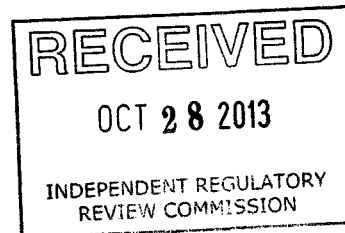


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To Mr. David Sumner and Staff



I am an educator in public education who is not thrilled in any way about the Federal Government's ultimate take over of education in our local schools.

Since 2011 when I began seeing Common Core State Standards in my email inbox, immediately a red flag rose in my mind. At the time, I was a candidate in the National Board Teachers Certification process and I completely understand the need for teaching standards. I felt that the National Board process was extremely helpful because I felt my personal education process to become a certified teacher never fully explained what I should be teaching. National Board Teacher certification is a personal decision, not a state or federal mandated process. The process exposed me to standards but not standards that dumb down the education process like those I'm seeing in the Common Core State Standards.

In the ELA component, the CCSS is imposing nonfiction texts over literature. Its great to include nonfiction and educators already do that during the Social Studies and Science related instructional times. However, to make English Language Arts to include 70% nonfiction and 30% classical literature is dumbing down the English language for all students. Where do you gather that "robust" vocabulary in a science text? You don't. You learn informational language like a robot. We are not robots. Also, the nonfiction reading include resources like the California standards for insulation requirements that is "highly suggested" as required reading in high school. REALLY? In addition this 70% suggested nonfiction text is a great way to teach ideology from the environmentalists that are reconstructing energy science education for the future. We already have to teach Darwinism over Intelligent design or a balanced approach to both. Now the texts being produced will be Common Core integrated because the testing (ACT and SAT) will be based solely on those science methods, thanks to author, David Coleman. Coleman publicly stated that he doesn't want classical literature as the main focus of his Common Core State Standards. This is another problem, the CCSS process was written by a small group of personally selected people and then money was given to TRADE ORGANIZATIONS to implement. A trade organization is something you pay into to be a member. A true educational professional, Dr. Sandra Stotsky, a professional who developed curriculums in many states, would not validate the CCSS.

In math, I am currently working in a K-5 elementary grade school. I work with students who need specially designed instruction (SDI). Are you telling me that I have to convert addition to base-10 and add 3 to 5 more steps to the process for these students to get them to add $21 + 5$ to equal 26. The standards says I have add more steps to the process because students need to have a deeper understanding of how that equation happens. YOU HAVE TO BE OUT OF YOUR MIND. Students with SDI need straightforward lessons not abstract ideology. It is my job to help them learn the basics. By basics I need to keep it simple and straightforward and eliminate the steps that are a

distraction in the first place. That's why they are behind now. To now ask these students to have deeper understanding will rule out chances to be successful and get up to age-level learning. Working alongside of the regular education teachers, one third grade teacher said this new math method is hurting all her students in the room. She said they are not grasping the additional steps to add and/or multiply. This maybe why teachers and parents are saying its fuzzy math. While CCSS says to teach less topics and focus on the important ones the methods to get the answer are complicated. The problem for teachers and students is that Coleman, the chief architect of CCSS, has now helped align the ACT and SAT to become CCSS text friendly and students will have to have this understanding to pass these college entrance exams. WHY?

The dumbing down process in math I am seeing is the delay to introduce Algebra and whether the high school requirements will include Algebra 1 only or Algebra 2. I'm not seeing anything in the CCSS that the standards lead the instruction to higher math like trigonometry and calculus. Yet, CCSS is about focus, rigor and coherence said, Jason Zimba of Students Achieve LLC. By the way, Students Achieve LLC is a result of GATES Foundation money to implement CCSS country wide. Zimba is a "college professor" who was brought on after Colman's first writing of the math standards to address the concerns that no college professor had input. James Milgrim from MIT who was on the validation committee would not validate the Math CCSS because it was not rigorous as CCSS proclaims due to the algebra issue.

I'm not understanding why we're expecting every student in America to enter college via CCSS either. America has nothing to offer students in this economy and today's college's are graduating thousands who can't find a job in their field now. What makes anyone think the future will be different. America is not moving toward being the economic superpower but a minor player "globally." I'm sorry but there's an agenda between BIG CORPORATIONS AND BIG GOVERNMENT and they are using education as their means to get their agenda accomplished. I for one want America to hold onto individual freedoms, capitalistic and entrepreneurial ideals that move more people out of poverty than into it. I am not into predicting students that will be robots on the Big Corporation/Govt. assembly line. That's what the predictive testing in preschool will produce for students via CCSS and all the components needed for full implementation. Its all explained in the DOE's mission and America Competes Act that was written and started along with the 2009 Stimulus Act.

Why are American students not "achieving" like before? I think it is lack of values in society and families around us especially in the inner cities. Today's society is broken especially in the inner cities and its a values issue not lack of education and common core standards missing from education. We don't need bureaucrats and philanthropists to philosophize that we need more money spent on education to fix what's broken in families. Implementing CCSS fully will require much money especially to implement the Longitudinal Data System needed and required by the 2009 ACT.

The entire process for CCSS to be complete is that the Govt. gets its way to have every child in a preschool by age 3 and the data gathering process to begin with initial

predictive testing. ON A CHILD AGE 3, WHO ARE WE CHINA? Yes, by implementing CCSS through the Race to the Top competition and under the American Competes Act, states who took the 2009 stimulus money, WHICH PA DID, automatically made PA agree to improve their Longitudinal Data Systems that will forever link that child to the government intrusive data banks forever. Yes, I've read through the additional document that the Federal DOE published in February 2013 about developing GRIT, TENACITY and Perseverance in our education systems.

I WILL NOT BE a teacher who will put a sensor monitor on a child's wrist, nor will I want to get their responses on a facial monitor about how they smile or don't smile when tested. I will also not monitor their posture in a posture chair or allow a fMRI into my classroom to gather physiological data on kids. AGAIN WHO ARE WE, A POLICE STATE? I have enough evidence watching students with SDI who break out into tears or tantrums because THEY HAVE to take state tests NOW that are not at their instructional level but forced to take them at their age level and that was thanks for the NCLB. AGAIN, ARE WE CRAZY.

I really despise bureaucrats who can't balance their budgets or figure out ways to do their jobs with accountability and then they want to impose topdown FEDERAL GOVT. ideologies on state and local school districts. I also am sick of people with the most money who get to make changes because they have the most money. For the Bill and Melinda GATES FOUNDATION to want to improve education is one thing, but then they get to impose the way it will be fundamentally changed is again against the principles that this country was founded on. BIG CORPORATIONS AND BIG GOVERNMENT do not get to overrule "We the People" and that includes PARENTS.

THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND OUR FOUNDING FATHERS WROTE INTO THE RULE OF LAW THE TENTH AMENDMENT THAT SAYS STATES HAVE CONTROL OVER ALL THINGS NOT GIVEN TO THE FEDERAL GOVT. THERE IS NOTHING WRITTEN INTO THE US CONSTITUTION THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH GETS TO DICTATE COMMON STANDARDS OF EDUCATION. The Great Society under LBJ never altered the US Constitution either. He may have installed the Department of Education at the Federal Level under the Presidents direction, but that can be changed easily because it is not a Constitutional Amendment to the US Constitution.

Do I agree that there needs to be standards, yes. I want a state-board certified surgeon operating on me; therefore, I believe that teachers need to be held to standards too. Do I see problems in the teaching profession - YES. I am forced to join a union as a PA public school teacher. While I teach with many highly qualified union professionals who go above and beyond the classroom to educate children, I also see a good number of union teachers who have a job and are not professional. They have protections guaranteed to them regardless of performance due to collective bargaining and signed contracts who are doing a big disservice to both the children and their parents who pay taxes that pays their salary. This disservice extends to society at large since all

taxpayers in America contribute to that person's salary and benefits through redistribution by way of the Federal DOE thanks to LBJ.

Everyone cries we need reform including the Thomas Fordham Institute who I once admired. However, I don't see the Institute as a credible source for unbiased education reform since taking money from the GATES Foundation and GE. It was clear from their forum on Wednesday, October 23, 2013, that they are biased and they do put out the disclaimer that they received money from BIG CORPORATIONS to push this idea of Common Core.

If students are expected to now become COLLEGE AND CAREER READY then I suggest you begin at the FAMILY level. We have proof of children who come from a 2 parent household, a mom and dad, who waited till marriage to bring children into the world, who contribute to society as a responsible adults and who have a vested interest in their child's welfare from birth by being responsible that those children are more likely to succeed. THERE IS NO COMMON CORE STANDARD in the world that will prepare WITH READINESS any child FOR COLLEGE OR CAREER encounters in their adult life unless the VALUES AND MORALITY OF A SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY AND FAMILY BEGIN TO CHANGE FIRST.

I will work forever to help those children who come from dysfunctional families in a community that doesn't have this commitment and for the past 15 year's I've done that. I've been walking the talk. While there needs to be changes in schools, INSTITUTING COMMON CORE STANDARDS IS NOT THE SOLUTION. CCSS is a Trojan horse that will lead future generations into the corral like sheep being led to the slaughter and I would hope that Pennsylvania the birth place of the Nation to hold fast to to vision of the Founding Fathers and to let States Rights override this mandate from the Federal Government into our school systems. Yes, it is a mandate because PA took the money in 2009 and that money had strings attached to it. We are now a puppet of the government puppet masters.

We all need to be more involved and hold the teaching profession to higher standards. We also need to hold parents more accountable. As elected representatives of the people need to figure out how to bring back VALUES and MORALS into our society. Until that happens, no textbook aligned to common core will produce any child to be able to succeed.

Thank you.

Rochelle Porto, M.Ed.