful that so many of my colleagues have helped develop these standards and know that my students will flourish with their implementation.

Respectfully,



Shawn P. Sheehan
2016 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year
Specialized Education Algebra I
Norman High School